

Music of the Asian Courts:

A Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathway for students in grades 3–5.

Teacher’s Guide

Lesson 4: Court Music of China



Lesson Overview

Yayue (雅乐), “ritual music”, and *Yanyue* (宴乐), “elegant music,” were imperial court musics in ancient China. The basic conventions were established in the Western Zhou period (西周, ca. 1045 BC–771 BC), and have been important to East Asian music and dance culture since then. Through creative engagements, this lesson offers students an imaginative space to explore the history and culture of Chinese court music, gain knowledge of traditional Chinese instruments, and learn pentatonic music. Students will also have a chance to decorate their own *zheng* and compose music for their court event!

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Lesson Paths and Student Objectives*



1. Exploring Chinese Court Music (20–25 minutes)

- After a series of age-appropriate activities introducing history and culture, students will be able to describe their experience with at least 3 of the following: location, instruments, hierarchy, artwork, and connections to their own lives.



2. Listening to Yanyue (15–20 minutes)







- Following exploration of two Chinese court instruments, students will demonstrate knowledge of instrument names, construction material, playing technique, and how these relate to pitch change and language.



3. Playing Yanyue (15–20 minutes)

- Given a series of activities based on a 5-tone scale, students will display the ability to sing, play, and create using a pentatonic scale, with cipher notation.

*Note: The learning icons used above signify the type of learning used in each Path. Keep in mind that these Paths are not intended to be sequential; rather, teachers or students may choose which Paths they'd like to use from each Lesson.

While all learning types ( History and Culture,  Music Listening,  Music Making and Creation, and  Creative Connections) fulfill 2014 National Music Standards, non-music teachers will be able to use  History and Culture and  Creative Connections Paths without specific musical knowledge.

Teaching Plan

Introduction (slides 1–5): Start with the following introduction before you choose the Path you will focus on.

Slide 1: We're on our birthday trip to Asia!

This slideshow is one of many in the Music of Asian Courts Pathway. If you are presenting this to students after doing the introductory Lesson (Lesson 1), you can extend its birthday theme to this slideshow. Tell the students that they have just landed in China for their birthdays and are being greeted with *yanyue* music!

Slide 2: Next stop, China!

Slide 3: Lesson Introduction

Slide 4: Menu Slide: Choose the Path you'd like to teach.

1. Path One: Exploring Chinese Court Music



To Prepare:

- Preview Path 1 of the **Lesson 4 Slideshow** (slides 6–17).
Open the “Launch Slideshow” link on the righthand menu of the Lesson 4 landing page. (*If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow link, which will not show the notes.*)
- Print out blank drawings of [guzheng](#) and [maps of Asia](#) for the class.
- Supply, or tell students to bring, materials for drawing.

Path One starts on slide 5

Slide 6: Several Types of Chinese Court Music

- Explain that Chinese court music had two main types: one was called *yayue*, and the other was *yanyue* (pronunciation on slides 8 and 9).
- Discuss the mural pictured on the slide. Ask students:
 - *Do you see the musicians?*
 - *Who do you think they are playing for? (Guide them toward royalty. In fact, this is a prince. The mural is from the tomb of the Northern Qi Prince of Wu’an, and head of the imperial armies, Xu Xianxiu.)*
- *Optional:* To explore the rich history of Chinese court music and the evolution of *yanyue* and *yayue* in greater detail, click on the arrow located at the bottom of the page for a comprehensive timeline.
- *Optional:* For examples of rituals and entertainment, click the downward arrow a second time.

Slide 7: Yayue: Ritual Music [pronunciation available on slide]

- Play the pronunciation audio at the top right of the slide and ask students to repeat (do this for all pronunciation audio).
- The term “*yayue*” refers to music played for rituals, events, and ceremonies.
- Encourage students to identify what these terms mean to them: *What rituals, events, and ceremonies do you have in your lives?*
- Ask students: *What music have you heard at events, rituals, and ceremonies?*

Slide 8: Yanyue: Entertainment Music [pronunciation available on slide]

- The term *yanyue* means “court entertainment music for big feasts.”
- Ask students: *What does entertainment music mean to you?*
- **Explain that *yanyue* included music for banquets, performances, and social gatherings.**

Slide 9: Did everyone listen to court music?

- A hierarchy existed in China; court music was mostly for ritual ceremonies at royal courts for royal families. Rituals included talking to ancestors, asking for prosperity, luck, and a good harvest. There were restrictions on what kind of music and dance should be performed for each class, and people must follow the rules.
- Ask students: “*What would you ask for if you could talk to your ancestors? Tell your ideas to a friend in the class.*”
 - **Each friend either** 1) tells the class one idea and the teacher writes it on a chart, or 2) writes one idea on a sticky note and adds it to a chart.

Slide 10: Listen to an Example

- Let’s listen to an example of music created with different court instruments. (Play the video embedded in the slide.)
- Ask students *to describe what they hear*. **Open answers** (any ideas that come to their minds)

Slide 11: Two Instruments Used in Chinese Court Music

- We will be looking at two instruments used in court music: [audio pronunciation included on slides]
- Bronze bells, or bianzhong (“byen-JONG”) are the oldest and most important instrument. They date back to 2,100 BC in China.
 - Ask students: *how long ago was that?*
- Originally, the se (“suh”) was also played in court music. It has 25 to 50 strings!
 - Ask students about string instruments they know:
 - *How many strings are on the instrument you know?*
 - **Write down on chart paper all of the ideas students share**, and/or have students draw the instruments they think of.

