

Title: *Exploring Body Percussion Through “Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls”*

Integrating global music into classroom instruction provides a gateway to exploring and connecting across cultures. Music has always been a vital part of human expression. It has the power to engage, motivate and inspire students and builds bridges between both what is familiar and what is unfamiliar. The integration of music across the curriculum enables students to engage in rich textual analysis of diverse, interdisciplinary primary source materials, as well further develop global competency skills such as recognizing perspectives and communicating across cultures. This lesson integrates music from the album [Wu Fei and Abigail Washburn](#), available through Smithsonian Folkways.

Lesson Theme: Listening, contextual relevance, creating/composing, body percussion

Featured Song: “Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls”

Overview: Students will use listening skills, analysis skills and will collaborate creatively to accompany a traditional American/Chinese Folk song with body percussion.

Suggested Grade levels: 3-5

Subject: General Music

Corresponding National Standards:

- MU: Re7.2.3a, MU: Re 7.2.4a, MU: Re 7.2.5a: Demonstrate and describe how responses to music can be informed by the structure, the use of the elements of music, and context (such as personal and social)
- MU:Cr1.1.3a, MU:Cr1.1.4a, MU:Cr1.1.5a: Improvise rhythmic body percussion ideas, and explain connection to specific purpose and context (such as social, cultural, and historical).
- MU:Re7.1.3a, MU:Re7.1.4a , MU:Re7.1.5a: Demonstrate and explain, citing evidence, how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.

Corresponding Global Competency Skills: ([Asia Society Global Competency Skills](#))

- Investigate the world
- Recognize perspectives
- Communicate ideas.

Essential Questions:

- What is body percussion and where does it come from?
- What is the use of body percussion and how is it an expression of art?
- What might be the use of body percussion in other forms of music?
- How might patsch/body percussion/juba/hambone factor into the culture or history of a people?
- How might patsch/body percussion/juba/hamboone evolve?

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will analyze the song “Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls”
- Students will create simple body percussion rhythms to accompany the songs “Banjo Guzheng Pick-inn’ Girls”
- Students will gain knowledge about the history of juba/hambone and body percussion through accompanying the song “Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls”

Vocabulary:

- Folk song
- Patsch
- Body percussion
- Juba
- Hambone
- Guzheng
- Banjo

Materials:

- [Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls lyrics](#)
- [Listening guide](#)
- [Form Visual](#)
- [Body Percussion samples](#)
- [Blank body percussion template](#)
- Image of banjo and guzheng
- Recording of “Juba” by Sweet Honey in The Rock from the album All For Freedom (1989)
- [“Gourd Banjo and Hambone on a Mississippi Porch”](#) by Markus James and Calvin Jackson.
- [“Hambone Bros Tutorial”](#) by Lierman Bros
- “Juba This, Juba That” picture book by Helaine Becker
- [“The Easiest Cup Song Tutorial”](#)
- [Smithsonian Folkways examples of body percussion/hambone](#)

Lesson Procedure:Day 1

1. Start by listening to “Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls” with no context or visual.
2. Open a discussion about what can be heard. “What instruments do you hear?” “What languages do you hear?” “Do you hear female or male voices?” “What patterns do you hear?” etc.
3. Share the [“Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls” Listening Guide](#) and [Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls Form Visual](#) to help students further evaluate the song and to deepen discussion about what is happening in the music. Also
4. Lead a quick discussion about the guzheng and banjo and show examples of each instrument using resources mentioned in this lesson.
5. Refer to the [“Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls” Lyrics](#) with students to see the English song lyrics and translation of Chinese song lyrics. “Whose point of view is the song in?” “What might their purpose be?” etc.
6. Listen to “Banjo Guzheng Pickin’ Girls” multiple times using visuals and practice patting a steady beat
7. Introduce the A’ section of the body percussion. Teach by route to prepare for day 2.

*This lesson plan was created by Leslie Roberts, Weddington Hills Elementary School, Cabarrus County Schools, as part of the 2019-2020 World View Global Music Fellows Program
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Day 2 (may need an extra day or two to further practice body percussion)

1. Review the order of the form from day 1

Body Percussion for Each Section

A- establish a steady beat

A'- body percussion rhythm

Interlude- 'juba' rhythm (performed on lap)

B- student body rhythm compositions (32 beats)

2. Listen to "Banjo Guzheng Pickin' Girls" and have the class establish a steady beat during the A section (verse 1).
3. Post a visual of the [Body Percussion/Juba Visuals for A' and Interludes](#) along-side the [Listening Guide](#) and [Form Visual](#) from day 1.
4. Perform the song independently (students read the body percussion visual on their own and practice the rhythm on their body without the music. Take time to be accurate before speeding up tempo).
**The song is quite fast so students need to be successful before adding music.
5. As a group, review/practice the body percussion for A' (verse 2) with the music.
6. Practice the 'juba' patting part for the interludes (again, practice as a group without the music before adding music since the song is has an upbeat tempo). **Explain juba to the students (**refer to the discussion and history portion of this lesson**).
7. Perform the body percussion for A' (verse 2) and the 'juba'(interludes) with the music

