

ENRICHMENT GUIDE & SOCIAL STORY

THE DANCING GRANNY

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DEAR FIRST STAGE FRIENDS,

Kids and adults will be dancing in their seats as Ananse, the clever spider of African folklore, tries to trick Granny into dancing away from her garden so he can take her vegetables. But his plan backfires when he is drawn into the dance himself. "Shake it to the East, shake it to the West, shake it to the one that you love best!"

Enjoy the show!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia Magnasco". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Special thanks to DeMar Walker and Samantha Montgomery for their contributions to this guide.

PRE-SHOW QUESTIONS



1. *The Dancing Granny* is a play based on the African folktale of the same name. Have you ever heard or read the story of *The Dancing Granny* before?
2. Granny works very hard to grow delicious food in her field. Does someone you know have a garden or a farm? What sort of plants and foods do they grow? Have you ever helped them in the garden before?
3. *The Dancing Granny* is a play filled with traditional African dance and music. Do you like to dance? Do you play an instrument? If so, what do you enjoy playing or dancing to?

DANCING GRANNY WORD SEARCH

ACTIVITY

Ananse and Granny are always trying to outsmart one another. Can you put your mind to the test and find all of the words below?

WORD BANK:

ANANSE	BEETS	EARTH	MANDIANE	SUN
ANIKA	GRANNY	KASSA	POMALOM	WIND
BEANS	CORN	MAMAYA	SPIDER	YANKADI

S Y P C O Q M K S A M G
P A O O F A A B W N A R
I N M R B N N E E A M A
D K A N E I D A A N A N
E A L O E K I N R S Y N
R D O G T A A S T E A Y
R I M O S U N Q H K P H
S K A S S A E W I N D G

MORE ABOUT *THE DANCING GRANNY*

Who is Spider Ananse? Taken directly from: <https://kidworldcitizen.org/anansi-stories-trickster-spider-west-africa-caribbean/>

Have you ever heard of the tricky spider named Anansi? This West African god frequently takes the form of a spider, and holds the knowledge of all of the folktales and stories; he is cunning and tricky, and uses his cunning guile to try to get what he wants. It is thought that Anansi was originally found in stories from the Ashanti and then the Akan people in Ghana, and from there the stories spread through West Africa.

During the Atlantic slave trade, the stories crossed the ocean with the slaves through oral tradition. Especially in the Caribbean, Anansi's cunning ways symbolized a resistance to powerful slave owners.

Anansi stories are considered "trickster" folktales because the small spider uses his intelligence and trickiness to triumph larger creatures.

Stories such as these are told by elders to pass down knowledge and moral messages to the younger generations. Sometimes the stories were acted out by the storyteller, or even sung with dancing and drumming. In the 1950s people began collecting the famous stories and writing them down so that school children in Ghana could learn them.

African Dance

Many of the dances in *The Dancing Granny* come from West Africa & are done at lots of celebrations during the harvest season. This is when people come together to see how well their crops of food like corn, rice, beans, & more have grown during that time. For example, the dance "Kassa" comes from the Malinke people of Guinea. The word means "to plant". Those in neighboring villages would come to fields to sing & dance as they till the soil & drop seed in hopes of having a plentiful harvest. This would help the days go by much faster. The food made from those vegetable crops would feed the large community to further nourish each other & the land.

Djembe Drum



The Djembe drum comes from West Africa. It is made of wood & hollow on the inside. The top of the drum is typically covered in goat skin. The loudest strike on the drum can be heard over a mile away. It has six hand patterns:

Bass Song Solo Ka Press-ka Variation

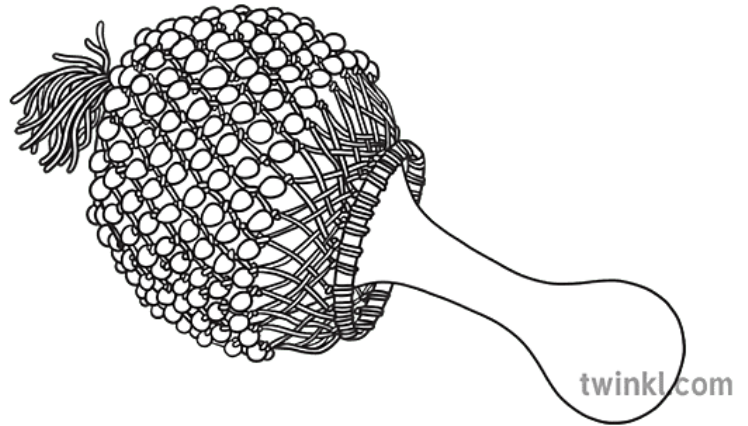
Can you guess how many times Brother Sun hits his djembe in the play?

