



Rhythmix Cultural Works presents:

Rhythm Café

Latin-American and Caribbean Percussion

This Study Guide is adapted from the San Francisco Symphony's Adventures in Music 2015-16 Workbook

What would the world of sound be without percussion instruments? Rhythm Café brings the vitality of drumming to a whole new level for the students. By introducing drums of different sizes and materials, the ensemble gives the students thrilling examples of sound, beat, and rhythm!



Each member of the percussion ensemble Rhythm Café introduces a different instrument in the incredibly versatile Latin percussion family. Your students will find the driving rhythms of the chekere and the varied drums impossible to resist! The curious cuica presents friction in a whole new context, and the surdo and conga will tell a compelling cultural story.

Exploration

Have students form small groups to research one of the instruments below and have them present their findings to the class.



Agogô



Chekere



Cuica



Conga



Surdo

Here are some guiding questions:

1. Where is this instrument from?
2. How is this instrument played?
3. What kind of sound do you think this instrument makes? Why?
4. When and where would you be most likely to hear this instrument played?

Class Discussion

Can you name any other percussion instruments that you've seen, heard or played before?

What are some different ways you can make percussion sounds using your body?

What are some different ways you can make percussion sounds using simple objects in your classroom?

Based on what you've discovered about percussion instruments, how would you define "percussion"?

Geography

1. Can you locate the Caribbean and Latin America on a map?
2. How many countries can you name?
3. Have you been to any of the countries or know anyone who has?
4. Can you locate on a map all the places that the percussion instruments listed above are from?
5. Some of the instruments above have their origins in West Africa. How do you think these instruments got to Latin America and the Caribbean?



Vocabulary

These are words that Rhythm Cafe will use in their presentation.
Please review these words with your students prior to the ensemble visit.

Agogô - A percussion instrument that has 2 different sounding bells.

Beat - A pulse.

Call and response - A musical or vocal “question and answer” where one person plays music or speaks and others answer with a special response.

Chekere (CHE-kuh-ray) - A percussion instrument from Cuba made of a dried squash decorated with a skirt of beads. The chekere is a descendant of the **Axatse** (Ah-ha-CHAY) from West Africa. The **axatse** originated in Ghana, Togo and in the Volta region by the Ewe people.

Conga (KONE-gah) - A tall drum from Cuba that is played with the hands.

Cuica (KWEE-kah) - A percussion instrument from Brazil that creates sound through friction.

Eardrum - A part inside your ear that vibrates when sound reaches it.

Friction - A force caused by rubbing two objects together.

Mallet - A wooden stick with a round head made of yarn, wool, or other materials. Mallets are used to play percussion instruments.

Patterns - A group of repeated sounds

Percussion - Instruments played by hitting, scraping, or shaking.

Rhythm - A pattern that repeats itself.

Sound Waves - Invisible waves created from vibration that carry sound to your ears.

Surdo (SORE-doo) - A large drum from Brazil that is played with a mallet.

Tempo - How fast or slow the beat goes.

Who is Rhythm Café?

Rhythm Café was created by Patricio Angulo for the San Francisco Symphony's Adventures in Music program. They have performed for thousands of students in every San Francisco public school.



Kim Agnew is a dancer, choreographer, percussionist, visual artist and educator. Mrs. Agnew has a B.A. in Fine Arts with emphasis in metalsmithing and sculpture – both a great complement to a lifetime of dance studies with Master teachers from all over the world.



Patricio Angulo majored in Molecular & Cell Biology and minored in music at UC Berkeley. Originally from Los Angeles, where he attended an Arts Magnet that deepened his knowledge and appreciate of Music, he studied classical percussion before discovering the world of Latin rhythms.



Javier Navarrette is a percussionist/educator living in the Bay Area. He has dedicated himself to the study and performance of music, specializing in Afro-Caribbean rhythms. Javier has recorded on 3 Grammy nominated albums. He continues to create and teach music throughout Bay Area Schools.



Robert "Bobby" Wallace began his musical career by not touching an instrument! It started with DANCE in his living room, then on to formal training with Afro-Cuban teachers and Brazilian folkloric dancers. When Bobby "heard the drums" he jumped to the percussion side of the drum/dance dialogue.



Jesse Weber took his first drum lesson at age 5 and played his first show with his own band at age 11. Jesse has recorded on several albums with Bay Area musicians and spent 2 weeks circumnavigating the entire San Francisco Bay on bicycle and performing concerts amplified by a pedal powered sound system.