

Celebrate African Life! From Nigeria to Baltimore

**RHYTHMS OF AFRICAN DRUMMING-DANCING-SINGING
BABATUNDE OLATUNJI (1927-2003)
SANKOFA DANCE THEATRE OF BALTIMORE**

Museum and Connection: Art and Enlightenment

Purpose: In this lesson students will experience the complicated rhythms of African drumming as well as the dancing and singing that accompany it. They will observe African drumming, dancing, and singing. They will be introduced to Babatunde Olantunji, a master drummer who was instrumental in bringing African drumming to America, and to the Sankofa Dance Theatre of Baltimore. They will participate in creating an authentic drumming session in the classroom.

Grade Level and Content Area: High School, Fine Arts Choral and General Music Classes, Dance Classes

Time Frame: 4-5 one hour class periods

Fine Arts: Music. High School General Music ELOs:

- I. B. 4 The student will play an appropriate part, demonstrating well-developed ensemble skills.
- I. C. 2 The student will demonstrate rhythmic accuracy or musical expression through physical movement.
- II. C. 1 The student will perform ensemble literature from a variety of historical periods, styles, and cultures and will relate its characteristics to the elements of dance, theatre, visual arts, and other disciplines.

Fine Arts: Dance. High School ELOs:

- I. C. 2 The student will perform movement sequences in one of the dance styles such as jazz, modern, or folk.
- II. A. 3 The student will discuss ways that culture is reflected through social, ceremonial, ritual, and concert dance.
- II. C. 4 The student will create an interdisciplinary project that combines dance with one or more other subject area(s).

Fine Arts: Music. General Music ELOs:

- I.B.1 The student will demonstrate and evaluate skills needed to perform in ensemble.
- I.C.3 The student will demonstrate rhythmic accuracy through physical movement.
- II.A.1. The student will identify various roles in society performed by musicians and will describe contributions of representative individuals for each role.

Objectives:

- Identify and observe the rhythms, instruments, dance, and chant of African drumming.
- Identify the reasons this method of self expression is an important part of life for Africans and those who participate.
- Participate in an African drumming ensemble, adding dance and singing.
- Identify people of Africa and America who promote the art of African drumming.

Vocabulary and Concepts:

Word or Concept	Definition
Idiophone	any musical instrument that creates sound by the vibration of the material and is generated by striking, rubbing, or plucking. Cymbals and xylophones are some examples of this class of musical instrument.
Membranophone	any musical instrument that creates sound primarily by way of a stretched membrane. Snare drum, bass drum, tom-toms, timpani, congas, bongos, table are some examples of this type of musical instrument.
Aerophone	any musical instrument that creates sound by the vibration of a column of air inside the instrument. Trumpets or flutes are some examples of this type of instrument.
Chordophone	any musical instrument that creates sound by the vibration of a taut strings. Piano, harp, violin, or guitar are some examples of this type of musical instrument.
Syncopation	playing part of a rhythmic figure ahead of time so as to stress the unaccented beat in the music.
Respect	not only are the elders honored in the African culture but so are the instruments used to produce music. The belief is that the tree stills gives life to the music and the animal is honored to be used as an instrument for celebration.
Community	When the word “family” is used, it includes all relatives no matter how distant they are in relationship to one another. An extended family is very important. There is a true sense that it takes a village to raise a child.
Call and Response	the master drummer presents a solo and the other drummers respond with the same set pattern after each solo. When the master is finished, a cue is given to return to the break and the original rhythm resumes.
Focus	every musician must be totally in the moment. The master drummer is totally in control and can change the tempo or call for the break at any time. Frequently this is determined by the dancers.

Balance	each participant in the music and dance listens to each other and the master drummer and each part is equally important.
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Materials:

For the Teacher:

TV Monitor, DVD Player, Overhead Projector, and Stereo.

DVD “Traditional Dances of Ghana” DVD. Filmed in Ghana, West Africa, with Nana Yaw Koranteng and the Aziza Music and Dance Ensemble. Vijay Rakhra Productions, 2002.

DVD “African Healing Dance with Wyoma” and the Dancers and Drummers of Damballa – Published by Sounds True. ISBN 1-59179-130-8

Booklet & CD “Slap Happy” How to play world-beat rhythms with just your body and a buddy – Published by Dancing Hands Music, 1st Ensemble. ISBN 0-9638801-7-9

Book “World Music Drumming” by Will Schmid
 09970094 Teacher’s Edition. ISBN 0-7935-9532-0
 09970996 Cross-Cultural Student Enrichment Book

Class set of the octavo sheet music: “South African Suite” SATB
 (For dance and general music class, you may wish to try the three-part Treble version or just sing the first part in Unison)

Song III: “Gabi Gabi”
 Arranged by Henry Leck
 21-20200 Colla Voce Music, Inc.
 4600 Sunset Avenue, #83
 Indianapolis, IN 46208

Teacher Resource Sheet 1: Words of Baba
 Teacher Resource Sheet 2: Continuation of Baba
 Teacher Resource Sheet 3: Sankofa Answer Sheet
 Teacher Resource Sheet 4: African Instrument Answer Sheet
 Teacher Resource Sheet 5: Assessment Rubric

For the Student:

Drums and rhythm instruments: as many African instruments as possible
 Copies for each student (if you have purchased the book, copying is legal) of the map of Africa and the instruments of African drumming from the Cross-Cultural Student Enrichment Book of “World Music Drumming.”