Slide 12: The Se and the Guzheng

- The se evolved into the guzheng (“goo-JUNG”), a popular instrument in China and around the world.
- Have students compare the two instruments.
 - *Share with them*, “The se has 25 to 50 strings, each with a small bridge. The standard guzheng has 21 strings, also with bridges.”
 - Ask what other similarities and differences there are. You can supplement their responses with additional similarities and differences:
- **Differences**
 - **Se is commonly played on a table, guzheng is played on a stand.**
 - Refer to slide 11: have students look at what the instruments are sitting on and decide if each one is a se or a guzheng. (**Se – they are both sitting on tables**). Return to slide **9**



- **Instruments have different decorations** (have students describe these)
- **Similarities**
 - Both have strings stretched across them.
 - Made of wood
 - Strings are plucked
 - One player only

| Differences | | Similarities |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Se | Guzheng | String instrument |
| 25-20 Strings | 21 strings | Pentatonic scale |
| Played on a table | Played on stands | Wooden body |
| Fingers pluck out | Fingers pluck in | Plucked playing |

Slide 13: Instruments and Artwork

- Hand out papers with a blank guzheng on them (see [Worksheet](#) section).
- Point out the areas that are usually filled with artwork (indicated in drawing on slide).
- Tell students they will be decorating their own guzheng: they will soon see three different ways to do this!

Slide 14: Three Chinese Art Traditions

- There are three types of art in Chinese tradition:
 - 書法 Shufa (“Shoo-faah”) (calligraphy)
 - 自然风光 Ziran Fengguang (“Tze-rah Fon-guang”) (natural scenery)
 - 窗花 Chuanghua (“Chuahng-hwah”) (window decorations – repeated patterns)
- Using the examples of these types of Chinese art as depicted on the slide, **have each student decorate their blank guzheng** while listening to a track that includes guzheng music: “Pingsha Luo Yan,” by Ding, Boling. (Track is included on the slide).
- Have students share how they associate the music with their artwork.

Slide 15: Court Music in Asian Countries

- **MAP** - Show which countries also had ‘elegant music’ in their courts. Bring attention to the map of China, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan.

- Hand out unlabeled maps (see [Worksheets](#) section) to students. Students identify each of the four countries by writing the name, or coloring them, or both.
- Have students draw lines connecting China and Vietnam, China and Korea, Korea and Japan, China and Japan.
- Remind students, “Each of these countries had something called ‘elegant music’ played in their royal courts.”
- Ask students to think of examples of ‘elegant music’ in their home countries.
 - **Answers will vary depending on knowledge**
 - If you like, you can explore “Elegant music” in these countries in our other lessons in the Pathway!
 - Lesson 2 – [Gagaku: Imperial Court Music of Japan](#)
 - Lesson 3 – [Jeong Ak: Music of the Korean Court](#)
 - Lesson 5 – [Music at the Vietnamese Court](#)
- **Optional reinforcement activity:** Have each student draw a simple house idea. Students then share their ideas and find similarities and differences.
 - Bring to student attention: *“The similarities and differences of your houses follows the same idea as elegant music in Asian countries. Each country had the idea of elegant music and created it in their own way.”*

Slide 16 - Learning checkpoint

- Explain the difference between yanyue and yayue music. **(Yanyue was entertainment music for big feasts, while yayue music was used by the Chinese court for special events like sports, dances, and ceremonies.)**
- What people were allowed to listen to court music? **(Chinese royalty listened to court music because they were ranked high in stature.)**
- Name two instruments that are part of a court music group. **(The Bianzhong, or bronze bells, and the Se, or the plucked zither, or more recently, the Guzheng)**
- Name two countries whose court music shared values of Confucianism. **(Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Vietnam.)**

Slide 17 – Where will you go next?

2. Path Two: Listening to Yayue



To Prepare:

- Preview Path **2** of the **Lesson 4 Slideshow** (slides 19–26).
Open the “Launch Slideshow” link on the righthand menu of the Lesson 4 landing page. (*If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow link, which will not show the notes.*)
- Have drawing/coloring utensils and 8.5” X 11” (or larger) blank paper ready: one per student.
 - Alternatively, print out more detailed diagrams for ‘Bronze Bell Sizes’ and ‘Bronze Bells with Pitch Ranges’ (in [Worksheets](#)). (The PDF will also be linked from the slide if you prefer to display it on the screen only).
- Print out ‘[Melodic Directions for Guzheng](#)’ cards for each student, and cut each sheet into 4 cards (or have students do this in class).

Path Two starts on slide 18

Slide 19: Exploring Yayue [If you did Path 1 or 3, you can skip this slide]

- *Yanyue* is one type of court music in China. The term “Yanyue” means “elegant music.”
- Play the audio pronunciation (embedded in the slide) and ask students to repeat. (Do this for all pronunciation files when they appear on a slide).
- Ask students: “*What does ‘elegant’ mean to you?*”

Slide 20: Tempo and Beat in court music

- Tell Students: “Let’s listen to an example of *yanyue* music, and we’ll act as detectives.”
- Play the video embedded in the slide and have them do the following
 - *0:00 - 0:25 Tempo*
 - Ask: *Is the tempo fast, medium, or slow?*
 - Have students move to what they hear (**medium**)
 - *0:26 – 0:35 Beat*
 - Ask: *Is it a steady beat or are there pauses?*
 - **Pauses:** Ask students to keep moving to the beat and stop moving if they hear a pause (they should stop at the pause).
 - *What happens at 0:40? The beat becomes steady and pauses stop.*

