

**LESSON PLAN: WEAVING THE ELEMENTS OF *LAMBARENA***

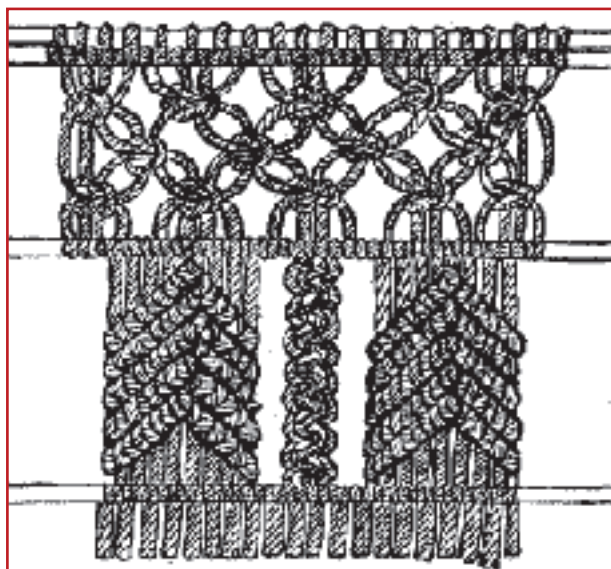
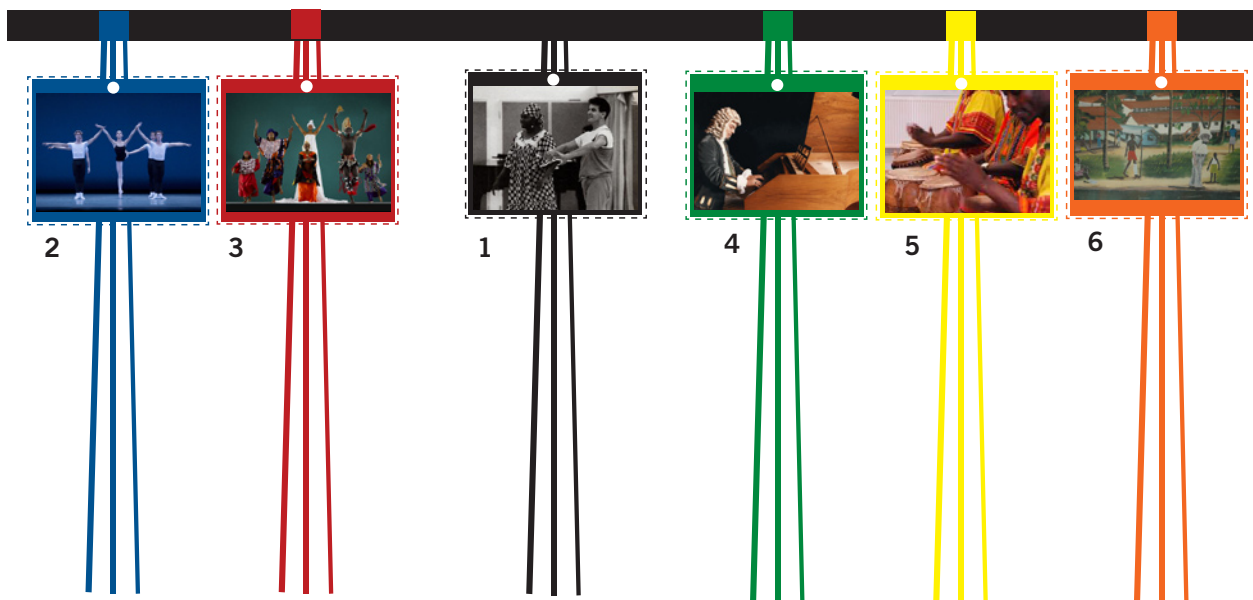
Choreographer Val Caniparoli reminds us that *Lambarena* is not intended to show two cultures muddled together as if you took red paint and blue paint and poured them together to make purple. Nor is it a story about Africa, or Bach or even Albert Schweitzer—it is a dance celebration, an enjoyment of the possibilities that can occur when cultures collaborate and share with one another. Diouf reminds us that this is truly the traditional African way. The following hands-on and visual activity intends to help students learn about the elements that make up the ballet and to show it as a woven tapestry of ideas looping, braiding and linking together.

**SUPPLIES:**

- Scissors to cut the images into squares. A hole punch to create holes in the top of each square so they can be hung.
- A fairly straight stick found in nature, or a long dowel or yardstick which has ties on the end for hanging.
- 6 color choices of yarn, ribbon, crepe paper, or torn strips of fabric, or raffia for a more natural approach, cut into 24-36 inch lengths or whatever lengths you desire in order to have enough to work with. Color choice examples are given below, but feel free to make your own color choices. Students should have several pieces of yarn of each color.

The six main element themes of *Lambarena* are represented in picture boxes on page 2. This project can be done by the teacher in front of class, affixing the *Lambarena* pictures and lengths of yarn to the top of the board, or by each child individually on their sticks. When asked to tie lengths of yarn to the stick, students may choose one or several lengths of each color.

- Tie the #1 picture to the center point of the stick and tie several **black** yarn lengths to the same place.
- Tie the #2 and #3 pictures on one side of the stick. Tie several **blue** yarn lengths next to the ballet picture (#2) and several **red** yarn lengths next to the West African Dance picture (#3).
- Tie the #4 and #5 and #6 pictures on the other side of the stick. Tie several **orange** yarn lengths near the Bach picture (#4), several **yellow** yarn lengths near the drum picture (#5), and several **green** yarn lengths near the picture of Schweitzer (#6).
- After all the yarn is on the stick, straighten the yarn out so that it is all hanging in the same direction. Tape the ends of the stick to a desk to hold it secure as you begin to tie in the knots and braids. Alternately you can tie yarn on the ends of the stick and hang the stick from a hook or knob.



Example of a woven pattern

Now as you discuss the ballet ask students to tie or loop the various yarns together, creating a type of macramé hanging or like the knotting of ropes around a djembe. For example, as you tell the students that *Lambarena* uses ballet movements done to African music you might ask students to tie the relating yarns together into interesting knots. All of the yarn will be mingled, braided, tied together, except the yarn for Schweitzer might not mix with the choreography until the very end of your discussions of *Lambarena* reflecting Schweitzer's daughter's experience of the ballet.



**1. CHOREOGRAPHER AND COLLABORATORS**



**2. CHOREOGRAPHY: BALLET**



**3. CHOREOGRAPHY: WEST AFRICAN DANCE**



**4. MUSIC: JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**



**5. MUSIC: TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF GABON**



**6. MUSIC: ALBERT SCHWEITZER**

