



Smithsonian Folkways

Steel Band Style, Calypso Culture and Childhood Chants: Trinidadian Music for the Classroom

A Smithsonian Folkways Lesson

Designed by: Sarah J. Bartolome
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Summary:

Students will identify and discuss steel pans and steel and style. Students will find Trinidad on a world map. Students will play a typical rhythmic/harmonic steel band pattern and learn to play a sustained melody in steel band style.

Suggested Grade Levels: 3-5, 6-8

Country: Trinidad & Tobago

Region: Caribbean

Culture Group: Trinidadian

Genre: Steel bands

Instruments: Maracas, Metallophones

Language: English

Co-Curricular Areas: Social Studies

National Standards: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Prerequisites: None

Objectives:

- Understand steel band music & re-create on metallophones
- Learn and play/sing a typical children's game song from Trinidad
- Learn about the history and purpose of calypso music
- Evaluate and perform "Begin the Beguine"

Materials:

- "Gun Slinger" by Kim Loy Wong from *Kim Loy Wong and his Wiltwyck Steel Band* (Cat. # FW03834)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/kim-loy-wong-and-his-wiltwyck-steel-band/caribbean-world/music/album/smithsonian>
- "I Los' My Glove" by Various Artists from *Caribbean Songs and Games for Children* (Cat. # FW07856) (Transcription provided below)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/caribbean-songs-and-games-for-children/caribbean/music/album/smithsonian>
- "Picong Duel" by Lord Melody and King Sparrow from *Calypso Awakening from the Emory Cook Collection* (Cat. #SFW40453)

<http://www.folkways.si.edu/calypso-awakening-from-the-emory-cook-collection/caribbean/music/album/smithsonian>

- “Begin the Beguine” by Bamboushay Steel Band from *Bamboushay Steel Band* (Cat. #FW03835)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/bamboushay-steel-band/caribbean-world/music/album/smithsonian>
- “Begin the Beguine” by Joe Sullivan from *The Musical Moods of Joe Sullivan: Piano* (Cat. #FW02851)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/joe-sullivan/the-musical-moods-of-piano/jazz-ragtime/music/album/smithsonian>
- “Begin the Beguine” by Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra from *Tribute to a Generation: A Salute to the Big Bands of the WWII Era* (Cat. #SFW40817)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/the-smithsonian-jazz-masterworks-orchestra/tribute-to-a-generation-a-salute-to-the-big-bands-of-the-wwii-era/historical-song-ragtime/music/album/smithsonian>
- “Begin the Beguine” by The Invaders from *Steel Band in San Juan* (Cat. #COOK01101)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/the-invaders/steel-band-in-san-juan/caribbean-world/music/album/smithsonian>
- Map of the Caribbean & Trinidad
- Transcription of steel band pattern by Pete Seeger
- Elder, J.D. (1962). *Song Games from Trinidad and Tobago*. The American Folklore Society
- Joseph, L. (1991). *A wave in her pocket: Stories from Trinidad and Tobago*. New York: Clarion Books
- Lord Melody biography
- King Sparrow biography
- Alan Lomax’s An American Patchwork Series: The Land Where the Blues Began, Toasts segment
- “Gypsy in da Moonlight” by Various Artists from *Caribbean Songs and Games for Children* (Cat. #FW07856)
- <http://www.folkways.si.edu/gypsy-in-the-moonlight/caribbean-childrens/music/track/smithsonian>
- Transcriptions provided below
- Elder, J.D. (1962). *Song Games from Trinidad and Tobago*. The American Folklore Society.
- Joseph, L. (1994). *The mermaid’s twin sister: More stories from Trinidad and Tobago*. New York: Clarion Books.

Lesson Segments:

1. **Gun Slinger** (National Standards 2, 5, 6, 8, 9)
2. **I Los’ My Glove** (National Standards 1, 2, 6, 8, 9)
3. **Lord Melody & King Sparrow** (National Standards 6, 7, 8, 9)
4. **Begin the Beguine** (National Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

5. Gypsy in the Moonlight (National Standards 1, 6, 7, 8, 9)

1. Gun Slinger

- a. Attentive Listening: Students will listen to a recording of “Gun Slingers”
 - i. What kinds of instruments do you hear?
 - ii. What do you think they are made of?
 - iii. How do the musicians create a sustained sound?
- b. Integrating World Music: Teacher shows maps of the Caribbean and Trinidad
- c. Integrating World Music: Teacher shows pictures of steel drums and if possible, allows students experiment with an actual steel drum
- d. Engaged Listening: Students will pat along with shaker part, following teacher demonstration
- e. Enactive: Students will play shakers along with recording
- f. Creating World Music: Experiment on metallophones
 - i. Play simple melodies (i.e. “Hot Cross Buns”) on metallophones, using a repeated roll on each note to sustain the pitches
 - ii. Add maracas and simulated brake drum
- g. Creating World Music: Students will perform a typical steel band rhythmic/harmonic pattern, as transcribed by Pete Seeger (see transcription), using metallophones, shakers, and a simulated brake drum (metal chair leg)

Assessment: Authentic assessment of final performances

Steel Band Riff

Reproduced from liner notes of

Kim Loy Wong and his Wiltwyck Steel Band available at

http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW03834.pdf

arr. Pete Seeger

The musical score is arranged in five staves. The top staff is for Steel Drums in treble clef, showing a sequence of chords and eighth notes. The second staff is for Steel Drums 1 in bass clef, featuring a bass line with eighth notes and rests. The third staff is for Steel Drums 2 in bass clef, with a simple eighth-note bass line. The fourth staff is for Maracas, showing a steady eighth-note rhythm. The fifth staff is for Brake Drum, also showing a steady eighth-note rhythm. The piece is in 4/4 time and consists of four measures.

