

DRUMMING UP THE STORIES

Dave Holland

Grades PreK-5

Program Description

Dave delivers a high-octane lesson in multimedia storytelling guaranteed to spark the imagination and kindle a love of reading. Students learn how the drum was first used to communicate, how music can enhance storytelling and how instruments can be created from ordinary objects. Lots of audience participation ensures a memorable, fun-filled, percussion-loaded learning extravaganza as Dave sings, drums and narrates his way through an array of world folktales. Student interaction includes acting, drumming and using their voices to create sound effects. This experiential process helps students understand how other cultures draw on their environment and life experiences to create stories. By exploring the storytelling traditions of varied cultures students are encouraged to draw inspiration from their environment to express their own history.

Suggested Georgia Performance Standards Connections

**This does not represent all the possible performance standard connections.*

ELA5LSV2 - The student listens to and views various forms of text and media in order to gather and share information, persuade others, and express and understand ideas

ELA4R1h - The student identifies themes and lessons in folktales, talltales, and fables.

ELA1R6a - The student reads and listens to a variety of texts for information and pleasure.

MKGM.4a&b – Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

a. Improvise simple body percussion patterns.

b. Improvise soundscapes (e.g., weather, animals, and other sound effects).

MKGM.5a&b – Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

a. Create sound effects and movements to accompany songs, poems, and stories.

b. Create simple rhythmic patterns including quarter notes and quarter rests using non-traditional and/or traditional icons.

M4GM.4 – Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

a. Improvise rhythmic patterns using a variety of sound sources and answers to given rhythmic questions.

M4GM.5 – Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

a. Create rhythmic and/or melodic motives to enhance literature.

Artist Bio

Dave Holland is a well-rounded performer and highly charged educator. On stage this musician and teaching artist places himself in a number of musical settings—including world beat, jazz, orchestral, and theatrical productions. Dave is the leading member of *Ritmo Blu*, a world percussion trio that performs at regional schools, and is also on the *Young Audiences* roster. As founder of *Beatin' Path*, a company that produces rhythm based events, Dave spreads the message of community, teamwork, diversity, and environmental awareness through drum circles and interactive performances. He regularly performs and facilitates drum circles at regional area schools, urban communities, health fairs, and festivals. Dave's world travels include Cuba, Africa, Brazil, Italy, Spain, Australia, Japan and Russia.

Background on Art Form

Rhythm is a natural part of life. It's everywhere, from the cycle of seasons, the rolling in and out of ocean tides, and the wings of a butterfly, to our own heartbeats. Our desire to share our experiences with others and to establish a community is just as natural. With this knowledge, it's easy to imagine early man accompanying a story of hunting down a bear with the dramatic

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effect of a rhythm played on a hollow log or two rocks. Eventually, these ancient, simple and traditional *special effects* evolved into the *art* of drumming. Used to conjure up a mood and enhance storytelling, drumming is deeply rooted in the ancient traditions of Asia and Africa. Early storytellers would create sound effects by shaking bundles of dried seed pods, blowing through bamboo, or whirling vines over their heads to create a mood of mystery and intrigue. Today, we can learn about our own world by exploring the history and characters of these ancient tales; we can then use the sounds and characters from our own environments to create a story that is uniquely our own.

Pre-Performance

Suggested Introduction:

Today, we're going to enjoy a performance of interactive storytelling by Dave Holland, a professional drummer and storyteller. Dave will be using sound effects, drumming, and folk songs to tell stories from around the world. He'll also introduce us to different types of world percussion instruments and show us how to use instruments, our voices, and creative movement to make storytelling more fun and memorable.

Warm Up Questions to set the stage for engaging students:

What is percussion?

Can anyone name a type of drum?

What role do drums usually play in theatre, historic paintings, movies, or in a band?

How do drums vary from culture to culture?

How are drums played?

What are drumsticks? Why do you think they are called sticks?

Can drums be used for communication—how?

What are some ways you could learn to play the drum?

What do you think the first drum ever built looked like? How did people tell stories before there were books?

What kind of stories do you think people told a long time ago?

What are sound effects and what do they have to do with storytelling?

Can you make 3 different sound effects with your voice?

Warm Up Questions for meeting the Georgia Performance Standards for Listening/ Speaking/ Viewing:

General questions usually produce global responses which show how students listen critically and respond appropriately to oral communication in a variety of genres and media and when relating experiences as a member of an audience—part of the way YA programs help meet the State Department of Education's required Georgia Performance Standards for Listening, Speaking, Viewing, found under the English/Language Arts Standards for K-12.