Slide 21: Two Instruments Used in Chinese Court Music

[If you did Paths 1 or 3, you can skip this slide]

We will be looking at two instruments used in *yayue* music: [audio pronunciation included on slides]

- Bronze bells, or *bianzhong* (“byen-JONG”) are the oldest and most important instrument. They date back to 2,100 BC in China.”
 - Ask students: “*how long ago was that?*” (**over 4,000 years ago!**)
- The *guzheng* (“goo-JUNG”) is a popular instrument in China and around the world. It is also played in modern yayue music.
 - Guzheng is a plucked string instrument.
 - The standard guzheng has 21 strings, each with a small bridge.

Slide 22: Which sound stands out to you?

Play the video again this time listening for particular sounds.

- 0:40 - 0:59 “*Which sounds stand out the most to you?*”
 - Have students listen and describe the sounds they hear, and possibly name the instrument (many will probably identify the bronze bells)
- Pause the video at 0:59
 - point to the bronze bells and ask: “*If you heard these sounds more, raise your hand.*”
 - Move to the *se* (“suh,” stringed instruments sitting on the tables in front) and repeat the question.
 - Move back and forth between *se* and bronze bells; students will have to keep paying attention as their instrument is highlighted.
- “*Why did the instrument stand out for you?*”
 - Encourage answers: write them on chart paper.

Slide 23: Bronze Bells: Size and Organization of the Bells

Bronze bell photo exploration. Slide 24 activities relate to activities on slides 25–27. Teachers can choose to do all or some of the activities below. There are connections to science and math. Tell students: “*let’s continue our detective work with the bronze bells!*”

- Hand out a piece of paper and drawing/coloring utensils* of choice to each student. Papers should be placed in a landscape position (horizontal).
 - * Or, if you prefer to save time, print out the diagram for students. (see Worksheets section below, ‘[Bronze Bell Sizes](#)’)
- Have students look at the photo and decide if there are different sizes of bells.
 - *Bell size:*
 - Point out each row of bells: “*Does each row have the same size of bells?*” (**no**)
 - “*How are the sizes arranged?*” (**bigger to smaller, in different groups**).
- Drawing different-sized bells:
 - Have students draw a diagram to indicate bells going from large to small.
 - Click the button on the slide to view a PDF of the diagram.

- Ask about the material elements of the bells
 - “Which bell size do you think is heavier? Lighter?”
 - “Which bells may need a bigger mallet? Smaller? Draw mallets beside your bells.”
 - “Which bells may sound higher? Lower? Let’s take some guesses but wait until we listen to the recording before we decide.”

Slide 24: Bronze Bells: Materials and Design

- Continue to ask about the material elements of the bells.
 - “What do you think the bells are made of? Why are they dark grey? If you were to build these bells, what material would you use? Why?” (**there are no correct answers, but you might want to focus on the properties of metal, and bronze in particular [which looks golden at first, but turns green/grey when exposed to oxygen for a long time]**).
- Refer to the bottom 2 rows in the photograph:
 - “Do you think the bells are hollow? Would we be able to hear them if they were solid?”
 - If available, demonstrate with a hollow bell: stuff it with cloth material to see if it rings. Take out the cloth and have students compare. (older students may be able to use the words “vibration,” and, “resonating chamber.”)
- Symbolic elements:
 - “What is ‘holding’ the bells on the right? (**human figure – this was a sign of power**).
 - On their sheet of paper, have students add drawings of what they might have holding their own set of bells.



Slide 25: Bronze Bells in Action

- Play the embedded video and do the following activities. As you listen, sit on the floor and tap your hands on your knees to the beat (and have students do the same)
 - Pitch: “Let’s listen for middle, high, and low sounds.”
 - **Middle sounds: Play the video** from 4:28 to 5:13. This highlights the middle sounds. **Say:** “Let’s put our hands at shoulder level to indicate these are middle sounds.”
 - **High sounds: Start the video at 5:07** and stop it exactly at 5:15. **Say:** “When you hear the high sound, raise your hands up high.” [Option: students can also be instructed to stand up when they hear the high sound.]
 - **Low sound: Start the video at 5:07** and stop it at 5:17. (Right after the high sound is a low sound). **Say:** “Wow, did you hear that? Was that last one a

- high or a low sound?”* Students can touch the floor (from standing or sitting position).
- Pitch and bell size: Continue asking students . . .
 - “*What is different about the way the large, low bells are played?*”
 - “*What do you notice about the size of the bells related to the sounds?*”
 - **The smaller the bell, the higher the pitch; the bigger the bell, the lower the pitch***
 - *This may take some teacher guidance: demonstrate with other large and small idiophones (if available).
 - Have students go back to their drawings and draw arrows to indicate high and low sounds
 - Click button on slide to view PDF or see Worksheets section, [Slide 26](#), below. They may also want to write in ‘high’ and ‘low’.
 - *Optional*: If they choose and there is time, they can decorate their bells: refer to [this](#) Smithsonian Institution site for examples. This may also be a good homework assignment.