Student Resource Sheet 1: Babatunde Olatunji
 Student Resource Sheet 2: Sankofa Dance Theatre of Baltimore

Student Resource Sheet 3: Continuation Sankofa
Student Resource Sheet 4: Questions about Sankofa
Student Resource Sheet 5: African Instruments
Student Resource Sheet 6: African Drumming Boggle & Assessment Paragraph

Resources:

Publications:

Olatunji, Babatunde (2005). *The beat of my drum: An autobiography*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Gross, Jason (October 2000). Babatunde Olatunji Interview. *Perfect Sound Forever – online magazine, October 2000*, Retrieved July, 20, 2006, from <http://www.furious.com/perfect/olatumji.html>

Haddad, Anne (2004, March). Sankofa Dance theater reaches back to move forward. *Urbanite Magazine-Baltimore, March April 2004*, 18-19.

Nellie T. Hill: African Drumming Specialist, Music Educator,
Lime Kiln Middle School, Howard County (MD) Public School System.

Tim Gregory: Ethno-musicologist, Founder and Director of Nada Brahma.

Web Sites:

Historical Background

Babatunde Olatunji (1927-2003) was a drummer, educator, author, and social activist, whose influence on the teaching of world music drumming is unquestioned.

Olatunji was born in Ajido, a small town in Southwestern Nigeria. He was introduced to the sounds of the African drum and African traditional music at an early age. He applied for a Rotary International Foundation scholarship in 1950, and came to the United States to study at Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA.

After his undergraduate studies at Morehouse, Olatunji moved to New York to study public administration at New York University. There he formed a small percussion ensemble to help him pay his way through the graduate program. Through performing with that group, he came into contact with John Coltrane and other notable jazz musicians, who were very impressed with his African drumming skills and enthusiasm for his native traditional music. With Coltrane's assistance, Olatunji founded the Olatunji Center for African Culture in Harlem. Coltrane also introduced Olatunji to John Hammond, the A&R man from Columbia Records, who signed him to a record deal in 1957. In 1959 Columbia Records recorded an album of Olatunji's drumming;

“Drums of Passion” became a landmark album, introducing many Americans to the sound of what would eventually become known as “World Music.” “Drums of Passion” featured guest artists from throughout the World of music, including Horace Silver, Clark Terry, and Yusef Lateef. Carlos Santana covered one of the tracks from “Drums of Passion,” “Jin-go-lo-ba” and had a huge hit with it in 1969. “Drums of Passion” has sold over five million copies and is still in print on CD and SACD. With “Drums of Passion,” Babatunde Olatunji had ‘arrived’ on the American musical scene.

During the rest of his life, Olatunji recorded many more albums – “Zungo!” (1961), “Flaming Drums” (1962), “Soul Makossa” (1973), “Drums of Passion: The Invocation” (1988), “Drums of Passion: The Beat” (1989), “Love Drum Talk” (1997), “Olatunji Live at Slatwood” (2003) and “Circle of Drums” (2005). He also collaborated with many artists on their own albums, including Stevie Wonder, Quincy Jones, Cannonball Adderley, Max Roach and Mickey Hart.

For over forty years, Olatunji taught drum and dance workshops throughout the United States and the World. His enthusiasm and love of African drumming was infectious and his influence on American music education was immense, as many schools throughout the country now include World Music Drumming in the music curriculum.

Babatunde Olatunji was also known for being an outspoken political activist. He often began his concerts with a political speech, and he marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. during the March on Washington on August 28, 1963. He wrote a book about his political beliefs, entitled “The Beat of my Drum: An Autobiography.”

Olatunji lived until a few days shy of his 76th birthday. He passed away from complications of diabetes, in Salinas, CA, in 2003. He continued playing and teaching right up until a few days before he died.

LESSON DEVELOPMENT:

Motivation:

LESSON ONE:

1. With each student having an instrument or using desks or books as drums, give several calls on your instrument with echoes from the students; then have them work on a specific rhythm pattern as a response to the call. (5 to 10 minutes only)
2. Begin Lesson One of “World Drumming,” (if students in your county have had experience with drumming, you may be able to work on Ensemble #5 from Ghana-this, however, will change the timeline) following suggestions on pages 16 and 17 of the Teacher’s Edition. (Be efficient and spend only 10 minutes)
3. Begin Lesson Two of World Drumming, following suggestions on pages 18 and 19 of the Teacher’s Edition. (Spend only 10 minutes on this section)
4. Warm up and stretch for all classes to prepare for moving. (5-15 minutes-depending on whether you are in general music, or chorus or dance)
5. Use the rest of the class time for the DVD “Traditional Dances of Ghana.” First listening and then moving with Nana as he models and the drums play.

