

Native American Pow Wow Dance Unit

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Summary of Unit: Students will:

- ✚ analyze video clips of Pow Wow dance styles
- ✚ dance the Round Dance and Intertribal Dance
- ✚ recognize Pow Wow dance styles from picture books
- ✚ learn the seven reservations in Montana.

Grade Level: 4th or older

Number of classes: four/five – 35 minute classes

Unit Objectives:

1) Learn to recognize six different styles of dance used in exhibition at Pow Wow;

female styles -

- ✚ Traditional
- ✚ Fancy Shawl
- ✚ Jingle Dress

male styles –

- ✚ Traditional
- ✚ Grass
- ✚ Fancy

2) Distinguish the music for the Round Dance and Intertribal Dance.

3) Learn the seven reservations in Montana.

Montana Content Standards:

Essential Understandings

1-Diversity among tribal groups is great.

2-Diversity among individuals is great.

3-Ideologies, traditions, beliefs, & spirituality persist.

Arts

Arts Content Standard 5: Students understand the role of the Arts in society, diverse cultures, and historical periods.

Missoula County Public Schools (MCPS) Fine Arts Curriculum Standards:

Standard #9: Students will understand music in relationship to history and culture.

Competency 1: Students will aurally identify, by genre and style, music from various cultures and historical periods

Competency 2: Students will demonstrate appropriate audience behavior for the setting and type of music performed



Materials Needed:

- CD:** *Enter the Circle: Black Lodge Singers* Canyon Records CR-6276 (Volume 15) 1997
- Videos** *Dance in America – The American Indian Dance Theater: Finding the Circle* Publisher: New York : WNET/thirteen, Tatge/Lasseur Productions, Inc. #10427, 1989. OCLC: 22286893
- DVDs:** *Wacipi Pow Wow* Publisher: Saint Paul MN: Twin Cities Public Television, 1995.
- Books:** *Jingle Dancer* by Cynthia Leitich Smith; New York: Morrow Junior Books, 2000
- People of the Circle* by Chris Roberts; Missoula, MT: Meadowlark Publishing, 1998.
- POWWOW* by George Ancona; New York: Harcourt Brace, 1993.
- Pow Wow Country* by Chris Roberts; Helena, MT: American and World Geographic Publishing, 1992.
- Your Guide to Understanding and Enjoying Pow Wows* by Murton McCluskey; Helena, MT: Office of Public Instruction, 2006.

Pow Wow Dance Styles student note-taking sheet

Map handout of major cities of Montana and another map showing reservations in Montana

Pencils and Writing boards

Teacher Preparation:

- ✚ Be familiar with the six dance styles as described in *Your Guide to Understanding and Enjoying Pow Wows*.
- ✚ Know where the seven reservations are located in Montana and which tribes are associated with each.
- ✚ Be comfortable teaching the Round Dance and Intertribal Dance.
- ✚ Know where to find the dance sections on the videotapes, *in America – The American Indian Dance Theater: Finding the Circle* and *Wacipi Pow Wow*.

Background Information:

Reviewing the CD, videos and books will provide necessary background information. In particular, the *Wacipi Pow Wow* video and *Your Guide to Understanding and Enjoying Pow Wows* from the Montana Office of Public Instruction will be particularly useful.

Engagement Activity:

Begin with a discussion of what the students already know about Pow Wow in general and Pow Wow dance in particular. Make a dual list of these on a large sheet of butcher paper. Explain that in this unit, students will be learning to recognize six different styles of dance used in exhibition and competition at Pow Wow – three male styles (Traditional; Grass and Fancy) and three female styles (Traditional; Jingle; and Fancy Shawl). Students will also learn to recognize the music for two styles of audience participatory dance at Pow Wow – the Round Dance and Intertribal.

Exploration phase:

1) Over the course of three class periods, watch the following sections of *Dance in America – The American Indian Dance Theater: Finding the Circle*. On their Pow Wow Dance Styles student note-taking sheet students write down at least four qualities of each dance style they observe through the videos. The qualities should include both the manner of movement and the style of dress.

After viewing each style of dance allow time for students to tell you their observations.

Be sure they list the basic style characteristics described in *Your Guide to Understanding and Enjoying Pow Wows*.