Describe the perfect audience.

What are some of our class rules for being good listeners?

How do we show someone we appreciate their visit to our school or classroom?

How does being part of an audience help make you a good citizen?

What are some examples of bad audience behavior or attitudes?

How does a negative audience member effect your enjoyment of a show or performance?

How would this make the performer feel?

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How do we want the performer to feel when they leave our school or classroom?

Reflections (Post-Performance)

Reflection activities may vary, but some suggestions include:

Map some of the places encountered in the musical journey.

cultures currently being studied.

Journal about the performance experience.

Learn counts or beats which mirror mathematical concepts.

Create a short, in-class performance that combines storytelling with sound effects made from “found instruments” or voice.

Read stories which feature drums or drumming.

Research the history of drums.

Investigate the role of drums during battles.

Allow students to create their own drum which explores their cultural background or

Challenge students to draw or devise a way to recreate their favorite percussion instrument.

Additional Suggested Activities:

- Research foley art online. (See Resources) Watch a favorite movie clip and try to identify when and how foley art is being used.
- Make your own sound effects out of ordinary objects. *Examples:* wood blocks: gunshot, door knock; cups: horse hooves (knock on a table, cup down); glass bottle with cork and vinegar: monkey squealing, mice, birds (dip cork in vinegar and rub on bottle); egg shakers filled with rice: rattlesnake, rainforest (shake both together); Pringles can filled with gravel: crash, rain (turn can slowly); Pringles can filled with pennies, plus sack: crash (give one solid shake lengthwise); pan and spatula: sword unsheathing (pull spatula across the back of the pan quickly), swordfight (clang spatula on pan)
 - Stone Pass—Pass a stone around a circle of students. Each student must say one word describing the stone without repeating what has been said. See how many times the stone can go around the circle without repeating words.
 - A Story Treasure Hunt—Select a well-known fable or folktale. Simplify the plot into a sequence of events and transcribe onto cards with short sections of the tale on each. Hide the cards out of sequence throughout the school or classroom. Give a treasure map showing the exact location where all the cards are hidden to another group or class, or use clues to lead from one card to the next. Groups of students must find the cards and assemble them in correct order. The treasure is finding the *whole* story. Two classes can trade treasure hunts simultaneously by putting the stories on two different-colored cards. When each class has found the other's story, they confirm it by assembling it, learning the plot and sending representatives to retell it, or to act it out as a skit to the other class.
 - The Autobiography of Anything—everything has a story! Every *thing* comes from its elemental origin, from the Earth. Collect an assortment of *things*, from a piece of paper or a shoe, to a rubber band or paper clip. Then, imagine the life story of each thing. Describe their history backwards. Personify the thing and tell its story like an autobiography. *Examples:* Tell the tale of a piece of newspaper back to the tree in the forest; Tell the tale of a plastic toy's life, tracing its history back to the oil that became plastic; and then back to the prehistoric plants that created the oil.

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Vocabulary

rhythm – the regular pattern of beats; the aspect of music comprising all the elements (accent, meter, and tempo) that relate to a forward movement

tale – a story; a usually imaginative narrative of an event

character - the figure(s) in the story; a character can be a person or an animal.

plot - the series of events that make up a story; within the plot there will be a conflict (problem) and a resolution (problem-solving); parts of plot include the introduction, inciting incident, rising conflict, climax and resolution.

setting - the time and place in which the action of a story takes place; may serve simply as background to the story or may be a vital part of the story's development.; often the setting adds to the conflict.

dialogue - the spoken exchange between characters.

Anansi - a spider that many stories from Ghana are based upon

foley art - the creation of sound effects to enhance a story that were originally done for live stage and radio productions; now an integral part of film and television production

Resources for Teachers & Students

Storyarts, a Classroom Storytelling Resource <http://www.storyarts.org>

The Art of Foley, Cinematic Sound Effect Creation <http://www.marblehead.net/foley>

Rhythm Web, World Rhythm Online Resource <http://www.rhythmweb.com>

Circle of Stories uses film, photography, artwork and music to honor and expore Native American storytelling <http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories/>

Myths, Folktales & Fairy Tales <http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/mff/index.htm>

Books

Tales Alive by Susan Milord

The Adventures of Spider by Joyce Cooper Arkhurst

Shake it Up Tales! by Margaret Read

National Geographic's *Songcatchers: In Search of the World's Music* by Mickey Hart