

Lesson Ideas

Younger Students

Show your students a video of an Indonesian puppet show (wayang theatre). Select a gamelan piece of music that could accompany a short puppet show. Instruct students in groups of three or four to create their own two-dimensional puppets out of card stock and to create their own shadow puppet story line that will mesh with the gamelan song you have chosen. After the groups have had enough time to prepare, allow each group to perform for the rest of the class.

Teach the class about the scales used in gamelan: the slendro, a five-note scale, and the pélog, a seven-note scale. Write an example of each of the scales' notes on the board. Sing the notes to them and have them repeat after you. You can also teach them the notes' names: for slendro they are "pannunggal, gulu, dada, lima and enam"; for pélog the notes are named "bem, gulu, dhada, papat, lima, nem, barang."

Visit the following site for an example of the notes and sound of each scale:

http://www.oddmusic.com/gallery/hang/hang_files/

Older Students

After the students have learned about the instruments gamelan musicians play and watched some videos, organize a game of charades. Write gamelan instrument names on scraps of paper. Encourage a student to come to the front of the class, draw an instrument name from a hat and pretend he is playing that particular instrument. The first student to guess which instrument he is acting out gets to act out the next instrument.

This website may be helpful for this activity:

<http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/minisite/gamelan/about-gamelan/>

According to the University of Lethbridge, gamelan from Java is "predictable and orderly," whereas Balinese gamelan is "virtuosic with more fluctuations in dynamics and tempo." With the class, listen to gamelan pieces from both Indonesian regions and discuss the similarities and differences between both styles. For a more advanced class you can discuss the cyclic structures of Javanese gamelan, such as the ketawang with 16 beats per cycle and the ladrang with 32 beats per cycle.

Listening Activity

After your students have had the chance to listen to some gamelan pieces, test whether they can recognize this style from other Indonesian music forms. Play gamelan songs interspersed among other styles such as tembang sunda, kroncong, kecak and modern pop. Ask the class to guess whether a song is a gamelan piece or not. Use the songs in the YouTube section for gamelan pieces. Here are some YouTube links for other Indonesian styles:

Tembang Sunda:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q21r39raqVY>

Anklung Orchestra:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKuvCzP_xr4

Kroncong:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyZmdWh3RYw>

Kecak - a beautiful clip of the kecak "monkey chant" from the movie *Baraka*:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkxuPxdS58>

Modern/Hip-hop - *Kroncong Protocol* performed by Bondan Prakoso

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzXov472XEw>

Listening List

Udan Mas (Golden Rain), a well known Javanese gamelan song

The Madness of the Night and the Woven Stars by Feliz Anne R. Macahis - performance theatre that includes various gamelan instruments and voices

Pagodas, composed by Claude Debussy - the piece demonstrates how Debussy was inspired by gamelan music

Angklung Kebyar, a Balinese galimen song

Taruna Jaya, an example of the kotekan, a characteristic of Balinese gamelan where two musicians play interlocking rhythms

SambaSunda: *Ecek* - a modern gamelan fusion orchestra from Bandung, Indonesia

Kethoprakan SI, Myr: *Ladrang Asmaradana*

You can find free links to find this listening list on Youtube, plus itunes download links for resources in the listening list in the resources area for this unit.

Resource List

The Virtual Javanese Gamelan - Listen to, play and compose gamelan music

<http://www.wcsmusic.org.uk/modulegamelan.asp>

A comprehensive site that discusses gamelan music both from Bali and Java, describes the instruments and has sample recordings

http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/budaya_bangsa/Gamelan/Main_Page/main_page.htm/

National Geographic article on gamelan music

http://worldmusic.nationalgeographic.com/view/page.basic/genre/content.genre/gamelan_721/en_US

A discussion on the influence of gamelan music on Claude Debussy

<http://brenthugh.com/debnotes/gamelan.html>

Listening to Balinese Gamelan: A Beginner's Guide

<http://cnx.org/content/m15795/latest/>

A helpful slide show

<http://classes.uleth.ca/200703/musi3721y/Power%20Point/Indonesia.ppt>

Pictures of the gamelan instruments and a map of how they are arranged on the stage

<http://cfsworldmusic.wikispaces.com/Indonesia--Gamelan>

YouTube Links

The Southbank Centre offers several instructional YouTube videos on how to play some gamelan instruments

<http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/minisite/gamelan/about-gamelan/>

Some audio samples of SambaSunda, the modern gamelan fusion orchestra from Bandung, Indonesia

<http://www.kapa-productions.com/sambasunda/music.htm>

Mission Impossible theme song performed by Kuaetnika and featuring gamelan instruments

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1h5dcjRIQ-E>

A gamelan gong kebyar, a modern style of gamelan music from Bali

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldPMifPbngc>

A performance by community gamelan group Sekaa Gong Nila Kusuma

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STKBTRbRFq0>

The Bandung Institute of Technology (Indonesia) choir sings *Gamelan*, a song that imitates the music style's instruments.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-prEAmhqxw>

A Javanese gamelan orchestra accompanied by singers

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_TKY1sfi_00

A mini documentary on wayang, traditional Javanese-Indonesian puppet theatre, featuring gamelan music

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfydro4X2t0>

An exciting gamelan performance by Cudamani from Bali

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2EXzfpS6WK4>

An excerpt from *The Madness of the Night and the Woven Stars* by Feliz Anne R. Macahis

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WmRhWfrP9A>

Claude Debussy: *Pagodas*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxDjLhy3aRk>

Tabuh Kreasi Banyumas: *Angklung Kebyar*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjBD1kaY4QQ>

Putu Putrawan and Wayne Vitale: *Taruna Jaya* (an example of kotekan)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbCuEOXvuoE>

Kethoprakan SI, Myr: *Ladrang Asmaradana*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fth56Gd7_rw