

TAKE ME TO THE RIVER NEW ORLEANS

Forward

In the words of the renowned saying, “it takes a village to raise a child.” Filmmaker Martin Shore, New Orleans music educators and cultural bearers, along with music educators from Berklee, Boston and New York City, enthusiastically came together to develop a dynamic set of cross-disciplinary resources to excite, engage and inspire your students in learning the music culture of New Orleans. The remarkable film *Take Me to the River New Orleans* richly documents music-making in New Orleans, which is at the core of American music culture. It infuses a multiplicity of genres, making historical linkages and informing the through lines of American culture and history. The thoughtful curriculum unit design maintains the integrity of music culture, which holds reverence for the past, and presses forward into a future that continues the inclusive, communal spirit of human connections through storytelling and music-making. What a privilege it is to welcome and expand music-cultural engagement that furthers the all-embracing influences of New Orleans music.

Krystal Banfield, EdD
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New Orleans is the perfect *mélange* of culture, legacy, and music. Visit New Orleans and you will find yourself transported to a storybook place of sounds, sights and aromas so appealing you’re compelled to explore and understand the culture. Culture with a diverse and inclusive community that not only built this city, but ensures this special place continues to flourish and grow on the foundation of its storied legacy and history.

The origins and influences of the cultural foundation are a wonderful blend of African, French, Spanish, Caribbean, Haitian, Cuban, and Native American Choctaw. New Orleans music is in fact the **FIRST** World Music. It is a unique cultural jewel and musical gift to the world which gave birth to multiple genres while inspiring the world’s popular culture and musical landscape.

New Orleans Music is rich and encompassing. It combines West African rhythms, Afro Cuban beats (*tresillo* and *habanera*), Haitian syncopation, European military marching brass bands, and so much more. Its only true definition can be compared to one of the most famous culinary dishes of the region: Gumbo!

Within these curricular units, our desire is for you as teachers to learn more about New Orleans' rich culture, heritage and legacy as seen in the film. But also, as seen in the film, our goal is to pass this knowledge to the next generation, your students, and we hope it inspires you to find new music and cultures to explore, learn about, and teach in your classroom, that are relevant to your students.

We are committed to making sure generations that follow will know where the music and this precious culture came from. What's important is that the world supports this culture, this city, these musicians. We must stay true to its rich culture and steadfast heritage. We are all cultural custodians.

- Martin Shore
Director, *Take Me To The River New Orleans*

Unit Overview

Berklee PULSE, Soundtrap for Education and the Take Me To The River Education Initiative present the following educational resources based on the documentary *Take Me To The River New Orleans* by filmmaker Martin Shore. These lessons strive to share the story of where American music came from, promote tolerance and respect for all people and cultures, and create a deeper understanding of history and civil rights through music. Teachers can select from a variety of lesson types, including a mix of history, listening activities, hands-on musical activities (singing, transcribing, playing instruments, clapping), and opportunities to use Soundtrap, or another DAW to create unique compositions.

In Unit 2: *Congo Square and the Foundation of New Orleans Music*, students will learn about the history of Congo Square; learn and perform the foundational rhythms of New Orleans Music (Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and Son Clave); and explore polyrhythms using Soundtrap's Beatmaker or another DAW.

Unit 2: Congo Square and the Foundation of New Orleans Music

Essential Questions:

- What is the historical importance of Congo Square? (Lesson 1)
- How did the events at Congo Square influence the rhythms heard in New Orleans and other popular music today? (Lesson 2)
- What rhythms are the foundation of New Orleans music? (Lesson 2)
- What are polyrhythms and how are they used in New Orleans music? (Lesson 3)

Grade Level

8 - 12

Content Area

- General Music
- Instrumental Ensembles

Unit Overview

Congo Square is an open public space located in Louis Armstrong Park on North Rampart Street in New Orleans, Louisiana. From the earliest days of New Orleans (founded in 1718) until the mid-1800s, Congo Square was a space where enslaved Africans were allowed to gather. Hundreds and sometimes thousands of enslaved Africans would congregate on Sunday afternoons to socialize and set up a marketplace to sell food, arts, and crafts. By 1819, these weekly gatherings included thousands of participants and onlookers.

Historians credit the gatherings in Congo Square with keeping African music and dance practices alive in North America. These early gatherings in Congo Square influenced New Orleans musical traditions, including Traditional New Orleans Jazz, Mardi Gras Indians, Second Lines, R&B, and more. To this day, the musical forms observed in Congo Square continue to be a part of people's lives in New Orleans. Congo Square remains as a gathering space, which includes drum circles hosted every Sunday, festivals, political demonstrations, and more.

