



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2000 Volume V: Sound and Sensibility: Acoustics in Architecture, Music, and the Environment

Exploring the Folk Instruments and Sounds of Kenya and Brazil

Guide for Curriculum Unit 00.05.02
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The unit is designed for third grade students, but can be modified easily to educate primary or challenge middle school students. It is to be used as part of a 4-person team. One middle school class to study Kenyan culture, one middle school class to study Brazilian culture, one middle school class to study the science of sound, the fourth class being this unit.

Following the cultural sound development in Kenya and Brazil the students explore the folk stories and customs of each nation. In turn, they solidify their understanding of basic musical knowledge of beat, rhythm melody inherent to all music. As the students deepen their conceptual understanding of music, they work in tandem with each other and the cross-curriculum classes, each bringing their newly acquired knowledge to the third grade class.

As a final project, the third grade class composes 16 bar folksongs in the style of Kenya and Brazil. The create instruments representative of each country and perform them for an International Festival.

In this unit it is intended that the students have a good solid understanding of keeping a steady beat, rhythmic notation, and Pentatonic scales. They should also be familiar with improvising a 4 bar phrase within the parameters of a certain style. They should also be comfortable expressing ideas and the process of brainstorming an idea within team units.

(Recommended for International Studies, Science, and Music, grades 6-10.)

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