LESSON TWO:

1. Students will highlight or underline information they feel is impressive about Babatunde Olatunji on Student Resource Sheet #1 as they read. After reading, students will be invited to share and discuss any information they found to be impressive. (10 minutes)
2. Using the African map page copied from the Student Book of "World Drumming," locate Baba's home. Then find the West Coast of Africa where their first drumming ensemble originates. Why do Americans more often learn music from the West Coast of Africa? (That area is closest to the shores of America and where most of the African slaves came from.) (5 minutes)
3. Using instruments, create an individual response to the teacher's call. When students are comfortable, have the whole class play the call: then one, by one each student plays their own answer. Say or chant words to the call and have the students create a chant to go with their response. (10 minutes)
4. Choral warm up (if general or dance – ask the chorus teacher for suggestions) and introduce the song "Gabi Gabi" from "South African Suite." (If you are a dance teacher and uncomfortable singing solo, ask the music teacher to make a tape or CD for you to use, but then you must sing as the students sing. For all participants, singing "pretty" is not the goal here). In Chorus classes, students should begin adding parts to "Gabi Gabi."
5. Warm up and stretch for all classes to prepare for moving (5-15 minutes-depending on whether you are in general music, chorus or dance)
6. Spend the rest of class watching, listening, and moving with Wyoma on the DVD "African Healing Dance with Wyoma." Encourage students to be as free and celebratory as Wyoma, including some of the calls and shouts. Wyoma's moves and steps are going to be easier for the dance students as hers are more refined, yet students in all classes can achieve acceptable form and enjoyment.

LESSON THREE:

1. Students should read the *Urbanite Magazine-Baltimore* article about Sankofa on Student Sheets 2 and 3. Using the article as a reference, they answer the questions on Student Sheet 4.
2. Using pages of instrument information copied from the student book of "World Drumming," students should fill-out Student Resource Sheet 5 of African Instruments.
3. Introduce the body rhythms of "Slap Happy" Lesson 1 Kuku. While learning is rote and aural, some students may have more success if an overhead is made of the chart, it is your choice, of course.
4. Review and refine Ensemble 1 of "World Drumming." This will be the accompaniment with "Gabi Gabi."
5. For chorus - after vocal warm-ups, review "Gabi Gabi" and add parts if needed or move ahead to 6.
6. Dance classes do a movement warm-up and begin creating dance moves to "Gabi Gabi." General and choral classes could, if they have time, do their own version of this part of the lesson, or continue with refining either the drumming or the singing of Gabi, Gabi."

LESSON FOUR:

1. Dance, choral, and general music classes review “Kuku” from “Slap Happy.”
2. All classes begin a vocal warm-up and review singing of “Gabi Gabi.” Chorus class would spend more time on this part of the lesson.
3. All classes add drums to “Gabi Gabi.” General music classes can spend more time on this step.
4. All classes begin a physical warm up and perform “Gabi Gabi” with singing, drumming, and dancing. Dance classes can spend more time on this step.

Assessment:

1. Performance – see Teacher Sheet 5:
 - a. Dance – Movement Assessment.
 - b. General Music – Drumming Assessment.
 - c. Chorus – Singing Assessment.
2. Summarizing paragraph for African Drumming Boggle – see Student Sheet 6 and Teacher Sheet #5.

Closure:

1. Students participate in an African Drumming Boggle using Student Sheet 6
 - a. Each student will brainstorm all of the reasons Africans would choose to either drum, dance or sing. (2 minutes)
 - b. Share with another student to increase both students’ lists. (2 more minutes)
 - c. Tell teacher each reason, and students will receive a point given for each correct reason (using your discretion to identify correct answers). (2 minutes)
Some Reasons: To celebrate a birth, a wedding, coming of age, a successful harvest, community events, social gatherings, to welcome a visitor, a hunting trip, and dance a warrior dance either before or after battle (battles are very rare these days, but the dances continue), for healing.
 - d. Reasons are announced to the teacher and a point is given for each acceptable reason. Tally the correct number of reasons in order to see who has the most.
2. Using their own Boggle Sheets as a reference, each student will write a paragraph describing the role of the drummer, dancer, or singer in society.
3. Watch review tracks of “African Healing Dance with Wyoma,” or watch new tracks and dance along for the rest of the class.