2. I Los' My Glove

- a. Integrating World Music: Review maps and steel band
- b. Engaged listening: Students play shaker and simulated brake drum along with recording of “Gun Slingers”
- c. Attentive listening: Students listen to field recording of “I Los' My Glove”
 - i. Who is singing?
 - ii. Can you describe the quality of the recording?
 - iii. Does it sound like it was recorded in a studio?
 - iv. Discuss field recordings
- d. Enactive Listening: Students learn song by rote and sing along with recording
- e. Creating World Music: Students sing song as a call and response song
 - i. Teacher sings first phrase, students respond
 - ii. Student soloist sings first phrase and students respond
 - iii. Assess pitch-matching
- f. Creating World Music: Students play game as follows (adapted slightly for the public school setting):
 - i. Players sitting in a ring, “Peter” walking around outside of ring while players sing
 - ii. At “Drop, Peter, Drop,” Peter drops a handkerchief or beanbag into the lap of the nearest player.
 - iii. The chosen player must chase Peter around the circle and tag him before he reaches the vacated place in the ring.
 - iv. The chosen player becomes the new Peter and the game repeats
- g. Integrating World Music: Read aloud a story from *A Wave in her Pocket: Songs from Trinidad and Tobago* (Joseph, 1994).

Assessment: Assess pitch-matching during call and responses solos

The image shows three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature change to Bb. The melody is written on a single staff with lyrics underneath. The second staff starts with a measure rest (marked '3') and continues the melody. The third staff starts with a measure rest (marked '5') and continues the melody, ending with a double bar line.

I los' my glove on a Sat' - u - day night and I found it Sun - day mor - nin'. I

los' my glove on a Sat - u' - day night and I found it Sun - day mor - nin'.

Drop Pe - ter drop boy Pe - ter would - n't drop boy, Drop, drop, drop

3. Lord Melody & King Sparrow

- a. Integrating World Music: Read Lord Melody biography
- b. Integrating World Music: Read King Sparrow biography and show pictures

- c. Attentive listening: Listen to Picong Duel by Lord Melody and King Sparrow at <http://www.folkways.si.edu/the-mighty-sparrow-and-lord-melody/picong-duel/caribbean/music/track/smithsonian>
 - i. Listen to the insults the two performers exchange.
- d. Integrating World Music: Discuss lyrics and insults.
- e. Integrating World Music: Talk about African American tradition of “the dozens” or “signifying.” Supplement here with examples from African American film culture
- f. Integrating World Music: Show “Toasts” segment from Alan Lomax’s An American Patchwork Series, The Land Where the Blues Began
 - i. What are toasts? Rapid fire delivery of lyrical, poetic statements and stories with veiled, often political meaning or roots in Black pride
 - ii. Can you think of other traditions like this? The dozens, kudeketera, calypso
 - iii. This tradition birthed what modern musical forms? Reggae and rap
- g. Integrating World Music: Compare forms of verbal dexterity across cultures: African American dozens, Shona kudeketera, calypso picong, rap, proverbs

Assessment: Assess verbal responses during discussion periods

4. Begin the Beguine

- a. Attentive Listening: Students will listen to four versions of Begin the Beguine
 - i. Identify the instruments and ensembles heard
 - ii. Compare and contrast styles
- b. Enactive Listening: Students will learn Begin the Beguine and sing along with the recording
- c. Creating World Music: Students will play Begin the Beguine on the metallophone, mastering the rolled technique for sustaining pitches
- d. Creating World Music: Students will accompany the melody with other barred and percussion instruments (see transcription)
- e. Integrating World Music: Students will read about steel band history during WWII found in the liner notes of The Steel Drums of Kim Loy Wong at: http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FWO8367.pdf

Assessment: Assess final performances of learned piece

Begin the Beguine in Bb
Steel Band Style for Orff

Cole Porter, arr. S. Bartolome

The first system of the musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (Bb). The time signature is common time (C). The first staff contains whole rests for the first four measures. The second staff features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in pairs, forming a steady pattern. The third staff continues this accompaniment with dotted eighth notes and quarter notes. The fourth staff has a simpler accompaniment of quarter notes. The fifth staff is a bass line consisting of a sequence of quarter notes.

