

World Dances



Lesson – *Patting Juba in Florence Price's Music*

Companion Video – Symphony No. 3, Movement 3

Suggested Grade Level

Grades 1-4

Objective

Students will learn about the history and cultural influence of the *Juba* dance on music by composer Florence Price. They will learn the traditional rhythms of the dance and make connections to the music. Students will listen to traditional juba song and dance and perform along with recordings and on their own.

Suggested Materials

- YouTube video of Hambone rhythm demonstration- <https://tinyurl.com/3kfy7x4x>
- YouTube video of master Hambone performance- <https://tinyurl.com/ys6fpjt8>
- YouTube video of "Patting Juba"- <https://tinyurl.com/5cwkerv6>
- BPO video of Florence Price's Symphony No. 3, Movement 3 "Juba"
- Composer Fact Sheet (provided)

New York State Arts Standards

MU:Cr1.1.1a-4a MU:Re7.2.1a-4a MU:Cn10.1.1c-4c
MU:Pr4.2.1a-4a MU:Cn11.1.1a-4a

New York State English Language Arts & Literacy Standards

Reading, Standard 1, 2, & 4
Speaking & Listening, Standard 1, 2, 4 & 6
Language, Standard 1, 3, 4 & 6

Procedure

- 1) The *juba* dance, originally known as "pattin' Juba," is an African-American style of dance that involves stomping, as well as slapping and patting the arms, legs, chest and cheeks. The juba dance was brought by Kongo slaves to Charleston, South Carolina. After the Stono Rebellion in 1739, plantation owners began to fear that enslaved people were hiding secret codes in their drumming patterns. So instead of using drums, the enslaved people used their bodies to make music to accompany their dancing and singing. This became known as "patting Juba." Today, it is most often called "Hambone."

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- 2) Have students read through the Composer Fact Sheet and watch the BPO recording of Florence Price's Symphony No. 3, Movement 3 "Juba."
- 3) Patting Juba involves slapping of the hands, legs and body to make music. Walk through the traditional rhythmic pattern with students:
 - a) Beat 1: slap your outer thigh with the palm of your hand
 - b) Beat 2: slap your chest with the palm of your hand
 - c) Beat 3: slap the top of your thigh with the back of your hand on the way back down from your chest
 - d) Beat 4 (optional): slap your outer thigh with the palm of your hand

Have students practice the rhythms and watch the YouTube video of the Hambone rhythm demonstration to help them learn the rhythmic pattern. Then, have students watch the master Hambone performance video to see the rhythmic practice in action. What are some of the different ways the performer varies the traditional rhythmic pattern?

- 4) Later on, lyrics were added to the juba to reference the slave rebellions of the 18th and 19th centuries. Read through the lyrics and discuss the following questions with students:
 - a) Who do you think may have sung this song during the 1800s, the enslaved people or the slave owners?
 - b) How do the lyrics in the second paragraph make you feel? Do the actions seem fair? Why or why not?
 - c) What do you think these lyrics are trying to convey?

*Juba this and Juba that
Juba killed the yellow cat.
Bend over double trouble Juba.*

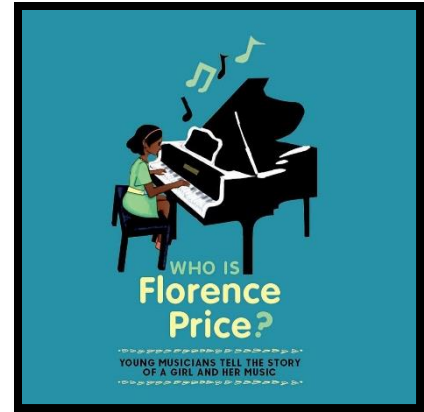
*We bake the bread
and you give us the crust.
We beat the corn,
and you give us the husk.
We cook the meat,
and you give us the skin.
And that's when my mama's troubles begin.*

- 5) Use the "Patting Juba" video to sing the lyrics as a call and response song with students. Then have them practice patting the rhythmic pattern along with the song.
- 6) Have students take turns being the leader and improvising a four or eight-beat pattern. The leader will pat out the pattern and students will respond with four or eight beats of the traditional Juba rhythms. Encourage students to be creative and have fun coming up with new patterns!

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Extended Learning

A group of 45 New York city middle school students recently wrote and illustrated the book, *Who is Florence Price?* The students attend Special Music School, a K-12 public school in Manhattan that teaches high-level music instruction alongside academics. The children's book tells the story of a brilliant musician who prevailed against race and gender prejudices to become the first Black woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer and performed by a major American orchestra in 1933.



Have students choose and research a BIPOC composer. BIPOC stands for Black, Indigenous, People of Color. Suggestions may include Jessie Montgomery, Joseph Bologne, George Walker, Scott Joplin, William Grant Still, etc. (A good resource for creating a list of composers for students to choose from can be found here: <https://www.composerdiversity.com/>.) Then, have students create a storyboard of their findings to share with the class.

Florence Price



Florence Price was a classical composer, pianist, organist and music teacher who became the first African-American woman to have her music performed by a major symphony orchestra. Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Price was guided in early music training by her mother, who was a music teacher. Florence gave her first piano performance at the age of four and had her first composition published at the age of 11. She graduated as high school valedictorian at age 14 and attended the

New England Conservatory, where she studied organ and piano and began to think seriously about composition.

Florence moved to Atlanta Georgia in 1910, where she became head of the music department at what is now Clark Atlanta University. She married a lawyer in 1912. Soon after, she gave up her teaching position and moved back to Little Rock, Arkansas, where she had two daughters. Continued racial violence led Price's family to leave Little Rock and settle in Chicago. While in Chicago, she studied composition and organ with leading teachers in the city, and published four piano pieces in 1928.

In 1931, Florence and her husband divorced. To make ends meet, she worked as an organist for silent film screenings and composed songs for radio. During this time, she moved in with her student and friend, Margaret Bonds, who was also an African-American pianist and composer. Together, the two achieved national recognition for their compositions and performances.

In 1932, Price won first prize at the Wanamaker Foundation Awards for her Symphony in E minor, leading to its premiere by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the first composition by an African-American woman to be performed by a major orchestra.