EXTENSIONS

1. Combine a show on Rhythms of African Art with a concert that Chorus, General Vocal Class, and Dance Class could perform the whole Henry Leck arrangement of “South African Suite” with the final section containing all drumming, dancing and singing.
2. Other excellent vehicles for multi-performing include:
 - a. “Take Time in Life” Arranged by Will Schmid 4-Part and Drum Ensemble. 0874-4777 Hal Leonard Corporation 2005.
 - b. “African Processional Jambo rafiki yangu” by D. V. Montoya. SATB and Drum Ensemble. P1197 Pavane Publishing – Hal Leonard Corporation 2001.
3. Visit the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture to view the Exhibit: Strength of the Mind-Black Art and Intellect.
4. Attend a live performance of the Sankofa Dance Theater in the Baltimore/Washington area.

Teacher Resource Sheet 1

Baba's Words – Why Drum?

From “The Beat of My Drum- An Autobiography” by Babatunde Olatunji

Olatunji, Babatunde (2005). *The beat of my drum. An autobiography*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple Univ. Press

“I'm the drum, You're the drum, We're the Drum.”

Where I come from, we say that rhythm is the soul of life. The whole universe revolves around rhythm. When we get out of rhythm, that's when we get in trouble. (...)

I've thought about the healing power of the drum for many years, and I have come to a philosophy of the drum that says it is a very special kind of trinity. First the tree, which is used for the body of the drum, contains a living spirit. Great care is taken to make sure the wood of the drum is alive. In many parts of the world, especially in Africa, prayers are said, songs are sung, rituals are performed before the tree is cut down. (...) Second, there is a spirit in the animal whose skin is used for the drum, be it that of a goat, a cow, a deer, or a buffalo. The skin contains a spirit that is still alive. And when you join these two spirits together with the spirit of the person playing the drum, the result is a trinity, an irresistible force, a balance that gives the drum its healing power. Probably the most important aspect of the drum is its use as a healing instrument. (...)

In Yoruba culture, music permeates every aspect of our lives. I heard the drum while I was in my mother's womb. I woke up every day to the beat of the drum. I grew up hearing the drummers heralding the dawn of each day in front of the chief's compound, serenading shoppers to the market place, playing at name-giving ceremonies.

Drumming, dancing, and singing were all part of life. I listened as the beat of the drum announced every celebration, from the birth of a new baby, to the rite-of-passage ceremonies of the young men and young women of the village, to the engagement of a young and beautiful girl in the neighborhood, to, finally, the celebration of the ones who had joined the great majority, thus becoming spirits of the ancestors.

From “Babatunde Olatunji Interview with Perfect Sound Forever Online Magazine

Gross, Jason (October 2000). Babatunde Olatunji Interview. *Perfect Sound Forever – online magazine, October 2000*, Retrieved July, 20, 2006, from <http://www.furious.com/perfect/olatumji.html>:

PSF: In your groups, how do the drums communicate with each other and interweave with the singers?

Baba: The African theatre is a total theatre. You cannot write a dramatic play without song and without movement. The trial is lost if you have a presentation that does not address ALL aspects of the music. The dancers must be able to dance with the beat of the drum. The drummers who play for the dancers must have knowledge of the dance. That's the only way that they're going to be able to play adequately and professionally. That's how they will be able to communicate with them. Not until recent times have I been noticing in Western theatre, in Broadway shows, the people who audition must be able to sing, dance and act. That was never a problem with an African performance. Automatically, he or she is trained right from the start to be able to combine all of those parts together. This is no sense in the whole presentation that the drummer does not know the dance. He must know the dance- the required changes necessary in the choreography of the dance. Not only in tempo, in intensity, maybe to a completely new interpretation.

In the other words, the dancer and the drummer have become one. The drummer as well as the dancer has the ability to sing along as they perform. It is part of the whole presentation. That is normally taught from the beginning of any particular presentation or production...

Teacher Resource Sheet 2

Continuation of Babatunde Olatunji Interview with Perfect Sound Forever Magazine

PSF: Do you also have a sense that the drums are interacting with each other?

Baba: The drummers between themselves are interacting and communicating. Irrespective of the number of drummers involved in a presentation, each drummer is given a part to play for the whole. He must know where the change is from one part to the next. That's (been) happening for thousands of years.

A lot of people go about teaching African dance but they don't teach the music. They just play for the dance. Every traditional dance that's been passed on from time immortal is all music, unless it is a new work. So (then) you got to write the music for it. New choreography, new music, new costumes. But the interaction among the drummers is very clear that you don't jump into playing rhythmic patterns unless there is a reason or the group can help bring you back as a reminder to say 'this is what you're supposed to be playing.' All the musicians know the parts, including the part of the lead drummer.

PSF: I had heard that you performed at a celebration here for Nelson Mandela. Could you talk about that?

