

The Arts



PART II.1

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NOTE: This document is a work in progress. Parts II and III, in particular, are in need of further development, and we invite the submission of additional learning experiences and local performance tasks for these sections. Inquiries regarding submission of materials should be directed to: The Arts Resource Guide, Room 681 EBA, New York State Education Department, Albany, NY 12234 (tel. 518-474-5922).



Nigerian Boat Song

ELEMENTARY

Standards & Performance Indicators



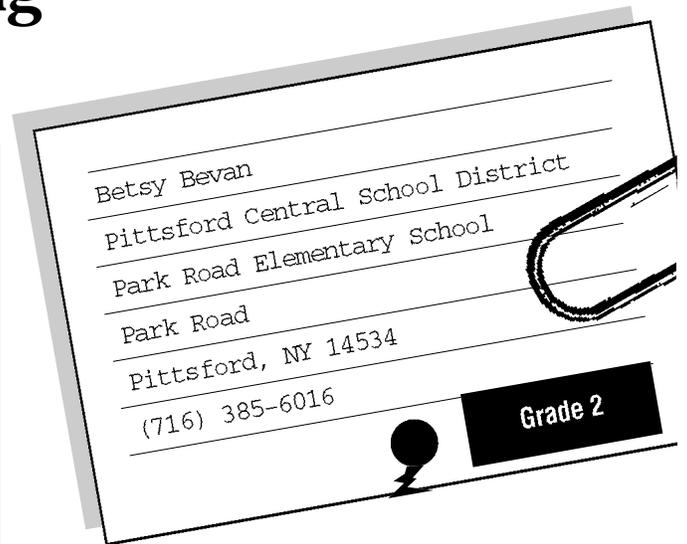
▲ SING/PLAY



▲ USE INSTRUMENTS



▲ IDENTIFY REPERTOIRE



Authentic African instruments made in Ghana: the djembes and shakere used in this lesson were purchased at AFENA AKOMA, African imports, 250 Cumberland Street, Rochester, NY 14605.



The purpose of this unit is to develop an understanding of another culture by expression through singing in the African language, performing on instruments, and creating a sound scene.

Resources

- *Nigerian Boat Song*
- map of the world
- map of Africa
- African picture book

In one sample song, students can learn many musical concepts and skills and connect this to other curriculums.

Teacher

What will the teacher do?

They:

- play a steady beat on a drum while singing the *Nigerian Boat Song*
- ask the questions:
 - ✓ Did I sing in a foreign language or in English?
 - ✓ What country do you think this song came from? Why?
- identify the continent of Africa and show where Nigeria is on the world map
- question students about the country:
 - ✓ Is it next to the ocean?
 - ✓ What would be a job the people who live by the ocean might have?
- ask students to paddle to the steady beat while the teacher sings the song again
- identify the song by name and teach by rote the Nigerian Boat Song, *Es oom bo kawayá*
- listen for pitch accuracy and help through the use of kinesthetic
- give a translation of the song, *The Clouds Are Gathering, Part 1*
- teach *Call and Response* African singing style—point to one drum for the first part and the other half for the response part
- ask students to clap the way the words go
- show and demonstrate authentic African instruments: djembe (drum) and shakere (shaker)
- demonstrate *Call and Response* song rhythm on the instruments. Use two drums for the *Call* part and two drums for the *Response* part.
- demonstrate instruments to be used for creating a thunderstorm
- show getting louder and higher with hand motions and voice
- identify the final form for the performance
- direct the performance order.



What will the students do?

They:

- keep a steady beat on their laps while the teacher sings the song
- answer inquiries by the teacher concerning Nigeria
- paddle the steady beat while teacher sings the song again
- learn the song by rote with echoing phrases sung by the teacher
- mimic teacher in using hands and body to show low and high notes, then answer what direction the notes go on the different phrases
- clap the way the words go
- echo rhythm of drum on their laps
- play drum while singing the song inside their heads

Students need little previous background to be successful with this lesson. It is helpful if they can sing in tune, keep a steady beat, and can play a drum.

Teacher

- sing the song using dynamics and hand motions
- paddle on beat while singing the song
- sing the song in the style of *Call and Response* Students stand when they sing their part(s) and sit when they are not singing. Then they do it without teacher's directions
- clap the rhythm of the words on lap
- play *Call and Response* song rhythm on the African instruments
- create thunderstorm on the instruments
- create an African village scene: describing a day's event through music, movement, instrument playing and story-telling
- with the teacher, talk about the sequence or overall form of the performance
- perform.

