

RHYTHMS AND INSTRUMENTS OF WEST AFRICA



YEAR 7 - 10 – CURRICULUM GUIDES

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

The lesson plan addresses the three elements of the Intercultural Understanding Curriculum:

- Recognising culture and developing respect
- Interacting and empathising with others
- Reflecting on intercultural experiences and taking responsibility

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

IB Diploma Programme Subject Brief 2019
Individuals and societies: Social and cultural anthropology:

Areas of anthropological inquiry in this course are: belonging; classifying the world; communication, expression and technology; conflict; development; health, illness and healing; movement, time and space; production, exchange and consumption; and the body. Key anthropological concepts addressed in this lesson plan include: belief and knowledge, change, culture, identity and symbolism.

OBJECTIVE

Watch, listen, dance and learn about West African drumming and dancing

RESOURCES

- Teacher laptop linked to interactive display screen, space for students to dance

THE HISTORY OF THE DUNDUN - 5 min

The dundun drum was adopted from the Mande from Mali. This set of drums used to be one of the royal drums of the Mande and the Wolof from Senegal, but now they are found in Mali and in the area along the upper reaches of the Gambia river. It then spread along the coastal regions of West Africa.



TRY OUT SOME WEST AFRICAN DANCE MOVES - 20 - 200 min

Use this link to watch and listen to [West African Dance- Sinte](#), filmed at Point Park University, Pennsylvania in 2016.

1. Ask students to comment on the performance, using prompts if needed:
 - What did you like?
 - What musical elements stood out (tempo/speed, dynamics/volume etc)?
 - Format of the singing (call and response)
 - What kind of instrument accompanies the dance (drums)?

2. Play the video again, pausing at the cues below. Ask students to try these moves:
 - 3 x side jumps fast fast slow swinging arms 4 beats L then repeating R, 0:03
 - 4 beats walking small circle facing front then back and swinging arms, 0:05
 - Arms shoulder width with palms to ceiling and flick up from the elbow while raising knee 2 beats L then R – repeat x 8, 0:06
 - Arms to side shoulder width 1 beat then pull up chest height 3 beats, L leg to side 1 beat then 3 steps on spot then repeat to R, lean slightly forward 0:16
 - 4 beats walking small circle facing front then back arms pulling down from above head, 0:24
 - 4 beats hands fling side to side shoulder height whilst legs shoulder width and feet pivot L-R 0:33
3. Once students are comfortable with these 6 moves, work your way slowly through the other sequences of moves in the video to learn the entire dance with the class – this may take several lessons!
4. As the dance becomes more familiar, notice repetitions of moves that show changes in the music:
 - a. Introduction features moves mimicking the rhythms of the drums, also occurs in the middle and at the end of the dance
 - b. Dancers turning in a small circle at the end of a series of repeated moves
 - c. Drumming fills (patterns) that signal a change of section



EXTENSION - 🕒 40 - 120 min

As a class, think of other dance moves you could try to this drumming music. Then students in groups could come up with their own dance routines and the class could watch each group.

EXTRA RESOURCE

Head to Sound Infusion <https://soundinfusion.io/> where there are 10 lesson plans for years 1 – 10 and students can explore instruments on an interactive map from over 100 countries before heading to the studio to create their own musical arrangements.