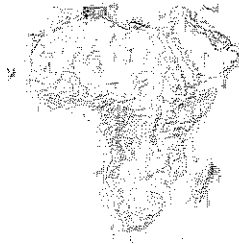


Have you ever seen the movie or the musical called “The Lion King”?

African music had a significant impact on the creation of the film and musical “The Lion King” which is a blend of traditional African tribal music, together with Western modern culture. Songs such as “The Circle Of Life” and “He lives in You” are a mixture of the South African Zulu language with English lyrics.



Africa is the second largest, and the second most populated continent on our planet. It has a population of over 1 billion, contains 53 countries, is home to the world’s largest hot desert and more than 1,000 languages are spoken throughout the whole continent. Many people can speak several African languages plus one or more European languages. To give you an idea about how important music and dance are in Africa, most languages there don’t even have separate words for music and dance. The arts are part of the way all people express themselves every day.

Music and culture in Africa has been passed down from generation to generation. A language known as “Drum Language or “Drum Talk” involved the playing of drums made from hollow tree trunks. It was used by tribes to communicate with each other over large distances. There is no surprise that language and music generally have very close connections in many African cultures.

Today, Drum Talk may be used as part of a ceremonies which include dance, rituals and story telling and use drums such as pressure drums and slit gongs for these purposes. Good listening skills are taught when children are very small, so that the music of each group can survive through the ages. Young African musicians are influenced by these ancient folk traditions, by other cultures, and also by modern global sounds.



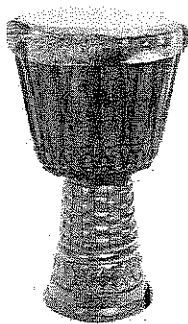
*African mbira
(thumb piano)*



*African slit gongs (Also known as slit
drums or log drums)*

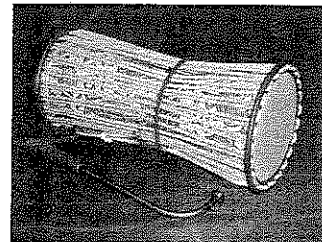
Besides using the voice, African musical instruments include a wide range of drums, **slit gongs**, rattles, and double bells. There are also melodic instruments like string instruments, (including musical bows, different types of harps and harp-like instruments such as the **Kora** as well as fiddles), many types of xylophone and

lamellophone like the **mbira** (also known as the thumb piano), and different types of wind instrument like flutes and trumpets.



*The djembe,
the most well known drum from
West Africa*

Drums used in African traditional music include **talking drums** and **Djembe** in West Africa, **Water Drums** in Central and West Africa, and different types of **Ngoma Drums** (or engoma) in Central and Southern Africa. Other percussion instruments include many rattles and shakers, such as the **kosika** (similar to two small maracas), rain stick, bells and wood sticks (also referred to as claves).



A talking drum, from West Africa

There are also lots of other types of drums, flutes, stringed instruments, and wind instruments used throughout the whole of Africa. In fact, many modern instruments, such as flute, double reed, trumpet-type horns, stringed instruments and percussion of all kinds can trace their roots back to Africa.