

Creative Dance Lesson Plan on Cultures

Part II

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Grade: 2nd

Length of Lesson: 45 minutes

Student Learning Outcome: The students will demonstrate understanding of their state's and community's culture and its influences through level explorations and creation of their own dance.

Equipment Needed: Hand Drum; CD player; CD with creative dance music; Poster from previous lesson.

Utah Core - Social Studies:

Standard 1: Students will recognize and describe how people within their community, state, and nation are both similar and different.

Objective 1: Examine and identify cultural differences within the community.

- a. Explain the various cultural heritages within their community.
 - c. Give examples of how families in the community borrow customs or traditions from other cultures.
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Behavioral Expectations: (3 minutes)

We have two rules for class today:

1. Always keep space around yourself. Never touch anyone else, the walls, or the steps unless I ask you to.
2. When the music or the drumming stops, you must freeze!

Let's practice: When the music starts, gallop around the room, but when it stops you must freeze! Don't move even one eyelash!

Experience/Identify: (12 minutes)

Level Boogie: How many levels are there in space and in dance? We talk about three: high, medium, and low, but what about all the levels in between high, medium, and low? There are infinite numbers of levels! Last time we played a game called level boogie. We played in small groups and no one's head could be on the same level as another person in your

group. Today we are going to play that game again, but instead of being in small groups, we will play as a whole class! When the music starts, travel throughout the room, making sure that your head is not on the same level as anyone else in the class. If the music stops, freeze. Don't let me catch your head on the same level as somebody else!

Melting Pot: Spread out into one big circle around the room. This circle represents the world. The world has lots of different people with different cultures and beliefs. Who knows what changed the world in the year 1492? Columbus discovered America! After that, many groups of people from many different countries tried to settle America, and started what eventually became the United States of America. (take out the extra space here) I need a first group of settlers... Everyone who is wearing orange raise your hand. You are my first group. Using a low level, find a way to come to the middle of the circle and then make a high shape and freeze. Everyone who is wearing red raise your hand. Using a high level, find your own way to travel to the center of the circle and make a medium shape. (Continue until all students are in the center of the circle making shapes in different levels). No matter what color you are wearing, you are in the middle, squished together. This is like America. No matter what country you came from before, you have to work with people who have lots of different cultures and backgrounds. That's why we call America the "melting pot" of cultures and people.

Explore/Investigate: (10 (take out the extra space here) minutes)

Since America is made up of many different peoples and cultures, we borrow a lot of our traditions from other cultures. For example, we celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Who can tell me what we do on St. Patrick's Day? ... Did you know that St. Patrick's Day started in Ireland and it is a celebration of a Saint from the Catholic Church, that is now a celebration of Irish culture? In America, we wear green and give pinches, and Chicago even dyes the river there green!

What about Halloween? Where did that come from? It came from Scotland where it was an ancient festival and tradition. Trick-or-treating was popular there in the 1800's. However, in Scotland, they carved turnips. In America we made our own tradition, carving pumpkins! In dance, we have a way of moving called carving through the space. It is a way of moving that is not in a straight line, and you can imagine that you are carving through a pumpkin, or butter, or even moving through jell-o! Let's try carving through the space. Use your whole body as if it were the knife that was carving a pumpkin.

Shape Chain: Let's do an activity with carving and different levels called shape chain. I need three line leaders. The line leader will find a way to carve through the space to this spot (mark a spot with tape, a piece of paper, etc.), then make a shape in whatever level they choose. Once they freeze in a shape, the next person in line carves through the space, and

finds a way to make a shape that CONNECTS to the first person's shape. However, just like in level boogie, your head cannot be on the same level as the person before you.

Did any of you see a shape your classmate made that you liked? Did you try to copy it? Sometimes other people have good ideas that you want to do as well. That is what happened when early Americans shared traditions. The Irish, Scottish, Germans, and everyone else brought their own traditions that we borrowed and made our own!

Create/Perform: ((take out the extra space here) 17 minutes)

Using the list of unique things about Spanish Fork created in the previous lesson, help students create a dance using the list as inspiration. Include making action shapes, locomotion, and the use of levels. If there are any borrowed traditions in the list, explain to the students how these came to be your **community's** tradition.

For example, Spanish Fork has a yearly Festival of Lights. Explain that Christmas lights at first were candles on tree branches and the tradition began in Germany in the 1600's. America did not use Christmas lights until the 1800's.

Find a word or theme that describes an item on the list and let children use it as inspiration. For example, for 4th of July fireworks use explosive movement, for a statue in town square create a high, proud shape. For a town trolley, create linear pathways using walking, skipping, or galloping. However, don't require all the children to do the same movement, let them create their own movement within a certain framework.

Connect/Analyze: (3 minutes)

Who can tell me what culture means? It's the way a group of people think, act, celebrate, make art, etc. We have our own Spanish Fork culture! Which dance do you like better, the square dancing or our own Spanish Fork dance? Why?