Day 3 (may need an extra day or two to practice and/or notate their body percussion compositions)

1. Review the form of the song from day 1
2. Practice performing the body percussions from day 2 (with the music) as a class.
3. After successfully performing A, A' and the interludes as a group, allow students to get into small groups to create their own body percussion/juba rhythms for the B section. **Allow ample time for creative process. Students will need to create a rhythmic pattern that fits 32 beats of music (8 measures in 4/4 time).
4. Students are encouraged to use basic sounds such as snaps, pats, and stomps to create different combinations of sound (suggested movements for advanced classes: crossbody pats (chest or lap) and partner claps (pat hands with each other/create hand clapping games). **Teachers may decide to allow students to improvise and write down ideas that they want to keep. Allow students to notate their creations in non-traditional ways. Advanced classes may use more traditional notation as shown in the extension of this lesson plan.
5. Perform the entire song as a group (teacher may choose to allow solos or volunteers to perform their composition for the B section/take turns performing the B section)

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Discussion and History:

Discuss the use of body percussion for this particular song. Use essential questions to drive discussions.

- What is body percussion and where does it come from?
- What is the use of body percussion and how is it an expression of art?
- What might be the use of body percussion in other forms of music?
- How might patsch/body percussion/juba/hambone factor into the culture or history of a people?
- How might patsch/body percussion/juba/hamboone evolve?

Patsch: a German word for pat, slap or smack. Typically to patsch is to pat one's legs with hands.

Body Percussion: using the body to create percussive sounds. It's the oldest form of music and is found in various cultures.

Juba: an African term derived from Guiouba (Nigerian) or Djuba (Haitian) that means hand slapping or patting rhythms on one's body. Another name for juba is hambone.

- Patting Juba is a folk tradition of African American origin. It's popularity dates back to the early to mid 1800's when white slave owners outlawed the use of drums for fear of possible revolts among enslaved people communicated through drums. Enslaved people adapted to their new environment and found ways to continue the traditions of home in new ways in order to express themselves and to release a need for self-identity by turning the body into a percussive instrument that accompanies singing and dancing. **Patting juba proves that though their drumming traditions were banned the slave owners could not suppress the spirit of the people who carried the music and traditions within themselves.
- Patting Juba consists of hands striking knees, hands striking hands, and hands striking shoulders or chest all while keeping the beat with the feet to accompany singing and/or dancing while dancing juba refers more to a jig type dance that is a combination of Irish style clogging and African stepping dance.
- A counterpart to patting juba is hambone where one uses the hand to create a loud percussive sound. Hambone is believed to be a precursor to the hand-jive and can be performed alone or with others.
- Stepping or step-dancing routines reflect the influence of juba as well as tap dance and soft-shoeing which got their influences from a fusion of juba and Irish style clogging.
- William Henry Lane ("Master Juba") was a famous African American minstrel dancer who is credited for making juba popular across different audiences during a time when Irish and African folk styles were mingling together to birth new American forms of dance.

Assessment:

Student groups create and perform their own body rhythms for the "B" section of the song meeting the criteria on the [Creative Group Body Percussion Performance Rubric](#).

Extensions:

1. Provide various examples and resources to help drive discussion or influence student work
 - a. Listen to a recording of "Juba" by Sweet Honey in The Rock from the album All For Freedom

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(1989)

- b. Watch the video "[Gourd Banjo and Hambone on a Mississippi Porch](#)" by Markus James and Calvin Jackson
 - c. Watch the video "[Hambone Bros Tutorial](#)" for a modern example of hambone and body percussion
 - d. Read the book "Juba This, Juba That" picture book by Helaine Becker for more on the traditions of juba (inside cover) and to practice juba with a twist on the traditional juba lyrics.
2. Provide students with a blank body percussion template and have them work in groups to transcribe their own simple patterns on paper.

** Assessment: Teacher collects the completed body percussion templates to see if they meet the following criteria:

- Fits 32 beats for the B section of the song
 - Use of pattern and ends on a strong beat
 - Use of quarter note, eighth note or sixteenth notes in composition
 - Correctly lines music notes up with the beats for each measure
 - Clearly notates which notes are to be used for each body rhythm sound
3. Allow students to transfer the body percussions to unpitched percussion instruments. Discuss which instruments would be good to represent each sound accompanying the song.
4. The cup song activity would fit this song nicely or perform with a hand clapping game. Steps to the cup game activity can be found on this video: [Easiest Cup Song Tutorial](#)

Reflections:

Did the discussion on body percussion change the way you might perform the body percussion for this song? Does that background knowledge change your thoughts and ideas of how you might create your patterns? Is there anything about the lyrics of this particular song that my influence your rhythm/body percussion composition?

Explorations/Cross Curricular Connection:

- Add an art component and have students create their own listening maps or graphic notation samples to describe what they hear in the music using artistic creativity.
- Collaborate with the school art teacher on creating a visual for the form of the music. Have students listen to the song in art class and use abstract patterns to represent the different sounds in the music as it changes or repeats.

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**Images in listening guide retrieved from <https://publicdomainvectors.org/en/planet-earth-clip-art-free> and <http://www.clker.com/clipart-457494.html> which are in the public domain

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