Slide 26: Guzheng and Melody

This slide has four icons with four recordings of characteristic sounds on the *guzheng*. (“Goo-JUNG”)

- Share the following information:
 - The other instrument in the performance we saw is called the guzheng.
 - The standard guzheng has 21 strings, each with a small bridge (see if students can identify the bridges in the pictures)
 - The body is made of wood, which amplifies the strings.
- Listening for melodic direction
 - Hand out pre-printed direction cards OR have students create their own cards (see Worksheets, ‘[Melodic Directions for Guzheng](#)’)
 - Click on each video, one by one. Have students hold up the corresponding card for each video.* After you have done all four, click the downward arrow on the bottom right to go to the answers.
 - *Upward*: play the ‘upward’ recording and have students identify the direction by holding card 1 in the appropriate direction.
 - *Downward*: play the ‘downward’ recording and have students identify the direction by holding card 1 in the appropriate direction.
 - *Bending notes*: students should use cards 3 and 4 to portray upward and downward bends. Play the recording and help students identify the upward bends (first) and downward bends (second). Encourage students to complete the activity without teacher guidance.

- *Vibrato*: play the vibrato recording, and have students raise their card 2 when they hear vibrato.

** Teachers can alter listening activities to include students working in small groups or pairs. Instead of cards, students can be instructed to move upward and downward, wiggle when they hear vibrato, pretend they are playing the instrument, etc. Teachers know what their students would like!*

Slide 27: Listening to Guzheng melodic direction in context

This is an extension of the previous slide. Explain that students will now listen to an actual guzheng song!

- Play the first example and have students use their cards again. Students will be able to see as well as hear the player. There will be some overlap of sounds, and therefore allow for some frenzied fun as children try to hold their cards up for each sound!
- Example 2 is a challenge, as it is faster and only audio. Help students follow along with your own cards. It is not crucial that students are correct. The objective is to have students focused on listening.

Slide 28: Music and Language

- Tell students: "Did you know guzheng string bending and vibrato are inspired by the Chinese language? Let's listen to the examples and see if we can copy the sounds." Say the sounds along with the recordings.
- Ask: "*Does your language have tones like Mandarin Chinese?*"
 - Discussion may include the way many languages use an upward sound to ask a question: in Mandarin, that sound will change the meaning.
 - The same happens with a stern, downward tone: in some languages it is because someone is angry. In Mandarin, it changes the entire meaning of the word!

[Teacher Resource site here.](#)

Slide 29: Learning Checkpoint

- Which size of bronze bells sounds higher? Lower? (**The smaller the bell, the higher the pitch. The bigger the bell, the lower the pitch.**)
- **What** are the bells made of? (**The bells are made with properties of metal and bronze.**)
- What is the name of the instrument we studied that has lots of strings? (**The Se or the Guzheng.**)
- How do players change the pitch on one guzheng string? (**By pressing on the strings**)
- Describe how the tones from the instrument are similar to the Chinese language. (**By using the Guzheng and the tones of the strings.**)

Slide 30: Where will you go next? – Navigation Slide

3. Path Three: Playing Chinese Court Music



To Prepare:

- Preview Path **3** of the **Lesson 4 Slideshow** (slides 32–45).
Open the “Launch Slideshow” link on the righthand menu of the Lesson 4 landing page. (*If you are able to use a different screen than the students, have them open the “Student Slideshow link, which will not show the notes.*)
- If available, gather Orff xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels.
- Obtain masking tape (or label stickers, etc) and markers for the activity on Slide 36. Students will write numbers on the tape and place them on their instruments.*
 - You may want to prepare tape or stickers with the numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and $\dot{1}$ (1 with a dot on top) beforehand for students.
 - *For younger students, see preparation suggested on slide 36 below.
- **If you plan to do the optional event** outlined on [slide 44](#), prepare the following:
 - Drape red fabric over chairs.
 - Display student’s guzheng artwork on folding panels or the wall.
 - Encourage students to wear red for the activity (considered a good luck color in China).
 - If available, hang paper lanterns

Path Three starts on slide 31

Slide 32: Exploring Yanyue [If you did Path 1 or 2, you can skip this slide]

- *Yanyue* is one type of court music of China. The term “Yanyue” means “entertainment music.”
- Play the audio pronunciation (embedded in slide) and ask students to repeat. (Do this for all pronunciation files when they appear on a slide).
- Ask students: “*What does ‘entertainment music’ mean to you?*”

Slide 33: Notation

- Ancient and current notation
 - Ask students: “*If you want to remember something, what are some things you can do to remind yourself?*”
 - When students mention **writing it down**, refer to writing *music* down: “*What ways of writing down music do you know of?*” Some students may refer to standard or Western notation.
 - “*There are many ways to write down music. We are going to look at two.*”
- Ancient notation
 - Bring attention to the left of the slide: Ask, “*What kind of writing is this?*”
 - Students may recognize that it is Chinese characters. Explain, **each character tells the player what note to play and how to play it.**

- Refer to the right of the slide: “*What does this type of notation use?*” (**numbers**)

Slide 34: Two Instruments Used in Chinese Court Music [If you did Path 1 or 2, skip this]

We will be looking at two instruments used in yayue music: [*audio pronunciation included on slides*]

- Bronze bells, or *bianzhong* (“byen-JONG”) are the oldest and most important instrument. They date back to 2,100 BC in China.
 - Ask students: “*how long ago was that?*”
- The guzheng (“goo-JUNG”) is a popular instrument in China and around the world. It is also played in modern yayue music.
 - Guzheng is a plucked string instrument.
 - The standard guzheng has 21 strings, each with a small bridge.

