

Global Music Lesson Plans

Lesson 5: Tempung Ketan – Bali & New Guinea (Age range 7-11)

Time required:

Either one 50 minute lesson or, with interlocking extension activity, two 50 minute lessons.

Activity:

Exploring Balinese rindik Gamelan music

Aims:

- To explore cyclic patterns.
- To introduce the Pentatonic scale.
- To use the Pentatonic scale to create simple tunes.

Pupils will learn:

- How to combine different pieces of rindik music successfully.
- To understand of the different role/ function of different textural layers.
- That different cultures have many similarities as well as fundamental differences in their musical traditions.

Web links you will need:

- Online [video of a rindik performance](#).
- Sound clip or CD of '[Celian](#)' by Sona Diabaté from the Rough Guide album 'Oxfam Africa'.

Other resources you will need:

Pitched percussion instruments (ideally one between two) and a small number of instruments that can produce sustained sounds e.g. recorders or keyboards.

Useful Information

Gamelan is the music of Indonesia. It is a rich and varied tradition of community music making that is particularly associated with the two neighbouring islands of Java and Bali. The word Gamelan, like our own word 'orchestra', describes a varied set of instruments (in this case metallic or wooden pitched percussion instruments), which are played together as an ensemble. Gamelan music plays an integral part of daily life on the islands, accompanying religious festivals, dance and shadow puppet theatre. The music is:

- Cyclic with ostinato layers.
- Based on a repeating 'core melody' or balungan from which all other parts relate.
- Pentatonic (called the slendro scale).
- Rhythmically vibrant featuring complex, decorative interlocking melodies.
- Essentially an outdoor music played in different community settings.

The following activities explore a form of gamelan music called rindik. Rindik is a small bamboo gamelan made up of only two pitched bamboo percussion instruments and a flute, and is heard both indoors and outdoors as a 'backdrop' to smaller more intimate social occasions. The flute and bamboo instruments all perform the same melody, the flute playing the melody in sustained notes and the bamboo pitched percussion (which are unable to sustain notes) playing repeated notes. The melody is decorated with an intricate and rhythmically exciting 'interlocking melody'.

The African balafon is a more commonly known as a marimba. It is an instrument that is common to almost every region of the African continent. The song '[Celian](#)' by [Sona Diabaté](#) fuses traditional and contemporary African musical elements using a traditional cyclical balafon ostinato as part of the accompaniment to a contemporary song.

Lesson plan	
Starter	<p>Interlocking melodies are a key feature of all gamelan music. This activity introduces pupils to the concept using an interlocking <i>rhythm</i>. Using the Interlocking Activity Worksheet (below):</p> <p>Count aloud the numbers 1 to 8 keeping a steady pulse, repeating them a number of times.</p> <p>Tap the pulse (shown as shaded circles) on knees whilst counting.</p> <p>Divide the class into two groups. Referring to the line of shaded circles below the number grid, ask Group 1 to only clap the numbers that have stems going up. Ask group 2 to clap the numbers that have stems going down. Practice them separately and then together. The two patterns should lock together into</p>