In this unit, students will explore the history of Congo Square and how the African Diaspora gave birth to the distinct rhythms of New Orleans music and culture. Utilizing the Bamboula, Tresillo, Habanera, Son Clave, and Cinqullo rhythms, students will listen to and learn the foundational rhythms of New Orleans music, which are still utilized in New Orleans music today, including Jazz, Brass Band, Funk, and Bounce.

This unit is designed to be taught over several classes and should be introduced prior to teaching the units on Mardi Gras Indians/Black Masking Indians, Traditional New Orleans Jazz, and Brass Bands.

Objectives (for all lessons)

Students will be able to:

- Describe the history of Congo Square. (Lesson 1)
- Understand how historical events can impact music development and creation. (Lesson 1 & 2)
- Identify, demonstrate, and understand the differences between the foundational rhythms of New Orleans music - Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and Son Clave Rhythms. (Lesson 2)
- Understand and identify polyrhythms. (Lesson 3)
- Draw upon existing rhythmic patterns to create their own artistic work. (Lesson 3)

National Core Arts Standards

Creating:

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Responding:

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Connecting:

Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Materials Needed

- Computer or Tablet
- Berklee PULSE Account
- Media Links (see below)
- Whiteboard
- Percussion instruments, non-pitched and pitched (or their current instrument)
- Soundtrap or other available DAW
 - For information comparing DAWs, visit <https://pulse.berklee.edu/content/tools/comparechart/>
- Headphones
- Optional: MIDI controller

Media (All available through Berklee PULSE)

- Lesson 1: Congo Square History - A Gathering Place
 - Videos:
 - [The Spirits of Congo Square \(3:18\)](#)
 - [Odadaa! Excerpts from "Congo Square" \(8:32\)](#)
 - Congo Square Maps:
 - [Google Earth Congo Square](#)
 - [1728 La Nouvelle Orleans Map](#)
 - [1794 Plano de la Ciudad de la Nueva Orleans](#)
 - [1883 Robinson's Atlas of the City of New Orleans - Vieux Carre](#)
 - [1883 Robinson's Atlas of the City of New Orleans - Treme](#)
 - [Code Noir](#)
 - Congo Square Illustrations:
 - [The Bamboula - E.W. Kemble](#)
 - [1819 Notebook of Benjamin Henry Latrobe - Illustration of drum played at Congo Square](#)
 - [1819 Notebook of Benjamin Henry Latrobe - Illustration of string instrument played at Congo Square](#)
 - [1819 Notebook of Benjamin Henry Latrobe - Illustration of percussion instruments played at Congo Square](#)
- Lesson 2: The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans
 - Videos:
 - Congo Square - *Take Me to the River New Orleans* (video embedded in [lesson](#)) (1:09)
 - [Congo Square Drum Circle \(2:38\)](#)
 - [Congo Square Dancers \(1:04\)](#)

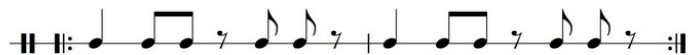
- Rhythm Demonstrations:
 - The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans (video embedded in [lesson](#)) (5:09)
 - The Impact of Congo Square in Music Today (video embedded in [lesson](#)) (2:22)
- Rhythmic Notation (see [lesson](#) for media):
 - Bamboula/Tresillo Rhythm
 - Son Clave Rhythm (3-2)
 - Habanera Rhythm
 - Cinquillo Rhythm
- Worksheet - The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans
 - [Dave Bartholomew's "Country Boy"](#) (3:05)
 - [Georges Bizet's "Carmen"](#) (2:10)
 - [Scott Joplin's "Solace"](#) (7:16)
 - [The Meters's "Hey Pocky Way"](#) (4:04)
 - [Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee's "Despacito"](#) (4:41)
- Additional Listening Exercises:
 - [Sidney Bechet's "Under the Creole Moon"](#)
 - [Jelly Roll Morton's "New Orleans Blues"](#)
 - [Rebirth Brass Band's "Feel Like Funkin' it Up"](#)
 - [Ed Sheeran's "Shape of You"](#)
 - [The Chainsmoker's Don't Let Me Down"](#)
 - [John Legend's "All of Me"](#)
 - [Shabba Ranks's "Dem Bow"](#)
- Lesson 3 - Polyrhythms:
 - Videos:
 - Jon Batiste describes the New Orleans Sound (embedded in lesson) (1:18)
 - [Jalikunda African Drums at the Montserrat African Music Festival](#) (4:29)
 - [Getting Started with BEATMAKER](#) (1:06)
 - Polyrhythm Exercises (embedded in [lesson](#)):
 - Polyrhythm Exercise 1
 - Polyrhythm Exercise 2

