



* Spanish * Hebrew * French * Mandarin *



By Sarah Farzam

Using Language and Music to Bridge Gaps

For more information visit www.bilingualbirdies.com

When I was eight I collected rocks, glued googly eyes on them, painted the word “hello” in the various languages I knew and sold them as charming paper weights for fifty cents. I would paint hola or salam in bright colors so if my customers ever met someone who spoke those languages, they would be better equipped to make friends with them. From this point the theme of using languages as a vehicle to bridge gaps and generate cultural awareness became a priority in my life.

I moved to New York City from California to teach high school in Brooklyn. Due to insufficient compensation I took a job as a cocktail waitress at night. On Sundays (my only day off) I frequented various parks. I noticed an abundance of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and would socialize with their mothers who would later become my target consumer. Market research carried out on park benches led me to conclude the modern Manhattan globally conscious mom is on the hunt for a children’s program with high educational and entertainment value. I decided to fill this need and launch Bilingual Birdies, a language and music program for young children.

Studying literature and education in college allowed me to write a dynamic curriculum for early language acquisition. Today Bilingual Birdies offers 27 weekly classes in Spanish, Hebrew, French and Mandarin in various preschools and community centers around New York. The idea is for children under five years to learn words in a second language through live music,

movement, dance, puppetry, and exploratory games. After one semester kids become familiar with simple vocabulary including counting, colors, animals, fruits, and more. Most importantly the kids learn polite greetings and how to say please and thank you in the second language. I hope learning new words will provide more opportunities for them later in life when making new friends, pursuing a job in a global market, and ultimately growing into compassionate adults.



Starting and sustaining my own company has been a relentless effort. In the beginning I faced the challenge of having zero brand recognition, high competition, and limited skills. I sought entrepreneurship training from The National Foundation

for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) and used the knowledge I gained to excel. Business basics like marketing once seemed unattainable and are now second nature practices. I utilize the internet including blogs, parenting websites, and search engine optimization to spread the word about Bilingual Birdies in a clear and professional way. The best thing about being an entrepreneur is that I can fill my days pursuing my passions (education, music, language, culture) and take control of my financial future.

I find my personal secrets to success include: taking risks, being aware in the moment, and honoring small victories. Fine tuning these qualities have allowed me to see a long and prosperous life for my company including licensing and merchandising as well as a future children’s television show. □



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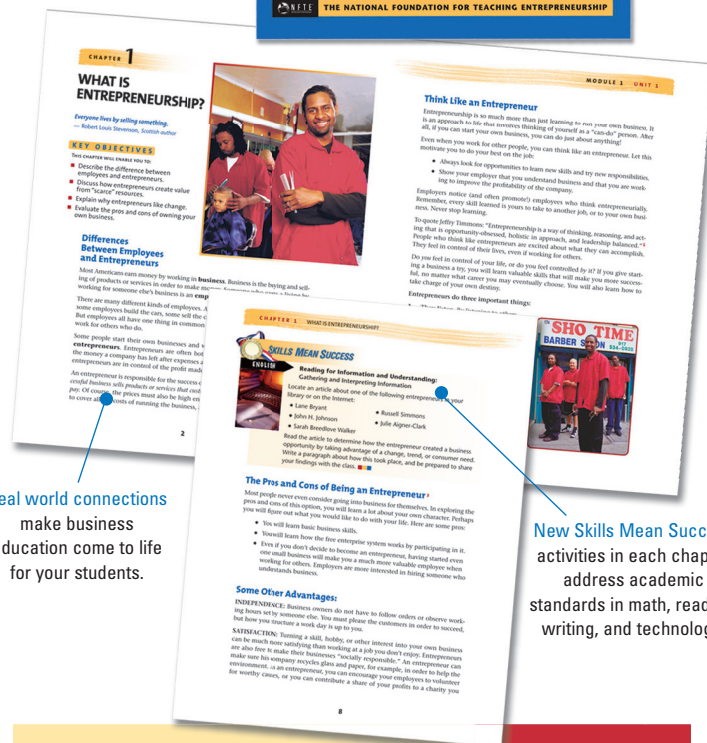
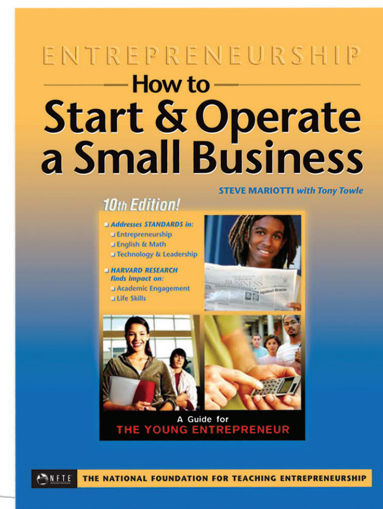
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