



Strand: Dance/ Music
Level: Grade 9-10
Content: 45 minute broadcast + hands-on activity

LIVE Arts: Ghanaian Dance and Music with Chancz Perry and Godknows Kumassah

Ghanaian Dance and Music will be facilitated by Chancz Perry and Godknows Kumassah. Godknows, a native of Ghana, brings remarkable live rhythms and syncopated beats to his drums. Chancz studied dance in Ghana and specializes in contemporary dance and movement forms. During this program, Chancz will discuss how Ghanaian dance and music are used to celebrate birth, puberty rites, marriage and death. Students will learn a traditional, recreational, and social dance titled Gahu. Chancz will teach students movement sequences while Godknows accompanies with percussive instrumentation. Students will feel transported to Ghana as they develop understanding through demonstration, interaction, repetition, and play.

Please see pages 3-8 for **Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activities**. These activities will give students the opportunity to apply what they have learned during the broadcast.

About the Artists

Chancz Perry has attended Simon Fraser University, the University of Ghana, the Broadway Dance Centre and the University of Regina. He has spent over 30 years in the entertainment industry – on stage, screen, and behind the scenes. This multifaceted performer and choreographer has received numerous awards and his film and theatre credits include Mr. Magoo, Bye Bye Birdie, Charlie Horse Music Pizza, West Side Story, Kiss Me Kate, and Five Guys Named Moe. While continuing his practice as an interdisciplinary artist, Chancz works as a sessional instructor at the University of Regina and as the Educational Outreach Facilitator at the Globe Theater.

Godknows Kumassah was born in Ghana, West Africa, where he learned about the traditional drumming, dancing and other cultural activities of his tribal people, the Ewes.

Godknows has earned a Diploma in Music Education and taught African and Western music at the primary and secondary level. In addition, he studied music at the National Academy of Music in Ghana. In 1986, Godknows immigrated to Canada and obtained a bachelor's degree in sacred music from Canadian Bible College and a master's degree from Canadian Theological Seminary in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Curriculum Aims & Goals

Creative/Productive:

Students explore and use choreographic and musical forms of expression.

Critical/Responsive:

Students develop understanding through demonstration, interaction, repetition, and discussion.

Cultural/Historical:

Students will learn about the functions and techniques of the Ghanaian dance Gahu and related music.

Godknows' involvement in musical activities while in Canada have ranged from singing solos in church and directing choirs to leading a group in African drumming at public and cultural events. Godknows was also the music director of the Afro-Cultural Ensemble (AFCULEN), a 20-member choir that performed African and English songs.

Godknows also has a Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work degrees from University of Regina. He currently works for the Government of Saskatchewan and lives in Regina with his wife and five children.

Curriculum Outcomes: www.curriculum.gov.sk.ca

CP9.2

Investigate and use choreographic processes (e.g., individual and collaborative choreography).

CH9.3

Investigate diversity of artistic ideas, styles, and media in contemporary arts expressions.

Broadcast Program (45 min)

Presentation 1

Artist biographies

Activity 1

Warm-up games

Presentation/ Activity 2

Functions of Ghanaian dance and music in relation to Indigenous traditions and student's personal experiences.

Presentation 3

Video montage demonstrating Ghanaian dance and music

Presentation/ Activity 4

Introduction to musical instruments

Presentation/ Activity 5

How choreographic and musical forms are used to structure a dance; locomotive and non-locomotive movement

Activity 6

Cool-down

Questions/ Wrap Up

If you are watching from a distance text questions to 306.291.7355 to have your questions answered on air!!

Materials and resources for broadcast:

- Space required: it is preferable to work in an open space such as a gymnasium or a large classroom with desks pushed against the wall

Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activities

1. What Did You Learn?

Based on the video biographies viewed during the broadcast, ask students to share what they learned about the artists' educational backgrounds. Students may respond in written form, small groups, and/or teachers may lead a group discussion.

Questions:

- **How did Chanz and Godknows learn about Ghanaian dance and music?**

- Note that Godknows subscribes to an oral tradition where his family and community passed the Ewe culture and art forms

down to him from childhood. In contrast, Chanz specifically studied Ghanaian dance and music in his adulthood during 7 months of field school and directed

Materials/ Resources for Activity 1

Students may review what they learned in written form, in groups or with the teacher leading a group discussion. Materials will vary accordingly.

studies at the University of Ghana.

