

LEARN QUITIPLAS WITH LADAMA

Est. Time: 45 minutes

Subjects: General Music, Geography, Physical Education, Social Emotional Learning


Age Range: Elementary

[View the classroom lesson version](#)

★ *TEACHROCK* ★



In this lesson you will:

- Explore how the traditional bamboo drums of Quitiplás are inspired by nature
 - Be able to define the terms “polyrhythm” and “idiophone” and identify when they occur in music
 - Sing and clap along to an Afro-Venezuelan Quitiplás drum ensemble
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What is **polyrhythm**?

Rhythm is defined as a regular, repeated pattern of sound.

The prefix “poly” means “many” in Greek.


The term **polyrhythm** describes many rhythms in conversation with each other.





Polyrhythms can be found everywhere - not just in music, but also in sounds you might hear everyday.


Watch the following video, then consider or ask a friend:

- Can you identify the sounds in this recording?
 - Why might these sounds be described as polyrhythms?
 - Besides rhythm, what other sounds did you hear?
 - Which example sounded high-pitched? Which sounded low or medium-pitched?
 - Were the different sounds you heard long or short?
 - How would you describe each sound? Did you hear hard and soft sounds?
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After listening to polyrhythms in nature, try to listen to them in music.


Quitiplás is a family of bamboo drums, a dance, and a unique rhythm that comes from Barlovento, a coastal region in Venezuela.





In the 1500s, West Africans were captured from their villages and sent across the Atlantic Ocean against their will to Venezuela during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. These enslaved people worked on large *haciendas* (ranch-like plantations).

Their enslavers did not allow them to play music, so the enslaved people crafted Quitiplás to look like bamboo tools which they could hide in their clothes and bags, out of sight from their enslavers as they traveled between houses.



Quitiplás are bamboo drums that are used together to create music, give thanks for nature's gifts, and celebrate with traditions brought from West Africa.

Consider or talk with a friend:

- Why do you think that enslaved people were not allowed to play music?
- How did the enslaved people demonstrate that music was important to them when they created Quitiplás?
- Think of at least five words that describe these instruments.



Listen to the polyrhythms of Quitiplás.

Then consider or talk with a friend:

- How would you describe the sound of the Quitiplás?
- Does the rhythm of the Quitiplás sound more like the rain, horses galloping, or the birds that you listened to a few minutes ago?



Quitiplás are considered idiophones.

An Idiophone is a category of instrument that uses only its body to make sound.

Consider of ask a friend:

- In what way is the Quitiplás an idiophone?
- Can you think of an example of a musical instrument that is an idiophone?



Now it's time to **learn Quitiplás with LADAMA.**

Stand up and watch and listen, then play along.

Then consider or talk with a friend:

- Was performing this polyrhythm hard to do? Why?
- In what ways can you make your voice sound like the Quitiplás?
- How long do you think it takes kids in Venezuela to learn these rhythms?



Now you will learn to sing the Quitiplás in the traditional Venezuelan call and response format.

Watch this video and sing along.

