



## Handout - ChocQuibTown Teacher's Guide

**Region of origin:** Pacific Coast of Colombia

**Background:** ChocQuibTown is a band from Chocó in the state of Quibdó, Colombia. This area of Colombia is the world's rainiest lowland, with close to 400 hundred inches of annual precipitation. Much of the population thrives on fish, and their plentiful natural resources form a contradiction with the extremely poor living conditions of the majority of Chocó's population.

The lyrics to "Somos Pacífico" ("We are the Pacific") (2008) is a word play in Spanish in which the rappers ChocQuibTown are saying two things at once. They are stating that they are from the Pacific Coast, while also identifying themselves as pacifists in a country where violence is all-encompassing and where being black, poor and a rapper is associated with violence ("*Pacífico*" can mean either "peaceful," or, a person from the Pacific region). Because they define themselves as artists, even without stating that they are pacifists, the connotation suggests that they have a seemingly innocent weapon: their songs.

ChocQuibTown's music video for "Somos Pacífico" shows their desire to showcase their Afro-Colombian identity while at the same time vindicating the rights of their ethnicity in order to have a dignified and proud presence in Colombian mainstream media. Their lyrics and images are a form of protest that deepen our understanding of the inequalities still suffered in the Chocó region of Colombia.

**Musical Characteristics:** ChocQuibTown's innovative sound fuses funk, North American hip-hop, Jamaican reggae, and elements of electronic music to produce elaborate beats. They mix them with African rhythms from the Colombian Pacific coast such as *bunde*, *currulao*, *bambazú* and *aguabajo*. Sometimes they complement their music with other more well-known styles such as *salsa*, *songo* and *guajira*. The lead vocals of Goyo, Tostao and Slow have the instrumental support of Larry Viveros (who plays *tambora*, *conga*, and *marimba*), Alex Sánchez (electric bass), Milton Jurado (guitar), and Andrés Zea (drums). It is an authentic street sound full of joy and nuances of the thick Afro-Colombian jungle that always uses El Chocó, and the Pacific, as their central axis.

**"Somos Pacífico":** "Somos Pacífico" is a song that integrates *marimba chontá*, also known as "the jungle piano". It is a marimba made entirely from materials brought from the high mountains of the Pacific Coast.

Similar to a large xylophone, the sound of the marimba comes from a series of sheets of chonta wood (a type of tropical palm) of various sizes, each with its own resonant box, and arranged from largest to smallest.

With African roots, this instrument is used primarily in Latin America in the north of Ecuador and the area of Tumaco, in the south of Colombia. It is said that Africans brought the design of the xylophone and the timbre of its keys with them to the New World. But in America, the wood of the chonta tree improved its sound and made it uniquely American. Oral tradition gives shape to life in Colombian Pacific cultures and is defined through ritual, storytelling, celebration, song, dance, gastronomy and



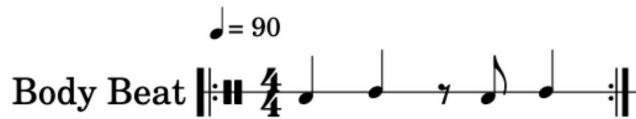
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cosmology. Rap and Hip-Hop, and more specifically, ChocQuibTown’s music, are a part of this tradition, innovating and adding to the wealth of ancestral knowledge of the region that connects the past with the present in the communities of the Colombian Pacific Coast.

**Musical Activity:** Students will learn the basic beat and chorus to the song Somos Pacífico. Below is the notation.

**The Beat:**



**“Somos Pacífico” lyrics (Spanish / English)**

**Chorus:**

*Somos pacífico,  
estamos unidos  
Nos une la región  
La pinta, la raza y el don del sabor*

**English Translation:**

We are Pacific  
We are united  
We are joined together by the region  
The style, the race and the gift of flow

# SOMOS PACÍFICO

Choc Quib Town





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### “Somos Pacífico” lyrics (Spanish / English)

#### Chorus:

Somos pacífico, estamos unidos  
Nos une la región  
La pinta, la raza y el don del sabor  
Somos pacífico, estamos unidos  
Nos une la región  
La pinta, la raza y el don del sabor

We are Pacific, We are united  
We are joined by the region  
The style, the race and the gift of flow  
We are Pacific, we are united  
We are joined by the region  
The style, the race and the gift of flow

#### Verse 1:

Ok, si por si acaso usted no conoce  
En el pacífico hay de todo para que goce  
Cantadores, colores, buenos sabores  
Y muchos santos para que adores  
Ok, Es toda una conexión  
Con un corrillo Chocó, Valle, Cauca  
Y mis paisanos de nariño  
Todo este repertorio me produce orgullo  
Y si somos tantos  
Porque estamos tan al cucho  
Bueno, dejemos ese punto a un lado  
Hay gente trabajando pero son contados  
Allá rastrillan, hablan jerguiados  
Te preguntan si no has janguiado  
Si estas queda'o  
Si lo has copiado, lo has vacilado  
Si dejaste al que está malo o te lo has rumbeado  
Hay mucha calentura en buenaventura  
Y si sos chochoano sos arrecho por cultura, ey!

