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Kathy Wade

Rhythms...Common Bonds

Classroom photo by Rich Sofranko

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RESPECT!

You have to give it to gain it!

Artists on Tour

Rhythms…Common Bonds

Rhythms…Common Bonds (RCB) links the audience to one of life's most important lessons: Respect. The show blends percussion, music, singing, poetry and storytelling, drawing participants into the 'rhythms of life,' and retelling the lessons of respect – the most important common bond between all people of all cultures.

The program message is demonstrated repeatedly throughout the program: RESPECT! You have to give it to gain it.

Rhythms . . . Common Bonds Study Guide is designed for teachers to encourage and prepare students prior to the program and use in conjunction with classroom curriculum. Please note the study guide complete with recommended activities, bibliography and interdisciplinary connections to other academic areas to enhance pre- and post-program activities.

What's in your RCB study guide

- Listen to the Rhythms
- A Piece of the Wind
- Endangered Species
- Rhythms of Life
- Lean on Me and Learn Respect
- About the Artists
- About Learning Through Art, Inc. and INSTEP
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Listen to the Rhythms

Rhythms . . . Common Bonds begins with listening to rhythms. The first rhythm in our lives is the human heartbeat, which thousands of years ago were first expressed by the beating of the drum. The drum became an integral means of communication between people who lived great distances apart. In many cultures, important stories and lessons of life were told utilizing the beating of the drum. As the heartbeat gave birth to the drum beat, the drum gave us the means to express the rhythms of life.

Rhythms . . . Common Bonds invites us to discover and to respect our own unique rhythms by exploring the rich poetry and stories that speak of the beat and the drum. Once we appreciate and respect our own rhythm/drumbeat, we can respect and appreciate the rhythm and the drumbeat of others. In her poem, "the drum," Nikki Giovanni, describes the beat:

daddy says the world is
a drum tight and hard
and I told him
I'm gonna beat
out my own rhythm

African Proverb: ***Study the reasons for a man's (person's) actions before criticizing him.***

A Piece of the Wind

Rhythms . . . Common Bonds examines African culture and daily customs practiced to teach respect to adults and children. **Heshi-ma** (heh-shee-mah) means 'respect' in Swahili. In many African cultures children are taught early to show respect for adults (and even older children) because of their wisdom which only comes from life experience.

In many communities it is customary for adults to kneel when greeting an older person. A common practice in African culture is to seek permission of the eldest at a gathering to begin a program or ceremony. These customs are tremendous acts of respect because they celebrate the wisdom of our elders.

A Piece of Wind is an African folk tale about learning from the wisdom of our elders and about the true meaning of respect:

In a village in Africa lived Tor, the proud father of a boy named Mooka. Whenever Tor looked at Mooka, he vowed to be a faithful father and to teach his son all the wisdom he himself had learned from his parents.

When Mooka was old enough to be taught, Tor called him to his side and said, "Mooka, I want you to grow up wise and good."

Mooka laughed and replied, "Father, I am already wise and good."

African Proverb: ***Wisdom is like a goat skin bag, each man (person) carries his own.***

"Mooka!" said the father. "The only one that can say that of himself is God's Son."

"Leave God's Son out of this," responded Mooka arrogantly. "All I want you to know is that young people get wiser faster these days, and we no longer want to be bothered by the wisdom of our parents."

Tor understood that his son could not learn unless he wanted to learn.

Not long afterwards, Mooka fell in love with Yamini, the daughter of a wise village elder. Mooka went to the elder and said, "I would like to marry your daughter Yamini. What is the bride price?"

Yamini's father replied, "I don't care about money, but I do want my daughter to be married to a wise and good man. The bride price for my daughter is a piece of wind."

Mooka knew right away that he was being tested and that he did not know the answer. He went home to his father and told him what happened.

Tor laughed. "You have always boasted how wise you are. If you really want Yamini to be your wife, put a knife in your belt, take a gun and a hunting bag, and find a piece of the wind."

Mooka did as his father told him, but hard as he tried, he could not catch a piece of the wind. He sat down on the tree stump and thought a long time. Perhaps he should look for another wife? No he decided. He really loved Yamini.

After a while he went back to his father. "I have been foolish not to realize how much I need your help," said Mooka. "Will you help me?" Tor smiled. "Of course I will help you."

Together they went to Yamini's father, who greeted them and offered them food. But Mooka's father asked only for a glass of water. After he was given the glass he studied it for a long time. At last he said, "Forgive me, my friend, but why have you given me water that has not been sifted?"

