

## African Music- Instruments students will see and play in station

A main component of African Music is *polyrhythms* (sometimes called cross rhythms). Polyrythms are two or more rhythms played simultaneously at the same tempo. African music often uses percussion instruments.

**Ghana Shekere** or gourd shakers make a sound similar to a maraca. They are made from gourds and seeds or beads netted over the outside of the gourd. The sound can be made by gently pulling rope ends or by twisting the seed net.



**Djembe** drums are goblet shaped and are covered with rawhide. Ropes are used to tune the drum. They are originally from West Africa and are traditionally played by men. They can be loud and can make a variety of sounds. Visit <http://youtu.be/FMs3LTgwY8> for an example of what a djembe sounds like.

**Balafons** are wooden instruments similar to xylophones that produce notes when struck by a mallet. They are thought to have originated in Mali. To hear what a balafon sounds like visit [http://youtu.be/Z8CPR\\_Mz9w0](http://youtu.be/Z8CPR_Mz9w0).



**Claves** are a percussion instrument of two thick sticks or dowels. They make a clicking noise and are played by striking one against the other. Traditionally they were made of wood but now are often made with plastic or fiberglass.

