

Alegría Musical: Puerto Rico

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Summary

This is the fourth lesson from the Alegría Musical Course. Students will visit Puerto Rico with puppets Pepe and Tito to learn about the traditions of plena and bomba music. Then students will participate in a bomba rhythmic activity as an ensemble.

Objectives

- Summarize important information about the culture, history, and geography of Puerto Rico.
- Create a traditional bomba beat.

Materials

- [Google Slides: Puerto Rico](#)
- [Alegría Musical: Latin American Stories Travel Diary](#)
- [Alegría Musical: Cuentos Latino Americanos, Diario de Viaje](#)
- [All About Puerto Rico](#)
- [Map of Puerto Rico](#)
- [Puerto Rican and Cuban Flags](#)
- [Barril de Bomba](#)
- [Bomba Rhythm Backing Track](#)
- Alternate instruments: box, book, saucepan, etc
- Adaptive instruments: hand clapping, foot tapping, or mouth clicking
- [S'Cool Sounds Padlet](#)

Note: S'Cool Sounds lessons are for educational and informational use only. SCS highly recommends the use of [SafeShare](#) to watch media securely without advertisements, pop-ups, and/or unwanted [inappropriate] content when teaching young audiences.

Explore

1. Display [Google Slides: Puerto Rico](#). Distribute the [Alegría Musical: Latin American Stories Travel Diary](#). Allow students a moment to personalize the diary. Tell students they will use the diary as they travel through Latin America with puppets Pepe and Tito, drawing and recording important facts about another culture.

2. Show students the [All About Puerto Rico](#) video. Ask them to remember the key geographical and cultural elements discussed in the video. Ask: *Where is the country located on a [map](#)? Which of [these flags](#) is the Puerto Rican flag, and which is the Cuban flag? Is there a national sport?*
3. Allow time for students to draw and write in their diary, recalling information they learned from the video.

Learn

1. Introduce students to [Bomba Music](#). Ask them to observe the relationship between the percussion instruments (including the drums, maracas, cuá, and barril) and the dancers. Explain that the dancers use their movements to express feelings, such as to rise up, restore balance, or show sadness or anger. Dancers also use their movements to challenge the drummer to watch as closely as possible and follow each step.
2. Introduce a game to learn how the bomba drummers follow the movements of the dancers. Use tables, the floor, or mouth clicking as percussion instruments. Practice starting and stopping together as a class, using two gestures of your choosing (for example, thumbs up to start and index finger over mouth to stop). Emphasize the importance of following your hand gestures.
3. Using the [Bomba Rhythm Demonstration Video](#), ask students to perform a rhythm that is traditionally played on a [Barril de Bomba](#). Repeat until students build confidence. Then, use the [Bomba Rhythm Backing Track](#) to allow students to perform the same rhythm, as an ensemble.

Perform & Share

1. Create a one minute video of students playing a bomba rhythm. Share the video at the [S'Cool Sounds Padlet](#).
2. Tell students to get their diary ready for the next lesson, which is a visit to Venezuela.