

MUSIC · GRADES 3–6

World Music Traditions

A musical journey around the globe

Musical traditions to explore

<p>African drumming</p> <p>Complex rhythms played on djembes and talking drums. Often accompanies dancing and storytelling. Music brings communities together.</p>	<p>Irish traditional music</p> <p>Fiddle, tin whistle, and bodhrán (frame drum) create lively jigs and reels. Often played in sessions where musicians gather to play together.</p>
<p>Japanese taiko drumming</p> <p>Large drums played with wooden sticks. Combines music with movement and spiritual discipline. Very powerful and energetic.</p>	<p>Indian classical music</p> <p>Uses different scales (ragas) and features instruments like the sitar and tabla. Often improvised around traditional patterns.</p>

Compare and contrast

Tradition	Key instruments	Common use	Special features
West African	Djembe, talking drums	Ceremonies, dance	Call and response, polyrhythms
Irish	Fiddle, tin whistle, bodhrán	Social gatherings	Fast dance rhythms, sessions
Japanese	Taiko drums, shamisen	Festivals, ceremonies	Physical movement, group precision
Indian	Sitar, tabla, tanpura	Classical performance	Improvisation, ragas

Listening activity



Listen to examples from each tradition. For each one: What instruments can you hear? How does it make you feel? What do you notice about the rhythm? Is it fast or slow? Does it make you want to move or dance?