Key Terms

- African Diaspora (1) -
 - The movement of African people, whether voluntary through emigration or involuntary through enslavement, to locations throughout the world – largely the Americas.
 - The many locations to which slave traders took enslaved Africans to make up the African Diaspora.
- Bamboula Rhythm (Also known as the Second Line Rhythm or Street Beat) (2,3) - A rhythm that derives from the structural core of sub-Saharan African music traditions. It is at the foundation of New Orleans African American musical styles including jazz, brass band music, and the music of Mardi Gras Indians. This rhythm is also prevalent in musical traditions found in many parts of the African Diaspora.



- Cinquillo Rhythm (2,3) - A rhythmic pattern that is common in Cuban contradanza and danzon music. The rhythm is an embellishment of the Tresillo rhythm and features a strong syncopated pattern.



- Enslaved person (1) - A person who was forced to perform labor or services against their will under threat of physical mistreatment, separation from family or loved ones, or death. We utilize language like “enslaved people” versus “slaves” to help separate a person’s identity from the circumstance they were placed in. Using the terms enslaved and enslaver are subtle but powerful ways of affirming that slavery was forced upon that person, rather than an inherent condition.
- Habanera Rhythm (2,3) - A Cuban form of syncopation used as the rhythmic pulse for some Latin and jazz pieces. It was a major influence on the musicians from New Orleans who traveled back and forth from New Orleans to Cuba, making their way into the culture and adding the “Spanish tinge” to the melting pot of New Orleans culture.



- Improvisation (2,3) - The freedom to create music on the spot. Improvisation allows spontaneous expression and interaction between and among musicians during a performance.
- Polyrythm (3)- When you hear two different meters playing at the same time. For example, you might hear a polyrythm when one instrument sounds like it is playing notes in a triple meter (three beats per measure) while another instrument sounds like it is playing in a duple meter (two or four beats per measure).

- Son Clave (2,3)- A rhythmic pattern that is composed of a three-side and a two-side. The first measure features three beats, and the second measure features two beats. The rhythmic pattern originated in sub-Saharan African musical traditions and is commonly utilized in Cuban popular music. The 3 - 2 son clave rhythm will be discussed in this lesson plan.



- Tresillo Rhythm (2,3)- Spanish for the word "triple," this rhythmic pattern has three equal notes that are played within the same time span occupied by two notes. When enslaved African people were brought to Cuba, they brought this rhythm with them based on the Bamboula rhythm.



Lesson 1: Congo Square - A Gathering Place

1. Watch the video [The Spirits of Congo Square](#) (3:18), which provides students with the history of Congo Square.
 - a. Note: The video utilizes language like slaves versus enslaved. When teaching about Congo Square, this lesson will utilize language like “enslaved people” versus “slaves” to help separate a person’s identity from the circumstance they were placed in. Using the terms enslaved and enslaver are subtle but powerful ways of affirming that slavery was forced upon that person, rather than an inherent condition.
2. Once the video concludes, facilitate a discussion about what stood out to students during the Congo Square video.
 - a. Why do they think the narrator talked about improvisation as it related to a place?
 - b. Are students familiar with other spaces like this where enslaved people gathered?
3. Introduce students to the location of Congo Square using the [Google Earth Image of Congo Square](#). Congo Square is located inside Louis Armstrong Park in the Treme neighborhood of New Orleans.
 - a. What do they notice about Congo Square today? Does it feel similar to other parks or spaces that they’ve been in?
4. Explain to students that they’ll be looking at the early New Orleans map. First, have students look at the [1728 La Nouvelle Orleans Map](#).
 - a. What do students observe about this map?
 - b. Why do they think it’s important that the earliest inhabitants of New Orleans were close to a body of water?
5. Show students the [1794 Plano de la Ciudad de la Nueva Orleans](#) map. Point out to students that the top of the map (marker 17 closest to marker 13) is where Congo Square is located.
 - a. Ask students what they observe on this map.
 - b. Why would Congo Square be located towards the back part of the city?
6. Have students explore the [1883 Robinson’s Atlas of the City of New Orleans - Vieux Carre](#) and [1883 Robinson’s Atlas of the City of New Orleans - Treme](#).
 - a. Note: Vieux Carre translates to “old square,” and refers to the French Quarter. Before 1788, the French Quarter encompassed the entirety of New Orleans.

