

Course Content - Instruments of the World

Historical Facts of World instruments

- Many countries from around the world have official national instruments
- Although not official, the banjo is considered the national instruments of the US
- The Banjo is played in many early styles of American music such as Folk, Country, Bluegrass, and Ragtime
- Most Instruments have resonators. The Resonator is the part of the instrument where the sound is created and given depth and volume. Resonators come in all different shapes and sizes and are made from a variety of materials.
- Griots and Jolies are oral historians in West Africa. They use an instrument called a **kora** as well as their voices to tell stories to the people in their community to inform and educate them about the past.

String Instruments

- The Zither is Bavaria's national instrument. It is a string instrument and the resonator is called a sound box. You can strum or pluck this instrument as well as use a bow to play it.
- The Bouzouki is from Greece and can contain 408 strings. It looks like a mandolin.
- The Berimbau is from Brazil and contains 1 string that is stretched across a bowed piece of wood. Gourds are the resonators and there is a coin or small stone the musician moves to adjust the note with while they use a stick to hit the string.
- The Veena is an instrument from India and has 7 strings across a long neck and contains 2 large gourds that resonate the sound.
- The Koto is an instrument from Japan that has 13 strings strung over 13 movable bridges. Musicians adjust the notes by moving the bridges before and during their playing. They use 3 finger picks to pluck the strings.

Music in Life Lesson:

The Music in Life lesson is a moment to engage in active listening. The Music in Life lesson song for this course is "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by Ladysmith Black Mambazo. Students are invited to think about how the music makes them feel, think, and move. Music is an individual experience; active listening encourages students to choose their own musical path.

Wind Instruments

- The Bagpipe is from Ireland and Scotland. It has a bag and hollow tubes of wood that have reeds inside to create the sound. The tubes are called drones and the size of the drones determined the notes. The musician blows into a small tube called a blowpipe.
- The Khene is from Thailand and is a wind instrument made of bamboo. People say it sounds like a violin.
- The Didgeridoo is from Australia. It has been around for over a thousand years and is made of wood.
- The Sheng is from China and has been around since eleven hundred B.C.

Percussion Instruments

- The Steel Pan or Steel Drum is an instrument from Trinidad. It is made from big steel barrels.
- The Güiro is from Cuba and other islands like Puerto Rico. It is made from a hollow gourd that is played by rubbing a stick along the notches in the gourd. It plays a key role in the typical rhythm section in all kinds of music especially jazz and Latin.
- The Marimba is from Guatemala/Mexico. Its resonators are hollow tubes attached under slats of wood called bars. The bars are positioned like keys on a piano.
- The Talking Drums are from West Africa. They have an hour-glass shape with two drumheads connected by leather cords on each end. You can change the pitch or notes by squeezing the cords with your legs or arms.
- The Angklung is from Indonesia. It is a traditional Indonesian percussion instrument that is very complex to play. It is made out of 2-3 bamboo tubes. The bodies and are pulled and pushed to make the sound.