

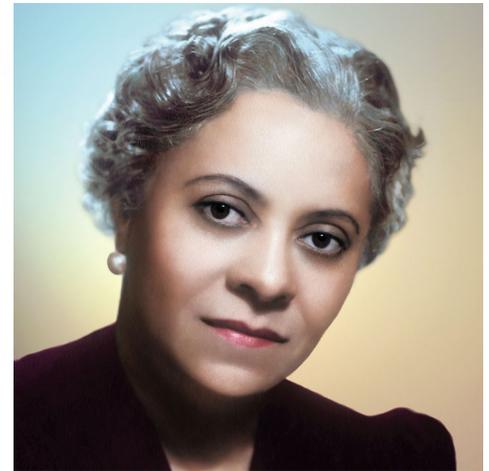


## Meet the Composer - Florence Price

**Born: April 9, 1887**

**Died: June 3, 1953**

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas as Florence Smith, her father was a dentist and her mother was a music teacher. Florence received her early musical training from her mother. She had her first composition published at age 11, graduated high school at 14 and later enrolled in the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, graduating in 1906. She briefly returned to Arkansas but soon moved to Atlanta where she held a position as head of the music department at a historically black college, now Clark Atlanta University. In 1912, she married a lawyer, Thomas Price and the couple moved back to Little Rock for his practice. In the years that followed there were a number of ugly racial incidents in Little Rock and after the lynching of a black man in 1927, the Price family moved to Chicago. There Florence continued her studies. They divorced in 1931, leaving Florence a single mother with two daughters. She soon remarried but became separated from her second husband in 1934. To support her family, she worked as an organist for silent films and composed songs for radio ads. She also wrote orchestral works to include four symphonies, chamber works, songs, organ and piano pieces. Much of Florence Price's work was unknown until 2009 when a collection of her manuscripts was found in an abandoned house outside of St. Anne, Illinois.



*Florence Price*

The works of Florence Price are known for the use of characteristic African-American melodies and rhythms. She was deeply religious and drew on the music of the African-American church, incorporating the rhythms and syncopations of spirituals as well as melodies inspired by the blues.



## Juba Dance

*Juba Dance* is the 3<sup>rd</sup> movement of the Symphony No. 1, completed by Florence Price in 1932 and first performed by the Chicago Symphony in 1933.

A Juba Dance, also known as “pattin juba” or the hambone originated in West Africa around 1840 and was first brought by slaves to Charleston, South Carolina. It is a fast-paced dance that involved stomping, slapping and patting the arms and legs, chest and cheeks. This plantation dance with the use of “pattin juba,” or now what we call “body percussion,” was performed when instruments weren’t allowed because of the fear that secret codes could be hidden by the slaves in the drumming.

The Juba Dance would have a circle of men around two men in the center. They would perform various steps in a call and response - the two men would improvise a response to the call of the other dancers in the circle. There would be a steady, fast-paced beat with a repeating rhythm called an *ostinato* with improvisation and shuffle steps above it.

In her *Juba Dance*, Florence Price substitutes African drums playing the juba rhythms rather than body percussion, while the strings play an upbeat melody.

Introduction video to Florence Price's “*Juba Dance*” by Margaret Campbelle-Holman <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBS10YkPOA4>

Watch a video about Pattin’ Juba - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYOhW-eArvE>

Performance of *Juba Dance* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYF81LuSaCI>

**Syncopation** One of the characteristics of African-American music and the *Juba Dance* by Florence Price is a rhythmic feature called syncopation. Syncopation involves the shifting of the normal accent by stressing the normally unaccented beats.

Beat 8 steady beats by clapping or tapping your foot. Now after the first beat, jump the second tap or clap early, so the pattern is short - long - short / short - long - short. Listen for this pattern of syncopation in the juba dance melody.



## ACTIVITIES

Walk in a steady, straight line - taking 16 steps. Repeat this but slap your thighs in between each step. (Step left leg forward and slap the back of that leg.)

Create your own rhythmic ostinato using body percussion.

Link to Body Percussion Activities - [https://www.lorenz.com/Files/Files/Lorenz/Products/Sample\\_Pages/30\\_2181H.pdf](https://www.lorenz.com/Files/Files/Lorenz/Products/Sample_Pages/30_2181H.pdf)

### Body Percussion Rainstorm

This body percussion activity is perfect for children of all ages and it really does sound like a rainstorm. It works best with a group of five or more people. The sounds start off quietly and build to a noisy storm. Then, as the storm passes, the volume goes back down from loud to quiet.

1. Rub hands together
  2. Click fingers
  3. Pat thighs softly
  4. Pat thighs louder
  5. Clap softly
  6. Clap louder
  7. During loud clapping make thunder sounds (rumbles, etc.)
1. Clap softly
  2. Pat thighs loudly
  3. Pat thighs softly
  4. Click fingers
  5. Rub hands together



There are no specific timings - just go with the flow of the activity.



## Djembe

How to pronounce [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxdx0K\\_iZIU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxdx0K_iZIU)

A Djembe is a drum originally from West Africa, with a rope-tuned rawhide head. It is played with bare hands.



## Build your own Djembe

Like the African artisans, you can create your own **Djembe (Jem-Bay) drum**. This is a fun project, though it does take a bit a time. It is recommended for third graders and older.

### Supplies Needed:

Two plastic, Styrofoam, or paper cups

Scissors

Tape

Newspaper

Flour

Water

Paint

Paintbrush

Punching balloon

Rubber band

Yarn (optional)

Cover your workspace. This project can get messy. Mix one cup of flour with two cups of water to make your papier maché paste. Tear newspaper into strips.

Choose two cups. Try to pick cups with interesting shapes. Cut the bottom out of the cups. You may need an adult to help with this step. Tape the bottoms of the cups together.



Cover the outside of the cups with a thin layer of papier mache covered newspaper strips. You don't need to use a lot of the mixture to make the newspaper stick, and the less you use the quicker your cups will dry.

When the cups are dry, paint over the newspaper with white paint. This is just meant to cover up the newsprint and make sure it doesn't show through the designs you paint onto your drum later.



Let the white paint dry. While you wait, decide what patterns or designs you want to paint onto your drum.

When the white paint has dried, paint over it with a solid color. I painted the top of my drum brown and the bottom yellow. You can choose any colors you want.



Let the paint dry.

Now paint your patterns onto your drum.

Let the paint dry.

Choose a punching balloon and cut it open. It's best if you stick your scissors into the opening and just slit the balloon apart. This leaves it as whole as possible. Stretch the balloon over the top of the cup and wrap your rubber band around it to hold it in place. You want the balloon to be stretched tight. Ask an adult to help you if you have trouble with this. Cut off most of the extra balloon (careful—not too much!).



If you stop here, you have a lovely, working drum. You may choose to add yarn to your drum. This can be difficult but, if you're up for the challenge, you can try it. Wrap a length of yarn about four times around the middle of your drum. Tie the ends together and tuck them back into the wraps. Wind another length of yarn around the top, tie the ends together and tuck them into the wraps. Now weave a longer piece under the bottom wraps, then over the top wraps. Repeat until you've gone all the way around the drum. Tie the ends together and tuck them into the wraps.



**Enjoy your drum!**

Juba Dance song rhythms - say and play on your Djembe

