

## Let's Dance

"Let's dance", sang the pop star, David Bowie. Did you know? When you speak English you use a lot of words from the languages of other countries. English takes words from many other languages and sometimes it changes their meanings. English has many words from West African languages. Many words are about dance and music.

Do you like jazz? Jazz comes from Mandinka in Mali and Temne in Ghana. It is Jasi in Mandinka and Yas in Temne. Do you like dancing? Of course you do! Ready? If you like rock n' roll, jive comes from Jev in Wolof from Senegal. If you're into Merengue (Salsa) it comes from Fulani mererek. It means 'shake your body'! Do you do the mambo? That comes from West Africa. Samba is West African too. Oh, and if you like dance programmes on TV – Tango comes from tamgu in Nigeria.

Where do you dance? If you're like me, anywhere. I can dance anywhere. If I go into a bar and I hear music it's often on a jukebox. Did you know jukebox comes from dzug in Wolof in Senegal and Bambara in Mali?

So when I dance, I dance African! But the words didn't always come from Africa. They came via America and Haiti. Then they joined the world.

Do you play the banjo? That's an African musical instrument. It comes from South Africa. It's a Bantu word, mbanza.

OK, after dancing I'm hungry. What can I eat? Well, there's bananas from banana in Wolof, yams from inyami in Fulani and Anyinam in Twi from Ghana. Oh, and I love okra, from okuru in Igbo in Nigeria.

So when you speak English you don't just speak English from the UK or from the USA. You speak English from everywhere and from lots of different languages. 'English Africa International', that's us!

### New words for this article

Pop star	Very famous singer of 'pop' music
Into (idiomatic English)	Like very much (I'm into jazz.)
'Shake your body'	Dance with all your body.
'I'm hungry'	I want to eat.
Jukebox	a machine that plays music in a bar
Musical instrument	an instrument to play music
to travel	To go to another place
to join	To put together
Bantu	A group of south African languages
That's us	(idiom) That is what we are like.
To join	be a part of

### Comprehension Questions

- 1 How many English words in the article come from West Africa?
- 2 One word comes from South Africa. What word?
- 3 Where does the word 'jukebox' come from?
- 4 Who sang the song, 'Let's Dance'?
- 5 What does inyami mean in English?

5	yam
4	David Bowie
3	Mandinka, Temne
2	banjo
1	11
<i>compréhension en lecture</i>	
<b>Comprehension questions - Questions de</b>	

**Answers**