- **How was their education similar, and how was it different from each other?**

- Both Godknows and Chancz have academic expertise in arts, education, and human justice. Both studied in Canada and Ghana: Chancz has a BFA in Dance and a BA in Criminology from Simon Fraser University. He is pursuing a Master's of Education in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Regina. He teaches at the university, works for Globe Theatre, and has his practice as a professional artist and child support worker. Godknows has a Diploma in Music Education and a BA in Sacred Music. In addition to his BA in Social Work, has a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Regina. He is a musician, father, grandfather, and a government employee.

- Chancz also learned about music and dance by working in professional theatre, commercials, film, television, and musicals for 30 years.

- **Ask students to share where and how they learn different skills or acquire knowledge outside of school** (e.g. from grandparents, at hockey school, from television, at camp, etc.)

2. Warm Up

Body Language: STOMP in the Classroom! This activity encourages students to develop their creative potential by building and sharing personalized rhythms with their bodies and/or found instruments the classroom. This tactile lesson literally gets students in touch with themselves and others as they learn to develop their sense of musicality individually or in collaborative groups.

1. Help students to develop terminology by exploring theory and practice.

Students participate in defining the following terms: form, timbre, steady beat, meter, ensemble skills, improvisation, dynamics, and melody.

2. Find a viewing space to watch video clip examples of people using their bodies and/or found instruments as musical instruments.

See video examples below:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AhrTeBVW4M>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWmoLP7A0MY>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0XdDKwFe3k>
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWeIB7Oap7U>

Materials/ Resources for Activity 2

Equipment:

- Assess to a computer, projector, and online links.
- Classroom furnishings: doors, drawers, desks, chairs, boards, blinds, and others objects that make sound(s).

Materials:

- Typical school supplies: Books, writing materials, and office supplies (paper, staplers, hole punchers, rulers, backpacks).

3. **Engage in a discussion.** Based on the video(s) observed, take this time to get some responses from the students. Use the defined term “improvisation” as a theme for discussion. Enrich the conversation by asking students to describe what they saw by using terminology they learned prior to watching the video. This is a wonderful opportunity to find out what captivated students’ attention? Where they moved by the complex melange of syncopated rhythms being played? Was the the team-work demonstrated by the musical ensemble well coordinated? Was there a noticeable or distinctive pattern that could be imitated by any of the students? Is there one or more students willing to demonstrate their own renditions of how fun it could be to create your own orchestra of musicians - without using a formal instrument (such as brass, woodwind, strings, or percussive)?

4. **Place students into working groups and give them enough time to develop their ideas to share.** I suggest giving them 15-30 minutes to create and rehearse a 1-3 minute group performance. Remember: Students are not limited to using their bodies and found instruments, using the voice in dialogue (rapping) and in creating sound effects can help to platform students who excel at freestyling (improvising). Check out the *Body Percussion in Classrooms* link for *Tips, Tricks, and Procedures* - just to prepare yourself for students who may require support along the process. If students are uncertain of what to do, provide them with alternative solutions or structure that work for them. For example:

1. **Start with a tempo, a beat, or some type of repetitive sound** (i.e.: clapping, opening and closing of a textbook or ringed binder, crunching pieces of paper).
2. **Explore selected sounds and movements** (i.e.: add layers and textures by mixing and accentuating a variety of sounds and movements together.) Make certain that everyone in the group is an active contributor to the sound-score building process.
3. **Coordinate music and movements** (i.e.: help students to phrase their work by using quantitative and/or qualitative means of expressing. Some students like to use numerical values and counts to manage the movements and musical ideas, other prefer using qualitative measures (such as words and descriptive clues) to convey their thoughts. Some like to mix both.
4. **Refine and rehearse works in process** (i.e.: encourage students to look and listen to each other, practice, have fun, take breaks, and instantly forgive themselves for making mistakes). Learning from mistakes is essential in the classroom.