	<p>a steady seamless pulse. Point out that interlocking is a key feature of rindik gamelan music.</p>
Main	<p>Introducing Rindik Gamelan Introduce Rindik Gamelan by watching the video of a rindik performance. Discuss the timbres of the instruments and the way in which they are played. Point out that, in Bali, the rindik ensemble is often heard in intimate settings because of its gentle sound e.g. as background music in hotels. Ask pupils to brainstorm words that describe the music e.g. busy, repeating, hypnotic etc. Extension: Distribute thesauruses and, in groups, look up the words suggested. Pupils then select more appropriate or sophisticated words and feed these back to the teacher.</p> <p>Performing Tempung Ketan. Introduce the pentatonic scale (called Slendro) on which Gamelan music is based and, using the 'Performing a Balinese Rindik Piece Worksheet' (below) work out how the pitches are referred to by number. Sing and/or play up and down the scale. Point out that the Gamelan music is also based on a cyclic (repeating) core melody called 'balungen'. There are two versions of the core melody in Tempung Ketan: a sustained melody (played on a Balinese flute) and a version performed in repeating notes on the bamboo rindik Gamelan (played in this way because the bamboo instruments cannot sustain sounds). Each core melody part is included on the Worksheet in numerical notation and below as an audio file. Perform Tempung Ketan Flute (Core Melody 1) on instruments that can sustain notes like recorders or keyboards set to a 'flute' voice. Perform Tempung Ketan Core (Core Melody 2) on pitched percussion. Then 'cycle' the melodies a number of times until secure. Ask pupils what is the effect of the cyclic melody?</p> <p>Listening and making comparisons. Compare Tempung Ketan and/or the Rindik Gamelan piece with the African contemporary song 'Celian' by Sona Diabaté from Guinea. This song contains a traditional cyclic melody performed on a balafon, an African marimba. This listening activity could be carried out using a Venn diagram or by using the following prompts: Which piece repeats a single melody? Which do they think is oldest? Which piece has the most instruments? Which piece could they dance to? Which piece has the most variety? How are the two pieces similar? Why do both pieces use a xylophone type of instrument as its core? Which piece do they prefer? Point out that both use a cyclic melody and decorative counter-melody played on a xylophone type of instrument (i.e. they both exploit instrumental resources in similar ways). In addition, 'Celian' includes additional layers i.e. lead vocal, backing vocals, guitars, djembe and other traditional drums. Point out that music of apparently diverse cultures can share many similarities.</p>

	<p>Extension: Point out that, in rindik pieces, the core melody parts are decorated with intricate interlocking parts. Teach the decorative Kotekan (interlocking melody) parts (see sound clips below). Begin with the Wadon (girl) and then the Lanon (boy). Rehearse them separately and then together as an interlocking melody.</p> <div data-bbox="368 497 1206 757" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Tempung Ketan (whole piece) Tempung Ketan Core (Core Melody 2) Tempun Ketan Interlock 1 Tempun Ketan Interlock 2 Tempun Ketan Interlock Both Tempung Ketan Flute (Core Melody 1) Tempung Ketan Flute and Core (Core Melodies 1 and 2)</p> </div> <p>5. Allocate parts to different groups of pupils and perform the piece as a class.</p>
Plenary	<p>Ask pupils to watch the video of a rindik performance. Ask the pupils in groups to agree a question that they would like to ask one or other groups of musicians. What do the class think would be the answer to each question?</p>

Interlocking Activity Worksheet

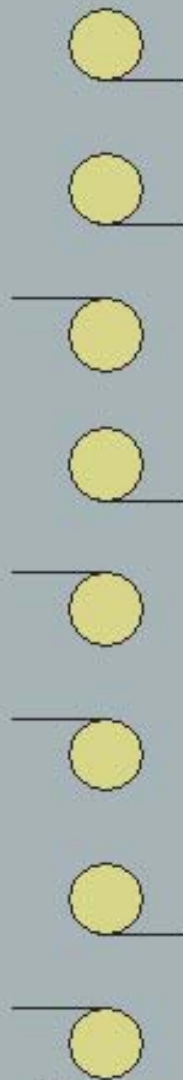
All: Tap a steady pulse



Count

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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Group 1: clap stems *up*



Group 2: clap stems *down*



A Balinese Rindik Piece Worksheet



Slendro Scale (pentatonic): G A B D E
1 2 3 5 6

Balunean (core melody - CM) parts 1 & 2 ↓ *(Kotekan parts start here)*

CM ₁	2	1	2	1	5	6													
CM ₂	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

CM ₁	1	6	1	6	1	5													
CM ₂	1	1	6	6	1	1	6	6	1	1	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

Kotekan (interlocking) parts (Extension)

Lanang	.	1	2	.	1	.	2	1
wadon	6	.	5	6	.	6	5	.