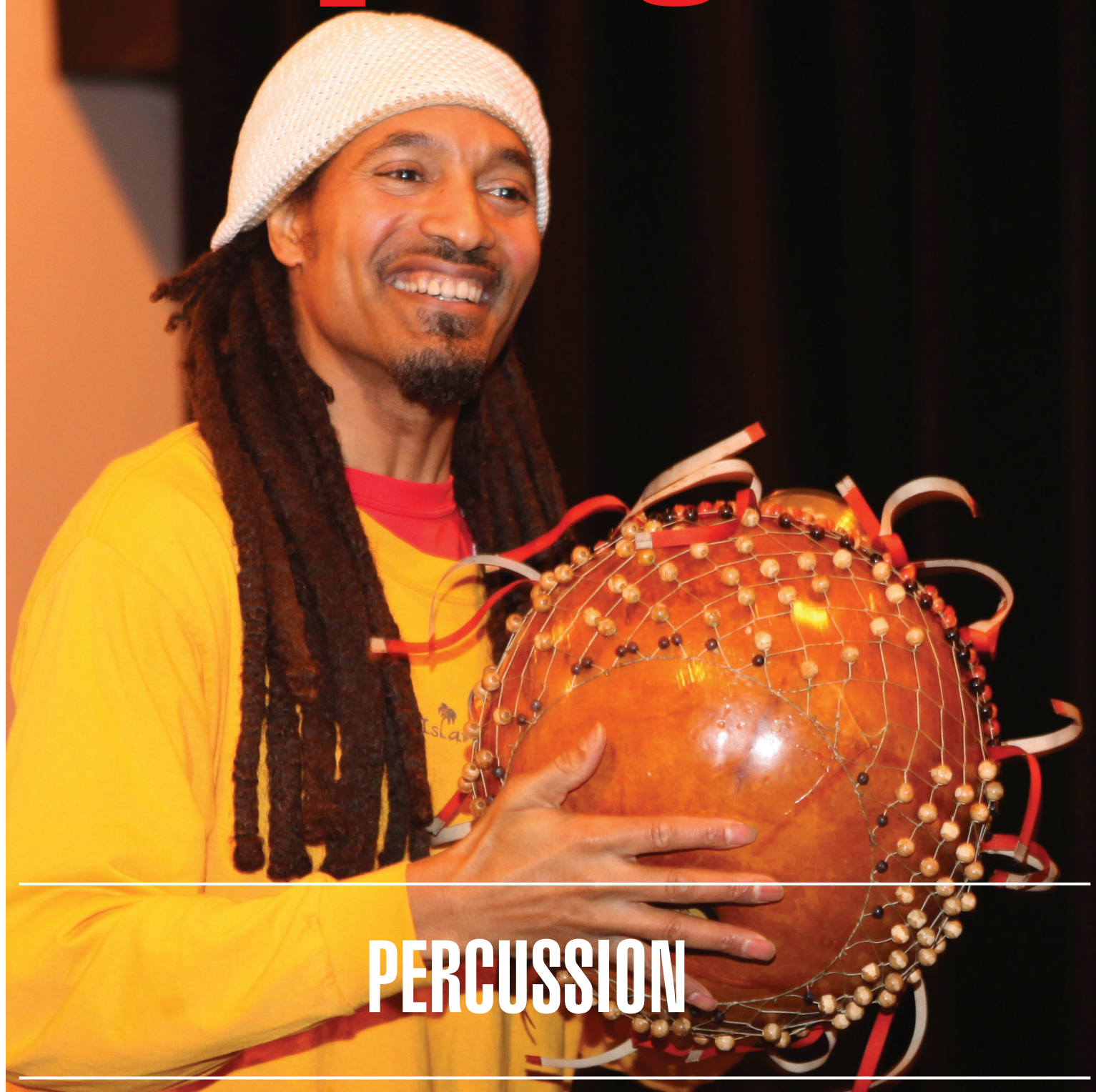


APOLLO EDUCATION

spotlight



PERCUSSION

A close-up photograph of a person's hands playing a djembe drum. The person is wearing a blue t-shirt and light blue jeans. Their right hand is positioned to strike the drumhead, while their left hand rests on the drumhead. The drumhead is made of light-colored animal skin and is surrounded by a dark, braided rope. The background is a solid orange color.

You've

probably told stories before, but have you ever told one with music? Djeli do. What is a Djeli? Well, they are the keepers and tellers of stories that have been passed down through generations. In West African cultures, the Djeli, (pronounced gel-lee), is the person who keeps the oral history of a group of people and preserves traditions. The Djeli is also considered to be a poet, a musician and a storyteller. Some Djeli only sing. Their songs carry the history of the people and the families, as well as other things. A Djeli may also use percussion instruments like the ones featured in this guide to help tell stories. Percussion instruments produce a sound when they are shaken or when struck with a hand or a stick. Certain types of rattles, drums, and harps are all examples of percussion instruments.

Percussion Instruments



● **Kese-Kese** is the name used in various parts of West Africa for rattles that are made out of woven straw (or sometimes woven fabric) with hard seeds inside and a calabash piece on the bottom. They are the same kind of rattle that in Brazil are called **Caxixi**. The word Caxixi quite clearly has a strong relationship with the word Kese-Kese by the pronunciation (ka shee shee) (ke say ke say). These rattles are shaken at different angles in order to make a wide variety of distinct sounds depending on whether they strike the woven straw or the hard gourd that covers its bottom.