You can connect the two maps together, with the Treme map placed above the Vieux Carre map to get a full picture of what the city previously looked like.

- b. Explain to students that the French Quarter was a predominantly European, white neighborhood and the Treme is a historically Black neighborhood.
- c. In what ways has the city of New Orleans grown in this map versus the map from 1794?

7. After students have an opportunity to view the maps, ask students how the layout of the city informed the location of Congo Square. What can studying old maps tell us about the history of a location?
8. Ask students why they think Congo Square became a gathering space for enslaved people. Once students have an opportunity to respond, explain that enslaved people were able to gather in Congo Square due to the [Code Noir](#).

Note: In addition to establishing the conditions of enslavement, the Code Noir also contains language regarding the expulsion of Jewish people from France's colonies. The information that is specific to Congo Square is listed in Article VI.

Explain that this code was first adopted in New Orleans in 1724, and the Code Noir predominantly focused on defining conditions of enslavement. Among some of these conditions was that all enslaved people should be Catholic, not Protestant.

Per Article VI, the Code Noir noted "We enjoin all our subjects, of whatever religion and social status they may be, to observe Sundays and the holidays that are observed by our subjects of the Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Faith. We forbid them to work, nor make their slaves work, on said days, from midnight until the following midnight. They shall neither cultivate the earth, manufacture sugar, nor perform any other work, at the risk of a fine and an arbitrary punishment against the masters, and of confiscation by our officers of as much sugar worked by said slaves before being caught."

The Code Noir dictated that Sundays were to be observed as holy days for all people of the colony, which included enslaved people. This provided enslaved people with liberty they didn't have on other days.

9. Explain to students that the individuals who were impacted by the Code Noir and who ultimately gathered in Congo Square were enslaved Africans who were brought to New Orleans through the Trans-Atlantic and Domestic Slave Trade.
 - a. Extension: Students can explore maps of the [Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade](#) to trace the path of the enslaved people from their homes to New Orleans. A

majority of enslaved people were born in Africa, Haiti, Cuba, and other parts of the Caribbean.

10. Display the [The Bamboula - E.W. Kemble](#). This illustration is the most famous illustration depicting what Congo Square was like in the 1700 and 1800s. Explain to students that much of what historians know about Congo Square came from journal entries written by people who witnessed the gatherings.
 - a. Ask students what they observe in the photo.
 - b. What does the photo tell us about gatherings in Congo Square? Student Responses may include:
 - i. The musicians are sitting on the ground.
 - ii. There are one or two people dancing at a time.
 - iii. They are organized in a circle, with no line between the audience and participants.
 - iv. There is a wall separating their gathering from the rest of the city.

11. The most detailed account of Congo Square is from a February 1819 journal entry by architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe. In his account, he observed more than 500 to 600 individuals gathering.

Latrobe noted that the drummers sounded "horses trampling on a wooden floor," and it was likely that they were creating the complex polyrhythms that characterize ritual drumming in West Africa and the Americas (see Lesson 3 on Polyrhythms below). While one group of women was "respond[ing] to the Song of their leader" in call-and-response fashion, others were "walk[ing], by way of dancing, round the music in the Center."

Others who viewed these gatherings included James Creecy, whose 1834 account noted that "groups of fifties and hundred may be seen in different sections of the square, with banjos, tom toms, violins, jawbones, triangles, and various other instruments."

In 1808, Christian Schultz observed that "they have their own national music, consisting for the most part of a long kind of narrow drum of various sizes, from two to eight feet in length, three or four which make a band."

12. This imagery of the music played in Congo Square was illustrated in Benjamin Henry Latrobe's 1819 journal. Show students the illustrations from Benjamin Henry Latrobe:
 - a. [1819 Notebook of Benjamin Henry Latrobe - Illustration of drum played at Congo Square](#)
 - b. [1819 Notebook of Benjamin Henry Latrobe - Illustration of string instrument played at Congo Square](#)
 - c. [1819 Notebook of Benjamin Henry Latrobe - Illustration of percussion instruments played at Congo Square](#)

13. Ask students:

- a. What materials might these instruments be made out of?
- b. How might these instruments be played?
- c. Do you know any similar instruments?

