

Tom Terrell
EDSE 436 Spring '18
L. Mehlbrech

Curriculum Unit Plan
Rhythm & Drumming

In the beginning, there was the drum...

The history of the drum dates back 30,000 years to the Upper Paleolithic era and was a signal of human expression, significant in communication, ritual ceremony, and eventually military order. The drum has remained ubiquitous and virtually unchanged, providing a foundation for nearly all manifestations of music to be created and performed with. Scientific studies have shown evident rhythm and organized patterns to exist in nature (Macaque monkeys, songbirds), while humans have evolved the form to the incredibly complex level seen and heard by countless cultures around the globe. In some societies, rhythm has come to represent the very fabric of life and embody people's interdependence in human relationships.

I believe teaching rhythm to be a vital keystone of music, thus my unit on rhythm/drumming will take place during the first five weeks of the school year. My philosophy of teaching and learning rhythm/drumming is with full immersion in both full-body kinesthetic movement, as well as studying the various cultures that feature rhythm/drumming as a centerpiece of their music, dance, and even lifestyle. After establishing a firm, internalized foundation of steady rhythmic pulse, students will experiment with and combine various rhythm, sound, and energy to form "grooves". At the end of the unit, the musician student will be able to speak rhythms clearly and articulately, with the goal to convey beauty, energy and joy, to support music making and dancing, and to foster the bringing together of a community.

Content Standard:

MU:Cn11.0.E.Ia

Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

MU:Cr1.1.E.Ia

Compose and improvise ideas for melodies, rhythmic passages, and arrangements for specific purposes that reflect characteristic(s) of music from a variety of historical periods studied in rehearsal.

MU:Cr3.2.E.Ia

Share personally-developed melodies, rhythmic passages, and arrangements – individually or as an ensemble – that address identified purposes.

MU:Pr6.1.E.Ib

Demonstrate an understanding of expressive intent by connecting with an audience through prepared and improvised performances.

MU:Re9.1.E.Ia

Evaluate works and performances based on personally- or collaboratively-developed criteria, including analysis of the structure and context.

Enduring Understanding:

Rhythm, and therefore music, is embedded in all aspects of life.
The foundation of rhythm is pulse (steady beat).

Essential Question:

Why is rhythm such an integral part of the human experience?

Unit Objectives:

To identify facets and relate historical information about the various styles of drumming to cultural expression (music, dance, lifestyle).

To cultivate and refine a steady internalized sense of pulse/time.

To develop proper technique for playing drums/percussion.

To perform rhythms on drums/percussion guided by performance rubric.

To create changes in texture, timbre, and dynamics through drumming.

To understand basic rudiments and polyrhythms.

To relate specific movements/dance with specific rhythms.

Performance Tasks:

Team-Jeopardy game: Identifying and performing various styles of rhythm/drumming.

Exhibiting a steady pulse/tempo, set and measured against a digital metronome.

Begin with playing basic simple-meter rhythms, advancing to triple/compound meters, syncopation and polyrhythms.

Drumming/Jamming/Creating in a unified ensemble, small groups, and improvised soloing.

Create a composition and dance set to stylized rhythms/grooves.

Assessment:

Written assignment on cultural context of chosen instrument/music.

Playing test: Read music, accurately keep tempo/time with minimal variation/mistakes.

Self/Peer Assessments: Create a piece of music that follows rhythmic/musical conventions to accompany a stylized dance routine.

