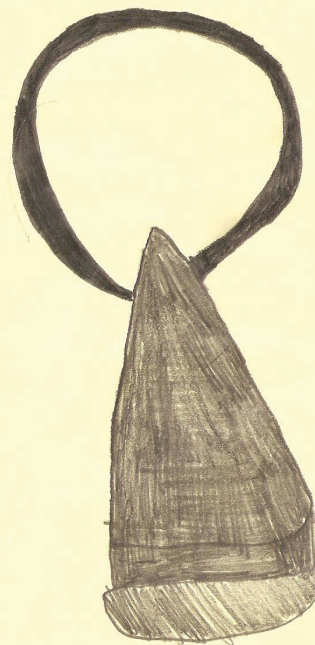




TEAM  
SPIRIT

# MUSIC AND ART IN SUDAN

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## IDEAS TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR CLASS

- What might the national instrument of Ireland be? You could probably choose to name the uilleann pipes, the bodhrán, the ‘fiddle’ or the harp.
- Do other countries have ‘national instruments’ – if asked to name the ‘national instruments’ of other countries, which and how many would the class list? Which countries might claim the button accordion, the pipe organ, the clarinet, banjo, or the harp?

See [www.africaguide.com/country/sudan/music.htm](http://www.africaguide.com/country/sudan/music.htm)



In Sudan, the tambour and other hide-covered drums are popular instruments for accompanying traditional music, and the oud (a kind of lute which is also played in Palestine and in other countries, and of which Sudan’s Hamza El Din is a master) is popular in northern Sudan, where the Arabic influence is strongest. They also play flutes and bow-harps made from yellow wood. These instruments use a pentatonic (five-tone) scale, which is quite restrictive, so in recent years people adopted western instruments as these are more versatile. Another instrument played in southern Sudan is the rattle, which is often made from dried and hollowed-out gourds or calabash and filled with dried seeds, often sorghum seeds, which are inserted through a hole cut in the top, later plugged with beeswax and leaves. The gourd is spherical and has a long narrow neck that acts as the instrument’s handle.

See [www.m-huether.de/sudan/sudmus/](http://www.m-huether.de/sudan/sudmus/)

On this website you can listen to many samples of Sudanese music which is encoded for RealPlayer or Windows Media Player.

## MAKING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

- Having listened to some Sudanese music and maybe looked at the photographs of some real Sudanese hide-covered drums or bow-harps (on web-address), why don’t the children make some musical instruments of their own? Tambourines, rattles and drums are all quite easy to make; using dried peas or beans and containers or cans that can be found in most households/kitchens.

See also <http://southernsudan.prm.ox.ac.uk/index.php>

You might make a tambourine by placing some dried beans in between two tinfoil pie-dishes and stapling these together before decorating with thin strips of crêpe paper

or coloured plastic (these could hang from the sides of the pie-dishes) and sprinkling with glue and glitter. You might even make patterns on both sides of your tambourine using the glitter or paint.

A shaker or rattle can be made by placing some dried peas or beans into a small or large Pringles or similar tube and sellotaping the plastic lid back on. The container can be painted in bright colours, or you could glue small pictures from magazines all over the tube and then cover in clear varnish.

A drum can be made using any cylindrical container, such as cheap terracotta pots which can be bought in most garden centres. Alternatively, you might buy some small aluminium or metal rubbish bins, of the sort often found in bedrooms or bathrooms. Stretch cellophane across the open end of the container and secure with elastic bands.

Beads can be made from clay (remember to make a small hole through them while clay is still wet) or from rolled paper.

- Explore the different sounds you get from beans, dried peas, rice, dry sand, pebbles, small shells, buttons – anything, really, that will make a rattle. Discuss the best combinations with the class and decide on your best classroom instruments.

If children in first and second class wished to join in creating their own musical instruments, a free resource **Make Your Own Music!** created by author Patrice Aggs to accompany her book *Ducks in Trouble* is available to download

[www.obrien.ie/resources/DucksinTrouble\\_1.pdf](http://www.obrien.ie/resources/DucksinTrouble_1.pdf)

## GREAT SUDANESE IMAGES

<http://southernsudan.prm.ox.ac.uk/index.php>



This website provides access to a detailed catalogue of the collections from Southern Sudan held at the Pitt Rivers Museum, the University of Oxford’s Museum of Anthropology and World Archaeology. You can explore the catalogue by clicking on ‘entry points’ such as instruments or baskets, or bead work etc. You will find images and information about toys and about musical instruments, and much more, on these pages.





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- The class might dye long white cloths or sheets in large saucepans containing boiling water and beetroot, onions (leave skins on for deeper colour), gorse-flowers, tea-leaves, red cabbage or any natural dye, as appropriate. Leave to soak overnight. The children might wind or wrap the dyed and colourful cloths around themselves while playing their own musical instruments. The walls of the room could be decorated with wall-hangings, with designs based on those to be found on  
<http://southernsudan.prm.ox.ac.uk/index.php>

## CLASS OR SCHOOL PROJECT WORK

- Represent a village similar to the one where Sadiq's family lives on an old sheet or curtain, using fabric glue to stick on houses with corrugated roofs, fields or plots of land with crops, and maybe baskets in which to collect or gather the sorghum and peanuts or groundnuts, and trees and bushes. You might choose to include a school-house or outdoor 'classroom' too. Might you have armed horsemen in the background of your village to show the ever-present danger Sadiq's family lives with?
- If the class is divided into four or five groups, each group might portray an aspect of village life, or of life in Darfur on a wall-hanging or backdrop. The class might then write a play around the theme of child soldiers – boys as young as ten or eleven who are forcibly taken by armed horsemen to serve in the militia. The other backdrops might show the parents reacting to the removal of their children, and the destruction wrought on the homes and crops of the village by these horsemen.
- Alternatively, the class might write a play about Sadiq's brothers and sisters as they wait for news of visas that would allow them to travel to Ireland to join their mother and brother. What are their feelings towards Sadiq now? Are they envious of him and jealous that he is already safe in Ireland, or do they miss him and wish he were still with them? Explore the mixed emotions the various members of the family would feel, and remember that grandparents might not be allowed to join the rest of the family, and so may never see their grandchildren again.