If for chance you don't know  
In the pacific there are everything for your happiness  
Singers, colors good flavours  
And many saints for you to adore  
Everything is a connection  
With Chocó, Valle, Cauca  
And my friends from Nariño  
All of this repertory makes me proud  
And if we are so much  
Why are we so left behind  
Well, let us make a point  
There are people working, but are counted  
They spoke “slang”  
They ask you, if you can really “hang”  
If you will stay  
If you have copied it, if you have danced it  
If you let go of the bad or dancied it out  
It is very hot in Buenaventura  
If you are chochoano your culture is brave!

#### Chorus:

Somos pacífico, estamos unidos  
Nos une la región  
La pinta, la raza y el don del sabor  
Somos pacífico, estamos unidos  
Nos une la región  
La pinta, la raza y el don del sabor

We are Pacific, we are united  
We are joined by the region  
The style, the race and the gift of flow  
We are Pacific, we are united  
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#### Verse 2:

Unidos por siempre, por la sangre, el color  
Y hasta por la tierra  
No hay quien se me pierda  
Con un vínculo familiar que aterrera  
Característico en muchos de nosotros  
Que nos reconozcan por la mamá  
Y hasta por los rostros  
Étnicos, estilos que entre todos se ven  
La forma de caminar  
El cabello y hasta por la piel  
Y dime quién me va a decir que no  
Escucho hablar de san pacho  
Mi patrono allá en quibdó, ey!  
Donde se dan un pico y juran que fue un beso

United forever, for blood and color  
Even for the land  
nobody will be lost  
With a bond  
distinctive in all of us  
They recognize us for mom  
even for the faces  
Ethnics, styles in all must see  
The way to walk  
the hair, even the skin  
And tell me who would deny?  
I heard speak about San Pacho  
My saint in Quibdó  
Where a little kiss is a big kiss



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Donde el manjar al desayuno es el plátano con queso  
 Y eso que no te he hablado de buenaventura  
 Donde se baila el currulao, salsa poco pega'o  
 Puerto fiel al pescado  
 Negras grandes con gran tumba'o  
 Donde se baila aguabajo y pasillo  
 En el lado del río  
 Con mis prietillos  
 En el lado del río  
 Con mis prietillos

Where the delicacy with breakfast is plantain with cheese  
 I haven't even talked about Buenaventura  
 Where it dances tight currulao, salsa  
 Port loyal to fish  
 Big mamas with great flow  
 Where dancing aguabajo y pasillo  
 Next to the river  
 With my crew  
 Next to the river  
 With my crew

**Chorus:**

Somos pacífico, estamos unidos  
 Nos une la región  
 La pinta, la raza y el don del sabor  
 Somos pacífico, estamos unidos  
 Nos une la región  
 La pinta, la raza y el don del sabor

We are Pacific, we are united  
 We are joined by the region  
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**Verse 3:**

Es del pacífico, guapi, timbiquí, tumaco  
 El bordo cauca  
 Seguimos aquí con la herencia africana  
 Más fuerte que antes  
 Llevando el legado a todas partes  
 De forma constante  
 Expresándonos a través de lo cultural  
 Música, artes plástica, danza en general  
 Acento golpia'o al hablar  
 El 1, 2, 3 al bailar  
 Después de eso seguro hay muchísimo más  
 Este es pacífico colombiano  
 Una raza un sector  
 Lleno de hermanas y hermanos  
 Con nuestra bámbara y con el caché  
 Venga y lo ve usted mismo  
 Pa' vé como es, y eh!  
 Piense en lo que se puede perder, y eh!  
 Pura calentura y yenyere, y eh!  
 Y ahora dígame que cree usted  
 Porque Colombia es más que coca, marihuana y café

From the Pacific Guapí, Timbiquí, Tumaco  
 Riverside Cauca  
 Standing here with African heritage  
 Stronger than before  
 Carrying the legacy everywhere  
 Constantly  
 Meaning us through culture  
 Music, plastic arts, dance  
 Strong accent to talk  
 The 1,2, 3 for dance  
 After this sure it's more  
 This is the Colombian Pacific  
 A race, a sector  
 full of bros and sisters  
 with our swag  
 Come and see by yourself  
 To see how it is  
 Think about what you're missing  
 Pure fever and Yenyere  
 Now tell me what you believe  
 Because Colombia is more than coca, marihuana and coffee