14. Then explain to students that known instruments in Congo Square include the hand drums, the banza (the American banjo derived from this African string instrument), shells, the donkey and/or mule jaw bone, shakers, and gourds.

15. Play students a video from [Odadaa! Excerpts from "Congo Square"](#) (8:32). After students watch this video, ask students:

- a. How are the instruments in this video similar to the ones illustrated in 1819?
- b. How are some of the instruments played in the video? How does this compare to how you thought the instruments in the illustration would be played?

Assessment/Extensions for Lesson 1: Congo Square - A Gathering Place

Extension:

- Have your students learn more about the music, dances, and economics of Congo Square by reading *Come Sunday: A Young Reader's History of Congo Square* by Freddi Williams Evans.
- Students can learn more about the enslaved people of Congo Square utilizing the [Afro-Louisiana History and Genealogy database](#) created by Dr. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, a noted New Orleans writer and historian who uncovered the background of 100,000 enslaved people who were brought to Louisiana in the 18th and 19th centuries making fortunes for their owners.

Lesson 2 - The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans

1. Explain to students that they will be watching videos of modern-day Congo Square.
2. Play the following videos:
 - *Take Me to the River New Orleans* about Congo Square (video embedded in [lesson](#))(1:09)
 - [Congo Square Drum Circle](#) (2:38)
 - [Congo Square Dancers](#) (1:04)
3. Ask students to reflect on the videos they watched.
 - What did they observe about the location of this drum circle?
 - What kind of instruments were played in these videos?
 - What did they notice about the singing?
 - How did the participants (musicians and dancers) interact with each other?
4. Explain to students that what they observed in these videos is reminiscent of what occurred during the gatherings that took place in Congo Square. Congo Square's influence can still be heard and felt in the music and traditions of New Orleans.
5. Explain to students that they will be learning about the most prominent rhythms that were first played in Congo Square more than 300 years ago. Play students the video *The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans* (video embedded in [lesson](#)) (5:09) to introduce the predominant rhythms heard in New Orleans music.
6. Tell students that the first rhythm they will learn about is the Bamboula rhythm. Originating in Africa, the Bamboula spread throughout the West Indies, South, and North America through the Transatlantic slave trade. The Bamboula was brought to New Orleans by enslaved Africans from the Caribbean, predominantly from Haiti and Cuba. The Bamboula rhythm is also known under a different name called the Tresillo rhythm.
 - Tresillo is a Spanish word meaning triplet. This rhythmic pattern has three equal notes that are played within the same time span occupied by two notes.
 - Then explain to students that like in most rhythms of African cultures, the Bamboula not only refers to a rhythm, but it also refers to a djembe-like drum which is made from a piece of bamboo that is covered with a calfskin or hide and a dance of the same name. The Bamboula rhythms gave birth to the distinct rhythm of New Orleans music, and it is an integral part of the fabric of New Orleans music and sound.

7. Introduce the Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm to students, so they can visualize and listen to the rhythm. The audio player is embedded in the [lesson](#).

- Students should then clap along to the rhythm with the music player, emphasizing the syllables “Bam-Bou-La” as they clap along with the rhythms.

8. Once students master clapping the Bamboula/Tresillo rhythmic pattern:
- practice the rhythmic pattern at various tempos
 - practice the rhythmic pattern on different instruments, including pitched and unpitched percussion or their individual instruments.

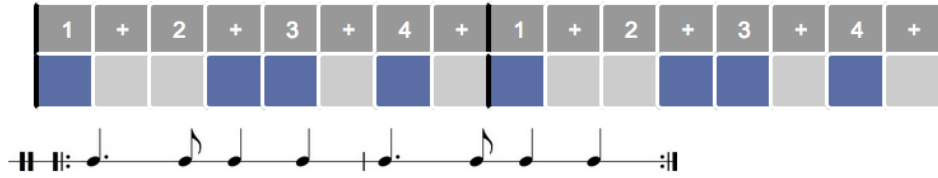
9. Both the Bamboula and Tresillo rhythms can be thought of as variations of the Son Clave rhythm. Students will listen to the Son Clave and then they will clap along to the Son Clave rhythm. The audio player is embedded in the [lesson](#).

- Ask students what differences they heard between the Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm and the Son Clave rhythm.

