

AFRICAN MUSIC

Context

- African drumming music is traditionally from Sub-Saharan Africa. Some scholars believe it originated in Mali.
- It's origins are in the war dances used to train and encourage warriors. Today, however, it is a very popular recreational dance and entertains people at funerals, weddings and any other get-together or party.
- It is learned through aural tradition—not written down but passed on through generations.

Syncopation	Playing off the main beat in the bar.
Structure	The layout and organisation of the
Acapella	Singing without accompaniment.
Master drummer	A title given to a drummer for their high skill and knowledge of drumming. The Master drummer is the leader.

Bass technique	A technique used when striking the middle of the djembe
Tone technique	A technique used when striking the outer perimeter of the djembe.
Slap technique	A technique used to slap the rim of the djembe.
Call and response	One person performs a rhythm/melody and someone else responds with a different rhythm/melody.
Cyclic pattern	A repeating pattern.
Polyrhythm (Poly = many)	Performing three or more conflicting rhythms at the same time.



Djembe (Gem-bay)

A popular West African drum played by striking the head of the drum with bare hands. The head is most commonly made of goatskin.



Balafon

The balafon is a pitched percussion instrument. It is made out of wood and played by striking beaters against the keys. It is very similar to the xylophone.



Cowbell

Named after a similar bell used by herdsman to keep track of the whereabouts of cows. The cowbell is made of metal and struck with a beater. It is very similar to the ago-go.



Axtse (Ah-ha-shay)

The axtse is a type of rattle with beads on the outside. It is played by being shaken and struck by the hand and thigh.

Kora

The kora is a 21 stringed instrument from West Africa. It is played by plucking the strings.



Clave (Cl-ay-ve)

Two cylindrical pieces of wood struck against each other.