Baba: There were 120 clergymen at Riverside Church of all denominations in the community. They had a special service for Mandela when he first came here (1990). It was my group that led him into the church, with the drums and the chants. I led him to his seat and then performed. From there, the group also performed at the reception given to him at Yankee Stadium. I also followed him out to San Francisco, which was also organized by Bill Graham. I am looking forward to going back to San Francisco to discuss a project, the Voices of Africa.

PSF: How has it felt to be an expatriate here in the States, playing the music from your homeland and occasionally going back there to perform?

Baba: Well, I'm a citizen of the world now. I am very concerned about what has been happening in Africa. What I've been doing here... I wanted to repeat (my) performance in Africa. I want to be going around now, reminding people that in our quest to become totally free as we pursue our goals, we need to remember and put into place all of the traditional wisdom that will help us survive in the new millennium. We need to re-institute some of our traditional values that seem to be evaporating in our society now. That is to restore our traditional ways of life in the areas of culture, music, arts that has helped us define what we call the African personality. In my estimation, we are in an educational pursuit. In the Western world, we have neglected those traditional values. So it's what I call 'misplacement of values.' Unless we go back to restoring them into our lives, we're going to have trouble- a lot of misgivings among our own people in the very near future. A lot of young people are clamoring now to find out 'what is it that we can call our own? What is it about our heritage?' They want to know. These times now make them very, very aware of that.

PSF: Do you see your work as carrying on tradition and bringing a message to people?

Baba: That's exactly what I'm so grateful about. I may not have any money to show about it but what I have started here, from five years ago, is like planting a new seed that is beginning to germinate. It will come out very well. I'm quite sure that the leadership will become very, very concerned about the need for looking into the past. The past and the present are inevitably put together. What we had in the past is what we have today- it will make a wonderful combination for tomorrow. Then we cannot let time go by without taking care of that particular aspect of our development now, especially if we try to patch up the rest of the world.

Teacher Resource Sheet 3

Sankofa Dance Theatre of Baltimore

Read Anne Haddad's article about the Sankofa Dance Theatre of Baltimore and answer the following questions using the article as your reference.

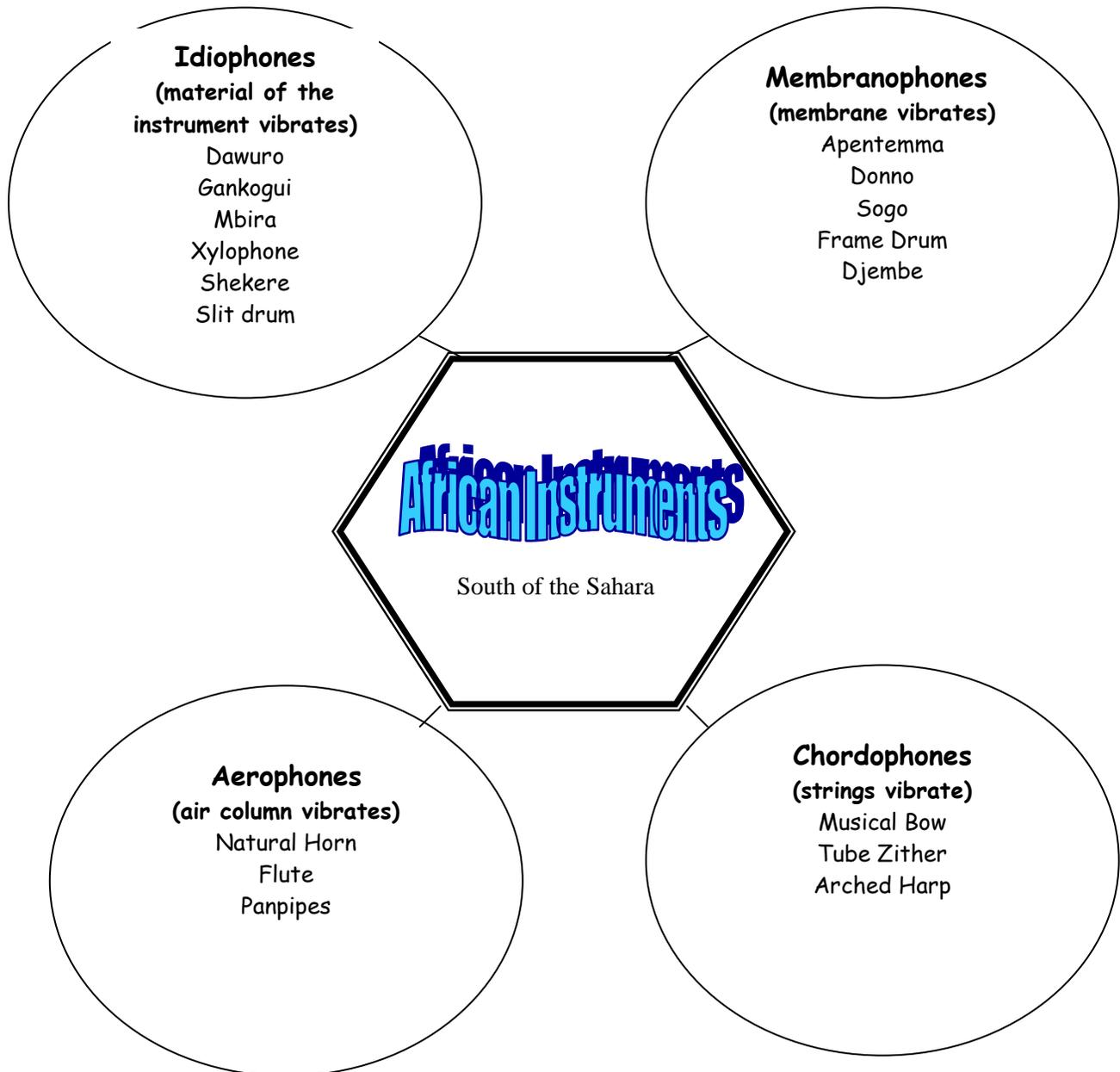
1. Sankofa is a word in the Akan language from the African country of Ghana.
2. Sankofa means going back to fetch it and Kauna Mujamal and his wife Kibibi Ajanku, co-founders of the company, further interpret the word of Sankofa to mean reaching back to move forward.
3. The djimbe (sometimes spelled djembe) is a large drum.
4. Every adult is a guardian of every child. (Circle the correct answer)
a. True b. False
5. Explain why the young parents of the company feel so strongly that they want their children to grow up in the atmosphere of the drumming, dancing, and singing of Sankofa. Possible answer:
I believe the parents want their children to grow up in this atmosphere because they see such great value in the love, culture, sound of the music, the way they feel when they participate. They feel valued, important, loved, and proud of a beautiful culture. They want their children to experience the same.
6. Trilogy is a group of three related things. Name the three parts of the trilogy of the Sankofa Dance Theatre.
a. Drum or Drumming
b. Dance or Dancing
c. Song or Singing
7. Use the space below to explain all the feelings an audience for a Sankofa performance would experience versus what the company members experience being part of the group.

