

Rhythms of Resilience



Curriculum Guide:
Providence Performing Arts Center

Countries

Mali

General Information

- Current Population: 19.66 million
- Name of people: Malian
- Official language spoken: French
- What Continent is it on?: Africa
- Almost twice as large as Texas!

Points of interest about Mali

- Much of the northern country is part of the Sahara Desert.
- Around 90% of the Malian population are Muslims.
- The Sankoré mosque in Tombouctou was built in the 1400s as part of the Sankoré University, which at one point had 25,000 scholars studying there.
- Mali is full of a variety of music from traditional acoustic and drumming to electric, Afropop, desert blues and hip-hop.
- Mali was colonized by the French during the Colonial period in the 19th Century but declared independence from France in 1960.

Burkina Faso

Points of interest about Burkina Faso

- Declared its independence from France in 1960.
- Burkina Faso means “land of incorruptible people”- the name was changed from Upper Volta in 1984.
- It is landlocked in the southern Sahara Desert.
- Burkina Faso has three UNESCO World Heritage Sites: The Ruins of Loropéni, the Ancient Ferrous Metallurgy Sites, and the transnational W-Arly-Pendjari Complex.
- Approximately 70 languages are spoken in Burkina Faso; Mooré, the language of the Mossi is spoken by over half of the people and Dyula is the language of commerce. Other important regional languages are Fula, Bobo, and Gourmanché.
- Burkina has not received the same level of notoriety for its music as most of the countries in the region. It has a tremendous wealth of variety with each of the 60 ethnic groups in Burkina having their own folk music.

Dominican Republic

General Information

- Current Population: 10.75 million
- Name of people: Dominican
- Official language spoken: Spanish
- Shares the Caribbean Island of Hispaniola with the country Haiti
- Country with second largest landmass in the Caribbean

Points of interest about the Dominican Republic

- The DR has 10,000-foot mountains, deserts, beautiful beaches, rainforests, and towering waterfalls.
- Both the internationally loved music forms of Merengue and Bachata were developed here.
- The native Taino people have lived there since the 7th century.
- It was the first permanent European settlement in the Caribbean. The capitol, Santo Domingo, is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the Caribbean.

Cuba

General Information

- Current Population: 11.2 million
- Name of people: Cuban
- Official language spoken: Spanish
- Largest island nation in the Caribbean comprised of an archipelago of nearly 1600 islands and cays

Points of interest about Cuba

- The Guanahatabey and Ciboney people settled on the island about 4000 BCE. The Taino people arrived around 500 BCE. Spanish arrived in 1492.
- It is the only Communist country in the Caribbean.
- The landscape is full of forested mountains, beautiful beaches, and has fertile red soil.
- Sugarcane and tobacco have been the largest crop since the days of Spanish colonization and slavery.
- Buildings in the cities of Havana and Santiago de Cuba are UNESCO World Heritage sites.
- Cuban music has many forms with a heavy African influence. It is loved internationally and has influenced other forms all over the world including American jazz, Congolese soukous, Salsa, Argentinian tango, Ghanaian high-life, West African Afrobeat, and Spanish nuevo flamenco.

Instruments

Steel Drum

- Also known as a steel pan
- Originates from Trinidad and Tobago
- You may recognize the sound of the steel drum from The Little Mermaid's "Under the Sea"
- The roots of the steel drum can be traced back to the African slaves who were on the island by placement of French and Spanish plantation owners
- In multiple senses, music was some slaves' only connection back to Africa

Djembe

- Drum originating from West Africa
- The Bambara people in Mali connect the Djembe to the phrase "everyone gather in peace."
- Animal skin is used as the drum's surface, with multiple cords around the side of the drum, which is made of wood
- Carvings are often engraved into the side of the wooden part of the drum
- Many different sounds can come from the Djembe as you can strike it with your hands, mallets, sticks, etc.

Congas or Tumbadoras

- Originated in Cuba; most likely descended from the tall Makuta drums from the Congo. Also has roots in Nigerian Lucumi bembé drum which is a smaller conga like drum.
- First made from wooden barrels with mule or cow skin tacked on. Modern congas are mechanically tuned with nuts and bolts. They are also made from fiberglass.
- Played in sets of three quinto (highest pitched drum), conga, tres golpes, tres dos, segundo (middle pitch), tumba, salidor (lowest pitch)
- Usually played with hands but some techniques use a bare hand and a stick in the dominant hand

Kamele Ngoni

- Has 6 or more strings and a calabash gourd with a goat skin stretched across as resonating chamber
- Known as the young man's harp
- Began as an accompaniment to hunter ceremonies but has become popular since the 1960s in the Wassoulou
- Contributed to the rise in popularity of Wassoulou music in the 1970s and 1990s

Güira

- Open ended metal cylinder with small bumps along the entire playing surface. It is played by scraping a stiff metal brush
- It is a core instrument in Dominican music such merengue and bachata
- Similar to the Haitian graj which is also metal and the Cuban guayo which made using a gourd

Shekere/Chekere

- Rattle made from a hollowed-out gourd or calabash wrapped with a net of seeds, beads
- Goes by other names and differing styles such as axatsé in Ghana and shabouray in Sierra Leone. Also found in Nigeria, Togo, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire and Cuba
- In Cuba it is spelled chekere and known as abwe or aggué
- A very large shekere called agbe is played in Nigeria. It is usually very personal to the player and not loaned out
- The Brazilian Afuxé is smaller and made from a coconut shell with a net of beads around it

Hybrid Conga Cajon

- In Spanish, cajon means drawer, caja means box. Before congas were developed in Cuba most poor people did not have proper instruments and utilized drawers and boxes for drums
- Similar to a Cuban cajon but is hexagonal instead of square on top
- Can be played in a set of three different sizes like a conga

Tambora

- Dominican drum whose name comes from the Spanish word tambor which means drum. It is one of the core instruments in merengue music
- Barrel shaped two headed drum which can be tightened by a roping system or modern hardware
- To play one head is struck with the hand. The other with a stick which strikes the head and the rim

Kora

- Played in West Africa by the Djeli or Griot caste of musicians who are the oral history keepers of the Mandé people
- Usually has 21 strings and a calabash gourd with a goat skin stretched across it as a resonating chamber
- Played by plucking strings fits into more than instrument category
- Has origins dating back to the 1300

Which Instrument is Which?!

1. Djembe
2. Conga
3. Kora
4. Steel Drum
5. Hybrid Conga Cajon
6. Dominican Tambora
7. Chekere/Shekere
8. N'goni
9. Güira



