# TWO TRADITIONAL KOREAN SONGS\*

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#### Abstract

For elementary school students, some traditional Korean songs to sing in Korean and English.

These songs may be used as part of a music class, for performance (particularly in a "multi-cultural" concert), or as part of a social studies unit on eastern Asia.

## Some Suggestions for Performance

- "Arirang" is so popular in Korea that it might be called the national folk song. The words have to do with the longing and weary feeling of having been jilted by a lover, so this is a good one for children to sing in Korean, not in translation.
- The "Doraji" of the second song is a beautiful wild flower. A singable translation has been provided. You can sing it in Korean, English, or both.
- The accompaniment included here for "Arirang" should be quiet and understated. It may be played very softly on the piano, or, even better, can be played (it is very simple) by students on handbells or xylophones, or plucked string instruments.
- A performance of these tunes with no accompaniment, or with a quiet percussion-only accompaniment, can be very effective. Typical Korean percussion instruments include a great variety of drums and small gongs, usually played with beaters rather than bare hands.

NOTE: Singing these melodies without any harmony or chordal accompaniment is a very authentic performance style. If you do not read music and need to learn the melody, listen to Arirang<sup>1</sup> and Doraji<sup>2</sup>. I hope to soon include a recording of the songs sung in Korean by Koreans.

## Notes on Pronunciation

• The pronunciation has been simplified a little and written out for English speakers.

NOTE: Please note that I am not using the internationally-accepted method for spelling Korean words using the Roman alphabet. I believe these spellings will be a little more intuitive for young English-speakers.

- "A" is the "ah" sound in "lot" or "call".
- "Aw" is the deeper-in-the-throat sound in "haunt" or "lawn".
- "I" is the "ee" sound as in "machine".

<sup>\*</sup>Version 1.11: Mar 11, 2011 9:24 pm +0000

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>See the file at <a href="http://cnx.org/content/m11632/latest/Arirang.MID">http://cnx.org/content/m11632/latest/Arirang.MID</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>See the file at <a href="http://cnx.org/content/m11632/latest/Doraji.MID">http://cnx.org/content/m11632/latest/Doraji.MID</a>

- "O" is long as in "cold".
- "U" is the sound in "pull"; "uh" is the sound in "run".
- "E" is the "eh" sound in "let".
- "R" is lightly tongued as it is in Spanish, not the heavy English "r".

You can download PDFs of Arirang-first page<sup>3</sup>, Arirang-second page<sup>4</sup>, Doraji-first page<sup>5</sup>, and Doraji-second  $page^6$ .

<sup>3</sup> http://cnx.org/content/m11632/1.11/ArirangEdit.pdf 4 http://cnx.org/content/m11632/1.11/Arirang2edit.pdf 5 http://cnx.org/content/m11632/1.11/Doraji1edit.pdf

 $<sup>^6</sup> http://cnx.org/content/m11632/1.11/Doraji2edit.pdf$ 





Figure 1





Figure 2





Figure 3

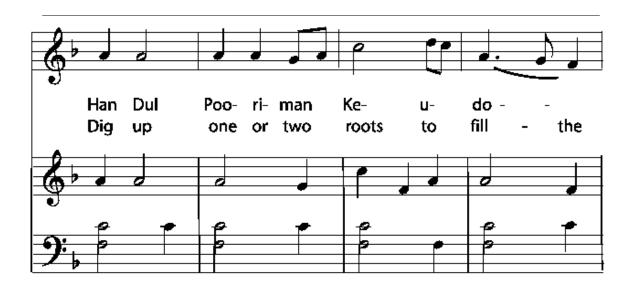




Figure 4

NOTE: Thanks to everyone who participated in the survey! It was very useful to me, both as a researcher and as an author, to get a better picture of my readers' goals and needs. I hope to begin updating the survey results module in April. I will also soon begin making some of the suggested additions, and emailed comments are still welcome as always.