Possible answer: (You should accept reasonable personal feelings here)

I believe an audience would be entertained by a Sankofa performance. Some will feel uplifted, maybe even feel better physically and mentally as a result of the experience.

I believe the members of the Sankofa Dance Theatre would feel fulfilled. They would be sharing something very important to them personally and it always feels good to share with others. They would be modeling a way of life that they would want others to follow.

Teacher Resource Sheet 4



Teacher Resource Sheet 5

Assessment Rubric

General music teachers should only use the Drumming Performance and Writing Rubrics.

Dance teachers should only use the Dance Performance and Writing Rubrics.

Choral teachers should only use the Singing Performance and Writing Rubrics.

GRADE	Drumming Performance	Dancing Performance	Singing Performance	Writing
A	Performed accurately Demonstrates great musicality including well-shaped phrases and dynamics	Student performs with excitement, intensity, and clarity. African dance movements are replicated with ease, body parts move with confidence.	Student performs with well-produced sound, resonant, supported, vibrant. Voice is well projected.	Addresses the demands of the question Effectively uses expressed or implied information from the text to clarify or extend understanding
B	Performed with some accuracy, but a few of the rhythms were incorrect Demonstrates a high level of musicality but has some lapses in phrasing and dynamics	Student performs with smooth transitions from levels and directions. African movements are replicated with some differences. Some body parts move with confidence.	Student performs with proper breath support. Voice is centered and clear. Some resonance is apparent.	Addresses the demands of the question Uses some expressed or implied information from the text to clarify or extend understanding
C	Performed rhythms similar to those required, yet not accurate Demonstrates a moderate level of musicality and dynamic interpretation	Student performs movements, yet they are not clear, African movements are replicated with some similarity to the model. Body movements are more random	Student performs with inconsistent, breath support, resonance, and clarity.	Lacks transitional information to show the relationship of the support to the question Uses minimal information from the text to clarify or extend meaning
D	Demonstrated an inconsistent performance of most rhythm patterns Musicality and expression are not evident in the performance	Student lacks focus. Small movements, close to body. African movements are not replicated. Lacks confidence	Student performs with a breathy sound, not well supported, or focused. No resonance is apparent.	Lacks enough information to clearly determine an understanding of the text or the question

Student Resource Sheet 1

Planet, Janet Babatunde Olatunji. (2003). In *The African Music Encyclopedia* [Web]. Retrieved June 20, 2006, from <http://africanmusic.org/artists/olatumji.html>

Babatunde Olatunji was born in 1927 in the small village of Ajido, [Nigeria](#), about forty miles from [Lagos](#), the capital of the country. This small fishing and trading town amplified the ebb and flow of the seasons through the sounds of drumming that echoed through the nights.