10. Explain to students that another common rhythm is the Habanera rhythm. The Habanera rhythm is a form of syncopation that is used as a rhythmic pulse for many Latin and Jazz compositions, and it was a major influence on New Orleans musicians who traveled between New Orleans to Cuba. Early New Orleans musicians, like Jelly Roll Morton, described the Habanera rhythm as the “Spanish tinge.” The Habanera rhythm was a rhythmic staple of Ragtime and early jazz.

Like the Bamboula and Tresillo rhythm, the Habanera is also a social dance that Cubans of African descent developed from European social dances. The dance became so popular that it traveled back across the Atlantic and became popular in Europe.

11. Introduce the Habanera Rhythm to students so they can visualize and listen to the rhythm. Students should then clap along to the rhythm with the music player. The audio player is embedded in the [lesson](#).



12. Once students master clapping the Habanera rhythmic pattern:

- practice the rhythmic pattern at various tempos
- practice the rhythmic pattern on different instruments, including pitched and unpitched percussion or their individual instruments

13. Ask students what differences they heard between the Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm and the Habanera rhythm. The Habanera rhythm is similar to the Bamboula and Tresillo rhythms, adding a backbeat to the dotted eighth and sixteenth note pattern.

14. Play students the video *The Impact of Congo Square in Music Today* (video embedded in [lesson](#)) (2:22)

15. Distribute *Worksheet 1 - The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans*. Explain to students that they'll be listening to music to hear how these rhythms remain a present part of music today. Students will fill in the worksheet for steps 16 - 20 below.

16. Students will listen to [Dave Bartholomew's *Country Boy*](#) (3:05). While listening to this song, ask your students to:

- Identify which rhythm they heard used during this tune (Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)
- Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?
- Describe if the rhythm was played fast or slow. How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?
- If time allows, have students clap along with the rhythm of the song.
- Note: In this selection, Bartholomew uses the Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm during the saxophone riff. The use of this rhythm on his 1949 record helped make the pattern one of the most over-used rhythmic patterns in 1950s Rock n'Roll.

17. Students will then listen to [Georges Bizet's *"Carmen"*](#) (2:10). While listening to this song, ask your students to:

- Identify which rhythm they heard used during this tune (Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)

- Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?
 - Describe if the rhythm was played fast or slow. How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?
 - If time allows, have students clap along with the rhythm of the song.
 - Note: In this selection, Bizet predominantly uses the Habanera rhythm.
18. Students will then listen to [Scott Joplin's "Solace"](#) (7:16). While listening to this song, ask your students to:
- Identify which rhythm they heard used during this tune (Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)
 - Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?
 - Describe if the rhythm was played fast or slow. How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?
 - If time allows, have students clap along with the rhythm of the song.
 - Note: In this selection, Joplin predominantly uses the Habanera rhythm.
19. Then have your students listen to [The Meters's "Hey Pocky Way"](#) (4:04). While listening to this song, ask your students to:
- Identify which rhythm they heard used during this tune (Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)
 - Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern.. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?
 - Describe if the rhythm was played fast or slow. How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?
 - If time allows, have students clap along with the rhythm of the song.
 - Note: This selection features the Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm in the drum part.
20. Lastly, have your students listen to [Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee's "Despacito"](#) (4:41). While listening to this song, ask your students to:
- Identify which rhythm they heard used during this tune (Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)
 - Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern.. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?
 - Describe if the rhythm was played fast or slow. How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?
 - If time allows, have students clap along with the rhythm of the song.
 - Note: Fonsi prominently uses the Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm throughout the song, including on the guitar and synth lines, as well as in the drum line in the chorus.
21. Extension: If time is available or if you'd like to engage in deeper listening with your students, repeat this listening exercise with:

- [Sidney Bechet's "Under the Creole Moon"](#) (Bamboula/Tresillo bass line, Cinquillo in drums)
- [Jelly Roll Morton's "New Orleans Blues"](#) (Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and Cinquillo rhythms)
- [Rebirth Brass Band's "Feel Like Funkin' it Up"](#) (Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm)
- [Ed Sheeran's "Shape of You"](#) (Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm)
- [The Chainsmokers's "Don't Let Me Down"](#) (Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm)
- [John Legend's "All of Me"](#) (Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm)
- [Shabba Ranks's "Dem Bow"](#) (Bamboula/Tresillo rhythm)

Assessment/Extensions for Lesson 2: The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans

