

Exploring Global Rhythms and Melodies

Learning objective: To understand the musical traditions, instruments, and cultural origins of music from around the world.

Use these flashcards to test your knowledge of world music. Read the front, try to answer, then check the back for the definition. Discuss the musical features with a partner.

What is a Djembe?

A goblet-shaped drum played with bare hands, originally from West Africa, known for its ability to produce a wide variety of sounds and pitches.

What is a Pentatonic scale?

A musical scale with five notes per octave, frequently used in many world music traditions, including folk music in China, Japan, and Scotland.

What is a Gamelan?

A traditional musical ensemble from Indonesia, primarily featuring bronze percussion instruments like gongs and metallophones.

What is a Kora?

A stringed instrument from West Africa that looks like a large lute-bridge-harp, traditionally played by griots (storytellers).

Define 'Rhythm' in the context of world music.

The pattern of regular or irregular pulses caused in music by the occurrence of strong and weak melodic and harmonic beats.

What is an ensemble?

A group of musicians, actors, or dancers who perform together, often using instruments specific to their regional culture.

Explain the term 'Cultural Heritage'.

The traditions, music, dance, and customs passed down from previous generations within a specific group of people.

What is a drone in world music?

A continuous, unchanging sound or note held throughout a piece of music, common in Indian classical music played on a tanpura.

How do folk songs differ from art music?

Folk music is typically passed down orally through communities over generations, whereas art music is often formally composed and written down.

What are idiophones?

Instruments that create sound through the vibration of the instrument itself, such as shakers, bells, or wooden blocks, commonly found in many world cultures.

Describe the role of a 'Griot'.

A West African historian, storyteller, and musician who preserves the cultural history and genealogy of their people through song.

What is a melody?

A sequence of musical notes that are satisfying to the ear; the 'tune' of the song.