

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tanabata is one of Japan’s five seasonal festivals. Celebrated on July 7, it is often referred to as the Star Festival and has cultural origins in China.

According to folklore, Tanabata marks the once-yearly meeting of forbidden lovers *Orihime*, a weaver, and *Hikoboshi*, a cow herder. Orihime’s father became enraged when the couple fell so deeply in love that they neglected their jobs. After forcing them to separate, he took pity and granted them one day a year to see each other. Legend has it that the two lovers are represented by the stars Vega and Altair respectively, which rise in Japan’s night sky around this time of year. If the weather is clear, the two stars will be visible, and Orihime and Hikoboshi will meet. As the date approaches, it is customary to decorate and hang long strips of colorful paper called *tan-zaku*. Before they are hung, each one has a wish written upon it. Along with other vibrant ornaments, these decorations are displayed in homes, businesses, and streets.

JAPANESE PRONUNCIATION / TRANSLATION

Sasa no ha sarasara,

Sah-sah noh hah sah-rah-sah-rah,
(Bamboo leaves are rustling.)

nokiba ni yururu.

noh-kee-bah nee yoo-reh-roo.
(swaying on the rooftops.)

Ohoshisama kirakira,

Oh-hoh-shee-sah-mah kee-rah-kee-rah,
(Stars twinkle.)

kin gin sunago.

keen jeen soo-nah-goh.
(gold and silver sand.)

NOTE: Though often written with traditional characters, Japanese can also be expressed using the Roman alphabet. This system, called *romaji*, is used here.

TANABATA

(Star Festival)

for 2-part voices and piano
with optional SoundTrax*

3

English Translation by
TAKASHI NAKAMURA

Japanese Folk Song
Arranged, with new Music, by GREG GILPIN

Gently (♩ = ca. 84)

3 PART I only
p

VOICES

PIANO

p

pedal harmonically

4

sa - ra - sa - ra, no - ki - ba ni yu - re - ru.

7

O - ho - shi - sa - ma ki - ra - ki - ra, kin _____ gin _____

* SoundTrax CD available (51075). Visit alfred.com for digital scores and audio.

Copyright © 2024 by Alfred Music
All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA.

51074

su - na - go.



13

PART II *only*
mp

Bam - boo leaves are rus - tling, rus - tling,



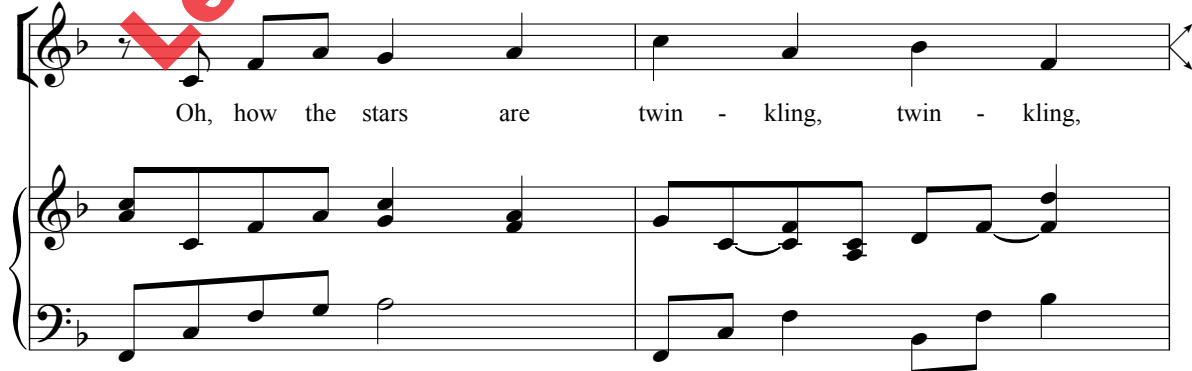
15

sway - ing close to the roof - top's edge.



17

Oh, how the stars are twin - kling, twin - kling,



19 PART I

21 *mf*

Five — wish - es

PART II

mf

gold and sil - ver grains of sand. Five wish - es

mf

22

I have writ - ten. The stars are watch - ing from the sky.

I have writ - ten. The stars are watch - ing from the sky.

25 *mp*

Five — wish - es I have writ - ten. The stars are watch - ing

mp

Five wish - es I have writ - ten. The stars are watch - ing

mp

from the sky.

from the sky.

31

Sa - sa no ha sa - ra - sa - ra no ki - ba ni

Bam-boo leaves are rus - tling, rus - tling, sway-ing close _ to the

34

yu - re - ru. O - ho - shi - sa - ma ki - ra - ki - ra,

roof - top's _ edge. Oh, how the stars are twin - kling, twin - kling,

37

kin _____ gin _____ su - na - go.

gold and sil - ver grains of sand.

41

p

Sa - sa no ha sa - ra - sa - ra.

p

43

Sa - sa no ha sa - ra - sa - ra. _____

p

Sa - sa no ha sa - ra - sa - ra. _____

pp