



Smithsonian Global Sound

Caribbean Beats and Blends

A Global Sound Lesson

Designed by: Patricia Shehan Campbell

Suggested Grade Level: K-2 3-5 6-8 9-12

Musical Culture(s): Caribbean

Musical Knowledge/Skills:

- Listening (to instruments, beat, ostinato, chord changes)
- Singing (partial and full melodies)
- Playing (rhythms, melodies, harmonies).

General Knowledge/Skills:

- Getting to know the Caribbean people, language, location, values.

Materials from Global Sound:

- “Seis Chorreo” by Cuerdas de Borinquen from *Puerto Rico in Washington*, (SFW40460)
<http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/trackdetail.aspx?itemid=34624>
- “Guajira Guantanamera” by Cuarteto Patria featuring Compay Segundo from *Cuba in Washington* (SF 40461)
<http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/trackdetail.aspx?itemid=35256>
- “Azouke Legba” from Smithsonian Folkways World Music Collection (SFW40471)
<http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/trackdetail.aspx?itemid=35925>
- “Two Pote: Ki Bel Bato” from *Musical Traditions of St. Lucia, West Indies* (SFW40416)
<http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/trackdetail.aspx?itemid=28952>

Instruments: Shakers, Congas, Guitars, Hand drums, Bass Guitar/String Bass, Bell

Other: Maps of the Caribbean (Puerto Rico, Cuba, Haiti, St. Lucia/West Indies)

National Standards: (1) (2) (6) (9)

Experiences:

“Iwo Pote: Ki Bel Bato”

- * Listen to recording
 - (a) Clap when you hear claps
 - (b) Dance the clapping rhythm in your feet, in place and traveling
 - (c) Respond to sung call by singing “Ah dine”
 - (d) Use the “dig-a-dum” clapping rhythm in singing songs like “Frere Jacques”, “Kumbaya”, “Down by the Riverside”
- * See map of Caribbean; find the West Indies and St. Lucia
- * Consider that the French Creole lyrics are short and repeated: “Look at the boat/How beautiful it is/Betilya is on board”
- * Consider that the sung text, rhythms, and melodies are a linguistic blend of French, English, and African

“Azouke Legba”

- * Find Haiti on the map, and its capitol, Port-au-Prince, and then look for New York City, the place in which the music is made by Haitians immigrants
- * Listen to recording
 - (a) Tap the fast wood-stick rhythm (two hands on right leg): “1”
 - (b) Pat the slower shaker rhythm (two hands on left leg): “2”
 - (c) Switch between the two responses on cue (cowbell or verbal “1”, “2”)
 - (d) Step fast and then slower rhythm
 - (e) Play drum on available surfaces: wall, desk, floor, lap, conga drum
- * Sing “Azouke ba-ye, leg-ba-ye”
- * Share the meaning of the song, a critical commentary on the influence money has over people

“Seis Chorreo”

- * Ask who’s doing/has done salsa in the group—playing in a band, dancing in a club? Discuss its pan-Latin embrace as dance and music, but with roots to communities of Puerto Ricans (at home and in New York) and Cuba, with name outstanding performers such as Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, Willie Colon, and Rueben Blades.
- * Turn to the early and continuing *seis*, dance music in Puerto Rico that recalls Spanish and Moorish traditions. Say “*seis chorreo*” (says-cho-RAY-ow), a rural dance in Puerto Rico of instrumental virtuosity.

- * Listen to recording; “Air-play” the speedy opening passages of the lead guitar
 - (a) Clap the shaker’s beat-keeping pulse at the start, switching to the rhythm patterns it takes on later
 - (c) Tap the high speed of the drum
 - (d) Show the chordal changes, using index finger for “I”, then four fingers for “IV”, and the whole hand for “V”
 - (e) Count fast beats per chord: I (4), IV (4), V (8)
 - (f) Play the chordal progression on guitar
 - (g) Add shaker, conga drum, bass guitar/string bass
 - (h) Feature players: solos for lead guitar, bass, conga
- * Locate Puerto Rico on a map, and calculate the distance from the island to New York City, where many Puerto Ricans now live.

“Guajira Guantanamera”

- * Find Cuba on a map, and generate discussion on music that Cubans listen to, from son to mambo, rumba, and salsa.
- * Say “ Guajira Guantanamera” (gwa-hee-rah gwan-tan-a-meh-ah), the name of the familiar song.
- * Know that the song is the international Cuban anthem, with its melody composed by Joseito Fernandez and poetic lyrics from “Verso Sencillos” by Jose Marti, the national poet and leader of Cuban independence. (The American folk-singer Pete Seeger learned from a Cuban music student at a camp in the Catskills, New York, Hector Angulo, and brought it into his repertoire of songs.)
- * Listen to recording
 - (a) Clap the slow beat with the audience
 - (b) Sing the chorus with the audience
 - (c) Listen for the audience calls and cheers
 - (d) Notice the chords of the guitar and bass, and show the I, IV, V changes as they happen
 - (e) Tap the fast beat pattern on the conga
 - (f) Learn the song and perform it live, for singers, guitar, bass, and conga players.