The Performance

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| A. Boat paddlers | (music skill + keeping a steady beat) |
| B. Instrument players | (<i>Call and Response</i> style) |
| C. Singers sing in the African language | |
| D. Translators | (using an expressive voice) |
| E. Improvisers | (create a thunderstorm scene using instruments) |

	<u>Steady Beat</u>	<u>Singing Pitch</u>	<u>Playing Song Rhythm</u>
Distinguished	Beat is steady throughout	Accurate pitch throughout	Rhythm is accurate throughout
Proficient	Beat is most often steady	Mostly on pitch	Rhythm is mostly correct
Competent	Beat is somewhat unsteady	Some notes are on pitch	Needs direction throughout as to when to sing or play

	<u>Form: When to Sing or Play</u>	<u>Creativity</u>
Distinguished	Always comes in at the correct time with no direction	Creates freely conveying the scene
Proficient	Needs some direction as to when to sing or play	Creates free; but doesn't convey the scene
Competent	Needs direction throughout as to when to sing or play	Is hesitant, doesn't know what to play

Assessment



Evaluation of accuracy of keeping a steady beat, singing with accurate pitch, playing the song rhythm, understanding of the overall form, and improvisation skill.

Other Ways To Augment This Lesson

- In one simple song, students can learn many musical concepts and skills, and connect to other standards and curriculum.
- Multi-cultural experience and geography can take the lesson further.
- Try writing down a composition portraying a scene through music.

Other ways to extend the lesson could include:

- bring in an African person to talk and play for the students
- study the environment of Nigeria , the ocean and boat-making
- make drums and shakers like the Africans do
- paint a thunderstorm
- access the Internet and talk with African students in Nigeria
- read more about Nigeria
- create a song about a real experience like the African song of being in a boat with an approaching thunderstorm
- study the weather and meteorology
- do more musical painting of different scenes through improvisation.

COMPOSITION

Within Specified Guidelines

ELEMENTARY



Student Population

There is a high rate of student mobility, a significant number of LEP students, and students with disabilities.

Elements of this activity:

- Experience and explore the concept
- Label the concept
- Practice the concept many times
- Create using the concept (composition)
- Evaluate the concept
- Maintain the concept.

I chose to make this a group experience, in which the students with greater skills help the students with weaker skills.

Teacher

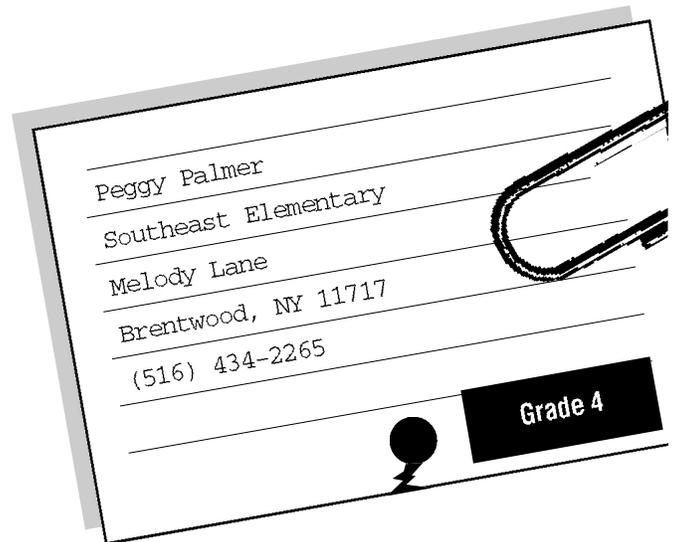
The assignment is to “Create a Melody” from *Share the Music* (MacMillan/McGraw Hill). This lesson was designed to take place during one 30-minute class period. The composition assignments in the *Share the Music* books were chosen deliberately, because of their clarity, short length, and relationship to the rhythms and notes the students were expected to know at that point in the year. A longer, more comprehensive composition might become frustrating for some students.

Using the pitches F G A C D and this eight-beat rhythm pattern



Based on trial and error in the sample class composition, it was agreed in advance that the eighth note pairs in the composition must be the same note for ease in playing.

Teacher



Student needs to know the rhythmic values for the specified notes and the placement of line notes and space notes for the specified notes.