Resources:

Simple Rhythm Activities

<http://cnx.org/contents/6zk5HAkg@12/Simple-Rhythm-Activities>

Body Percussion in Classrooms

<http://www.bodypercussionclassroom.com/lesson-plans.html>

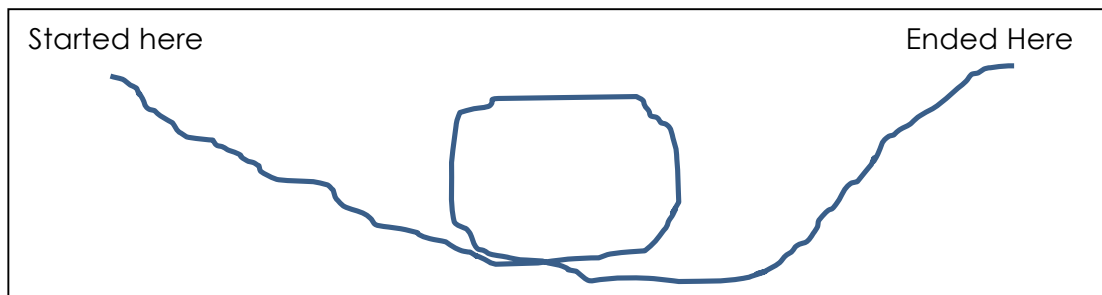
3. Structured Improvisation: Visual Art and Movement Activity

During the broadcast, Chanz directed a group of student to enter *Gahu* dance choreography in a line formation (from upstage right), form a circular pathway (at

Materials/ Resources for Activity 4

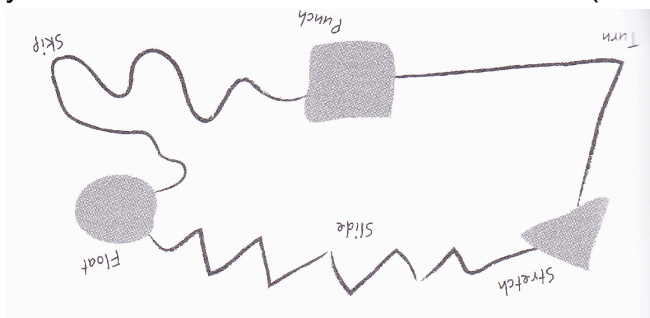
- Sheets of white paper (can work with any size)
- Multi-coloured mediums for drawing (such as crayon, chalk, markers, glitter, etc.).
- **A safe space for physical activity.** Open area (such as a gym or outside)
- Pre-recorded or live music.

center stage), and then exit in the shape of a line (toward upstage left). This flow or pattern of movement can be seen from a bird's-eye-view and be drawn on a map as illustrated on the next page:



According to Anne Green Gilbert, this **Movement Mapping Exercise** can be done individually or in groups. “Dancers draw different pathway designs on paper as they listen to music. As the music is replayed, dancers dance their designs. Individual dancers may draw their own designs on sheets of paper, then place them on the floor and dance around them. Groups of three to five dancers may share a large piece of chart paper that can hang on the wall to illustrate the pathways of movement.”

Instructions: “[Have students] draw three shapes on a piece of paper (triangle, circle, and square). Connect the three shapes with 3 lines (perhaps curvy, straight, zigzag.) Now choose a movement to do in self-space [your own personal space] for each shape and movement to do for each line that travels through general space. Perform the dance, using the map to tell you what to and how and where to travel (Gilbert, 2015, p. 121).



5. Music Activity

Jeremy Cohen's interactive audio mixer is a great resource to help students and teachers learn the basic rhythms of *Gahu*. In this exercise, students will listen to the rhythms played using the audio mixer and try to replicate them using actual instruments. If you don't have the 6 traditionally used instruments, use fewer instruments or substitute the ones missing with other drums or percussive instruments in stock. You might find a bunch of useful coffee cans, buckets, and sticks, in a recycling area. Be creative.

Materials/ Resources for Activity 5

- Computer/ speakers and internet access
- Interactive audio mixer

<http://thisworldmusic.com/gahu-african-drumming-and-dance-from-ghana/>

**Mixer commands:

S=solo: you will hear only this instrument

M=mute: click to silence an instrument

To hear all of the instruments together, click “Reset Controls” and then “Play” or “Resume”.

- Earplugs or earphones for students with sensory concerns
- Instruments (substitute as needed, or play with fewer instruments)

- o Gankogui – iron bell
- o Axatse – gourd shaker
- o Boba – lead/master drum
- o Sogo – low pitched drum
- o Kidi – medium pitch drum
- o Kagan – high pitched drum

-A safe space for musical activity. Select a space where lots of loud sound can be made with instruments.

