



# CLIBURN IN THE CLASSROOM

## TEXAN LIKE ME!

A musical tour of the Lone Star State

### CLASS ACTIVITY:

#### Rumba

Grade Level(s): 2-5

Subject Areas: Music, Social Studies

#### OBJECTIVE

Students learn the history of the rumba, learn the rhythms call-and-response style using classroom instruments, and experience the basic steps to the dance.

#### SPACE AND EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Classroom percussion such as claves, maracas, cajon, and/or congas are needed. Adequate space is necessary to safely dance.

#### MUSIC TO EXPLORE

BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB	<i>Fiesta de la Rumba</i>
JOBIM	<i>The Girl from Ipanema</i>
HORSLEY	<i>Beethoven in Havana</i>

#### INTRODUCTION

The rumba is a type of Afro-Cuban dance nicknamed “the dance of love.” Most of the movement happens at the hips or below, while the upper body stays very still. It originated as a fast-paced dance among African slaves living in Cuba, while the middle class danced the slower and more refined Son. The wealthy preferred an even slower dance called *Danzon*, in which the hip movement is barely noticeable, and most of the motion happens in the knees.

The American rumba that we know today crossed economic barriers and became a combination of all three. It caught on in the United States in the 1920s and became a popular ballroom dance. We now dance it at competitions or social events like weddings. It’s a popular dance for beginners to learn because of its slower tempo, which makes the steps easier to follow along.

#### ACTIVITY

1. Introduce students to the origins of rumba and the style using the paragraph and musical examples listed above. Then allow time for students to learn the steps of the dance; a step-by-step tutorial can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9QN9ioeOK2w>
2. Continue the activity with an exploration of the main rumba rhythms played call-and-response style on classroom instruments. Highlight the use of syncopation and off-beats that create a groove. Some basic rhythmic examples are included on the next page. Teacher introduces on clave, while students echo back on cajon, congas, bongos, maracas, or by clapping.
3. End with a freestyle drum circle! Select some instruments to keep a steady beat, and a few others to tap out the first two rhythms listed below. Go around the circle one at a time, allowing each student a chance to improvise their own rhythms for approximately 8-12 measures while the rest of the class drops out. Bring the circle back in when each solo has finished; this may be done over the course of several class periods, depending on age and skill level.



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### RUMBA RHYTHMS

The image displays five rows of musical notation, each consisting of two measures separated by a vertical bar line. The notation is written on a five-line staff. The first measure of each row begins with a quarter note on the first line, followed by a dotted quarter note on the second line. The second measure of each row begins with an eighth note on the second line, followed by a quarter note on the second line. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and sixteenth notes, often grouped with beams and slurs. Some notes have accents or flags. The notation is designed to be simple and easy to read for young students.