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Traditional Musical Instruments

Natasha Cooper

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Traditional Musical Instruments

Natasha Cooper – School not available

Grade Level (Req.): 6th-8th grade	Content Area (Req.): World Geography, Human Geography	Unit (Opt.):
Connections to Other Disciplines (Opt.):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • 		
Time Frame (Req.): Approximately 2-5 days	Goal (Req.): To get a feel of Nigerian culture through music.	
	Objective (Req.): Students will understand the four categories of traditional Nigerian music. Students will be able to explain and display an example of the four types of instruments in a poster. Students will be able to apply knowledge as they create their own traditional Nigerian instrument.	
Materials Needed (Req.):	New Vocabulary (Opt.):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background information • Paper • Markers • Colored pencils • Supplies to make musical instruments • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • 	
Anticipatory Set/Introduction [Inquiry Question is required] (Req.): What are the four categories of traditional musical instruments in Nigeria? How does traditional music define Nigerian culture?		
Instructional Sequence/Procedure (Req.):		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will work in groups and read background information on music. 2. Students will then make a group poster displaying an example of the four categories of traditional Nigerian instruments. 3. The teacher will model how to construct musical instruments. 4. Students will then apply what they have learned and construct a traditional musical instrument. 5. Students can work in groups to create a song or dance with their musical instrument. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 		

19. 20.	
Formative Evaluation (Req.): Group work	Assessment (Req.): Poster will be graded on the following rubric: 3 – Very complete, truly understands the four categories of traditional musical instruments through application; 2 – Good, but could be more complete; 1 – Very incomplete, did not apply information to the poster. Instrument Rubric for grading: 3 – Worked hard on instrument and followed directions; 2 – Good, but could have spent more quality time on construction and design; 1 – Poor, little understanding and effort given on musical instruments.
Iowa Core Curriculum Standards Used (Req.):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography, grade 6-8: Understand how geographic and human characteristics create culture and define regions. • Geography, grade 6-8: Understand how human factors and the distribution of resources affect the development society and the movement of populations. • • • • • • • • 	
Common Core Curriculum Standards Used (Opt.):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • 	
NGS Standards Used (Req.):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical and human characteristics of place • The characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics • • • • • • • • 	
Five Themes of Geography Used (Req.):	School District Standards and Benchmarks (Opt.):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place • Region • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

•	
21 st Century Universal Constructs (Opt.): Collaboration, Creativity	
Other Disciplinary Standards (Opt.): • • • • •	
Other Essential Information (Opt.):	
Other Resources (Opt.): • • • •	

Traditional African Music

There are various legends and myths about the origin of musical instruments among ethnic groups. In the Yoruba ethnic group, musical origin center around a personality named Aryan. He taught the Yoruba families the art of drumming. The Ijaw of the Rivers State have musical instruments associated with their mermaid dances. They believe humans did not invent the instruments, but they were copied by ancestors who spied on the gods, goddesses, and mermaid of the sea.

Musical instruments play an important role in the lives of Nigerians. Singing and dancing accompanies the musical instruments at social festivities such as weddings and funerals. Traditional musical instruments announce the opening of a war or festival. They may also accompany the arrival and departure of a visitor to and from a royal palace. Musical instruments also play an important role in religious ceremonies.

An important aspect of traditional instruments is that they should be played so they reproduce the tonal sounds of the player's tongue. A musician is evaluated on how poetic his playing is rather than the melody or rhythm. Traditional musical instruments give more happiness than the human voice alone. When musical instruments are played, they appeal to the eye. Elaborate decorations may be made on the musical instruments. Many of them have symbolic figures on them or gods.

The first category of traditional Nigerian musical instruments is the Chordophones. Chordophones are often referred to as string instruments. They make a sound through a vibration of a cord or a string. The string may be of fiber, hair, twisted skin, or metal wire. Friction, striking, or plucking may make the sound. The sound is usually very quiet so usually a resonator is needed. A resonator is often made out of wood or calabash. The sound depends on the string length, degree of tension, and the weight of the string. Chordophones are often referred to as melody instruments and are common in Nigeria, especially in the north. If the strings are vertical, the instrument is called a harp. If the strings are plucked, the instrument is called a lute. If a bow is used across the chordophone, it is called a violin or a bowed lute.

Membranophones are instruments, which make sounds by striking with the hands, stick, or leather thongs. A membrane material is stretched over a frame and it is attached through pegs or hide strips. Drums are the most common membranophones and they are the most popular instruments in Nigeria. Sizes of drums vary from very small ones to ones that reach 12 feet. Shapes vary from cylindrical, barrel like, and even hourglass. Wood is the most common material used for the frame, but pottery and gourds are also used. Some drums are covered on one end while others are covered on both ends.

The position of playing drums depends on size and shape. Some of the drums are placed on the ground, on a stand, between the knees, or slung over the shoulder of the player. The talking drum is the most famous in Nigeria. This is well known among the Yorubas and Ibos. It is named the talking drum because it is to be used to imitate speech and send messages, which recite history and sing, to the chiefs.

Idiophones are instruments, which are capable of making sounds by themselves when they are hit or shaken. Balls, rattles, xylophones, and sansas are examples. Wood, metal, calabash, and bamboo are commonly used to make idiophones. Shapes and sizes vary from place to place. These instruments are mainly used for background sounds. Leg rattles are often used by dancer to provide music to dance to.

Acrophones are often referred to as wind instruments because the sound is made by air. The most common acrophone is the flute. The player blows air through one end of the acrophone and the air passes through the end creating a sound. The longer the flute, the lower the sound it will produce. Some flutes have holes so the sounds can be manipulated by covering the holes. Trumpets are also acrophones and are usually end blown. Trumpets are made of joined sections of calabash, bamboo, or metal. An oboe is also an acrophone and sound is made as vibrations go across a reed.

Constructing Traditional African Instruments

Drum



Materials: Tire inner tubing (A tire store will usually donate this), empty tin cans, string

Directions:

1. Cut the inner tube into two small circles bigger than the bottom of the tin.
2. Cut out the bottom of the tin and remove the lid.
3. Use a large nail to make holes around the edges of the inner tube circles.
4. Cover each end of the tin with the inner tubes.
5. Thread string alternately through the holes in the inner tubes at both end until the rubber is held all around both ends of the tin.
6. Pull the string tightly together and tie a knot to secure the rubber tightly.

[Talking Drum](#)

Shaker



Materials: Calabash or gourd, bead or shells, and string

Directions:

1. Join the beads or shells together with string in rows.
2. Cover your gourd with beads or shells.
3. Shake your Sekere.

Leg or Arm Rattle



Materials: 24 bottle caps, a small nail or beads instead of bottle caps, and string.

Directions:

1. Use the nail to make a hole through the center of each bottle top.
2. Pull the string through each bottle cap or bead grouping them in pairs so they face each other.
3. Tie and knot the string together.

Lute



Materials: Cereal box or top of a shoebox, scissors, string. You may purchase music strings at a music store if desired. Use markers and paint to decorate the lute.

Directions:

1. Cut a hole in the middle of the shoe box or cereal box.
2. Put strings across the opening and glue or tape down the strings tightly underneath.
3. Using paint or markers, have students decorate their lutes.

Tambourine

