

Rhythm Path Free Study Guide

★ This is a simple guide to use in preparation and in follow up lessons with the day of drumming program. Be sure to check out www.RhythmPath.com for videos, the Rhythm Blog, and updates to this guide!



West Africa Quick Facts

- West Africa is about the size of the continental United States
- Over 1,600 unique people groups
- About 500 primary languages & over 700 additional sub-languages/dialects including drum languages!
- Yes many West Africans own mobile phones and have access to the internet.
- The Sahara desert is in parts of Mauritania, Mali, and Niger.
- Jungles are found in Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Guinea - Just to name a few!
- You will find people wearing colorful clothes all over West Africa.
- Mali is about twice the size of Texas!
- Nigeria is the most populated country in all of Africa with about 170 million people!

Glossary of Terms:



Djembe (Bambara Language) means “to gather together in peace”—traces its heritage to the caste of blacksmiths that occupied the former Mali Empire by at least the 12th century and its shape to the mortar used to pound millet. Carved from a single piece of wood with goat skin stretched across the top, the three primary notes it produces cover a large sonic spectrum making it both a solo and accompaniment instrument. Although fast becoming one of the most popular percussion instruments in the world, the djembe originates from the present day countries of Guinea, Mali, Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Burkina Faso.

Supporting Activities

How to make a shaker

Gather up your shaker ingredients

- A can (soup, tuna, or something likewise)
- Some duct tape...preferably colorful
- Some rice
- Some dried peas, or lima beans, or something similar

1) Clean the can, remove the label, and remove any jagged edges from the lid

2) Fill it up with up with rice and beans (1-2 cm deep). You'll get the feel for the right amount as you practice.

In general, there's more rice than beans.

3) Make an "x" with duct tape on the lid

4) Fasten the lid to the top of the can

5) Tape around the side of the can. This is for looks, so make it look good. Feel free to use multiple colors of duct tape and/or make stripes. Shake, rattle and roll

How to make a Rainstick

Materials

- cardboard tube (from paper towels, wrapping paper, fabric, mailing)
- straight pins (for thin tubes like paper towel or wrapping paper)
- nails (for thick tubes – nails should be shorter than the diameter of the tube)
- popcorn, seeds, beads for filling
- hammer (if using nails)
- masking tape
- materials for decorating the outside (fabric, colored masking tape, paper mache', paint)

Instructions

Insert pins or nails into the side of the tube in a spiral pattern. Cover the nail or pin heads with tape to keep them in place.

Close off one end by taping on a circular piece of cardboard.

Pour in filling (Try different ingredients for different sounds)

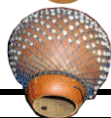
Close off the other end of the tube.

Decorate the outside of the tube with colored tape, fabric, markers, paint or paper mache'.

Glossary of Terms:



Ashiko – Yoruba word that means drum. A long straight-sided drum originally carved from a single piece of wood, and headed using tack or pegs.



Djaabara (or Shekere)- are gourd rattles covered in a woven net of cord and seed pods or plastic beads. There are various techniques for playing them, the most common is to hold them in the right hand and strike onto the left leg (for down strokes) and up into the palm of the left hand (up strokes).

A Song to Sing

Fanga – Fanga Alafia is a greeting song sung throughout parts of West Africa. This song is attributed to the Vai people from Liberia. Alafia and Ashay means something equivalent to good health and peace be with you. The song is often sung with gestures, touching the head and extending the arms, then the lips, then the heart and showing empty sleeves. These gestures symbolize greeting people with your thoughts; with your words, with your heart and then assuring them that you have no tricks up your sleeve, that you have come in peace.

Fanga (Fun-guh)

Alafia (ah-la-fee-ah)

Ashay (ah-shay)

Verse:

Fanga Alafia, Ashay Ashay (repeat)

Chorus:

Ashay Ashay, Ashay Ashay

Tune Notation (verse)

Fanga 110 bpm Song means - Welcome, and peace be unto you, amen.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody is written in a simple, rhythmic style. The first staff contains the first two phrases: 'Fan ga A la fi a A shay A shay' and 'Fan ga A la fi a A shay A shay'. The second staff contains the final two phrases: 'A shay A shay A shay A shay' and 'Fan ga A la fi a A shay A shay'. The notes are primarily quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Instrumentation


You can use any percussion instruments that you have in your classroom to play songs, rhythms, and games.

I recommend djembes, djun djuns, congas, bass drums, large tom toms, ashikos, and frame drums. Snare drums with the snares turned off also work well.

To round out the traditional West African musical style you may also use shakers, clave sticks, cowbells, agogo bells, rainsticks, etc.

Boom Whackers are also a great addition to have in the classroom. These are tuned plastic cylinders (large multi-colored looking sticks)

Glossary of Terms:



Shay Shay – Come in a set of three, the Ksink Ksink are placed around the djembe head and provide a shaker-like sound while playing your drum. The Ksink Ksink are representative of the shields that were used to protect drummers during battle as they oversaw the battlefield and drummed messages to the soldiers.



Djun Djun – These are the bass drums of the West African drum family. There are 3 sizes (kenkeni, sangban & dunun). They are usually made with cow skin and played with thick wooden sticks.

§117.12. Music, Grade 3

B 3.2 Creative expression/performance. The student performs a varied repertoire of music. The student is expected to:

- (A) sing or play a classroom instrument independently or in groups; and
- (B) sing songs from diverse cultures and styles or play such songs on musical instrument.

B 3.4 Creative expression/performance. The student creates and arranges music within specific guidelines. The student is expected to:

- (A) create rhythmic phrases; and
- (B) create melodic phrases.

B 3.5 Historical/cultural heritage. The student relates music to history, to society, and to culture. The student is expected to:

- (A) identify aurally-presented excerpts of music representing diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures;
- (B) perform songs and musical games from diverse cultures; and

§117.18. Music Grade 5

(b) Knowledge and Skills

(5) Historical/cultural heritage. The student relates music to history, to society, and to culture. The student is expected to:

- (A) identify aurally-presented excerpts of music representing diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures;
- (B) describe various music vocations and avocations;
- (C) perform music and movement from diverse cultures;

Traditional African Rhythms

Bottom Note = Bass Note - Center of Drum

Center Note = Tone Note - Edge of drum

Top Note = One handed Slap - can substitute with tone note

Agbekor Traditional - Ewe people of Ghana

B _ S _ S S _ S _ S _ S B _ S _ S S _ S _ S _ S

Macrou (Sou Sou) from Guinea

B T T B S B T B S B T T B S B T B S

Glossary of Terms:



Caxixi—These are basket shakers. They have the seeds or plastic beads on the inside. They are made with a hooped hand and you can usually play two in one hand while dancing.