Slide 35: Pentatonic Scale: 5 notes

- Follow directions given on this slide. Sing the numbers with the students (help adjust the octave to match theirs).
- “*Wow, that works really well, doesn’t it? We’re going to go to another challenge on the next slide....*”

Slide 36: Chinese pentatonic song

- Play the first few verses of the song (up to 0:52, or so)
 - Pause the video and explain: “This is a Chinese song about kids who are trying to pull up a big radish. *Who has worked in the garden before?*”
 - Say: “In this song, kids are asking for help because the radish is so big. In each verse they ask for more help, even from a kitten and lamb! Let’s keep listening.”
- Continuing to the next section (start again at around 0:53), slow the recording down to $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ speed (*click the settings “gear” on the bottom of the YouTube video frame*). This helps students sing along.
 - Start with the first two lines and gradually add more lines.
 - Ask students: “*What words do you hear repeated?*”
 - If students remain engaged in the activity, challenge them to learn the whole song. There is a language guide at the end of the video.
- Optional role play: have students pretend they are the characters in the song. Divide them into groups of 5. The first child begins, the next plays the old lady, the little girl, cat, and sheep. If students are interested, they can add more people or animals.

Slide 37: Bronze Bells in Action

- Play the embedded video, starting at 4:28, to get an idea of what the bronze bells sound like.

Slide 38: And now on instruments!

(use Orff xylophones, metallophones, and glockenspiels, if available)

- Ask: “*Do we have any instruments that sound similar to bronze bells?*”
 - Have students identify different instruments that may be available.
 - Ask students: *Why are they similar?* (**made of metal, struck with mallets, series of different pitches**)
- Bring attention to the words on the left of the slide: **high, middle, low, upward, downward** (these were introduced on slides 26–27 in Path 2).
 - Sing the word, “High,” as students reach up high, and repeat the same for middle, low, upward, and downward.
- Have students find high notes on their instruments, and repeat the same for middle, low, and sweeping upward and downward. Have small groups take turns, or individuals, or pairs. Be creative!

Slide 39: Three ways to write a pentatonic scale

- Before class, use masking tape (or label stickers, etc), to mark the number 1 on the C notes of each instrument. (*For grades 1–2, teachers may need to place numbers on all of the keys, and remove the keys not being used*). Key corresponding information is given on the slide: grade 3–5 students may be able to place the numbers on keys themselves.
- Encourage students to play short sequences: sing, “One, two three...,” “One, five, one, five...,” etc and have students copy the patterns.
 - Some students will want to make up their own 3- or 4-note sequences for the class to play. The main idea is to have students comfortable with playing using numbers.
- *Optional Octaves*: If students are comfortable with numbers 1–6, introduce the octave 1 with a dot on top. Ask, “*Why do you think the high note has a dot on top? Do you think it is the same for a lower note?*” (**lower notes have a dot on the bottom: students may guess this**)

Slide 40: Big jump challenges (*optional*)

- This is a more advanced challenge. Stemming from the previous slide, students can try finding octaves based on the way the notation is written. Instruments will need to have more than one octave for this activity. As an alternative, the piano can be used as a demonstration instrument.

Slide 41: Ba lu buo with instruments (*optional*)

- Additional challenge: if students are ready, help them learn parts or all of the Ba Lo Buo song! Proceed slowly, allowing students to find repetitions, new phrases, jumps, and steps in the melody, and repeating rhythms. Click the video to play along.

Slide 42: Composing court music

- This can be done on instruments or on the two online platforms linked to the slide.
- Divide students into 4 groups. Each group has the task of creating a 4-note, steady rhythm melody.
- When each group is finished, have each group (all students if they each have an instrument, or as many students as there are instruments in the group), play their 4 notes, one group at a time. This is their class yanyue piece!
- Some students may want to play all 4 lines. Encourage students to try.

Slide 43: Your own yanyue event *(Optional – this activity is for enrichment if students and teachers are interested, and schedules allow the time).*

- *"We are going to create our own court event!"*
- **Role play:** have students decide which character they would like to represent first ("roles" are bolded below). If there is an abundance in one group, divide students evenly among each of the four roles and remind them they will rotate between roles.
 - **Musicians** are set up in one corner of the room, ready to play the yanyue piece the class has composed.
 - **Hosting members of the royal family** are seated near the musicians.
 - **Royal guests** slowly enter the room and sit in prescribed places.
 - **Government officials** follow the royal guests and sit in their own area.
 - A host from the royal family announces the musicians and their piece.
 - Musicians play through the piece, and the audience claps.
 - Students rotate to the next role and the activity is repeated until all students have been in each role.
- **Optional props:**
 - Drape red fabric over chairs
 - Display student's guzheng artwork on folding panels or the wall
 - Encourage students to wear red for the activity (considered a good luck color in China)
 - If available, hang paper lanterns

Slide 44: Learning Checkpoint

- How many tones does a pentatonic scale have? **5 notes.**
- With which two instruments did we sing a pentatonic scale? **(The Bianzhong (bronze bells) and the Guzheng (zither)).**
- Sing a phrase of "Ba Luo Bo."
- List two types of guests at a Chinese court event. **(Musicians, Royal family, royal visitors, government officials).**
- Play one line of the group's Chinese piece. **(On Orff instruments, or click on the bells to go back to the interactive Bianzhong slide).**

2014 National Music Standards Connections

MU:Cr1.1.3a Improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas, and describe connection to specific purpose and context (such as personal and social).