YOUNG MUSIC MAKERS

ACTIVITY

Taken directly from: <https://kinderart.com/art-lessons/music/make-a-sticker-shakere/>

Have you ever seen a shekere from Africa? It is a beautiful musical instrument made from a dried gourd that is shaken, tossed or moved from hand to hand creating wonderful rhythms and songs. Traditional shekeres (or sekeres) are most often made from a type of squash called a birdhouse gourd that grows in many locations around the world. It is grown, dried and about a year later, ready to be turned into an instrument. When the outside of the gourd hardens into a thick shell, it is strung with a netting that fits loosely around the rounded part of the gourd. Beads, seeds, shells or other rattling objects are attached to the netting to create the percussive sound of the shekere.



OBJECTIVES:

Students will discover how to create sounds with a work of art they create themselves.

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Plastic milk jug, (*rinsed out, with lid*)
- Stickers (*such as paper reinforcements or the little round stickers used to price items at garage sales*).
- Permanent Marker, if you wish to draw string patterns on the plastic jugs
- Colorful yarn or string for handle
- Filling for the shekere - such as bird seed, dried macaroni, beans, beads, rice, sugar, salt, paper clips or small pebbles.
- Electrical tape - for sealing the instrument and keeping the content inside

WHAT YOU DO:

Since gourds may be hard to find and take some time to dry, here is a simplified version of this musical craft that uses stickers and recycled milk jugs. Also, working with netting and beads can be difficult for tiny hands, so this craft allows young children to create beautiful patterns that are unique and still have an instrument that is fun to play along with African songs or any up-tempo music.

YOUNG MUSIC MAKERS

ACTIVITY

1. First, wash and clean your milk jug and keep the lid or cap. If you are working with many children, you may wish to put each child's name on their milk jug for identification, should some of the shekeres look similar. Next, allow your students to do their beading, either free form by applying stickers anywhere on the milk jug or you can draw string patterns for them to show where a bead or sticker would go. If you like, you can talk about patterns of colors and different ways that patterns can be created.
2. Once your shekere is "beaded", then add the filling. Fillings that create quieter shekeres are sand, salt, sugar, Q-tips®, seed beads or tiny pasta such as pastina. Slightly louder shekeres can be made with fillings like paper clips, bird seed, rice, pony beads, or smaller beans such as lentils. Louder shekeres can be created by adding large dried macaroni, or beans, pebbles, larger beads or even jingle bells.
3. After filling your shekeres, seal the instrument with sturdy electrical tape by wrapping it around the lid and the top section of the plastic jug. This way the contents are secure inside, especially if working with younger children. If you can find colorful electrical tape, it adds a nice design element.

A HANDLE FOR YOUR SHEKERE:

If you like, add colorful yarn or pipe cleaners to create a handle for your milk jug shekere.

PLAYING THE SHEKERE:

1. The shekere can be played like a rattle, simply shaking it around.
2. It can also be held in one hand and then tapped on the other hand, like you might play a tambourine.
3. It can be tossed gently from one hand to the other. It can be played by tossing gently from one person to another and works well in a circle.
4. Some players "burp" their shekere. They hold it in one hand and tap the bottom with the other hand. On gourds, this creates not only a rattling but an "ah" sound. If you try this with your milk jug shekere, you'll get a rattle and a tap, a nice percussive effect.
5. What other sounds can your sticker shekere make? Explore it and find out.

POST-SHOW QUESTIONS



1. Spider Ananse tried to trick Granny to get her food. Have you ever tried to trick your family or friends? How did you try to trick them?

2. Granny is a very strong dancer and hard worker. What is something that you try really hard at? What is something that you are really good at doing?

3. "The Dancing Granny" is a tale from Africa. There are many stories from all around the world that are passed on each and every day. What are some stories that you like that you think should be shared? If you could hear stories from any place in the world where would that place be? Why?

THE
DANCING
GRANNY

**SOCIAL STORY
COMING SOON**