The second system of the musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats (Bb). The time signature is common time (C). The first staff contains a vocal line with lyrics: "When they be - gin _____ the be - guine, _____ it". The melody includes a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure and a half note in the second measure. The second staff features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in pairs. The third staff continues this accompaniment with dotted eighth notes and quarter notes. The fourth staff has a simpler accompaniment of quarter notes. The fifth staff is a bass line consisting of a sequence of quarter notes.

9

brings back the sound of mu-sic so ten - der. It

17

brings back a mem - - - - mo - ry of green.

Begin the Beguine in C
Steel Band Style for Orff

Cole Porter, arr. S. Bartolome

The first system of the musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a grand staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (C). It contains four measures of whole rests. The second staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in pairs. The third staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in pairs with some rests. The fourth staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of quarter notes. The fifth staff is a bass clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of quarter notes.

The second system of the musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature, containing a vocal line with lyrics: "When they be - gin _____ the be - guine, _____ it". Above the first measure of the vocal line is a triplet of eighth notes. The second staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in pairs. The third staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes in pairs with some rests. The fourth staff is a treble clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of quarter notes. The fifth staff is a bass clef staff with a common time signature, containing a rhythmic accompaniment of quarter notes.

9

brings back the sound of mu-sic so ten - der. It

17

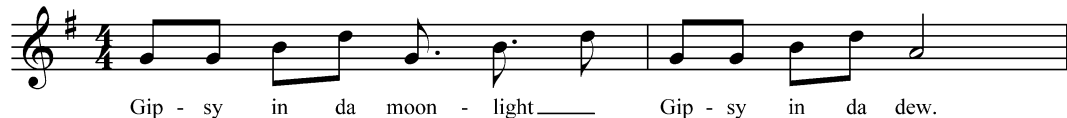
brings back a mem - - - mo - ry of green.

5. Gypsy in the Moonlight

- a. **Enactive Listening:** Listen to the recording of “Gypsy in the Moonlight”, keeping steady beat
- b. **Attentive Listening:** Listen to the recording of “Gypsy in the Moonlight”
 - i. What is the story of the song?
 - ii. When does the gypsy come home?
- c. Learn song by rote (transcription provided below and in Song Games from Trinidad (Elder, 1962)).
- d. **Creating World Music:** Play game as follows (Adapted slightly for classroom use):
 - i. Players standing in a ring, “gypsy” walks around the outside, while players sing verse one and point.
 - ii. At “Walk in,” gypsy enters the ring and continues circling inside the ring. Players can join hands and circle in the opposite direction if desired.
 - iii. Gypsy sings the third verse as a solo and chooses a partner.
 - iv. Gypsy and chosen partner dance in the ring, while the rest of the players clap and sing
- e. **Integrating World Music:** Read aloud a story from *The Mermaid’s Twin Sister: More Stories from Trinidad and Tobago* (Joseph, 1994).
- f. **Creating World Music:** Final performances of learned pieces including “Begin the Beguine”, the steel band style groove, and game songs.

Assessment: Assess pitch-matching during solo verse of game song
Assess final performances of known pieces

Gipsy in da' Moonlight



Suggested Resources

Smithsonian Folkways Resources:

Bamboushay Steel Band (1962). *Bamboushay Steel Band* [Sound Recording]. Folkways Records, FW03835.

Champion Steel Bands of Trinidad (1957). *Champion Steel Bands of Trinidad* [Sound Recording]. Cook Records, COOK01046.

Drums of Trinidad (1956). *Drums of Trinidad, Calinda* [Sound Recording]. Cook Records, COOK01045.

Mighty Sparrow (1959). *King Sparrow's Calypso Carnival* [Sound Recording]. Cook Records, COOK00920.

Lord Invader (1959). *There's a Brown Girl in the Ring and Other Children's Calypso Songs* [Sound Recording]. Folkways Records, FW07262.

Video Recording:

Villon Films (1987). *Pan in "A" minor: Steelbands of Trinidad*. Iskra Films.

Survey of Carnival and the annual Panorama steel band festival. Interviews musicians and pan makers. Discusses historical links to African percussion.

Books:

Blake, F.I.R. (1995). *The Trinidad and Tobago steel pan: History and evolution*. Spain: Grafiques.

Dudley, S. (2008). *Music from behind the bridge: Steel band spirit and politics in Trinidad and Tobago*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dudley, S. (2004). *Carnival music in Trinidad: Experiencing music, expressing culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Elder, J.D. (1965). *Song games from Trinidad and Tobago*. American Folklore Society.

Hill, D.R. (1993). *Calypso calaloo: Early carnival music in Trinidad*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida.

Stuempfle, S. (1995). *The steelband movement: The forging of a national art in Trinidad and Tobago*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Journal Articles:

Aho, W.R. (1987). Steel band music in Trinidad and Tobago: The creation of a people's music. *Latin American Music Review*, 8(1), p. 26-58.

Brown, E.D. (1990). Carnival, calypso, and steelband in Trinidad. *The Black Perspective in Music*, 18(2), 81-100.

Delano, P. (1998). Images of Trinidad: Carnival 1997. *The Drama Review*, 42(3),



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