- Can I help create a yayue piece and explain why I chose specific notes?

MU:Cr1.1.3b Generate musical ideas (such as rhythms and melodies) within a given tonality and/or meter.

- Can I put together a 4 beat phrase for bronze bells?

MU:Cr2.1.3b Use standard and/or iconic notation and/or recording technology to document personal rhythmic and melodic musical ideas.

- Can I use cipher notation to write down which notes to play for a piece?

MU:Cr3.2.3a Present the final version of personal created music to others, and describe connection to expressive intent.

- Can I demonstrate basic bronze bell techniques?
- Can I inform listeners of guzheng techniques?

MU:Pr4.1.3a Demonstrate and explain how the selection of music to perform is influenced by personal interest, knowledge, purpose, and context.

- Can I play a yayue piece to reflect the formal nature of court events?

MU:Pr4.2.3a Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance.

- Can I describe how a yayue piece is put together?

MU:Pr6.1.2a Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy

- Can I play a bronze bell part correctly in presentation?

MU:Re7.1.3a Demonstrate and describe how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, or purposes.

- Can I explain how yayue supports a court event?

MU:Re7.2.3a Demonstrate and describe how a response to music can be informed by the structure, the use of the elements of music, and context (such as personal and social).

- Can I identify low, middle, high, upward, and downward melody?
- Can I identify articulation techniques in a guzheng piece?
- Can I aurally identify the sounds of bronze bells and guzheng?

MU:Re8.1.3a Demonstrate and describe how the expressive qualities (such as dynamics and tempo) are used in performers' interpretations to reflect expressive intent.

- Can I identify relationships between guzheng articulation and Chinese language tones?

MU:Cn10.0.3a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.

- Can I identify my favorite instrument in a yayue ensemble?
- Can I identify different sections of yayue and my preferences?
- Can I explain technique differences in two yayue instruments?

MU:Cn11.0.3a Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

- Can I explain how yayue fits with court events?
- Can I explain decoration of instruments as an art form?

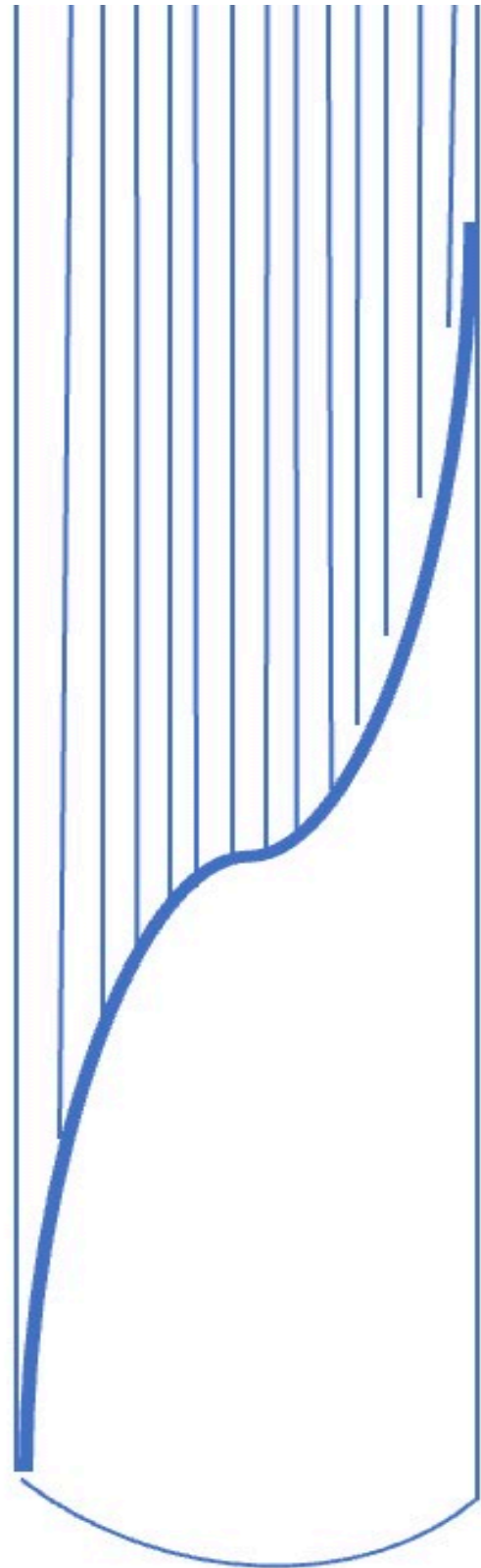
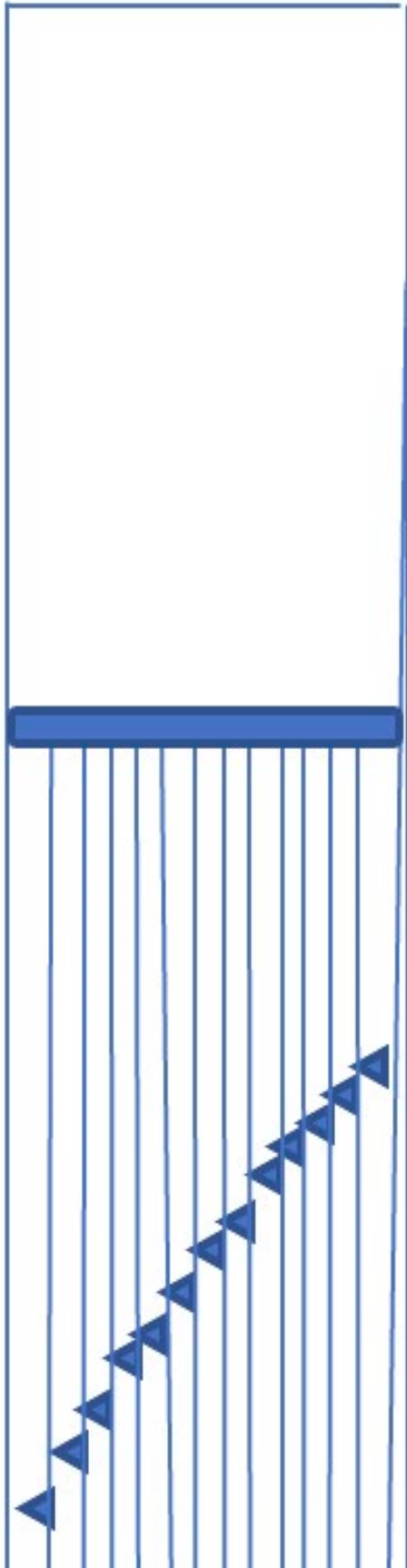
Additional Reading and Resources

