

ROOTS OF RHYTHM – CHAPTER 6: THE *KAKKO* FROM JAPAN
FUNSHEET

Name _____

Date _____

DECORATE YOUR INSTRUMENT: THE *KAKKO*

The *kakko* (kah-ko) is a barrel-shaped drum with two drumheads played with two sticks from Japan. The drum is considered the leader or conductor of the ancient musical ensemble called *tōgaku* (toh-gah-koo). This drum probably came from China in the 700s and was gradually accepted in Japan and even used in performances in the Imperial Court for the Emperor's entertainment.

There are several types of rhythms played on the *kakko*, a slow repeated hit, a fast roll (fast alternating R-L-R-L) and *katarai*, (kah-tah-rye) which sounds like a bouncing ball. When other musicians in the ensemble, hear these rhythms they know when to play or change speed. The *kakko* plays with two other percussion instruments in the ensemble, a small gong called *shōko* (sho-koh) and a large bass drum called *taiko* (tie-koh). Below is a photograph of a *tōgaku* ensemble, showing the *kakko* and other percussion instruments in the front of the group, unlike many European orchestras where the percussionists are positioned in the back.

The *tōgaku* ensemble performs in traditional Japanese robes and headpieces, and the musical instruments are often highly decorated as the photograph below shows. The *kakko* is decorated with a lotus flower and ornamental greenery against a gold background. The lotus is a symbol of spiritual enlightenment.

The Kakko



The Tōgaku Ensemble



Shōko

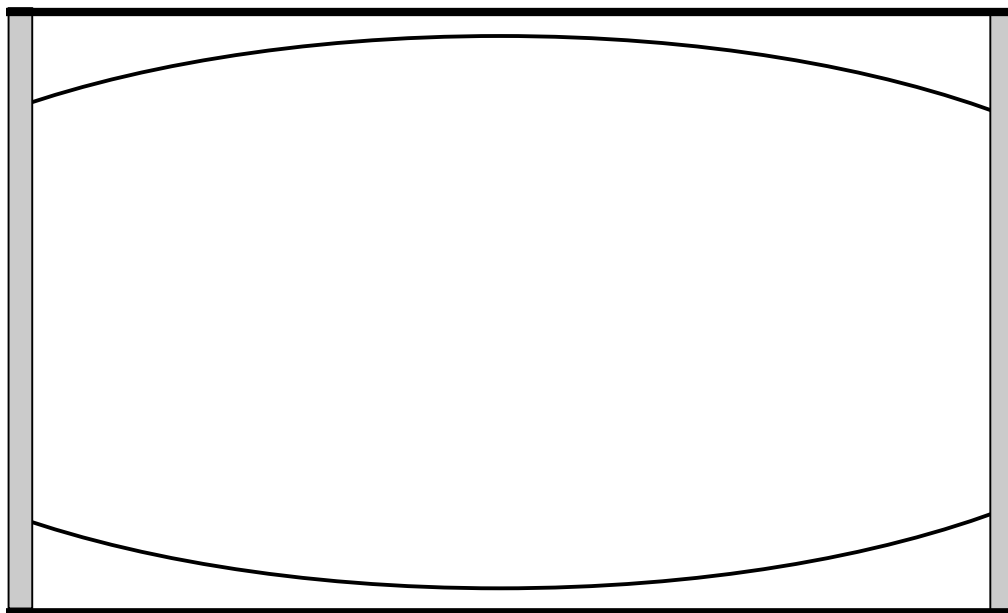
Taiko

Kakko

Reigakusha Gagaku Group

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Directions. Think about how you might decorate a kakko with one of your favorite flowers or other designs. Consider what that design mean to you. First, list these designs in the spaces below and then draw them on the kakko form shown below. Outline the design and background in pencil then use color. Use the information in the paragraph above to get some ideas for your designs.



To me, this decoration is a symbol of _____