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

As a child, Olatunji accompanied his great aunt Tanyin to hear the drums - hollowed out from trees and covered with the skin of goats - punctuate the lives of his people. The drummers celebrated every occasion, proclaimed the coming of local politicians, evoked the dreams and aspirations of their people. The drumbeat of his childhood became the life blood of his adult experience as Olatunji grew and traveled throughout the world popularizing the music of his Yoruban heritage.

While still in Africa in the late '40s, the ever resourceful Olatunji read in *Reader's Digest* about the [Rotary International Foundation](#) scholarships offered to youths from war-affected countries. By 1950, Olatunji and his cousin were each awarded a scholarship and were on their way to America to attend school in [Atlanta, Georgia](#). Olatunji came to the U.S. determined to succeed in the international arena, at the time he had no aspirations to be a musician. In 1954, after graduating from [Atlanta's Moorehouse College](#) with a degree in Diplomacy, Olatunji moved to [New York](#) to begin a Political Science postgraduate program in Public Administration at [New York University](#). Throughout his American education he had a unique perspective on the cultural divides between black and white Americans. Early on he realized that music, drumming in particular, had the ability to break down the long-established cultural divisions within the "[Melting Pot](#)" that America was thought to be in those days. These sorts of insights were the motivating factor that brought Olatunji to begin performing the drumming of his Yoruba ancestors.

To cover his expenses he started a small drumming and dance group. Recognizing the influence of African polyrhythms in jazz, some of Olatunji's earliest fans were the jazz greats of the time; men like [John Coltrane](#), [Yusef Lateef](#), [Clark Terry](#), [George Duvivier](#), [Count Basie](#), [Duke Ellington](#), [Quincy Jones](#), [Taj Mahal](#), [Pete Seeger](#), Bill Lee (Spike Lee's father), and Dance luminary [Alvin Ailey](#); not to mention the legendary noted [Columbia](#) A&R man [John Hammond](#) who produced Olatunji's first album. Even [Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.](#), (also a Moorehouse graduate) invited Olatunji to tour with him. In 1957 when [Columbia Records](#) producer John Hammond heard Olatunji performing at [Radio City Music Hall](#) with a 66-piece orchestra, he was so impressed that this fortuitous meeting led directly to the recording of *Drums of Passion*. Released in 1959 by Columbia Records, Olatunji's first album became an unprecedented, worldwide smash hit. It was the first album to bring genuine African music to Western ears, and it went on to sell over five million copies and is still a popular recording. (...)

Olatunji's impact on the drumming culture around the world is unprecedented. He has been a member of the faculties at the [Esalen Institute](#) in [Big Sur](#), California and the [Omega Institute](#) in Rhinebeck, New York for over 15 years. He played with [Mickey Hart](#), the [Grateful Dead](#), [Airto Moreira](#), and [Carlos Santana](#) on his 1986 recording *Drums of Passion: The Beat*. (...)

Baba was the single most important contributor to the popularization of African hand drumming in the United States. Baba created the popular [Gun-Dun, Go-Do, Pa-Ta](#) method of learning drum patterns in which these spoken sounds were able to help recall the sounds made on most hand drums -- with the *Gun-Dun* denoting the bass notes played with right and left hands; the *Go-Do* denoting the open tones; and the *Pa-Ta* denoting the slaps. This simple method revolutionized the learning rate for thousands of hand drum students in the West. He is also well-known for popularizing the popular Liberian rhythm [Fanga](#) (a song of welcome to which he added words), which was often played for him by his students when he would enter a workshop.

Olatunji traveled throughout the world for almost half a century giving percussion workshops spreading his love of the drum, song, music, and African culture inspiring generations of American musicians, many of whom have devoted their careers to African music and who are, in turn, spreading Baba's message to their students. **Babatunde Olatunji** died (...) April 6, 2003 of complications due to his long struggle with the effects of Diabetes.

