

LESSON PLAN

African Retentions in the Americas

Grades 3-5

Objectives:

Students will:

- explain a definition of an African retention or Africanism.
- identify at two retentions in the U.S. and Brazil.
- explain a retention that influences his/her life.

GLCE:

4 – G4.0.2

Describe the impact of immigration to the United States on the cultural development of different places or regions of the United States (e.g., forms of shelter, language, food).

5 – U2.2.3

Describe how Africans living in North America drew upon their African past (e.g., sense of family, role of oral tradition) and adapted elements of new cultures to develop a distinct African-American culture.

Materials:

Teacher Information Sheet: African Retentions in America
Retentions from Africa Worksheet
Capoeira Coloring Sheet
West African Proverbs Worksheet
Bahiana & Brigadeiro Recipe Sheet
Hoppin' John Recipe
Collard Greens Recipe

Words to Know

African retention or
Africanism

- retained elements from African culture

Body percussion

- includes rhythmic combinations of the hands and other parts of the body performed alone or to accompany a song

Candomble (Kahn-dom-BLAY)	- an African Brazilian religion
Capoeira (Kop-o-WAY-ra)	- a martial art disguised as a dance
Call and response	- a melody is sung by one soloist; it is answered and responded to by one or more singers
cuisine	- preparing food; style of cooking
culture	- the beliefs, arts, patterns of behavior of a group
polyrhythms	- two or more different rhythms are played at once
oral tradition	- proverbs, folktales, storied, song, history passed from one generation to another

Introduction:

1. Write the following definition on the board:
African Retention: elements of traditional African culture that have been transferred to the Americas.
2. Ask students to read the definition and explain what they think it means.
3. Have the class do a simple polyrhythm. Half of the class will tap their desks with a regular 4/4 rhythm. The other half will tap fast eighth note taps. Explain that the class has just created a polyrhythm.
4. What are some ways to play body percussion?
(Discuss how different parts of the body can be used: head, arms, hands, feet, legs, hip, etc)

Activity 1:

Instruct the students to read the African Retentions in the Americas Worksheet and answer questions. The students are encouraged to work in pairs for this activity. Share the answers with the class.

Activity 2:

Ask students to move to the computers in pairs or groups and open Resources tab and begin to investigate the different links under the retentions tab that they are interested in.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some reasons today why people might use body percussion?
2. Have you heard any Anansi or Br'er Rabbit stories? If you were to create a folktale, what animal would you use for the main character?
3. Discuss how capoeira is performed.

Extended Activities:

1. Color the Capoeira Worksheet.
2. Color the Bahiana and follow the recipe to cook the brigadeiro-chocolate "Brazilian sweets"
3. What are some retentions that you think you will find in the *Bandits and Heroes* exhibit?
4. Click on "Let's Investigate" under the "Learn More About Brazil" section on www.banditsandheroes.org. What African retentions can you find?