WELCOME TO CLASS NOTES ARTISTS!

We are so excited to bring live music into your school—thanks for hosting a concert. This curriculum includes:

- **Learning prompts for before, during, and after the concert experience**
- **Standards-based, K-6 lesson plans based on themes and ideas from your Class Notes Artists concert**

Everything is designed to help you and your students get the most out of the experience. Please share your experience with us!

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BEFORE THE CONCERT

LEARN WHAT YOU WILL HEAR

Siama’s Congo Roots sings music from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Find it on a map!

- Listen to and watch Siama’s Congo Roots performing in the MPR studios.
  - “Yele Yele”
  - “Yele Yele” again, this time on the Sky Ride at the State Fair!
  - “Ko Yimbe Ko”
  - “Malembe”
- Watch all or part of this episode of The Lowertown Line to hear Siama’s music and learn his story.
- Read this interview with Siama and Dallas to learn a little more about them.
- Siama’s Congo Roots’ Class Notes Artists concert will include a selection of the following pieces:
  - “Balafon Song,” an improvised welcome song by Siama Matuzungidi
  - “Yele Yele,” a celebration song in Kikongo by Siama Matuzungidi
  - “Mbira Song,” an improvised lullaby by Siama Matuzungidi
  - “Ko Yimbi Ko,” a song in Kikongo about kids shooing a hawk away by Siama Matuzungidi
  - “Maisha Mazuri,” a song in Swahili about living in the moment by Siama Matuzungidi
  - “Lion Sleeps Tonight,” a South African/Zulu song by Solomon Linda
  - “Malembe,” a song in Lingala about enjoying life just as it is (“slowly by slowly”) by Siama Matuzungidi
MEET THE PERFORMERS

Back in Africa, **Siama Matuzungidi** played guitar on hundreds of songs and toured the world with popular artists. Now living in south Minneapolis with his wife Dallas, Siama is a singer who writes songs and plays guitar, ukelele, balafon and mbira.

**Dallas Johnson** is a singer, songwriter and storyteller with two CDs on iTunes. She plays a little ukelele, guitar, flute and piano. She and Siama love wearing fun, colorful clothes and they’ve created a Minnesota-style jungle in their front yard.

**Tim O’Keefe** is a longtime musician who plays many musical instruments—mostly drums—from all over the world. He also has a very large outside cactus garden at home.

- Listen to a short radio interview where Tim explains his drumming interests.
MEET THE INSTRUMENTS

• GUITAR

Guitars are stringed instruments used all over the world. They usually have six strings. When a string is plucked or strummed, it vibrates, which causes the whole body of the instrument to vibrate, and the sound is amplified, or made louder.

• MBIRA (THUMB PIANO)

The mbira, also known as the thumb piano, is made of a wooden board with metal tines attached to it. Players push down on the tines and sound is produced. Shorter tines make higher sounds and bigger ones make lower sounds.
• PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

The musicians in Siama’s Congo Roots play a wide variety of percussion instruments, including African drums. Percussion instruments include anything that you shake, scrape, or strike to produce a sound. Here are just a few percussion instruments that you will see in Siama’s Class Notes Artist concert.

› BALAFON (MARIMBA)

The balafon is a percussion instrument. Players hit wooden bars with mallets to create melodies.

› SHEKERE

The body, or main part, of a shekere is made of a dried, hollowed-out gourd. A net of beads covers part of the gourd, and shekere players tap and shake the instrument to create rhythmic patterns.

› UDU

The udu is a big clay pot or jug that has a hole in the side and one on top. Players use their hands to tap on the instrument in different ways. The position of a player’s hands can affect how high or how low the pitch sounds. Certain hand positions create a low “dooon” sound.
DISCUSS IN CLASS
• How can we use our bodies to listen?
• How can we show respect to performers and other audience members?
• What does it mean to be an audience?
• Some of Siama’s music is dance music—it is okay to dance! How can we move to the beat and still listen to the music?
• Watch a video about concert etiquette.

DURING THE CONCERT
• NOTICE
  › Tim plays many percussion instruments. Compare and contrast how they look and sound. What things do they have in common? What are some differences?
  › Sometimes one person sings and sometimes two people sing. Notice how their parts fit together. Sometimes they sing together (in unison) and sometimes their singing echoes or overlaps.
  › Siama’s Congo Roots sings in several different languages. Do you notice how each language has a collection of sounds that make it sound different from other languages?
• WONDER
  › How often do these musicians practice?
  › How did they get their start?
  › Many of Siama’s songs tell a story. Do you ever use music to tell a story? Some of his music is about everyday life. What parts of your everyday life could you write a song about?
• THINK ABOUT
  › How each instrument makes its sound.
  › How the singing changes to tell different kinds of stories.
  › The different kinds of sounds each instrument can make.
  › The feelings or images that pop into your mind as you listen. Do you think the composers wanted to make you feel a certain way with his or her music?
• IMAGINE
  › You are a composer or songwriter. What sounds would you want each instrument or each voice to make?
AFTER THE CONCERT

• DISCUSS
  › Your favorite piece of music from the concert. What did you like best, and why?
  › How each piece sounds similar or different from the others.

• TELL SOMEONE AT HOME
  › Two things you heard or saw or learned at your Class Notes Artist concert.

• DESCRIBE
  › How the music made you feel. Maybe different pieces of music made you feel different feelings.

• REMEMBER
  › How each instrument made its sound. Can you explain how each instrument’s sound is produced?

• CONNECT
  › Something from the Class Notes Artists concert to something you’ve learned in school. Explain the connection to a partner, a teacher, or someone at home.