Fletcher, Peter. 2001. *World Musics in Context: A Comprehensive Survey of the World's Major Musical Cultures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

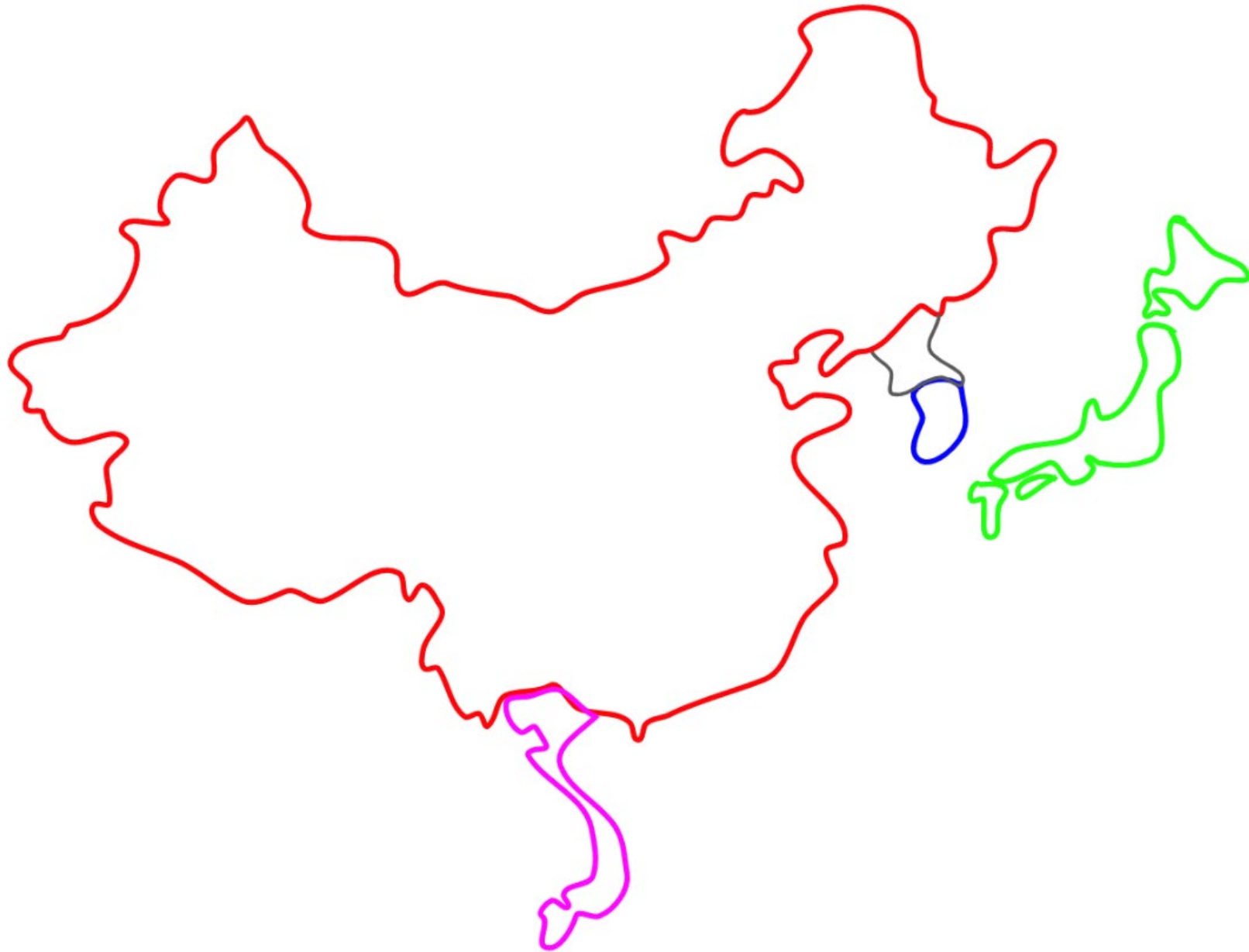
Li, Yi. 2005. *The Structure and Evolution of Chinese Social Stratification*. Lanham: University Press of America.

