

Sofi and the Magic, Musical Mural

Sofi y el mágico mural musical

By Raquel M. Ortiz

PREVIEW: Sofia learns how to conquer her fear of the unknown.

GENRE: Fiction, trickster tales	READERS: 9 or more
CULTURE: Puerto Rican	READER AGES: 7–10
THEME: conquering fear	LENGTH: 15 minutes

ROLES: Narrators 1–4, Sofia, Mami, Plenero, Singers and Dancers

NOTES: This play has Spanish words and music. It's best to practice the words and song before reading the play. Also, having a *pandereta*, *claves*, *maracas* and a *güiro* would add greatly to the play. A link to the *plena* in this play is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3x0fOPEXp4k>

SCENE I: *A small, third-floor apartment in a big city.*

NARRATOR 1: Sofia was lying on her bed, bored when her mom walked in.

MAMI: (*in a grumpy voice*) Sofi, please go to the corner store and get us some milk.

SOFIA: (*cheerfully*) Okay, Mami. Let me get my shoes on and I'll go right down.

NARRATOR 2: As Sofia walked into the living room, her mom began her usual speech.

MAMI: (*sternly*) Now remember, don't talk to ANYONE! Go straight to the store and back.

NARRATOR 3: Sofia nodded as she put on her scarf and zipped up her coat.

NARRATOR 4: She knew her mom would be watching her from the apartment window as she walked all the way to the store and back.

SCENE II: *A cold winter day on a gray city street with a colorful mural.*

NARRATOR 1: Sofia ran down the three flights of stairs to get to the street. (*sound of feet going down stairs*)

NARRATOR 2: As Sofia walked to the *bodega* she looked at the mural painted on a building across the street.

Sofia: (*to herself in awe*): That mural is HUGE! Even from over here I can see everything: musicians, dancers, tropical fish, a large *amapola* flower and a *vejigante*.

NARRATOR 3: Now, Sofia knew that the *vejigante* was just a trickster. It would dance around people and try to hit them with a little bag it carried, a *vejiga*.

NARRATOR 4: But, as Sofia looked at the sneaky smile on the *vejigante* mask and its three horns, she was glad the *vejigante* was just a painting.

NARRATOR 1: At the *bodega* Sofia bought a half-gallon of milk and quickly left the store. She decided to cross the street and walk by the mural on her way back home.

NARRATOR 2: Sofia noticed how life-like everything looked. The colorful tropical fish swimming past her in the warm Caribbean Sea made the wintery day a little less dreary.

NARRATOR 3: When Sofia came to the musicians, the *pleneros*, she stopped and put down the milk. One had his hand held out. He seemed to be inviting her to dance.

SOFIA: (*giggling*) Okay, let's dance.

SCENE III: *A beautiful colonial city plaza on the island of Puerto Rico in the Caribbean.*

NARRATOR 4: Suddenly, Sofia found herself in the middle of Viejo San Juan, on the island of Puerto Rico. She was surrounded by the music of a *pandereta*, *claves*, *maracas* and a *güiro*. (*sounds of pandereta, claves, maracas and a güiro*)

SOFIA: (*in shock*) W-W-W-What's going on?

PLENERO: (*happily*) Well, you said you wanted to dance!

NARRATOR 1: Sofia, too shocked to do anything else, began dancing.

NARRATOR 2: Suddenly, a group of musicians and dancers made a circle around Sofia and the *plenero* and began to sing a famous *plena* song:

SINGERS and DANCERS:

“The plena music that I know
is not from China, it comes from home.
Because the plena was born in Ponce
It's from the barrio of San Antón.
Because the plena was born in Ponce
It's from the barrio of San Antón.”

“La plena que yo conozo
no es de la China ni del Japón.
Porque la plena viene de Ponce,
viene del barrio de San Antón”.

NARRATOR 3: After the song ended, the musicians began to play a song from carnival.

SINGERS and DANCERS:

“Toco-toco, toco-toco, Vejigante eating coco!
Toco-toco, toco-toco, Vejigante eating coco!”

