



Hambone by Libby Larsen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TEACHER'S GUIDE (CONTINUES ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES)

Introduction & Overview	pg 3
Teaching Strategies	pg 4
Background Information	pg 7
• Composer Biography	
• Program Notes	
• Hambone History and Context	
• Listening Map	
Glossary	pg 14
Matching Terms	pg 17
References & Resources	pg 18

FOLDER 1: LESSON PLAN FOR REHEARSING

1. Skill Builders: Warm-Ups
 - Musical Style Warm-Up
 - Syncopated Rhythm Warm-Up

FOLDER 2: LESSON PLANS FOR LISTENING & RESPONDING

1. Listen & Respond to *Hambone*
2. Musical Timeline Project

FOLDER 3: LESSON PLAN FOR CREATING MUSIC

1. Create a Hambone Rhythm

FOLDER 4: LESSON PLANS WITH INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

1. *Hambone* Inspirations: 3 Mini-Lessons
2. How Different Regions of the World Connect to *Hambone*
3. Mini-Lesson: Meet Composer *Libby Larsen*
4. Oral Tradition & the Roots of *Hambone*
5. Write Your Own Program Notes

STUDENT MATERIALS

Featured readings and worksheets designed to be printed and shared with students can be found throughout this curriculum. They are easily identifiable - each page has a border and contains an image of Rondo, the BandQuest® mascot!



Teacher's Guide

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

BandQuest® was conceived and launched by the American Composers Forum to create new music for middle level bands. In addition to commissioning works by some of today's leading composers, *BandQuest* also provides a rich curriculum with multiple resources for ensembles and music classrooms. This curriculum can be used not only to create ensemble lessons that teach students how to perform the pieces, but also to access interdisciplinary lessons that help students think critically, make connections between the music and other areas of learning, and understand the music they perform through multiple entry points.



The materials were developed using a curriculum planning strategy called the Facets Model (Barrett, McCoy, & Veblen, 1997). The Facets Model is a comprehensive approach for studying musical works in depth, and helping students relate music to other disciplines in meaningful ways. The model has been used to create curriculum in many settings, but especially in designing the content of the *BandQuest* curricula. For in-depth information on the facets model, go the *BandQuest* website at <http://www.composersforum.org/sites/default/files/BandQuestFacetsModel.pdf>.

The materials for each *BandQuest* curriculum can be downloaded. The curriculum for each work includes:

- Teacher's Guide
- Introduction to the Composer
- Program Notes
- Guided Listening resources
- Rhythm Practice and Warm-ups
- Lessons for Creating Music through arranging, improvising, interpreting or composing
- Interdisciplinary Lessons and Resources in Language Arts, Math, or Social Studies
- Readings Pages prepared especially for students
- Assessment Strategies
- Links to other web based resources

Hambone was composed in 1999 by Libby Larsen and premiered by the Blake School in Minneapolis, MN under the direction of Brian M. Olson.

Larsen used three inspirations from her life to write *Hambone*. First, she was inspired by early rock 'n roll rhythms, particularly those written by Bo Diddley, from her high school days when she had her own rock band. The second inspiration is the African-American tradition of hamboning—clapping and slapping to create fun, new rhythms, and finally the melodies of the traditional cakewalk, reminiscent of Debussy's "Golliwog's Cakewalk."

HAMBONE TEACHING STRATEGIES

TECHNICAL DEMANDS AND MUSIC READING REQUIREMENTS

Conservative ranges required from all instruments

Clarinet – no slurs across break, some technical passages around the break

Brass – no awkward skips

Some syncopated rhythms to read (cakewalk rhythms)

Some use of accidentals – identify any later notes in measures that accidentals affect

Some rhythmic independence, especially in percussion parts

Some stylistic playing that requires students to perform rhythms differently from how the rhythms are written

Many block chord rhythms

Percussion: snare drum – rolls, samba whistle, tom-toms – rolls, orchestra bells – some technical passages, cowbell – relatively fast triplets

Percussion requires secure tempo on rhythmically independent parts

MUSICAL ELEMENT ANALYSIS

An analysis of the musical elements contained in *Hambone* are listed below, along with an indication of which measures contain each element. More in-depth teaching strategies are provided for some of the musical elements which may require more time and attention in order for students to gain a complete understanding.