Listen and Learn: Interactive Audio Mixer

“Using the interactive multi-track drumming mixer below, listen closely to what all six ensemble parts sound like during the free movement A section of the present-day Kopeyia-style arrangement of Gahu. Tempo is moderate for purposes of teaching and learning. Isolate rhythmic parts and create different mixes by adjusting instrument levels, including soloing, muting and panning individual tracks. All instruments are played by Jeremy Cohen.”

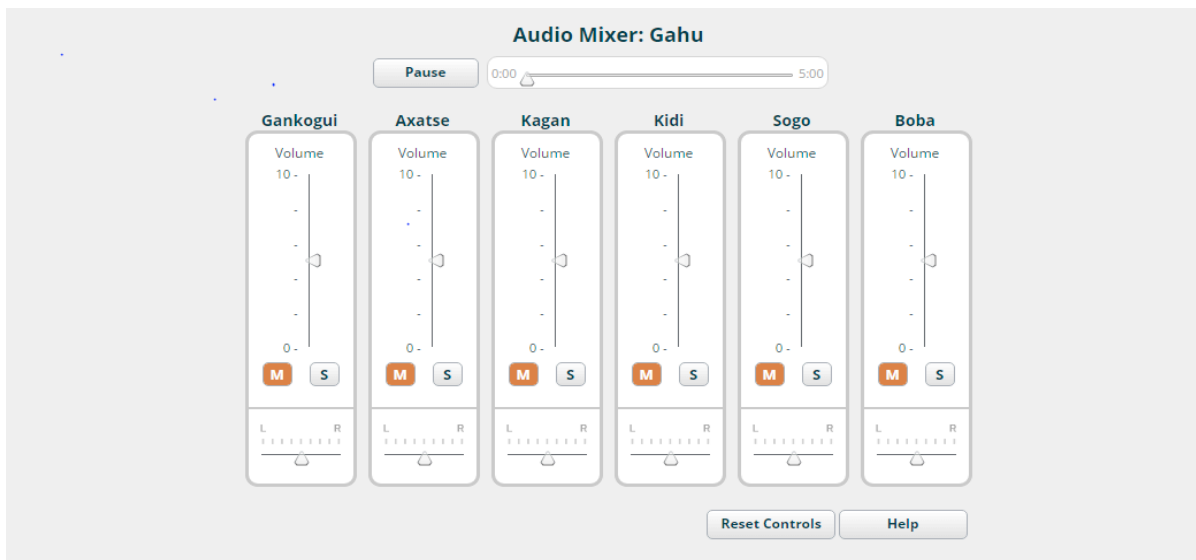
<http://thisworldmusic.com/gahu-african-drumming-and-dance-from-ghana/>

Instructions:

1. **Sit in a circle.** Have students select an instrument and sit in a circle. Introduce students to their instrument by showing them how it is played and cared for.
2. **Explain that students should only play their instruments when directed,** and preferably when someone isn't talking. Remind students to remove the temptation of playing the instrument by putting it down when not in use.
3. **Listen and Learn: Mirror and Imitate** - Using the interactive multitrack drumming mixer below, listen closely to each individual musical instrument. Isolate one track by clicking “s”/solo, and press “m”/mute on the other instruments. Invite students to play along with the solo track, and eventually without the track. Try mastering all six parts.

Interactive Mixer Commands

S=solo: you will hear only this instrument
M=mute: click to silence an instrument
- To hear all of the instruments together, click “Reset Controls” and then “Play” or “Resume”.



4. **Once the class is familiar with all 6 instrumental parts, have students select which one of the six groups they' like to be in.** Assign groups and play together starting with the bells/shakers (time keepers) and layering in all of the other parts consecutively.
5. **Close with an Improvised Share:** Allow students to express themselves by initiating a rhythmic jam session. In form of a canon, each student will contribute their own sound to the melange of syncopated creativity. You may do this as a vocal exercise, use the

body as a percussive device (by slapping legs, snapping fingers), and/or use instruments. How? One person begins a steady rhythm with his or her instrument, and then another person adds to the beat, and so on until everyone in the circle is contributing collectively to the ensemble. Students may change their beats during the jam if they need a challenge or feel inspired to try a new beat.