

"The Sound of the South... and the North"

In a small town in Argentina lived a curious girl named Sofía. One day, her school received exciting news: they would be participating in a cultural exchange with schools from other countries. Each class would receive a mysterious box containing objects representing another culture.

Sofía's class received a box from Spain. Upon opening it, they found a fan, a colorful sash, a small embroidered handkerchief... and a pair of wooden castanets, smooth to the touch and delicately designed.

"What are these?" asked Sofía as she clumsily jingled them.



"They're castanets, a traditional Spanish percussion instrument," explained the teacher. "They're used in many dances, such as flamenco, but also in the 'jota', which is danced in northern regions like Aragón, Navarra and La Rioja."

Sofía and her classmates began to further investigate. They learned that the jota is danced at parties and celebrations, with lively movements, quick turns, and lots of energy. They watched videos of children like them, dressed in traditional costumes, dancing to the sound of guitars, bandurrias, and castanets.

For several weeks, they practiced playing the castanets. At first, they struggled to keep the rhythm, but little by little, the "clack-clack" began to sound more confident, as if their hands wanted to dance too.

When the day of the presentation arrived, Sofía and her group showed what they had learned. They explained that castanets are not only played in

flamenco music in the south, but also in the north, in jotas and other regional dances steeped in history and tradition.

"Spain is a country with many different cultures," Sofía concluded. "And each one has its own rhythm."

As the castanets played on stage, Sofía felt like she had travelled, without leaving her school. And that music, like friendship, can unite people from all over the world.