

23. TRADITIONAL KOREAN PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

GRADE LEVEL: 6-12

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SUBJECT: Music, World Cultures, World History, Language Arts

TIME REQUIRED: 1/2 to 1 class period

OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the traditional Korean percussion instruments.
2. Identify, by sound, the various instruments.
3. Describe how the percussion instruments are used in folk music.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- Photos (real instruments, if possible) of traditional Korean percussion instruments
- Appendix 1: Korean Musical Terms
- Appendix 2: Traditional Korean Percussion Instruments
- Chongdong Theater tape
- (The tape is available by contacting the theater by e-mail chongdong@chongdong.com)

BACKGROUND:

Samulnori is a genre of Korean traditional percussive performance. A *samulnori* ensemble is comprised of one or more each of a *kkwaenggwari* (small gong), a *ching* (large gong), a *changgo* (hourglass drum) and a *buk* (barrel drum). *Samul* means "four things" and *nori* means "to play." In Korean, *samulnori* refers to the performance of four musicians playing and dancing with these folk percussion instruments.

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce the students to the terms to be used in the lesson (Appendix 1). Students are to write definitions on the worksheet as teacher writes on the board or overhead projector.
2. Using the pictures (Appendix 2) (or real instruments) explain how each instrument is played. If using real instruments, allow students to have the experience of playing the instruments.
3. If the tape of Chongdong Theater is available, show the performance to demonstrate both the sounds and use of the instruments.

Appendix 1

KOREAN MUSICAL TERMS

Ching – a large, flat, lipped bronze gong.

Kkwaenggwari – a small gong similar to the *ching* in its form and construction.

Changgo – a double-headed drum shaped like an hourglass.

Buk – a shallow double-headed barrel drum with a wooden body.

Sogo – a small double-headed shallow drum with a wooden handle.

Pangut - a dance featuring a *sangmo* (ribboned hat) and a *bubpo* (feathered hat) which the performers make to move and spin with the energy they expend while dancing.

Nongak - farmers dance or the dance of Korean peasants.

Appendix 2 TRADITIONAL KOREAN PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

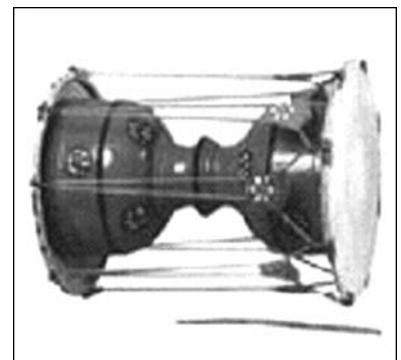


Ching (large gong). Made from brass, the *ching* has a diameter of about 60 centimeters. Played, or sounded, with a mallet wrapped in cloth or deerskin, the *ching* was originally used in military music. Currently, it is widely used in a variety of Korean traditional music, including band music for royal processions, *nongak* (the farmers dance or the dance of Korean peasants), shaman ritual music, and Buddhist music. It is held in the left hand by a handle suspended by a cord running through two holes at the top and struck with the right hand.

Kkwaenggwari (small gong or hand gong). Similar to the *ching* in its form and construction, the *kkwaenggwari* is smaller in size with a diameter of 20 centimeters. Unlike the *ching*, it is played with a small, unwrapped mallet and therefore creates a much sharper and higher pitched sound. In the farmers' festival music, the lead player (the *sang-soe*) of this small gong produces tones that are both loud and high in register while the sounds that emanate from the *ching* are softer by comparison. The mallet that is used to strike this larger gong is made of wood and tipped with cloth or deerskin. The mallet used for the smaller gong (the *kkwaenggwari*) is thinner and longer in size, is usually made of bamboo or other wood, and lacks the cloth or deerskin wrapping, creating a shrill sound by comparison.



Changgo (folk hourglass drum). With a wooden body and two drumheads made of hide, the *changgo* is played by striking the drumheads with two sticks, one in each hand. It is mostly used in *nongak* and also as accompaniment to folk songs and folk ballads. The *changgo* is an instrument fundamental to Korean traditional classic music. It was originally used to accompany traditional vocal music. However, because of its flexible nature and the ease with which it can be used to produce complex rhythms, the *changgo* is now regarded as



the basic accompaniment instrument in any performance because of its ability to instantly cheer an audience.



Buk (folk drum). This drum has two identical drumheads, top and bottom, each with a diameter of about 60 centimeters. The instrument is played by striking the drumheads with a stick made of hardwood. In the past, the *buk*, known to be the oldest folk instrument, was used to accompany all genres of Korean music. Because of its dynamic resonance, the *buk*'s sound has been compared to that of pounding the earth. The *buk* was originally placed on the ground in performance; however, in *samulnori* the *buk* is played on the knee.

Sogo (handle drum). A small drum with a handle, the *sogo* is played with a small stick. It is frequently used in the farmers' dance and sometimes in the accompaniment of folk songs. In farmer's music and dance, the *sogo* is struck on the first beat of each rhythmic cycle, namely, the fundamental beat. Also, when a number of folk singers are grouped into lead singer and chorus, the leader strikes the *sogo* on the fundamental beat, and the chorus follows with the basic rhythmic pattern.

