

## **NON-WESTERN MUSICS IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM AND CHORAL INSTRUCTION: A SNAPSHOT OF CURRENT PRACTICE**

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In Spring 2006 72 elementary music teachers from New York State participated in a study examining the inclusion of non-Western musics in K-5 classroom and chorus instruction. A five-page survey asked questions about the content of undergraduate and graduate coursework, and inquired about attitudes and practices regarding repertoire and pedagogy in both instructional settings.

Almost 75% of respondents indicated non-Western musical selections comprised more than 10% of their classroom materials, with such selections accounting for a smaller percentage of their choral repertoire. The majority of respondents stated these percentages were similar to the previous year's practice, although approximately 20% intended to increase their use of non-Western materials. The results provide a snapshot of current understandings and implementation of music as cultural practice and raise additional questions for further study.

Study participants valued a diverse curriculum incorporating songs, games, and listening selections from many cultures. However, they reported few experiences with non-Western musics and cultures during their academic coursework. Their responses indicate the materials and methods for learning, understanding, and incorporating non-Western musics in elementary classroom and choral settings are not consistently embedded in teacher preparation courses or meaningfully implemented in instructional practice.