

# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

## Step Afrika!



Support for SEAS has been provided by the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation and the following Funds at the Community Foundation of Broward:

Mildred H. Fagen Charitable Fund  
Leonard & Sally Robbins Fund  
Mary and Alex Mackenzie Community Impact Fund

# STEP AFRIKA!

## ABOUT US:

Founded in 1994 by C. Brian Williams, Step Afrika! is the first professional company dedicated to the tradition of stepping. Under Mr. Williams' leadership, stepping has evolved into one of America's cultural exports, touring more than 60 countries across the globe, and the Company now ranks as one of the top ten African-American dance companies in the United States.

Step Afrika! blends percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities; traditional African dances; and an array of contemporary dance and art forms into a cohesive, compelling artistic experience. Performances are much more than dance shows; they integrate songs, storytelling, humor and audience participation. The blend of technique, agility, and pure energy makes each performance unique and leaves the audience with their hearts pounding.

Step Afrika! promotes stepping as an educational tool for young people, focusing on teamwork, academic achievement and cross-cultural understanding. The Company reaches tens of thousands of Americans each year through a 50-city tour of colleges and theaters and performs globally as Washington, DC's one and only Cultural Ambassador.

Step Afrika! has earned Mayor's Arts Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education, Innovation in the Arts, Excellence in an Artistic Discipline and headlined President Barack Obama's Black History Month Reception at The White House. The Company is featured prominently at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African-American History & Culture with the world's first stepping interactive exhibit.



# STEP AFRIKA! VOCABULARY

What is Stepping?

Stepping is a percussive, highly-energetic art form first developed through the song and dance rituals performed by African-American fraternities and sororities. In stepping, the body becomes an instrument, using footsteps, claps and spoken word to produce complex poly-rhythms. Stepping has been described as “one of the most exciting dance forms created in the 21st century.”

## DEFINE THE FOLLOWING ESSENTIAL TERMS:

ritual:

fraternity:

sorority:

poly rhythm:

aesthetic:

storytelling:

discipline:

percussive:

contemporary:

cohesive:



# STEP AFRIKA!: MUSIC IN THE MAKING

## MUSIC OSTINATO

OSTINATO IS A MELODIC PATTERN THAT REPEATS

### BODY PERCUSSION OSTINATO

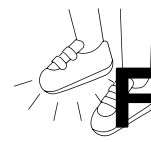
Use the key below to create your own repeating pattern in the boxes below.



CLAP hands



SNAP fingers



STOMP feet

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

example: **C C C S S F F F S**

### MUSIC BEAT OSTINATO

Use the key below to create your own repeating pattern in the boxes below.




# STEP AFRIKA!: CREATING POLYRHYTHMS

After the performance, look at the chart on this page.

In class, divide into four groups: A, B, C, and D.

Each group should choose a different part of their body to create rhythm.

For example: A group can clap their hands, another can slap their knees, another can stomp their feet, and the last can repeat a short word like 'yes!'



Using the chart on this page:

Group A sounds all four beats

Group B sounds beats 1 and 3,

Group C sounds 2 and 4,

Group D sounds twice on each beat.

Each group needs to rehearse by itself and count the beats out loud and practice until they can repeat this rhythm three times with accuracy.

**Finally, all four groups come together for a performance!**

Beats	1	2	3	4
Group A	X	X	X	X
Group B	X		X	
Group C		X		X
Group D	XX	XX	XX	XX



# STEP AFRIKA!: SEL

## SENSE OF SOUND

Describe different sounds you might hear throughout your day and put them in the boxes. Answer the questions below.



My favourite sound is \_\_\_\_\_

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# STEP AFRIKA!: WRITING

Dear Family and friends,

Today, I saw a live, professional theatre performance presented called, Step Afrika!

The performance had intricate kick stomps and rhythms mixed with spoken word. From Appalachia to South Africa from stepping to gumboot to Zulu. Step Afrika seeks to build connections between people and to highlight the similarities in their dance forms, our lives and our communities. Here are my favorite moments from the show, my favorite dances and all of the things I remember:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Student to Family Cooperative Activity Ideas:

- Share impressions and discuss Black Violin: Sit down with your family and have a conversation about the performance. Share your impressions, thoughts, and emotions. Discuss the elements that stood out, such as the performances, the set design, or the storytelling.
- Does anyone in your family play an instrument, sing, dance? Interview some family members and see if you can discover a link to music. Write it down (journal) and save it for future generations.
- Family jam session: Write a song with your family. You can start a family band, or simply work on a song together as a team or unit. Share some of your favorite genres with your family (jazz/funk/hip-hop...and see who you have them in common with).
- Create a Playlist: Collaborate on creating a playlist featuring songs from the concert as well as favorites from everyone in the family. This can be a fun way to learn about music through the decades.
- **Remember, the goal is to create memorable and immersive experiences. Adapt these ideas based on your family's preferences and the resources available to you.**

## Additional Activity Ideas:

- Attend workshops or classes: Look for theater workshops or classes that interest you and your child. Participating in these educational opportunities can help your kids develop their skills, gain confidence, and connect with others who share their interest in the performing arts.
- Encourage your kids to create their own journals or scrapbooks to document their childhood memories. Take the opportunity to share your childhood stories as you help them with their own projects. You can even contribute by adding some of your own stories or mementos to their journals.
- What was your favorite song, band or genre growing up? Play a few songs for your child/children and let them play a few of their favorites for you!
- Volunteer or participate in theater activities: If your kids have developed a keen interest in theater, encourage them to get involved in local theater groups or school productions. Volunteer backstage, audition for roles, or assist with set design and costumes. This hands-on experience allows us to gain practical knowledge and further nurture a passion for the performing arts, and the whole family can volunteer with the show!





# My Theater Review

I saw: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

This play/musical was about...

Here's a drawing of  
my favorite character:

It made me feel:

I learned:

I gave this play/musical .... stars.



**We'd love to hear from you! If you'd like to submit this review,  
please send to [jenriquez@browardcenter.org](mailto:jenriquez@browardcenter.org)**