Listed musical elements for which specific teaching strategies have not been provided, may be taught by using the following activities:

1. After defining and describing an element, ask students to identify measures in their individual parts that contain the element.
2. Pick a measure in the piece and ask the students to identify all the elements that were discussed in class that are contained in the measure (different parts may contain different elements).
3. Pick two contrasting measures in the piece where only one contains a particular element. Ask the students to choose which measure contains the element.
4. Ask students to identify selected elements in measures of other pieces that they are rehearsing.
5. Play an excerpt of a recording that has several elements represented. Ask the students to describe the elements that they heard.
6. Have a student play a measure or several measures that contain a particular element. Have other members of the class (who do not play the same part) identify which element is being illustrated. You may want to give them several choices of answers from which to choose.

RHYTHM

CONCEPT	MEASURE LOCATION	POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGY
Syncopation	mm. 3, 11, 35-38, 42-66, 70, 77, 79, 87-95	Syncopated Rhythm Warm-up
Meter – 4/4	Entire piece	
Accent	mm. 7-10, 15, 17, 20, 21, 35, 36, 43-54, 58-64, 73-76, 87-95	
Ostinato	mm. 1-4, 23-29, 33-38, 43-54, 54-58 (cowbell), 58-64, 67-end	
Cakewalk rhythm	mm. 35-39, 54-57	
Hambone rhythms	mm. 5-30, 70-86	Musical Style Warm-up
Bo Diddley rhythms	mm. 43-54, 58-66, 87-95	
Swing/shuffle rhythms	mm. 3-30, 70-86	
Tied notes	mm. 3-6, 11, 13, 35-38, 42-53, 54-57, 58-66, 69-72, 77, 79, 87-92, 93-94	
Hemiola (2 against 3)	mm. 24-30	

MELODY

CONCEPT	MEASURE LOCATION	POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGY
Major scale	mm. 35, 37, 54, 56	
Dorian scale	mm. 36, 38, 42, 55, 57	
Counter melody	mm. 35-38 (alto & tenor sax)	

HARMONY

CONCEPT	MEASURE LOCATION	POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGY
Tonic/dominant (b7) – bass line	mm. 35, 37, 54, 56	
melody/accompaniment	mm. 35-42, 54-57	
Quartal harmony (chords built in 4ths)	mm. 45-53, 58-66, 87-92	
Tertian harmony (chords built in 3rds)	mm. 39-42, 93-95	

TIMBRE/TEXTURE

CONCEPT	MEASURE LOCATION	POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGY
Dense vs. thin	(all dense)	Students identify whether they are fulfilling the function of melody, countermelody, accompaniment, bass line or rhythmic punctuation in measures selected by the teacher.

EXPRESSION MARKINGS

CONCEPT	MEASURE LOCATION	POSSIBLE TEACHING STRATEGY
dynamics: soft (<i>p</i> , <i>mp</i>)	m. 54 (perc), 58	
dynamics: loud (<i>f</i> , <i>ff</i> , <i>fff</i>)	mm. 26, 28, 30, 35, 41, 64, 84, 86, 93	
Dynamics: medium (<i>mf</i>)	mm. 33, 39, 41, 43, 45, 87	
crescendo	mm. 58-64, 88 (tom-tom)	
Articulation: slur	mm. 35-43	
Articulation: marcato (detached)	mm. 35-39 (tpts. & upper woodwinds), 41-42 (a. sax, t. sax, piccolo), 54-57 (flute & clarinet)	
Articulation: accents	mm. 7-10, 15, 17, 20, 35, 36, 43-54, 56-64, 73-76, 87-95	
Articulation: staccato	mm. 33-37, 45-54, 58-66, 87-92	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY: LIBBY LARSEN