- Assessment:
 - Students are able to perform all rhythmic patterns presented in the lesson.
 - Students can identify all the rhythmic patterns in selected recordings.
- Extension:
 - Have students learn the Cinquillo rhythm and listen to how the Cinquillo rhythm shows up in different musical genres, including jazz and pop music.
 - Connect this lesson to the [Berklee PULSE Unit on the Clave Rhythm](#)
 - Review percussion notation in [Berklee PULSE's Study Room](#)

Lesson 3 - Polyrhythms

1. [Review the Bamboula/Tresillo, Habanera, and 3-2 Son Clave rhythms](#) with students by clapping along with the music player or by playing the rhythms on pitched or unpitched percussion.
2. Remind students that the rhythms they've been studying were brought to the United States through the African Diaspora. Explain that the African Diaspora is the movement of African people, whether voluntary through emigration or involuntary through enslavement, to locations throughout the world – largely the Americas.
3. In the songs that they heard in the previous class, they heard the basic Bamboula/Tresillo rhythms and beats, but that wasn't all they heard. More rhythms were played along with it.
4. Watch the video of Jon Batiste talking about the New Orleans sound and demonstrating a clapping pattern (embedded in [lesson](#)) (1:18).
 - a. Ask students what they observed in the video.
 - b. Were the rhythms similar to those they learned about in the previous class (Bamboula, Habanera, etc)?
 - c. What do they think this would sound like in a performance context?
5. Play the video of [Jalikunda African Drums at the Montserrat African Music Festival](#) (4:29). After watching this video:
 - a. Ask students what they observed in the video.
 - b. Did they hear one beat or rhythm that served as the foundation for all of the other rhythmic patterns? If yes, what was it?
 - c. How did the performance change when different drum beats were added in? Did it make it more exciting or change the tone of the performance?
6. Explain when rhythms with different beat subdivisions are layered on top of each other, this is called a polyrhythm – poly meaning more than one.
 - a. A polyrhythm is when you hear two different meters playing at the same time. For example, you might hear a polyrhythm when one instrument sounds like it is playing notes in a triple meter (three beats per measure) while another instrument sounds like it is playing in a duple meter (two or four beats per measure).
 - b. The rhythms they heard in the drum circles and other videos watched in this unit have a foundational beat or rhythm that is played by one or more

11. Once students connect with the concept of polyrhythms, explain that they will now be using the rhythms they just learned to create a drumbeat.
12. Students will open up a new Soundtrap session.
 - a. If this is their first time using the BEATMAKER, have them watch the video [Getting Started with BEATMAKER](#) prior to creating their beat.
 - b. If you're already experienced in Soundtrap, we recommend the [Drums Sound video](#).
 - c. Demonstrate to students how to get started with BEATMAKER.
13. Explain to students that the drumbeat should be at least 8 bars long and feature the [Bamboula/Tresillo beat, Habanera, or 3-2 Son Clave rhythms](#).
 - a. These rhythms can be used on any drum sound.
 - b. Demonstrate to students how they would place these rhythms in Soundtrap using the BEATMAKER.
14. While students create their beats, assist them as needed.
15. Once students have ample time to create their beats, have them play their drum beats for the class.

Assessment/Extensions for Lesson 3: Polyrhythms

- Assessment:
 - Students are able to perform all rhythmic patterns presented in the lesson.
 - Students understand how the layering of rhythms creates polyrhythms.
 - Students are able to develop a drumbeat using Soundtrap.
- Extension:
 - Utilize the drum beat created in this lesson as the foundation to their remix in the [Take Me to the River New Orleans unit on Arranging, Sampling, and Remixing in Berklee PULSE](#).
 - Connect learning about polyrhythms on [Berklee PULSE](#).
 - Review percussion notation in [Berklee PULSE's Study Room](#)

Attributions

This unit was written by Terence Higgins and Ashley Shabankareh.