"Where do you grind and sift water?" asked Yamini's father.

"At the same place where you get a piece of the wind," replied Mooka's father.

Yamini's father smiled and said to Tor, "When I told your son to bring me a piece of the wind, I knew he could not do it. But now I see that he is a wise young man. He had the wisdom to ask his father for help. Everyone knows that a man who honors his father and mother will honor his wife. I welcome Mooka as my son-in-law."

Mooka and Yamini were married. And when their children were born, they taught them to honor the wisdom of their parents.

Rhythm and music create a compelling backdrop for this African tale of a young man's blatant disrespect towards his father's wisdom in *A Piece of Wind*. Oscar Brown, Jr. further emphasizes the message of this parable in *Brown Baby*.

Trust. Honor. Wisdom. These are the components of respect.

Endangered Species

Rhythms . . . Common Bonds looks at the common bonds of all living things on earth and throughout the universe. In understanding these common bonds, we see the value and necessity of respecting people and respecting our earth. To ignore the harmony and rhythms inherent in our common bonds could make us Endangered Species. This chant/rap is based on an original song by jazz vocalist Dianne Reeves. The lyrics reinforce the lesson that teaches us about the need for universal respect for ourselves, others and the world in which we live.

Endangered Species
Bruce Wade, lyrics
Kathy Wade, Billy Larkin, Music

Chorus

We are endangered species

But we sing no victim's song

We are one with the earth, one with the sun

We sing out loud and strong

African Proverb: ***The man (person) who listens understands.***

Rhythms of Life

Listen to the Rhythms of Life in the music by combining ancient African instruments with today's electronic keyboard wizardry. Listen to the rhythms expand beyond the heartbeat, beyond the drumbeat, and create your own story describing a lesson of respect from your life's experiences.

Lean on Me and Learn Respect

We are taught lessons of respect from birth until we become the “elders” of our village. Understanding, appreciating and sharing respect can only serve to broaden our ability to enjoy the many cycles of life and to learn from the rhythms of life and to learn from the rhythms of our common bonds. If, throughout your life cycle, you learn to lean on those who are older and wiser than you, you will learn the lessons of respect.

Lean on Me

Bill Withers

Chorus

You just call on me brother
When you need a hand
We all need somebody to Lean On
I just might have a problem
That you’ll understand
We all need somebody to Lean On

African Proverb: ***It takes a whole village to raise a child.***

RESPECT

Recognizing Everybody’s Space Promotes Everyone Coming Together

RESPECT! You must give it to gain it.

About the Artists

KATHY WADE, #1 Blues Vocalist on mp3.com, featured in *Essence Magazine*, March 1999 (*Teaching With Music)*, twice voted Best Singer by *Cincinnati Magazine*, a 1997 *Cincinnati Enquirer* Woman of the Year, YWCA Career Woman of Achievement, won the prestigious Cincinnati Post-Corbett Award for Performing Artist and *Applause!* Magazine Imagemaker.

Kathy is a world-renowned entertainer whose talent has taken her throughout Europe, United States and Caribbean. Her celebrated voice is captured on her debut CD, '*You Got The Magic'*; Emmy award winning video, *Someone's In Love* and the production *Stranger in My Dreams*.

In addition to her recordings, television and commercial projects, Kathy shared concert bills with Whitney Houston, Anita Baker, Kenny G., George Benson and David Sanborn. A native Cincinnatian, Kathy holds a Master of Arts from the College-Conservatory of Music and is Co-founder and President of Learning Through Art, Inc., producer and presenter of *Rhythms . . . Common Bonds*.

MAURICE CRUTCHER (keyboards) recently returned to Cincinnati after spending several years in Cleveland and Detroit where he expanded his recording resume. A highly sought after musician, Maurice is one of today's forces in contemporary gospel music that works with Fred Hammond, Commission and Virtue. A graduate of Withrow High School and Southern Ohio College, Maurice, who began playing piano at age three, celebrates his debut compact disc, *Consecration*. In addition to performing, writing, composing and recording, Maurice and percussionist Charles Miller accompany Kathy Wade in LTA's INSTEP program, *Rhythms…Common Bonds* throughout the Midwest.

