

Young Audiences of Massachusetts

Educational Materials

Please forward to teachers

7/14/09

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Bamidele Dancers & Drummers

Grade levels: 6-12

The **Bamidele Dancers & Drummers** takes audiences to Brazil, the Caribbean, and Africa with their instruments, exciting rhythms, costumes, folklore, celebratory dances, and songs. In this program, two dancers and two drummers perform the songs and dances of Africa and explore the migration of African culture to the Caribbean and Brazil.

Audience participation and the use of authentic costumes and instruments create a memorable learning experience.

LEARNING GOALS:

1. To explore the music, dance, and culture of West Africa, the Caribbean, and Brazil.
2. To broaden students' understanding of African culture.
3. To demonstrate how African culture has influenced the cultures of the Caribbean and Brazil.

PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Diversity of Africa*

Identify the continent of Africa. What are the countries of Africa? Discuss the diversity of the African continent (peoples, traditions, geography, food, etc.). Divide the class into groups, and assign each group an African region. Have each group answer a series of questions about their country. Ask the groups to present their answers using drawings, dance, music, etc.

POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Understanding Cultures*

Discuss the meaning of culture using a "bubble chart" as an illustrative tool. Discuss aspects of culture in the Bamidele Dancers & Drummers performance. Ask students about their own cultures. Have students interview their families about their cultural roots. Ask students to share their cultural history with the class.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

African-American Studies, Multicultural Studies, Music, Health, Physical Education, History and Social Sciences

PRE-ACTIVITY: *DIVERSITY OF AFRICA*

LEARNING GOAL:

To explore the diversity of Africa in terms of music, language, culture and geography.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Maps

Books about African culture

TIME:

Two 45 minute classes

STEP 1:

Discuss Africa. What countries comprise Africa? Do students have general or specific knowledge about Africa? Emphasize that Africa is a diverse continent with many different countries and cultures.

STEP 2:

Divide the class into groups. Assign each group a country from different regions in Africa, such as Egypt, Kenya, or South Africa.

STEP 3:

Have each team answer the following questions and develop additional questions to ask one another.

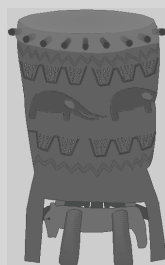
- What is the typical music of the country?
- What is the primary spoken language?
- What does the traditional dress look like?
- What shapes, colors and patterns are predominate in crafts?
- What is the style of architecture?
- What movements do the dances emphasize?
- What are the climactic and geographic characteristics?

STEP 4:

Have each group present the answers to these questions non-verbally (i.e, through drawing, maps, crafts, dance and music, etc.). Have the other students guess which country each team is describing.

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) **Look** in newspapers and magazines for information on African current events and share findings with the class.
- 2) **Explore** the African visual arts, paying special attention to the use of patterns and ideas.



POST-ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING CULTURES

LEARNING GOAL:

To understand the concept of "culture" and encourage students to explore their own cultures.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Magazines, photos, objects that students bring in from home

TIME:

Two 45 minute classes

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

* If making a collage is not feasible, have students share what they have learned about their cultural roots with the class.

STEP 1:

Discuss the word "culture". What does it mean? Using a bubble chart, ask students to share any words or comments that relate to the concept of culture.

STEP 2:

Discuss the Bamidele Dancers & Drummers performance. Using the bubble chart as a reference, talk about the various aspects of culture presented in the program.

STEP 3:

Ask students about their own heritage and culture. Have them share some of their family customs.

STEP 4:

Have students interview their family members about their cultural roots. Encourage them think about the culture that they have created for themselves, such as the music they listen to, the food they like to eat, etc.

STEP 5:

Have students create collages that represent their culture using photos, objects, drawings, etc. Have them share their culture collages.

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) **Ask** students to read and report on various African cultures. How did European colonization influence them?
- 2) **Discuss** *acculturation*, the process by which one culture adopts the traits of another culture. How does this happen in music? How has it happened in the United States (with food, language, clothes, etc.)?



Bamidele Dancers and Drummers

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RESOURCES:

Balandier, George and Jacques Maguet. Dictionary of Black African Civilization.

Bebey, Francis. African Music, A People's Art. NY: Lawrence Hill & Co, 1975.