"Music exists in an infinity of sound. I think of all music as existing in the substance of the air itself. It is the composer's task to order and make sense of sound, in time and space, to communicate something about being alive through music." -- Libby Larsen



Libby Larsen (b. 24 December 1950, Wilmington, Delaware) is one of America's most prolific and most performed living composers. She has created a catalogue of over 400 works spanning virtually every genre from intimate vocal and chamber music to massive orchestral works and over twelve operas. Her music has been praised for its dynamic, deeply inspired, and vigorous contemporary American spirit. Constantly sought after for commissions and premieres by major artists, ensembles and orchestras around the world, Libby Larsen has established a permanent place for her works in the concert repertory.

Larsen has been hailed as "the only English-speaking composer since Benjamin Britten who matches great verse with fine music so intelligently and expressively" (USA Today); as "a composer who has made the art of symphonic writing very much her own."

(Gramophone); as "a mistress of orchestration" (Times Union); and for "assembling one of the most impressive bodies of music of our time" (Hartford Courant). Her music has been praised for its "clear textures, easily absorbed rhythms and appealing melodic contours that make singing seem the most natural expression imaginable." (Philadelphia Inquirer) "Libby Larsen has come up with a way to make contemporary opera both musically current and accessible to the average audience." (The Wall Street Journal). "Her ability to write memorable new music completely within the confines of traditional harmonic language is most impressive." (Fanfare)

Libby Larsen has received numerous awards and accolades, including a 1994 Grammy as producer of the CD: The Art of Arlene Augér, an acclaimed recording that features Larsen's Sonnets from the Portuguese. Her opera Frankenstein, The Modern Prometheus was selected as one of the eight best classical music events of 1990 by USA Today. The first woman to serve as a resident composer with a major orchestra, she has held residencies with the California Institute of the Arts, the Arnold Schoenberg Institute, the Philadelphia School of the Arts, the Cincinnati Conservatory, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Charlotte Symphony, and the Colorado Symphony. Larsen's many commissions and recordings are a testament to her fruitful collaborations with a long list of world-renowned artists, including The King's Singers, Benita Valente, and Frederica von Stade, among others. Her works are widely recorded on such labels as Angel/EMI, Nonesuch, Decca, and Koch International.

As a past holder of the 2003-2004 Harissios Papamarkou Chair in Education at the Library of Congress and recipient of the Eugene McDermott Award in the Arts from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as well as a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters,

Libby Larsen is a vigorous, articulate champion of the music and musicians of our time. In 1973, she co-founded (with Stephen Paulus) the Minnesota Composers Forum, now the American Composers Forum, which has been an invaluable advocate for composers in a difficult, transitional time for American arts. Consistently sought-after as a leader in the generation of millenium thinkers, Libby Larsen's music and ideas have refreshed the concert music tradition and the composer's role in it.*

For more, go to the composer's website, LibbyLarsen.com

* Official biography from libbylarsen.com

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

PROGRAM NOTES FOR *HAMBONE*

Hambone, by Libby Larsen, is a rhythmically driven piece that uses hambone rhythms, early Rock N' Roll patterns, and cakewalk melodies as inspiration. The composer drew on three important African-American cultural traditions in composing *Hambone*.

The term hambone comes from bones that enslaved Africans used to make music when they were denied use of traditional instruments. Later, the term was used to describe the hand clapping game played by African-American children as they clapped, patted thighs and slapped various parts of the body to accompany singing.

Another tradition, the cakewalk, refers to an 18th century plantation dance. In a cakewalk, the dancers hold their upper bodies stiff while improvising fancy dance steps with their lower bodies that allowed individual dancers to display their best moves. The dance was performed to syncopated melodies.

The third tradition – rock and roll – developed out of Rhythm and Blues. Bo Diddley was an important innovator in the development of this American popular style of music; the syncopated accompaniment used in *Hambone* was one of his trademarks.