CHARLES MILLER (Percussionist) is the founder and Director of CIC Percussion. He has been a cultural drummer/percussionist, drum maker, performer and teacher in the greater Cincinnati area for over twenty years. Charles has a series of children's workshops and presentations titled *The ABC's of Percussion*. Born in Philadelphia, Charles is the percussionist with Drums for Peace and Caixa De Sol. He has traveled extensively throughout Cuba, Brazil, and the far east.

CHARLES HOLMOND (Director) holds an MFA from the College-Conservatory of Music, UC and has been a director, teacher and actor for nearly thirty years. Currently, he is teaching in the Theatre Department at Earlham College. He served as producing director for NEW THEATER/FREE THEATER since its inception. His directing credits include *Serious He-Man Ball* for the Ensemble Theater and *Driving Miss Daisy* for the Kanawha Players of Charleston, WV; *The Zoo Story*; *The Brownsville Raid*, (along with about 30 other plays), in Cincinnati.

Charles served as Harold Scott's assistant on Broadway and at the Kennedy Center. He feels doubly honored to have received the Wright-Overstreet Memorial Award for outstanding service, given by the Cincinnati branch of the NAACP and Profiles of Excellence Award from WIZF-FM.

ASSIM SHADEE, (Production Assistant), is a 13 year veteran of theater and stage productions with director credits for the *Dutchman*, *Shoes*, *Money Game* and others. He has worked as Stage Manager and Light Designer for many productions in Cincinnati and other cities around the country.

About Learning Through Art, Inc. (LTA) and INSTEP (In-School Touring Education Program)

Learning Through Art, Inc. (LTA), a non-profit organization, created and founded in 1992 by Dan Jenkins and Kathy Wade. LTA is dedicated to providing quality performing arts programs in support of arts education and community development encouraging multicultural awareness and understanding. Programs and services are reaching over 300,000 participants.

LTA presents In-School Touring Educational Program (INSTEP) designed to bring quality performing arts education programs on diverse cultural topics to your students and faculty. The lecture through performance presentations will enrich and enhance the brilliant world of cultures. Learning Through Art, Inc. keeps you INSTEP with today's hottest issues through the medium of music.

INSTEP – In-School Touring Educational Programs:

- A Black Anthology of Music © 1984
- Rhythms…Common Bonds © 1995

Research Consultants

Connie Harris, Head Librarian, Children's Department, Retired, Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library

The Late Rev. Dr. Wayland E. W. Melton, Dean, Church of the Savior Cathedral, Philadelphia, PA

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The 'Hood Is Bigger Than You Think

There is a rhythm under the sun
Boomin' fat beats driven by everyone
Here's the tip to jump on this game
Give out respect and you'll get the same.
Start at home if you're gonna join the team
Can't start nothin without self-esteem.
This ain't about fronting loud and wrong.
It's about being solid, proud and strong.

Bring it together. Respect is the link
The ‘hood is bigger than you think.

Step to this, Sisters and brothers
Let’s deliberate on respect for others.
You’re out there rolling with your crew,
You respect them; they give it up to you.
Coming up on folk that you don’t know,
Just listen for the rhythm; they’re in the flow.
It ain’t automatic, you gotta earn it
But send out respect and people return it.

Bring it together. Respect is the link.
The ‘hood is bigger than you think.

Give up respect, or just chill. Witness the truth or just be still.
Don’t try to lay back, you ain’t done yet
Let’s slide Mamma Earth into the set.
Sling the massive rhythm from where ever you live
Send it out to the world, Cause you get what you give.
Now you’re vibin’ on the fattest beat,
From the stars in the sky to the bass in the street.
We share a rhythm under the sun
With respect, we are one.

Bring it together. Respect is the link.
The ‘hood is bigger than you think.
The ‘hood is bigger than you think.

Lyrics by Rico Bruce Wade
Music by Kathy Wade and Billy Larkin
Wadesphere Music (BMI) © 1995

Activities

- Discuss what customs in our culture and in our families are practiced and passed on to young people in order to teach the value of respect.
- Have students find poems and stories from different cultures that convey lessons of respect that they can share with each other.
- Develop creative writing assignments around the theme of respect. Identify the components of respect (e.g., self-respect, acceptance, appreciation, valuing diversity, etc.) and how it is emphasized in the culture of today's "modern world."
- Identify what the seemingly natural "cycles" and "rhythms" of life are. What about the 'cycles' and 'rhythms' of our universe? (e.g., the earth takes 365 days to revolve around the sun and 24 hours to revolve on its axis.)
- Have students create their own message about respect using each letter of the word.

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