Terence Higgins was born in New Orleans in 1970 and was raised on the west bank of New Orleans in the suburb of Algiers. He was introduced to the drums at a very young age by his great-grandfather, and he has been playing ever since. In high school, he was one of two students chosen from the state of Louisiana to perform in the McDonald's All-American band, and after high school, he enrolled in music studies at Southern University. Specializing in New Orleans grooves and keeping in touch with the Crescent City's second line tradition and early New Orleans funk and R&B, he draws his influences from the legends of New Orleans drumming such as Baby Dodds, Earl Palmer, Smokey Johnson, Charles "Hungry" Williams, Zigaboo, and Idris Mohammad to name a few. His professional career has taken him all over the world and his unsurpassed, versatile, and diverse skill set on the drums has allowed him to play with an eclectic group of musicians of all genres of music. Terence credits George Porter Jr. of the Meters for taking him under his wing and introducing him to the vast repertoire of New Orleans music. Terence has performed with artists like Dr. John, Earl King, Snooks Eaglin, Johnny Adams, George Porter Jr., Fats Domino, and the Dirty Dozen Brass Band. In recent years Terence has toured the world with John Scofield Piety Street Band, The Warren Haynes Band, Tab Benoit, Ani DiFranco, as well as performed in the popular Last Waltz tribute tour and star-studded and nationally televised tributes to Elvis Presley and Willie Nelson. Terence performs in his own band, Swampgrease, and he is the producer of several worldwide distributed Drum Loop Libraries. Terence is a two-time Grammy award-winning drummer, winning Grammy awards for his collaboration with Jon Cleary on his album *Go-Go Juice* (Best Regional Roots Performance in 2016) and with Aaron Neville and the Dirty Dozen Brass Bands for *Stompin Ground* from the film *Take Me to the River New Orleans* (Best American Roots Performance in 2023). He is also the Founder of the Louisiana Drumline Camp that teaches and mentors young drummers from across Louisiana.

Ashley Shabankareh (she/they) is a New Orleans musician, music educator, and arts administrator. Ashley is the Director of Operations and Programs for Trombone Shorty Foundation, and they also work as an Adjunct Professor at Loyola University New Orleans and Xavier University. Ashley has worked with numerous arts organizations during her career, including Artist Corps New Orleans, Upbeat Academy Foundation, New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, New Orleans Jazz Museum, and Preservation Hall Foundation. In her spare time, Ashley serves as the Board President for Folk Alliance International, Vice President of the Jazz Education Network, and Board Secretary for Second Line Arts Collective. Ashley is an avid performer and has performed alongside Allen Toussaint, Aretha Franklin, Big Sam's Funky Nation, Theresa Anderson, and in her own group, Marina Orchestra.

About Berklee PULSE

The Berklee PULSE® Music Method is a unique and innovative online music education portal that enables students to study, jam, and practice using interactive modules and an ever-expanding collection of popular music.

PULSE is open to anyone, with exclusive resources available through Berklee City Music and select public school partners. PULSE gives students and teachers the benefits of a Berklee education no matter where they live.

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Take Me To The River New Orleans The Foundational Rhythms of New Orleans

The Bamboula, Tresillo, Habanera, and Cinquillo rhythms are prominent rhythms in New Orleans music. Derived from music performed in Congo Square beginning in the 1700s, these rhythms have shaped New Orleans music, utilized by a multitude of artists including Jelly Roll Morton, The Meters, Fats Domino, and Allen Toussaint. These rhythms continue to be utilized today by contemporary artists including Justin Bieber, Shawn Mendes, Luis Fonsi, and Shakira. While listening to the songs below, you'll map out where you hear these rhythmic patterns and how they're utilized in the music.

Dave Bartholomew's "Country Boy"

Listen to [Dave Bartholomew's "Country Boy"](#). While listening to this song, fill in the following questions.

What rhythmic pattern did you hear in this song? (Bamoula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)?

Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?

Was the rhythm played fast or slow? How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?

Georges Bizet's "Carmen":

Listen to [Georges Bizet's "Carmen"](#). While listening to this song, fill in the following questions.

What rhythmic pattern did you hear in this song? (Bamoula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)?

Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?

Was the rhythm played fast or slow? How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?

Scott Joplin's "Solace":

Listen to [Scott Joplin's "Solace"](#). While listening to this song, fill in the following questions.

What rhythmic pattern did you hear in this song? (Bamoula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)?

Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?

Was the rhythm played fast or slow? How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?

The Meters's "Hey Pocky Way":

Listen to [The Meters's "Hey Pocky Way"](#). While listening to this song, fill in the following questions.

What rhythmic pattern did you hear in this song? (Bamoula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)?

Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?

Was the rhythm played fast or slow? How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?

Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee's "Despacito":

Listen to [Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee's "Despacito"](#). While listening to this song, fill in the following questions.

What rhythmic pattern did you hear in this song? (Bamoula/Tresillo, Habanera, and/or Son Clave)?

Identify which instrument featured the rhythmic pattern. Did the instrument play the rhythmic pattern for the entire song?

Was the rhythm played fast or slow? How did that impact the overall feeling of the song?

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