The A section of this ABA piece begins with the percussion section playing syncopated rhythms. Next the wind players clap and slap their legs in a hambone rhythm which develops into a call and response between various sections of the band. Additional musical effects are achieved by use of vocal glissandi and a samba whistle.

The B section features an ostinato in the bass instruments and a syncopated cakewalk melody performed as a call and response between the trumpets and the upper woodwinds. Cakewalk melodies are combined with tunes typical of those sung on a playground while performing a hambone. The section ends with a rhythm from the rock n' roll tradition of Bo Diddley, which starts in the low brass and woodwinds and builds to a climax as additional instruments are added. The syncopated percussion rhythms and hambone clapping return in the final A section of the piece, followed by a coda based on the Bo Diddley rhythms.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

HAMBONE LISTENING MAP

SECTION A

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS START THE MUSIC:

- a cowbell sets the beat
- a tambourine comes in with a syncopated rhythm
- then the drum says, “get ready!”

HANDS CLAP AND SLAP HAMBONE RHYTHMS IN CALL AND RESPONSE PATTERNS:

- tom-tom plays triplets
- the chimes “chime in” and hambone continues
- cowbell takes over the triplets and are answered by hambone rhythms
- voices swoop up with an accent at the top – tom-toms and the cowbell answer

LAYERS BUILD:

- first the bass drum, then woodblock, cowbell, chimes, body percussion and a vocal glissando section ends with accented eight notes, the snare drum and a samba whistle

SECTION B

LOW INSTRUMENTS PLAY AN OSTINATO:

- trumpets ask a question –an upward tune with a cakewalk rhythm
- flutes, piccolos, oboes and clarinets play an answer – a downward tune also in cakewalk rhythm
- trumpets ask the question again and woodwinds answer

A NEW HAMBONE MELODY STARTS:

- bassoons, horns and chimes sing out... “Hambone, Hambone, where you been?”
- piccolos and saxophones answer with a saucy syncopated response
- percussion starts an ostinato using the “Bo Diddley” rhythm, low winds join and energy builds
- the pattern breaks and a soft solo flute asks a question in the cakewalk rhythm
- solo clarinet answers
- layers build to a big crescendo using the “Bo Diddley” pattern

SECTION A

THE COWBELL TAKES US BACK TO THE OPENING SECTION:

- tambourine and snare drums play
- two hambone groups clap and slap in call and response

CODA

LAYERS BUILD ONCE MORE:

- bass drum, woodblock, cowbell, body percussion and chimes, and vocal glissandos
- low winds and brass play the “Bo Diddley” pattern in layers – low to high and soft to loud
- music ends fortissimo with a major chord and a **final punch!**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

HAMBONE HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Hambone is an African American musical style that has been incorporated into many artistic and cultural traditions. Some of those traditional forms include storytelling, children's games, and poetry. In each form, rhythmic hand clapping, and body percussion is integrated into the telling of the story, the playing of the game, or the recitation of a poem.

The origins of hambone can be traced back to West African oral traditions. When enslaved Africans were brought to the Americas, they carried with them various languages, cultural practices, and customs. To control and discourage slaves from revolt, the slave owners forbade slaves to use their languages, customs and musical instruments as a means of identity, expression, and communication. Slaves were not allowed to read nor write and, therefore, had to rely upon their rich oral tradition of storytelling and ingenuity to develop alternative methods for artistic expression and communication.

Forms of artistic expression created by the slaves arose from their experiences of life on the plantation, the customs and memories of their African communities, and the English language and religious stories and songs taught to them by Christian missionaries upon their arrival in the Americas. The slaves strengthened their abilities to communicate through artistic expression by refining the art of storytelling, singing, and public conversations. They used a variety of methods such as acting, gesturing and vocal inflection and the poetic application of metaphor and coded messages.

Some of the earliest artistic forms expressed by the slaves were sung. They sang praise songs later called spirituals. Spirituals are primarily religious songs that were created and sung by the enslaved Africans. The songs often combined the texts and harmonies of European Christian hymns, integrated with West African syncopated rhythms and poetic phrase structure. The genre of spirituals contributed to the development of musical form, spontaneous emotion, and vocal inflections found in Hambone.