Courlander, Harold. A Treasury of African Folklore. NY: Crown Publishing, 1975.

Courlander, Harold. A Treasury of African-American Folktales. NY: Crown Publishing, 1976.

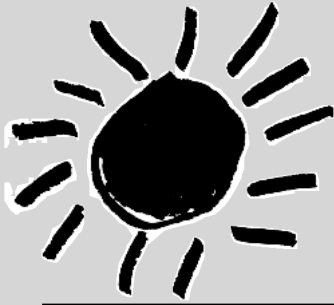
Newman, Thelma. Contemporary African Arts and Culture. NY: Crown Publishers, 1975.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:

The Bamidele Dancers & Drummers was founded in 1983 by Bamidele Osumarea (1947-1995). The company, based in Amherst, Massachusetts, continues under the direction of Marilyn M. Sylla. The group is proud to have in residence Sekou Sylla, a dancer, acrobat and drummer from Les Ballet Africains, the national dance company of the Republic of New Guinea, West Africa. Mrs. Sylla and members of the group have studied and performed in West Africa, Brazil, the Caribbean, and Europe. Marilyn and Sekou are adjunct faculty at Mt. Holyoke College, Smith College, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Greenfield Community College in western MA. Members of Bamidele conduct ongoing community and private classes and offer concerts, workshops, and residencies. The Bamidele Dancers & Drummers performed for Nelson Mandela in Boston in June 1990. In addition, the group has performed with folk singer Pete Seeger and has appeared in the film Luxor. Bamidele has traveled throughout the United States to universities, various festivals, and cultural events and was selected Best World Beat Group of the year in the Pioneer Valley. Bamidele have released two CDs, *Live* and *United*, in addition to an African dance instructional video, *Wofa Baron*. Their CD *Live* contains rhythms from their program and other African and African-rooted music. For more information on Bamidele, please visit their web site: www.bamidele.com.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:

Young Audiences of Massachusetts (YAMA) is the oldest, largest and most utilized arts-in-education organization in the state and one of the largest in a national network of 33 chapters. For over 45 years, YA has been serving as a link between teaching artists and the region's school children, providing dance, storytelling, music and theater programs to children in schools, libraries and hospitals in the form of assembly performances, workshops and residencies. The organization's mission is to encourage lifelong engagement with the arts by making them an integral part of every child's education.



Young Audiences of Massachusetts

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MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

Bamidele Dancers & Drummers

<i>Language Arts</i> 9	...identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed.
<i>History</i> 4	Society, Diversity, Commonality, and the Individual...learn the complex interplay that has existed from the beginning of our country between American ideals and American practice.
<i>History</i> 8	Places and Regions of the World...identify and explain the location and features of places and systems organized over time.
<i>World Language</i> 9	...provide and obtain information and knowledge.
<i>World Language</i> 10	...obtain new information and knowledge.
<i>World Language</i> 16	...identify cultural and linguistic characteristics.
<i>World Language</i> 19	...examine and analyze cultural contributions of diverse groups.
<i>World Language</i> 20	...use a world language to connect with other disciplines such as Arts, English Language Arts, Health, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Social Studies.
<i>Arts-Dance</i> 1	Movement Elements and Dance Skills...identify and demonstrate movement and dance skills.
<i>Arts-Dance</i> 3	Dance as Expression...demonstrate an understanding of dance as a way to express and communicate meaning.
<i>Arts-Dance</i> 5	Critical Response...describe and analyze their own dances and the dances of others using appropriate dance vocabulary.
<i>Arts-Dance</i> 6	Purpose and Meaning in the Arts...describe the purpose for which works of dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and architecture were and are created.
<i>Arts-Dance</i> 8	Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence, and Stylistic Change...demonstrate understanding of styles, influence, change.
<i>Arts-Dance</i> 10	Interdisciplinary Connections...apply knowledge of the arts to the study of English language arts, foreign languages, health, history, and social science, mathematics, and science and technology/engineering.
<i>Arts-Music</i> 3	Playing Instruments...play instruments, alone and with others, to perform a varied repertoire of music.
<i>Arts-Music</i> 4	Improvisation and Composition...improvise, compose, and arrange music.