Student Resource Sheet 2

For resource

Copy and paste hyperlink below to your browser

http://issuu.com/urbanitemagazine/docs/marchapril2004_issuu

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Student Resource Sheet 3

For resource

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Student Resource Sheet 4

Sankofa Dance Theatre of Baltimore

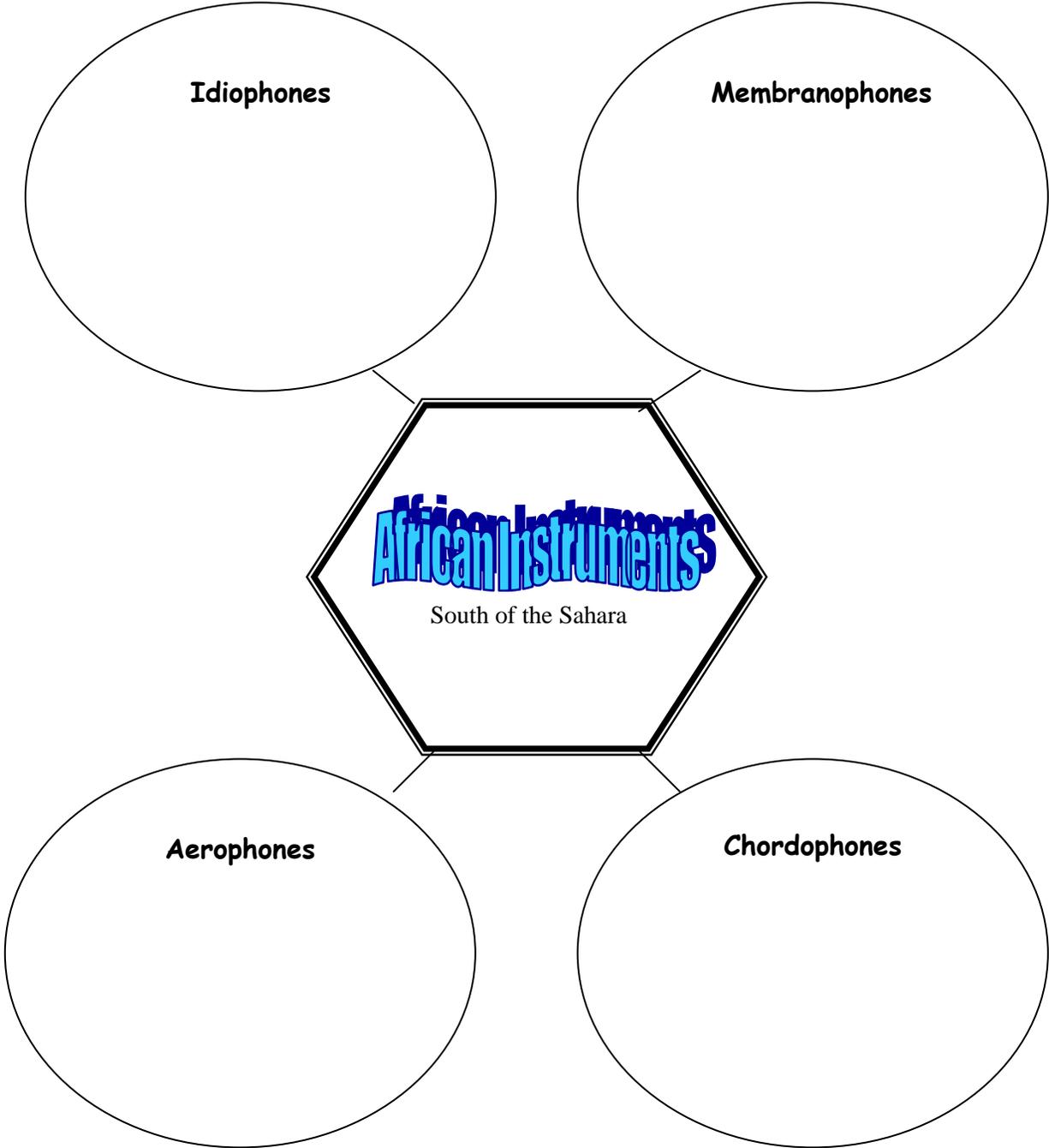
Read Anne Haddad's article about the Sankofa Dance Theatre of Baltimore and answer the following questions using the article as your reference.

8. Sankofa is a word in the _____ language from the African country of _____.
9. Sankofa means _____ and Kauna Mujamal and his wife Kibibi Ajanku, co-founders of the company, further interpret the word of Sankofa to mean _____.
10. The djimbe (sometimes spelled djembe) is a large _____.
11. Every adult is a guardian of every child. (Circle the correct answer)
a. True b. False
12. Explain why the young parents of the company feel so strongly that they want their children to grow up in the atmosphere of the drumming, dancing, and singing of Sankofa.

13. Trilogy is a group of three related things. Name the three parts of the trilogy of the Sankofa Dance Theatre.
a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
14. Use the space below to explain all the feelings an audience for a Sankofa performance would experience versus what the company members experience being part of the group.

Student Resource Sheet 5

Use the two pages of African instrument pages from the "World Drumming" book to describe the meaning of each group. Use the rest of the space inside each graph to write the name of instruments that belong to that "family" or group.



Student Resource Sheet 6

African Drumming Boggle



1. Take two minutes to think, and in the space provided below, write all of the reasons Africans drum, dance and sing. Your teacher will time this activity.
2. Share your list with a partner (two minutes). Add your partner's reasons to your list.
3. Share your list with your teacher. All correct reasons get a point. Determine which set of partners earns the most points.

AFRICAN DRUMMING BOGGLE	
	<u>List the reasons Africans drum/dance/sing</u>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Now use your Boggle list to help you write a paragraph about the role of the African drummer, dancer, and singer in society.