



Smithsonian Folkways

Persian Groove
A Smithsonian Folkways Lesson
Designed by: Sarra Sharif

Summary:

Listen to various instruments from Iran across different Iranian genres such as classical or pop. Determine the meaning of the lyrics in reference to the culture.

Suggested Grade Levels: 9-12

Country: Iran

Region: Middle East

Culture Group: Iranian

Genre: World

Instruments: voices, *dombek*, *daf*, and violins (to imitate the *kamanche*)

Language: Iranian, English

Co-Curricular Areas: Social Studies, English, Dance

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

Prerequisites: None

Objectives:

- Listening (to instruments, singing style, beats)
- Singing (partial and full melodies)
- Playing (melodies, occasional harmonies, rhythms)
- Location of Iran and learning about its culture (language, poetry, mysticism, people)

Materials:

- “Ay Sar Kotal At the Top of the Hill / Massom, Massom I’m Drunk With Love” by unknown Iranian folk musicians, from *Folk Songs and Dances of Iran* (FW08856)
<http://www.folkways.si.edu/ay-sar-kotal-at-the-top-of-the-hill/central-asia-islamica-world/music/track/smithsonian>
- Liner notes from “Ay Sar Kotal At the Top of the Hill/Massom, Massom I’m Drunk With Love”
http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW08856.pdf
- Map of Asia, Iran
- Pictures of the people, musical instruments, country
 - Esfandiary, Dr. Hossein-Ali Nouri. The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. Japan: Shumposa Photo Printing Co., Ltd., 1977.

- Waite, James and Jamileh Heydari. Persia. Islamic Republic of Iran: Yassavoli Publications, 1998.
- VHS: *Mystic Iran - the Unseen World*
 - A film by Aryana Farshad in association with Cinema Development Center ; produced and directed by Aryana Farshad; written by Aryana Farshad and Janelle Balnicke. New York : Wellspring Media, (2003).

Lesson Segments:

- 1. “Ay Sar Kotal At the Top of the Hill / Massom, Massom I'm Drunk With Love” by Unknown Iranian Folk Musicians, from *Folk Songs and Dances of Iran*.**(National Standards 1, 2, 3, 6, 8)
- 2. Literature and Music; Understanding Iranian Culture** (National Standards 8, 9)

- 1. “Ay Sar Kotal At the Top of the Hill / Massom, Massom I'm Drunk With Love” by Unknown Iranian Folk Musicians, from *Folk Songs and Dances of Iran*.**
 - a. Listen to recording.
 - b. Learn to sing the melody by rote.
 - c. Sing along with recording when it gets to 00:31.
 - d. Continue to listen: how are the *kamanches* (bowed lutes) altering the melody?
 - e. Add a few violins to the sung melody to imitate the *kamanches*.
 - f. Add the drums to the melody .
 - g. Between the verse and chorus, add improvised sections on the voice, violin, or *dombek*, keeping within the mode of the piece.

Assessment: How do the students perform? Do they grasp all the components of performance?

2. Literature & Music: Understanding Iranian Culture

- a. Persians have an ancient tradition of writing poetry and using this poetry in religious, mystic, and musical settings; show clips from “Mystic Iran: The Unseen World,” to illustrate this.
- b. The language of Iran is Farsi; Better illustrate Iranian language, musical instruments, artwork, people, and landscape (see below for sources).

Assessment: Can the students answer historical, cultural, and literary questions accurately?

Extension:

- Incorporate dance into the folk song “Ay Sar Kotal At the Top of the Hill”
- Find a Persian dancer in the community

- To inquire, email the Seattle Iranian community mailing list

References:

- Esfandiary, Dr. Hossein-Ali Nouri. The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. Japan: Shumposa Photo Printing Co., Ltd., 1977. (*For Iranian illustrations and calligraphy*)
- Fadiman, James and Robert Frager. Essential Sufism. New Jersey: Castle Book, 1998.
- Ladinsky, Daniel. The Gift, Poems by Hafiz, the Great Sufi Master. New York: Compass, 1999.
- Waite, James and Jamileh Heydari. Persia. Islamic Republic of Iran: Yassavoli Publications, 1998. (*For photographs of Iran.*)