



Knowledge Organiser: Africa



Topic Background

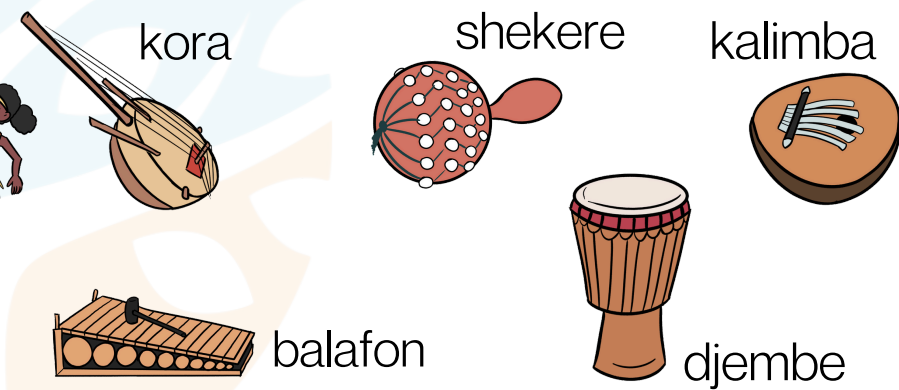
A huge variety of music exists in Africa from classical to pop music, and the roots of all of our music is believed to have sprung from traditional African music. Unlike our own traditional music, traditional African music is celebrated widely.

Rhythm forms the foundations of African music. All movement creates rhythm and every aspect of life is therefore accompanied by music; from the gathering of crops, the pounding of flour, to the working of metals in the blacksmiths and the washing of clothes in the river. Music is an essential part of celebrations including weddings and funerals. Music also socially binds a village through dancing and the famous art of storytelling by the village Griot. Griots are travelling poets, musicians, and storytellers who still maintain a tradition of aural history in parts of West Africa.

Listening Pieces

- African Tribe, African Drums
- Sona Jobarteh, Jarabi, 2011

Traditional African instruments:



Musical Knowledge

Note Values	1 beat	two 1/2 beat notes	1 and 1/2 beats
	1/2 beat	1 beat rest	



Key features of traditional African music:

call and response a leader calls and everyone else responds

mnemonics

The use of words to help remember and create rhythms.



ostinato

Repetition of a musical pattern or rhythm.



polyrhythm

Two or more rhythms played at the same time.



Key Vocabulary

- call and response:** two phrases, the first phrase being the call and the second phrase is a response to the first
- dynamics:** how loud or quiet a sound is
- improvise:** creating music on the spot
- melody:** the tune of the music made up of high and low pitches
- mnemonics:** the use of words to help remember and create rhythms
- ostinato:** repetition of a musical pattern or rhythm
- performance:** an act of performing a song or piece of music
- polyrhythm:** two or more rhythms played at the same time
- pulse:** the heartbeat of the music
- rhythm:** patterns of sound consisting of shorter and longer notes
- structure:** how a piece is organised
- texture:** combining different layers of music to give an overall effect