**“De Donde Vengo Yo Pacífico” lyrics (Spanish / English)**

De donde vengo yo  
 La cosa no es fácil pero siempre igual sobrevivimos  
 Vengo yo  
 De tanto luchar siempre con la nuestra nos salimos  
 Vengo yo  
 Y aquí se habla mal pero todo está mucho mejor  
 Vengo yo  
 Tenemos la lluvia el frio el calorl come

Where I come from I  
 The thing is not easy but always equal survive  
 I come  
 Both always struggle with our left we  
 I come  
 And here we speak badly but everything is much better  
 I come  
 We heat the cold rain



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De la zona de los rapi mami papi  
Tenemos problemas pero andamos happy  
Comparsa también bailamos salsa  
Y bajamos el río en balsa  
El calor se siente eeh  
Y no hay problema pa' tomase su botella de aguardiente  
Hace días que soliao te la pasas enguayabado  
Todo el mundo toma whisky aja  
Todo el mundo anda en moto aja  
Todo el mundo tiene carro aja  
Menos nosotros aja  
Todo el mundo come pollo aja  
Todo el mundo está embambado aja  
Todo mundo quiere irse de aquí  
Pero ninguno lo ha logrado

De donde vengo yo  
Si mi señor  
Se baila en verbena con gorra y con sol  
Con raros peinados o con extensión  
Crítiquenme a mí o lo critico yo  
Si tomo cerveza no tengo el botín  
Y si tomo whisky hay chaglo y blin blin  
Y si tengo oro en el cuello colgado  
Hay ia iay es porque estoy montado  
Todo el mundo toma whisky aja  
Todo el mundo anda en moto aja  
Todo el mundo tiene carro aja  
Menos nosotros aja  
Todo el mundo come pollo aja  
Todo el mundo está embambado aja  
Todo mundo quiere irse de aquí  
Pero ninguno lo ha logrado

Acá tomamos agua de coco  
Lavamos moto  
Todo el que no quiere andar en rapi moto  
Carretera destapada pa' viajar  
No plata pa' comer hey pero si pa' chupar  
Característica general alegría total  
Invisibilidad nacional e internacional  
Auto-discriminación sin razón  
Racismo inminente mucha corrupción  
Monte culebra  
Máquina de guerra  
Desplazamientos por intereses en la tierra  
Su tienda de pescado  
Agua por todo lado  
Se represa  
Que ni el discovery ha explotado  
Hay minas llenas de oro y platino  
Reyes en la biodiversidad  
Bochinche entre todos los vecinos  
Y en deporte ni hablar

In the area of the rapi mami papi  
We have problems but we walk happy  
Comparsa also danced salsa  
And down the river rafting  
The heat feels uh ...  
And no problem pa 'take your bottle of aguardiente  
For days you spend soliao enguayabado  
Everyone drinks whiskey ... aja  
Everyone walks in moto ... aja  
Everyone has car ... aja  
But us ... aja  
Everyone eats chicken ... aja  
Everyone is looking fly ... aja  
Everybody wants to go away from here  
But none has

Where I come from I  
Yes my Lord  
They dance in parties with hat and sun  
With crazy hair or extension  
Me or criticize me I criticize him  
If I drink beer I do not loot  
And if I take whiskey there chaglo and blin blin  
And if I have gold neck hung  
it's because i'm crushing it!  
Everyone drinks whiskey ... aja  
Everyone walks in moto ... aja  
Everyone has car ... aja  
But us ... aja  
Everyone eats chicken ... aja  
Everyone is looking goog! ... aja  
Everybody wants to go from here  
But none has

Here we take coconut water  
Bike wash  
Anyone who does not want to ride a bike rapi  
Dirt road pa 'travel  
No money to 'eat hey ... but for drink  
Feature overall total joy  
National and international invisibility  
Auto-discrimination for no reason  
Racism imminent much corruption  
Monte snake  
War machine  
Navigating interests in land  
Your fish shop  
Water everywhere  
This dam  
That neither the discovery has exploded  
There mines full of gold and platinum  
Kings on biodiversity  
Brawl between all neighbors  
And in sports or talk



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De donde vengo yo  
Ya cosa no es fácil pero siempre igual sobrevivimos  
Vengo yo  
De tanto luchar siempre con la nuestra nos salimos  
Vengo yo  
Y aquí se habla mal pero todo está mucho mejor  
Vengo yo  
Tenemos la lluvia el frío el calor

Where I come from I  
A thing is not easy but always equal survive  
I come  
Both always struggle with our left we  
I come  
And here we speak badly but everything is much better  
I come  
We heat the cold rain