Worksheets

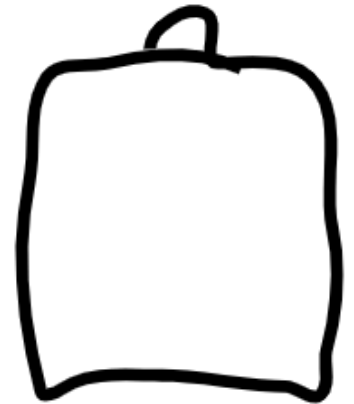
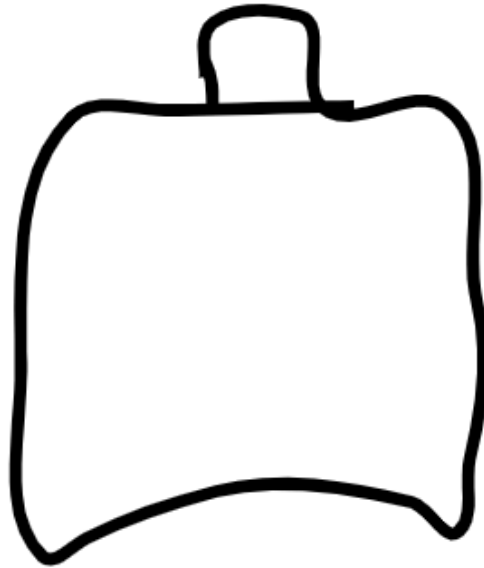
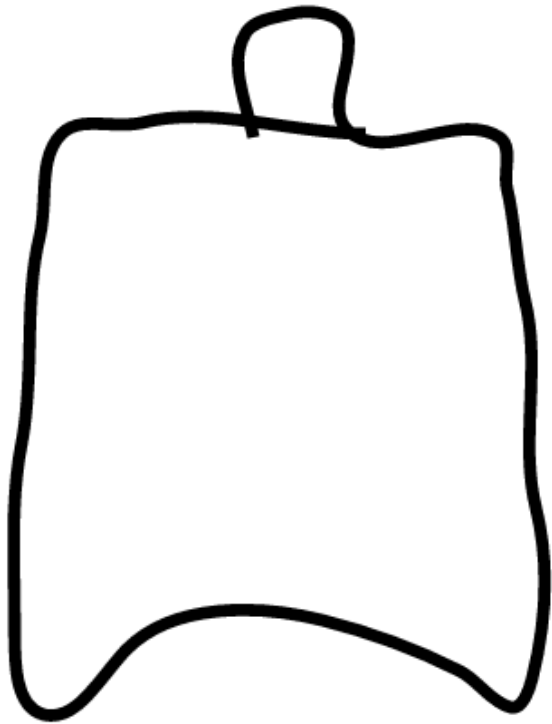
Guzheng drawing



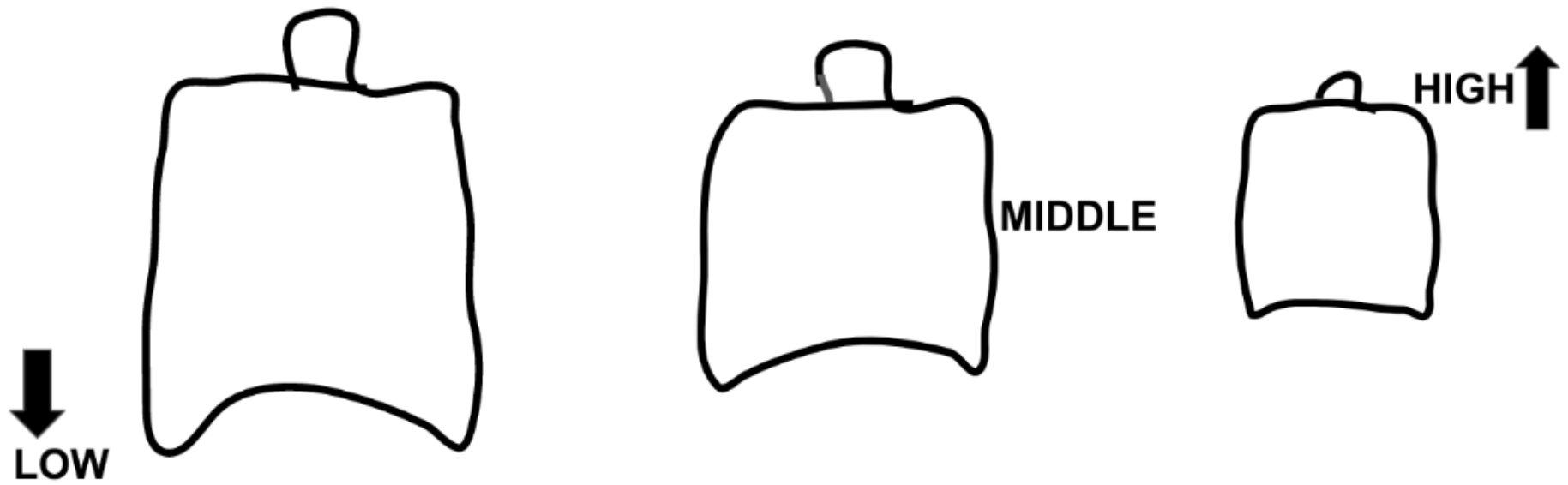
Map of Asia



Bronze Bell Sizes – SLIDE 24



Bronze Bells with pitch ranges – SLIDE 26



Melodic Directions for Guzheng - Slide 27