Playing Test Rubric:
Performing Rudiment Rhythms on Snare Drum

Teacher Name: **Mr. Terrell**

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Rhythm	The beat is secure and the rhythms are accurate for the style of music being played.	The beat is secure and the rhythms are mostly accurate. There are a few duration errors, but these do not detract from the overall performance.	The beat is somewhat erratic. Some rhythms are accurate. Frequent or repeated duration errors. Rhythm problems occasionally detract from the overall performance.	The beat is usually erratic and rhythms are seldom accurate detracting significantly from the overall performance.
Sticking Patterns	Correct sticking Markings (staccato, sticking patterns, etc) are executed accurately as directed by the score and/or the conductor.	Sticking patterns are usually correct, though there might be an isolated error. Markings are executed accurately as directed by the score and/or the conductor.	Sticking patterns are rarely secure, but markings are often executed accurately as directed by the score and/or the conductor.	Few secure stickings. Markings are typically not executed accurately.
Technique	Correct technique is used. Palms are down. Fingers are used to control the level of bounce. Hits the instrument with only enough force to make a pleasing, clear sound.	Correct technique is usually used. Hits instrument with a little too much force but incorrect technique does not distract from the quality of the performance.	Correct technique is sometimes used. Incorrect technique distracts from the quality of the performance, but usually does not strike with excessive force.	Correct technique is rarely used. Incorrect technique distracts greatly from the quality of the performance.
Attention in Class	Student is focused and attentive throughout class and follows directions to the best of his/her ability.	Student is usually focused and attentive during class, but sometimes is distracted by others.	Student is sometimes focused and attentive during class, but is easily distracted by others and sometimes distracts others.	Student is rarely focused and attentive during class. Sometimes disruptive to rest of class.
Practice	Student's performance indicates regular and sustained practice outside of class, with great attention to areas of difficulty.	Student's performance indicates regular practice outside of class with some attention to areas of difficulty.	Student's performance indicates some practice outside of class, but with little attention to areas of difficulty.	Student's performance indicates there is very little practice outside of class.
Dynamics	Dynamic levels are obvious, consistent, and an accurate interpretation of the style of music being played.	Dynamic levels are typically accurate and consistent.	Dynamic levels fluctuate but can be discerned.	Attention to dynamic levels is not obvious.

Learning Plan

Pre-Assessment:

Students take a brief pre-assessment quiz to exhibit their knowledge of rhythm notation, beat patterns, and syncopated rhythms.

Students review, clap and speak basic rhythms, using a warm-up exercise of syncopated patterns.

Students perform a “free dance” to connect body and mind, activating kinesthetic learning.

Key Learning Events:

Sound and video overview study of the following styles of drumming:

Japanese Taiko, Sub-Sahara/West African, First Nation Native American, Balinese Gamelan, Afro-Cuban, Military Marches/Drum Corps, Western Neo-Classical, and American Hip-Hop.

Field trip to African Drum Circle exhibition in Leimert Park Village, Los Angeles.

Demonstration on proper playing technique of drums/percussion.

Modeling dynamic, texture and timbral changes on various drums/percussion.

Week One: Overview/“Rhythm is Life”

Day 1 - Immersion: Cultures, Rhythms, Dances

Day 2 - Sound Recordings/Videos

Day 3 - Sound Recordings/Videos 2

Day 4 - Sound Recordings/Videos 3

Day 5 - Cultural Understanding Assessment/
Free Dance

Week Two: Approaching hand drums

Day 6 - Dance Movements: Africa/Americas

Day 7 - Techniques: Djembe/Native Skin Drum

Day 8 - Techniques: Congas/Bongos/Cajon

Day 9 - Techniques: Shakers/Cabasas/Guiro

Day 10 - Field Trip: Drum Circle in LA

Week Three: Approaching stick drums

Day 11 - Dance Movements: Eastern/Ballet

Day 12 - Techniques - Bass/Snare/Tom Toms

Day 13 - Techniques Taiko/Timpani

Day 14 - Techniques Cymbals/Bells

Day 15 - Group/Section Jam Session

Week Four: Playing Accurately

Day 16 - Simple/Compound Meter

Day 17 - Duple/Triple Meter

Day 18 - Rudiments/Syncopation

Day 19 - Assessment: playing test

Day 20 - Group Composition Workshop

Week Five

Day 11 - Merge Music and Dance Depts.
and Form Groups w Dancers, brainstorm
composition/dance routine

Day 12 - Compose/Choreograph

Day 13 - Rehearse w Groups

Day 14 - Perform and Record Original
Pieces/Routines

Day 15 - Debrief/Reflect/Assess
Performances

Progress Monitoring:

Daily warm-ups of rhythm clapping/singing, playing, and free dance movements. Teacher assessments and student self-checks address material that students may be struggling with. Demonstrate simple rhythmic patterns on three different drum/percussion instruments, with feedback provided by teacher.

Differentiated Learning Pathway: English Language Learner

Movements and music-making provide non-verbal instruction.

Cultural Lessons offer increased chance of native-language familiarization.

Sound Recordings/Videos can be translated/subtitled in native languages.

Diversity of material offers increased chances of connection to native culture.

Opportunity for English Language Learner's to share experiences and engage classmates in native culture and language through music and dance.