STORYTELLING

Hambone is linked to the tradition of African American storytelling. This form of storytelling can be traced to the West African literary forms of folktale expression. Storytelling was used by the enslaved Africans as means of communication, to maintain history and cultural heritage, to teach values, morals, life survival lesson and to pass along coded information often used in plans of escape or revolt. In many West African cultures the traditional storyteller is called the Griot. The Griot is recognized as a person of great significance because as storyteller, the Griot is responsible for remembering the village history, teaching and entreating cultural values.

Traditional West African folktales were a popular custom among enslaved Africans because this form allowed the slaves to tell stories in a stylized language. This artistic form can be traced to Esu Elegbara (pronounced eshu eleg bär'a; referred to as Esu in most circumstances), an African god who was a trickster, and master of metaphor, literary forms, and stylish expression. Esu is found in the mythology and folklore traditions of many West African cultures. This stylized language was sometimes used by

African slaves to outwit slave owners, or to maintain or gain some independence or individuality within a community. Stylized language was also used to teach lessons of customs, morals and values.

Storytelling and stylized language can also be traced through history to contemporary African American forms of artistic expression. Further investigation and examples can be found in the works of African American literary figures such as W.E.B. DuBois, Zora Neal Hurston, Langston Hughes, and Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

Other examples of stylized language forms can be found in the poetry of the spirituals, African American folk songs and blues, the expressive language of foregone street vendors, be-bop, beatnik and spoken-word poetry, and the poetic and stylized language of rap and hip hop.

GAME SONGS

Hambone is linked to African American game song traditions and can be traced to the customs of educating children through communal dance rituals and songs. Dance has served as an integral part of traditional West African societies and is often performed as communal activity or ritual. Songs for children have taught values from the moment lullabies are used to soothe a crying baby to ritual ceremonies when children are accepted into society as young adults. As in many traditional cultures that combine the custom and ritual of dance and song, some of the many lessons children are taught include:

- social roles and etiquette
- responsibility to community and nature
- expectations for contributing to the society
- cooperating and harmony

Linked to these traditions, hambone is an example of a children's game song that combines the use of dance movement, rhythm, storytelling, stylized language, and song. The rhyming text of the hambone tells a story that imitates the life circumstances of adults by children.

POETRY AND RHYTHM

The rhyming poetic language of the hambone can be traced to the African American artistic forms of the spirituals, folktales and storytelling. Like the poetic text of the spirituals, hambone is enhanced by its musical form, which offers a complex interpretation of the meaning. As in the oral traditions of storytelling and folktales, the rhyming vernacular text is performed in rhythmic, short phrases and recalls a story that reaches a climatic conclusion. Just like many African American artistic forms, the hambone consists of rhythmic stress patterns and phrase structures that can be heard through the speech patterns in vocal expression paired with use of body percussion.

African American poetic expression is also linked to the development of a body of poems and poetically stylized literature. A few of the many acclaimed African American writers and artists who have contributed to this tradition include Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou and Alice Walker.

To further your investigation visit the Southern Mosaic: John and Ruby Lomax 1939 *Southern States Recording Trip* through the Library of Congress web site at:

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/connections/southern-mosaic/>

HAMONE GLOSSARY

Beatnik	A school of thought that developed shortly after WWII by authors and poets who were trying to find meaning in the post-war world through a search for truth, beauty, and mysticism.
Blues	A type of music that was developed in African-American communities near the end of the 19 th century. Blues is common in jazz, rhythm and blues and rock 'n' roll music and is often identified by the use of the 12-bar blues progression. The distinctive sound of the blues progression comes from the inclusion of the lowered 3 rd , 7 th , and sometimes 5 th step of a major scale.
Cakewalk	A type of improvised dance that started in the 18 th century on southern plantations. In a cakewalk, the dancers hold their upper bodies still with little or no movement while doing agile dance steps with their lower bodies.
Composer	A person who writes music.
Glissando	Rapidly changing pitches gliding through scale-like, consecutive tones produced by singing, sliding over keys or strings of a piano, harp, string instrument, or smoothly moving the slide of a trombone.
Griot	West African oral historian, musician, and storyteller, who carries on the ancient traditions of praise-singing and storytelling.
Hambone/hamboning	A musical style made by rhythmically clapping, patting, and slapping various parts of the body. Over time, hambone came to describe the intricate game played by African American children as they clapped, patted thighs and slapped various parts of their bodies while they sang.
Hand jive	A type of dance associated with rhythm and blues music in the 1950s that includes complicated hand movements, slapping and clapping that imitates the percussion in the music.
Improvise	Spontaneously creating music; creating music while performing it without a score.
Jazz	A style of music that originated in the early 1900s when African musical styles were combined with European musical styles. A distinctly American type of music.

Melody	A series of succession of pitches that make up a tune.
Metaphor	A figure of speech in which a seemingly unrelated word or phrase is related to another to suggest a similarity or shared meaning.
Minstrel show	American entertainment consisting of comic skits, variety acts, dancing, and music, performed by white people in blackface or, especially after the Civil War, black people in blackface, often depicting black people as stupid, superstitious and happy-go-lucky.
Oral tradition	Verbally sharing cultural values, stories and history from generation to generation through the use of folktales, sayings, songs, storytelling or chants.
Ostinato	A repeated melodic or rhythmic pattern, often in the bass line.
Ragtime	A new kind of music in the late 1800s and early 1900s, based largely on the tunes that were played during slavery-era cakewalks. Syncopated melodies gave the music a 'raggedy' feel.
Spirituals	Religious songs that were originally created and sung by the enslaved Africans who often took European Christian hymns and combined the harmonies with West African syncopated rhythms.
Spoken-word poetry	Poetry that is recited aloud, made popular during the early 90s, which uses the rhythms, diction, and timing of the poetry to give it attitude. It is often performed in competitions called "poetry slams."
Storytelling	Method of oral communication used to pass along information, teach, retain cultural identity, or entertain. Characteristics of storytelling include: an emphasis on rhythm of the language, some repetition, short phrases used for ease of comprehension and memorization, emotional content, and the use of climatic endings and themes that emphasize respect for family values, children, and community.
Stylized language	A way of speaking, choice of words, and gestures used by a specific group of people; colloquialisms.
Swing	A style of jazz or popular music originating in the 1930s. It also describes a stylistic approach to performing a dotted eighth/sixteenth note rhythm.
Syncopated	Placing rhythmic emphasis on a weak beat or weaker part of a beat, the off-beat.

Vaudeville

A type of live entertainment popular from the early 1880s until the early 1930s which included a mix of performances including music, theater, comedy, acrobatics and more.

Matching Terms

Match the term to its definition. Chose the correct musical term from the bottom of the page and write it to the left of the definition.

- _____ placing rhythmic emphasis on a weak beat or weaker part of a beat, the off-beat.
- _____ verbally sharing cultural values, stories and history from generation to generation through the use of folktales, sayings, songs, or chants.
- _____ religious songs that were originally created and sung by the enslaved Africans who often took European Christian hymns and combined the harmonies with West African syncopated rhythms.
- _____ a musical style made by rhythmically clapping, patting, and slapping various parts of the body.
- _____ a type of improvised dance that started in the 18th century on southern plantations.
- _____ a West African oral historian, musician, and storyteller, who carries on the ancient traditions of praise-singing and storytelling.
- _____ a way of speaking, choice of words, and gestures used by a specific group of people.
- _____ spontaneously creating music
- _____ a person who writes music
- _____ a style of music that originated in the early 1900s when African musical styles were combined with European musical styles. A distinctly American type of music.

STYLIZED LANGUAGE
SYNCOPATION

ORAL TRADITION
IMPROVISATION

HAMBONE
SPIRITUALS

GRIOT
JAZZ

COMPOSER
CAKEWALK



REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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