The students work in groups to create a melody. The melody is to be played on chromatic xylophones.

The teacher will elicit ideas for a sample class composition. Each group plays the composition as it is constructed, and the teacher writes the notes on the chalkboard.

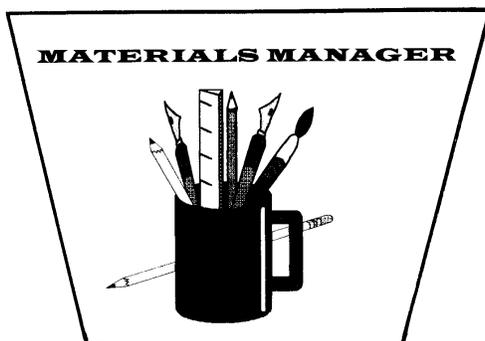
Teacher

These class compositions may be played with a simple keyboard or piano accompaniment.

Since the class composition is pentatonic, melodies will complement each other when played simultaneously.

Videotape the teams without rehearsal.

Badges for Cooperative Learning Groups



The Teams

Form teams of six students.

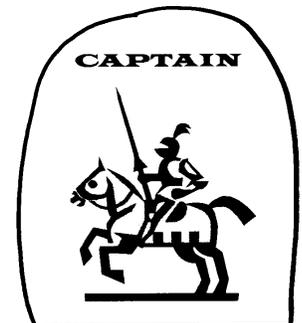
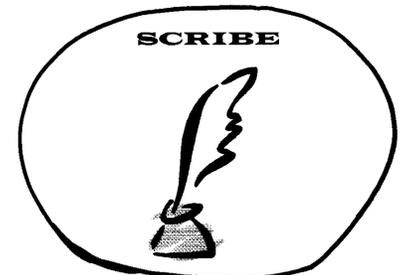
Captain leader, asks questions, settles disputes, if any
Scribe writes melody on music paper

Timekeeper watches clock to make sure group finishes on time

Praiser praises group members when appropriate

Materials Manager gets supplies for group and returns supplies at end of class

Instrument Player plays melody on xylophone.



In 10 minutes develop the team composition.

Each team plays its composition.

Note: If a team has no member who can write a composition, students could name or play the pitches and the teacher can write the notes.

Team #

Class
Composition

January 14, 1997
Date

Handwritten musical notation on a staff. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody consists of several notes: a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on C5, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on G4, and a quarter note on F#4. There are also some handwritten markings above the staff, possibly indicating phrasing or dynamics.

A series of empty musical staves for writing.

Based on the school population there will always be some children who would have a great deal of difficulty doing this assignment working alone. This is why I chose the group experience, in which the students with greater skills help the students with weaker skills, and the students who understand English and speak English will help those who do not. The nature of this project does not warrant making allowances for students who have weaker skills since as a group project it allows everyone to succeed.

ASSESSMENT



Techniques

Observation—go from group to group to see if the teams are working on the task and able to write the short melody on their staff paper.

Group discussion—as each team plays its composition, ask students if the composition is correctly written and played and why or why not.

Tools

Rubric can be filled out by the student only, teacher only, or both student and teacher.

REFLECTION

The student work samples were taken directly from the students at the end of the videotaped class. They were not recopied or corrected. A good follow-up lesson could be to have each team recopy its composition with particular attention to notes and correct placement of note stems.

The element of reality is apparent. Quite a few of the teams had trouble playing the rhythm of the half note correctly. However, by the end of class, they all were able to play it correctly.

As a teacher, I learned that I need to spend more time having that particular class play melodies using various rhythms.

All the groups completed the assignment and felt a sense of accomplishment.

The success of this assignment was due to each team having a member who could write the composition successfully and one who could play the composition successfully. To ensure that each student in the class could do these tasks, it would be necessary to repeat the assignment, giving every student a turn at a different job.

REFLECTION:
REFLECTION:

The students were pleasantly surprised to hear that five melodies combined were quite musical.

Teacher

RUBRIC

Group Composition

Used correct pitches in written composition

None	Some	Almost all	Completely Correct
1	2	2	4

Used correct rhythm in written composition

None	Some	Almost all	Completely Correct
1	2	3	4

Instrumentalist's performance

Could not play	Somewhat correctly performed	Almost perfect	Bravo, Bravo!
1	2	3	4

Group had major problem in completing composition

Group worked smoothly most of the time

Group worked quietly and efficiently

1	2	3	4
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