## YOUNG SOLDIERS IN AN EARLIER ERA



Just as the Janjaweed and other militia groups kidnap young boys and men and force them to become part of their army, press gangs were used in the 18th and early 19th centuries to 'recruit' soldiers and sailors into the British armed forces. This was really a form of kidnapping, carried out by the services or their (often armed) agents, and was similar to the practice of 'shanghaiing' sailors for duty in the merchant marine, especially in the Far East. The term 'press gang' came from the organisation at the ports which was charged with obtaining seamen and which was known as the Impress Service. The Impress Service was allowed to seize only those who were seamen, but they often ignored this rule. The word 'press' itself was a corruption of the word *prest*, which came from the old French *prest* which was a 'loan' or 'advance'. A man who was paid the King's shilling to enlist became an impress, or prest man. Many men would bribe their way out of the gangs' clutches, and wealthy men would often pay bribes to the press gang in exchange for their freedom.

Many traditional folksongs from England refer to these press gangs. Examine the words of these verses about the old naval press gangs:

As I walked out on London Street  
A press gang there I chanced to meet  
They asked me if I'd join the fleet  
On board of a man-o-war, boys

Come brother shipmates tell to me  
What kind of treatment they give you  
That I may know before I go  
On board of a man-o-war, boys

When I got there to my surprise  
All they had told me was shocking lies  
There was a row and a jolly old row  
On board of a man-o-war, boys

The first thing they done they took me in hand  
They lashed me with a tar of a strand  
They flogged me till I could not stand  
On board of a man-o-war, boys





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## MUSIC AND ART

When next I get my foot on shore  
To see them London girls once more  
I'll never go to sea no more  
On board of a man-o-war, boys

### Verse of 'High Germany'

Cursed be those cruel wars  
wherever they arise  
And out of merry England  
pressed many the man likewise  
They pressed my true love from me  
Likewise my brothers three  
And sent me off to die, my love  
In high Germany

### EXPLORING TRADITIONAL COSTUMES

- Divide the class into groups and ask them to think about and research the many traditional costumes found in different parts of the world. If there are children from different countries in the class, perhaps they could bring in examples of the clothes worn on special occasions in their countries of origin. Some children may bring in embroidered and sequined dresses and/or long robes, eg an Arabic burnoose or a sarong, or an Indian sari, and the children might examine various fabrics and designs and say how the patterns were achieved – whether they were batiked using hot wax, or printed like the *adinkra* cloth often found in Ghana.
- Sudanese traditional *jallabiyas*, *tagiyas* and '*immahs*' are usually white, sometimes beige. Ask the children to consider why Sudanese men have traditionally chosen to wear white clothes – perhaps the class might conduct an experiment with white and black cloth/material, to see which colour reflects most light and why? Ask the parents/carers if they could encourage their sons to wear at least one white piece of clothing for one day – ask them to be aware of how difficult it is to keep white clothes clean in Irish weather and to consider if it would be more or less difficult under a hot Sudanese sun.

- In Japan, 15 November is a special day for some young boys and girls – seven-year-old girls, five-year-old boys, and boys and girls of three are honoured with a celebration called *Shichi-Go-San*, meaning Seven-Five-Three. Girls wear their best clothes, often kimonos tied with a sash or *obi*. Some boys wear a *hakama*, which is a shorter version of the kimono and both boys and girls wear wooden clogs called *geta*.
- Children might think of wedding and/or funeral and/or naming-day dresses and costumes – what types of clothes and jewellery do they and their older family members traditionally wear on special occasions?
- There are also different headdresses worn by different cultures, and on different occasions, eg the white wedding veil traditionally worn by western brides, the turbans worn by Sikhs in India and the *kaffiyeh* worn by many Palestinian men. What, if anything, do these headdresses signify?

### SKIN PAINTING

- *Mendhi* (Hindi) or henna (English) is a tropical plant derivative, which, when applied to the skin, leaves behind an orange/red/even burgundy stain, which can last for several weeks. The tradition of applying *mendhi* to decorate feet and hands goes back thousands of years to religious and bridal rituals in India, Africa and the Middle East. *Mendhi* is of great significance in Hindu weddings and Islamic celebrations, such as Eid ul-Fitr. Some believe that the darker the red colour and the longer it remains on the bride's hands and feet, the deeper the groom's love for her. The henna paste appears black, but it temporarily dyes the skin a deep red colour.
- A *bindi*, meaning 'a drop or a dot', is a decoration worn on the forehead, particularly in India and in South East Asia. Traditionally, it is a dot of red colour applied in the centre of the forehead close to the eyebrows, but it can also be a piece of jewellery said to symbolise the third eye, which is a window into the soul.
- Children might research these decorative practices and experiment with designs in class.

