

CAST Model District Unit Template

Unit Title: Cultural Dance Studies

Subject: Dance

Grade Level/Course: High School

Brief Description of Unit:

In this unit, students will research and learn about Native American, African, and Latin cultures and the dances that are related to those civilizations. Students will then create individual and group choreography that communicates personal experiences, and current societal/cultural/community experiences. The written component of this unit requires the students to journal and to write a culminating paper.

Standards:

Creating:

- Synthesize content generated from stimulus materials to choreograph dance studies or dances using original or codified movement. **DA:Cr1.1.HS.II**
- Apply personal movement preferences and strengths with the movement vocabulary of several dance styles or genres to choreograph an original dance study or dance that communicates an artistic intent. **DA:Cr1.1.HS.II**

Performing/Presenting:

- Dance alone and with others with spatial intention. Expand partner and ensemble skills to greater ranges and skill level. Execute complex floor and air sequences with others while maintaining relationships through focus and intentionality. **DA:Pr4.1.HS.II**
- Dance with sensibility toward other dancers while executing complex spatial, rhythmic, and dynamic sequences to meet performance goals. **DA:Pr.5.1.HS.II**
- Apply body-mind principles to technical skills in complex choreography when performing solo, partnering, or dancing in ensemble works in a variety of dance genres and styles. Self-evaluate performances and discuss and analyze performance ability with others. **DA:Pr.5.1.HS.II**

Responding:

- Explain how dance communicates aesthetic and cultural values in a variety of genres, styles, or cultural movement practices. Use genre-specific dance terminology. **DA:Re.7.1.HS.III**

Connecting:

- Use established research methods and techniques to investigate a topic. Collaborate with others to identify questions and solve movement problems that pertain to the topic. Create and perform a piece of choreography. Discuss orally or in writing the insights relating to knowledge gained through the research process, the synergy of collaboration, and the transfer of learning from this project to other learning situations. **DA:Cn10.1.HS.II**
- Analyze dances from several genres or styles, historical periods, and/or world dance forms. Discuss how dance movement characteristics, techniques, and artistic criteria relate to the ideas and perspectives of the peoples from which the dances originate, and how, the analysis has expanded one's dance literacy. **DA:Cn11.1.HS.III**

Enduring Understanding(s):

- Choreographers use a variety of sources as inspiration and transform concepts and ideas into movement for artistic expression.
- Space, time, and energy are basic elements of dance.
- Dancers use the mind-body connection and develop the body as an instrument for artistry and artistic expression.
- Dance is perceived and analyzed to comprehend its meaning.
- As dance is experienced, all personal experiences, knowledge, and contexts are integrated and synthesized to interpret meaning.
- Dance literacy includes deep knowledge and perspectives about societal, cultural, historical and community contexts.

Essential Questions:

- Where do choreographers get ideas for dance?
- How do dancers work with space, time, and energy to communicate artistic expression?
- What must a dancer do to prepare the mind and body for artistic expression?
- How is dance understood?
- How does the dance deepen our understanding of ourselves, other knowledge, and events around us?
- How does knowing about societal, cultural and community experiences expand our dance literacy?

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Knowledge:

Students will know:

- The meaning of culture
- The role dance plays in various cultures
- Historical, cultural and technical facts about Native American, African and Latin dances
- Cultures communicate meaning through dance
- Personal, societal, cultural and community experiences influence individual creativity
- How a community creates a dance to relay a story or meaning

Skills:

Students will be able to:

- Research and present information about Native American, African and Latin dance cultures
- Perform a cultural dance
- Identify and describe similarities and differences between Native American, African and Latin dance cultures
- Reflect on cultural dances, personal experiences, current societal, cultural and community experiences in order to create movement phrases and group choreography
- Learn original movement phrases created by their classmates
- Collaborate with classmates to share ideas and information to construct a dance and perform it
- Refine memorization skills
- Analyze movement and gestures created by themselves and others to find meaning
- Organize research, ideas, procedures and concepts in written form

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Research, organize and present cultural dance facts
- Demonstrate an understanding of dance in diverse cultures
- Describe similarities and differences in movement styles and structures of Native American, African and Latin dances
- Analyze movement and verbally articulate ideas and opinions based on movement observed
- Interpret personal and current societal/cultural/community experiences to incorporate into personal movement
- Explore, analyze and practice cultural dances
- Develop individual and group choreography
- Make connections to past and current methods of dance making
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Cultivate dance literacy
- Gain performance experience

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Learning Plan/Instructional Strategies:

- Divide the class into three groups (4-6 students in each) and assign each group a cultural dance: Native American, African or Latin, each group will research their assigned cultural dance and give an oral presentation to the class that includes information about:
 - the country of origin
 - historical context in which the dance was created
 - what members of society created/performed the dances and why
 - dance terminology used
 - music used (instruments, vocal or body sounds)
 - process of dance making
 - gestures used and their meaning
 - environment where the dances were performed
 - costuming
 - meaning of the dances – what were the influences and were they trying to tell a story or evoke meaning?
- The groups will learn an excerpt (or excerpts) of their researched dance(s) and perform them for the class with traditional music that accompanies it.
- Facilitate discussions with the class after the group presentations to discuss:
 - The similarities and differences of the dances
 - Specific characteristics of the dance that were observed
 - How the dances different from each other
 - If they were able to observe a story that was communicated, was there a theme?
 - If their classmates performed the movements in the same way
 - How the music accompanied or influenced the dances
 - What was being expressed?
 - What made the dances unique?
- Explain to the groups that:
 1. Based on their own personal cultural experience, each student will create their own 64-count dance phrase.
 2. Students will work on their movement phrases outside of class.
 3. The individual movement phrases will then be combined with those of their classmates to create unique choreography that was inspired by the cultural dances researched and that reflects their personal movement choices/style and intention.
 4. Over the next week, the students will meet as groups to learn, discuss, and memorize the movement phrases of their group members. The groups will then organize and combine the movement phrases to create an original piece of choreography that will be performed for their classmates at the next class meeting.
 5. The groups will discuss and agree upon a selected piece of music to accompany their choreography – songs that are instrumental and/or use vocal or body sounds.
- Once the groups have presented their choreography, create a group discussion to:
 - Compare and contrast the cultural dances that were researched and performed to the ones that were created by the 3 groups
 - Examine and justify their individual and group choreographic choices made to create their movement.
 - Assess if it was evident that the movement created had an influence and if personal stories were communicated through movement
 - Determine what was trying to be expressed or if there was a theme.
 - Share ideas about the collaborative process of combining phrases and choreographing as a group
 - Discuss the similarities in the concepts that influenced the movement

Writing Component:

- The students will keep a journal to record cultural dance facts, document group discussions, and to reflect on cultural dances, the process of creating personal movement phrases and the process of individual and group planning.
- Students will individually write a concluding paper to display knowledge gained through research conducted about their assigned dance culture, the process of creating dance and collaborating with others and how to connect this learning experience to future endeavors.

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Resources:

1. artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators
 >collections>"A">Africa>African Dances>Five Minute Dance Lessons
 >collections>"L">Latin America>Baila!
 >collections>"N">Native America>Native Pride Dancers
2. danceheritage.org
 >The First 113>Native American Dance
 >The First 113>Jose Greco
 >The First 113>Asadata Dafora
3. jacobspillow.org
 >About>Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive>Browse Our Playlists>By Genre>Cultural>
 Then look for Latin dance: Pilar Rioja, Juan Siddi Flamenco Santa Fe, Jose Greco II
 Or for African: Asadata Dafora
 Or for Native Am: American Indian Dance Theatre

Repertoire/Media & Materials:

- Dance area: an open, safe environment with appropriate space and floor for movement.
- Smartboard/TV/projector
- CD player/iPod
- Sound system/speakers

Academic Vocabulary:

Artistic criteria, artistic expression, choreography, cultural movement practice, dance literacy, dance phrase, dance structures, dance study, dance terminology, dance work, dynamics, elements of dance, embody, energy, explore, evaluative criteria, folk dance, kinesthetic awareness, movement characteristics, movement phrase, movement problem, phrase, polyrhythmic, rhythm, sound environment, stimuli, theme

Differentiation/Modification:

In order to ensure that the unit is inclusive for those participating, instructors may wish to integrate the following strategies:

- provide study guides/visual aids
- facilitate peer mentoring
- provide verbal cueing during movement exploration
- address preferred learning styles
- ask questions to foster critical thinking
- repeat information
- allow for extended time on activities
- make use of equipment to stabilize the bodies of students with physical disabilities
- focus on fine motor and verbal skills of students with physical disabilities

Assessments: Must link to unit standards and objectives. What evidence will be used to demonstrate students have met the standards and achieved the learning objectives?

Summative Assessment** (use Attached template)

Formative Assessment Description:

Through observation of group presentations and facilitated discussions, the instructor will be able to assess if the students have demonstrated an understanding of the above-stated standards and objectives. Class discussions will provide a venue for peer and teacher feedback about the unit. The journal writing component of this project will provide the students with an opportunity to organize information and ideas in order to write a final paper about the learning experience.

Summative Assessment:

Please refer to the attached rubric.

Notes:

This lesson can be modified and/or developed for middle school students as well. The length of the unit can be extended over a period of 1-3 weeks.

Cultural Dance Assessment

Name: _____

(Highest=5 to Lowest=1)

Criteria	<i>Highest</i>				<i>Lowest</i>
Research	Conducted a significant amount of research				
	5	4	3	2	1
Presentation	Information was presented in an effective way				
	5	4	3	2	1
Perform (cultural dance)	Successfully performed a cultural dance				
	5	4	3	2	1
Knowledge	Demonstrated knowledge about various dance cultures				
	5	4	3	2	1
Cultural Awareness	Demonstrated ability to reflect on dance cultures; personal experiences; current societal, cultural, and community experiences				
	5	4	3	2	1
Create	Demonstrated ability to create a personal movement phrase				
	5	4	3	2	1
Learn	Demonstrated ability to learn personal movement phrases of group members				
	5	4	3	2	1
Collaborate	Demonstrated ability to collaborate with group members to share ideas and information in order to construct a dance				
	5	4	3	2	1

Cultural Dance Assessment

Perform
(group choreography)

Performed a group dance

5 4 3 2 1

Physical Awareness

Indicated a sense of physical awareness of self and others

5 4 3 2 1

Memorize

Demonstrated memorization skills

5 4 3 2 1

Analyze

Analyzed movement and verbally articulate ideas and opinions based on movement observed

5 4 3 2 1

Journal

Journal entries were written in an organized, thoughtful way

5 4 3 2 1

Final Paper

The final paper was presented in a clear, organized way and included an introduction and conclusion, proper grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and an understanding of the subject

5 4 3 2 1

Notes: