Using rhythm, music and movement for self-expression and connection.

**Big Idea:**
Using rhythm, music and movement for self-expression and connection.

**Your students will:**
- Learn about Bomba, a style of dance and music from Puerto Rico
- Follow along with a drum beat
- Listen and dance to the rhythm of their peers’ drumming

**Discover Bomba with Freddie and Ty**
As a class, co-view the clip from the episode “Bomba & A Goodbye for Ty,” in which Freddie and Ty visit Taller Puertorriqueño and learn about Bomba, a Puerto Rican style of music. Identify Puerto Rico on a map and prompt a discussion about the episode. Conversation starters might include:

- What did you learn about Bomba? How would you describe it?
- Tony says Bomba is about communication. What does he mean by that?
- Describe how the dancers and the drummers listen and respond to one another.
- Tony talks about how Bomba has been an important tradition in his family’s home. Can you think of any styles of music or dance that are important to you or your family?

**Lesson Activity**

**Teacher Prep:**
1. Make some space in your classroom so that students have the option to dance along to the drumming.
2. Make sure students have a table or surface to drum on while watching the episode. If you have access to drums in your school, consider bringing them out for this lesson, or even creating your own drums.
3. Practice the drum beat ahead of time so that you can help guide your students.

**Materials**
- The episode clip; a surface to drum on, such as a table; and space to move!
Instructions:
1. Watch the part of the episode clip where Freddie and Ty learn the Bomba rhythm and dance. Invite students to follow along as Tony teaches the drum beat. You might have to rewind a few times as students practice.
2. Help students identify the difference between the edge of their drumming surface and “the middle” surface out in front of them.
3. Rest your hands on the edge of your drumming surface. Move your right hand forward to the “middle” of your surface and drum once using your whole hand.
4. Add on! With your right hand remaining still in the middle, tap twice with your left hand on the edge of the table or drum.
5. After you tap your left hand twice, slide your right hand from the middle to the edge of your drum or table and tap once.
6. Now move your right hand back to the center and repeat the pattern: Middle, left, left, right (slide back to the middle); Middle, left , left right (slide back to the middle). Remember that your right hand moves from the middle to the edge of your drum after the left-handed beats.
7. Practice! Try speeding it up or slowing it down. Try to create new rhythms that students can follow along to as well.
8. Invite students to take turns in the center of the room dancing to the other students’ drum beats. How can they make their bodies and movements match the rhythm of the drums? Encourage students to listen closely to one another.

Vocabulary

**Bomba:** A style of dance from Puerto Rico accompanied by drums and percussion instruments

**Percussion:** Musical instruments that make sound through hitting, drumming or shaking

**Rhythm:** The pattern and repetition music or dance follows

School-to-Home Connection

- Ask students to talk with their families about styles of music or dance that hold meaning or importance to them. What about that genre of music or dance is special and why?
- Invite students to teach the Bomba drum rhythm to their families.
More about Taller Puertorriqueño
Taller Puertorriqueño is a community organization in Philadelphia dedicated to celebrating and promoting Puerto Rican and Latinx arts and culture, through events, exhibitions, classes, workshops and more. To learn more, visit tallerpr.org.

More Classroom Activities
Visit PBS LearningMedia for more lesson plans like this inspired by The Infinite Art Hunt.

Children’s Books with Related Themes
Check out these children’s books online or at your local library to continue exploring the concepts in this episode.

When Julia Danced Bomba by Raquel M. Ortiz
When Julia has trouble with her dance steps, she closes her eyes and listens closely to the rhythm of the Bomba drum as her bravery grows.

Across the Bay by Carlos Aponte
Carlitos travels to Old San Juan to find his father in this book which paints a picture of the author’s childhood in Puerto Rico.