The Kese-Kese is often used to accompany the playing of the ● **Djembe**, a rope-tuned, skin covered drum that is played with bare hands. A Djembe can create up to 25 distinct sounds that, depending on how it is struck, can be loud enough to be heard over an entire percussion ensemble.

You are probably familiar with the popular rattles known as ● **Maracas**. They are native to Latin America and are made of gourd or shell. Maracas are often played in pairs with one maraca pitched higher than the other in register.



The **Hosho** is another type of rattle. It is made of maranaka gourds and is filled with hota seeds. It is essential for them to be played alongside the ● **Mbirra**. The Mbirra is often referred to as a thumb piano, and with good reason. The instrument is made out of a wooden board with long metal strips attached to its base. The musician holds the base of the instrument in both hands with the fingers curled around the back while the thumbs pluck the metal strips, causing them to vibrate.



The ● **Ganza** is also a rattle filled with beads, but it is shaped like a cylinder. It can either be woven like the Kese-Kese or be made of metal. As you could guess, the beads striking the metal make a loud sound. They are often used to keep rhythm during a performance of a band.



A completely different type of rattle is called the ● **Shekere**. It is also made out of a gourd, but the beads are woven to a net on the outside of the base instead of on the inside. When you shake the instrument, the beads hit the base and create a rattling sound.



A ● **Kora** is a 21-string bridge-harp made out of a calabash fruit and covered in cow skin. It is played by plucking the string with the thumb and index finger and makes a sound like a traditional harp.



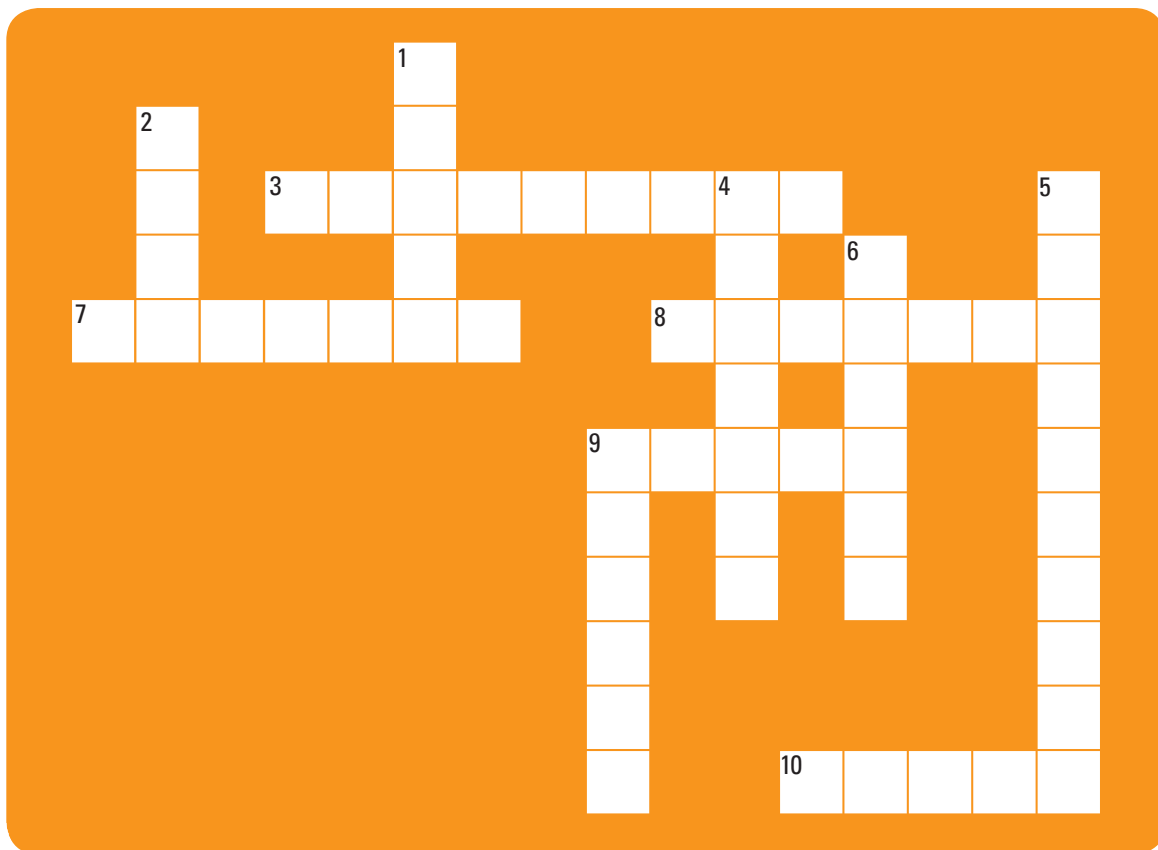
The ● **Bala**, also known as the **Balafon**, is very similar to a xylophone both in appearance and execution. Its keys are made of wood and they are struck with a stick in order to produce different tones of sound.

Let's see how much you've learned today!

Name: _____

Date: _____

spotlight word puzzle



Across:

3. A West African rattle commonly made out of straw
7. This instrument is similar to a xylophone
8. These rattles are popular in Latin America
9. A keeper and teller of stories that have been passed down through generations
10. This rattle is cylinder-shaped

Down:

1. A type of rattle filled with hota seeds
2. A harp made out of calabash and covered in cow skin
4. It has beads woven onto a net
5. Place where the Kese-Kese rattle can be found
6. A Brazilian rattle
9. This drum can create up to 25 different sounds

1. hoshō, 2. kora, 3. kese-kese, 4. shakere, 5. westafrika, 6. caxixi, 7. balafon, 8. maracas, 9. djeli (across) and djembe (down), 10. ganza

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