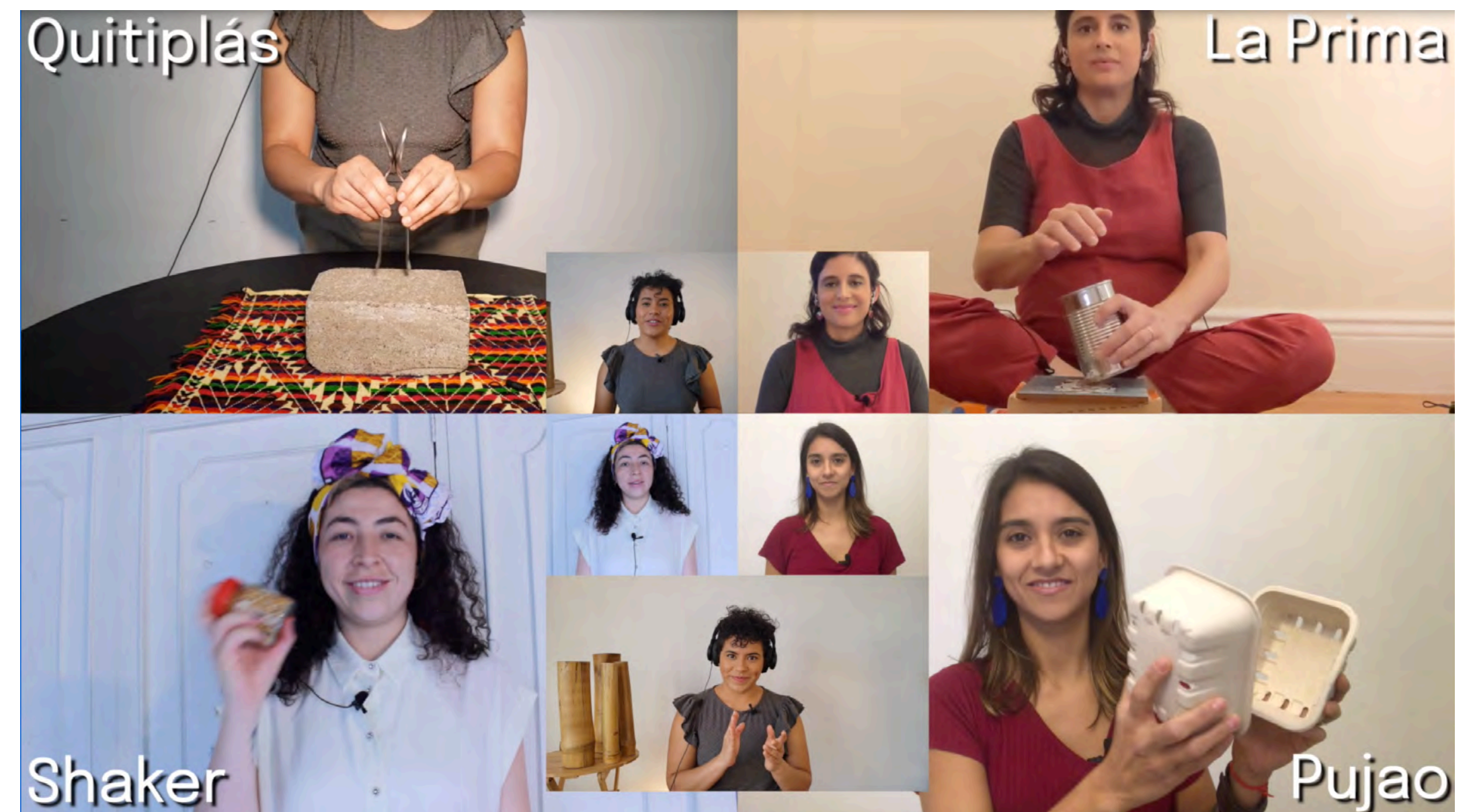
Consider or talk with a friend:

- Did you enjoy singing in Spanish?
- How did it feel to sing over the rhythms of the Quitiplás drum ensemble?



Do you think that you can create your own idiophone instrument at home?

Watch this LADAMA video, find an idiophone instrument in your home, and play along!



SUMMARY

- Polyrhythm describes one or more rhythms in conversation with each other
- Quitiplás originated in the coastal region of Venezuela and celebrates rhythms found in nature
- An Idiophone is an instrument that uses only its body to make sound



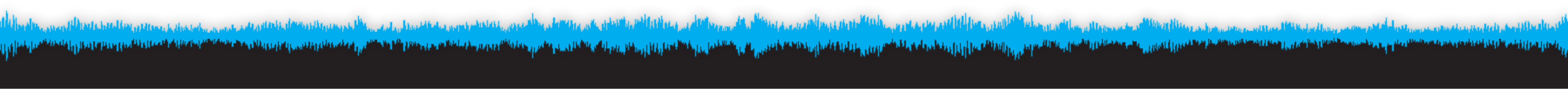
BE CREATIVE

- Create a sound diary. Each entry can describe a sound you hear using words and pictures.
- Create a song of gratitude. Think of something you are grateful for, such as a sunny day during a long winter, your favorite food, or your favorite place to play outdoors, and create a song about it. Film yourself playing your song.
- Create an infographic to share what you have learned about Quitiplás.



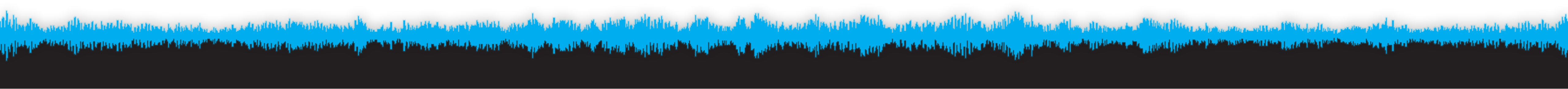
EXPLORE MORE!

- [Learn more about Polyrhythm](#)
- [Learn about African Polyrhythms](#)
- [See some examples of Idiophones](#)



CONNECT

Share with us! Either you or an adult in your life can share your sound diary, song of gratitude, or infographic with TeachRock on **Instagram** or **Facebook**, email to **info@teachrock.org**, or Tweet it to **@TeachRock**





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