Cuba is an island country located in the Caribbean. It is the largest island in the region and is slightly smaller than Pennsylvania. There are two instruments that are from Cuba that have become famous for their distinctive sound. Both instruments are considered percussion instruments. A percussion instrument is an instrument that makes sound by hitting or scraping the instrument against your hand or another instrument.

The picture above is of a Cuban pair of claves. Claves consist of two short, thick wooden sticks. They make noise by hitting them together. Claves are common in two types of Cuban music: son and rumba guagancó. Son became popular across Cuba in the early 1920s. Its roots reflect a distinctly African sound that used percussion instruments like the claves. Rumba guangancó is considered to be a type of dance that is often performed in the streets of Cuba and symbolizes the mating between a rooster and a hen.
The *shekere* is a percussion instrument originally from Africa that is popular in Cuban music, especially the rumba. The shekere is thought to have come from the descendants of slaves brought from West African to Cuba to work on sugar plantations. It is made of a dried hollow gourd and is covered with a net woven with shells or beads. To make noise, a person holds the handle and shakes the shekere, causing the shells or beads to hit the gourd. To make different types of sounds, shekeres come in different sizes because large gourds make different noises than small gourds.