“Toco-toco, toco-toco, Vejigante come coco!
Toco-toco, toco-toco, Vejigante come coco!”

NARRATOR 4: Then, out of nowhere came someone dressed in a black jumper with yellow ruffles and a mask. It was the *vejigante* from the mural!

NARRATOR 1: Sofia tried to make a run for it, but her dance partner stopped her.

PLENERO: “Don’t be afraid. Nothing’s going to happen.

NARRATOR 2: But, Sofia was sure something bad would happen when the scary-looking *vejigante* took her hand. Sofia wanted to scream!

NARRATOR 3: But, after looking at the bag dangling from the *vejigante*’s hand, she plotted how not to be plopped on her head with it.

NARRATOR 4: The *vejigante* began to spin-spin-spin Sofia.

NARRATOR 1: When the spinning was finally over, a dizzy Sofia discovered she was now dressed as a *vejigante*!

NARRATOR 2: Sofia touched her face. It was covered with a three-horned mask!
Her black jumper had a brilliant yellow ruffle!

NARRATOR 3: Now, the musicians began to sing to Sofia.

SINGERS and DANCERS:

“Vejigante wants to play
in red and yellow she’ll have her way.”

“Vejigante está pintao
de amarillo y colorao”

NARRATOR 4: Laughing, Sofia danced around the plaza, tapping everyone lightly with her *vejiga*.

NARRATOR 1: Then, she opened her arms and began to spin around, the ruffles billowing around her.

NARRATOR 2: She spun faster and faster, keeping time with the music.

NARRATOR 3: Before she knew what had happened, Sofia was above the dancers and musicians.

NARRATOR 4: She was flying! Sofia looked back and waved her goodbye as she left the street party.

NARRATOR 1: Everyone cheered as she went soaring through the air.

DANCERS and SINGERS: (*happily, cheering*) Bravo! Adios! Goodbye!

NARRATOR 2: First, Sofia soared eastward to visit El Yunque, the rainforest.

NARRATOR 3: She heard the gurgling of the waterfalls (*gurgling sound*).

NARRATOR 4: And, the chatter of the parrots (*chatter of parrots*).

NARRATOR 1: Then, Sofia flew over tall mountains that seemed to go on forever.

NARRATOR 2: After getting her fill of crisp mountain air, Sofia glided south towards the beach.

NARRATOR 3: She could see colorful fish and spiky coral in the bright blue Caribbean Sea.

NARRATOR 4: The salty water called out to her, and Sofia came closer and closer to the foamy white waves, ready to plunge in ...

SCENE 3: *Back on the gray, cold city street with a colorful mural from Scene 2.*

MAMI: (*angrily*) Sofia, what is the matter with you? I've been calling you and calling you and all you've done is stand here, staring at this mural. What's wrong with you?

NARRATOR 1: Startled, Sofia looked down at herself. She was no longer clad in a colorful *vejigante* outfit.

SOFIA: (*sad and confused*) Mami, I'm sorry. I was just looking at the mural and ...

NARRATOR 2: Sofia bent down and picked up the milk.

NARRATOR 3: Slowly, Sofia walked beside her mom. She glanced back at the mural one last time.

NARRATOR 4: She admired her sister's name, Esmeralda Pagan, under the long list of students who had helped paint the mural.

NARRATOR 1: Sofia and her mom climbed up the three flights of stairs in silence.

SCENE 4: *Back to the same bedroom from Scene 1.*

NARRATOR 2: Back in her apartment, Sofia went to her bedroom window. She looked at the mural across the street that's called, "The Pueblo Sings."

NARRATOR 3: Now, the *vejigante* didn't seem so scary. Staring at the mural, she could have sworn she saw the *vejigante* wink!

SOFIA: (*happily*) Maybe this really is a singing, and DANCING town.

NARRATOR 4: Then, Sofia began to sing and dance a *plena*, her arms outstretched to her new friends across the street.

SINGERS and DANCERS:

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is not from China, it comes from home.
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