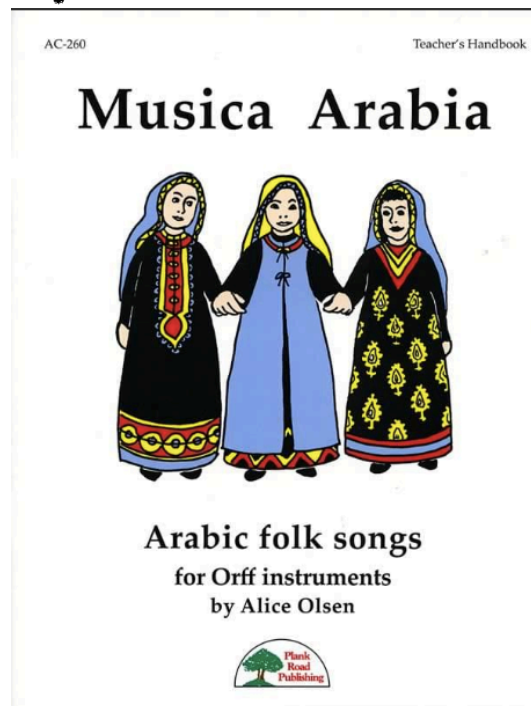


# *Musica Arabia: Arabic Folk Songs for Orff Instruments*

BY ALICE OLSEN

Book review by Luke Thallas, Lincoln Public Schools



This book is chock-full of singing, dancing, instruments, and classroom-ready activities. The tunes are gorgeous in their simplicity of arrangement, and are easily adapted to add more challenging musical aspects if needed.

The folk tunes that Alice Olsen chose are fairly common ones in various Middle Eastern cultures: in planning “Tafta Hindi” (p. 9) for my spring chorus concert, I checked with some of my Arabic-speaking students to see if they recognized the tune. Most of them did; hearing a folk song in their native language made their eyes light up! One student even correctly identified it as originating in Pakistan, even though she grew up in Iraq. Another arrangement is a traditional Arabic children’s rhyme set to “Frere Jacques”!

I would highly recommend this book to any teachers that have Arabic-speaking students in their population – the authenticity of the folk songs and accessibility of the arrangements puts some very interesting sounds within reach for your students!