Track 10 Traditional Suite – Women

Track 11 Men’s traditional dance styles

Track 16 - Women’s Fancy Shawl

Track 19 - Men’s Fancy

Track 3 - Men’s Grass

2) Watch the Jingle Dress Dance on the video *Wacipi Pow Wow*. Have half of the students write down at least three qualities of the dance style and the other half pay attention to the origin story of the jingle dress dance.

IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE ACTIVITY:

Day Two: Bring students into the music room dancing to Selection 10 – “Intertribal” on the CD *Enter the Circle: Black Lodge Singers*

Lead a discussion about the importance of circles to Pow Wow dancers. Discuss the use of a circle at Pow Wow – the dance arena as seen in the Grand Entry Track 15 of *Dance in America – The American Indian Dance Theater: Finding the Circle*. Also explain that the Intertribal Dance can be danced by anyone attending Pow Wow – Indian; non-Indian; dressed for dance exhibition; or in street clothes.

Day Three: Bring students into the music room dancing to Selection 9– Round Dance on the CD *Enter the Circle: Black Lodge Singers*. Include the greeting within the Round Dance where circle turns back in on itself and dancers shake hands. Explain that Round Dance is another social dance at Pow wow. Anyone can participate.

See if students can demonstrate the difference between a Round Dance step and the Intertribal dance step.

Explanation phase:

Divide class into six small groups with each group responsible for one dance style. Each group must come up with six characteristics, three for movement/three for regalia, for their assigned dance style. Put list on posters that can be displayed around the room.

Ask for volunteer students who can demonstrate the correct dance step for Round Dance and Intertribal. Have the rest of the class practice the step in place.

Elaboration activity:

Day Four: See how many Montana reservations students can name. Using the map handout, discuss with class the seven reservations in Montana and the tribes associated with each reservation. Explain that most reservations have Pow Wow but that Pow Wows are also held off of the reservation. For instance, the Kyi-Yo Pow Wow at the University of Montana in the spring and the Honor the Youth Pow Wow held at Big Sky High school sponsored by Missoula County Public Schools. Also explain that even when a Pow Wow is on a reservation, many people from different tribes attend as well as non-Indians. It is a celebration for everyone!

Divide the class into small groups each with a copy of the book *Pow Wow Country* or *People of the Circle* and each student with a map handout. Have the groups find two pictures from the book to share with the class. The students must be able to show where the Pow Wow was located on the map and which reservation it is closest to. *Where possible, students should name the dance style portrayed.* Share results with large group.

Make a list on the board of the reservations represented in the picture search. Also make note of which reservations were not included.

Extension activities:

I: In *Dance in America – The American Indian Dance Theater: Finding the Circle* watch Track 14 – Men getting dressed for dancing. Have the students individually determine which man dresses as a Traditional dancer (yellow regalia) and which man dresses as Fancy (red regalia). Discuss conclusions.

II: Explain that many Native American people believe that the number four is sacred (four seasons; four-legged animals; four directions etc.)

Read : *Jingle Dancer* by Cynthia Leitich Smith. After reading the book, discuss as a class elements of the story or illustrations that happen in fours. (tink, tink,tink,tink ; brum, brum, brum, brum; four directions; four rows of jingles; four people to dance for etc.)

III: Bring in live dancers to demonstrate dance style and regalia.

Formative Assessment:

I) Students will be able to recognize the following characteristics of the six dance styles:

Women's Traditional: Women wear long, buckskin dresses decorated with beads, quillwork or elk teeth. Styles vary with individual and region. Most traditional dancers wear or carry a shawl and some carry a hawk or eagle feather fan, or a single feather. (McCluskey, 2006) The dance consists of bending the knees with a slight up and down movement of the body while the feet move subtly. Women stay basically stationary or sometimes turn slowly. They may also dance around the circle slowly.

Women's Fancy Shawl: The dance regalia consist of “a decorative knee-length cloth dress, beaded moccasins with matching leggings, a fancy shawl, and various pieces of jewelry.” (McCluskey, 2006) The dance is energetic with fancy footwork and much movement of the arms with the shawl draped over.

Women's Jingle Dress: The dress is cloth with many metal cones, jingles, attached. Some dancers also carry a fan and wear a beaded purse. The movement is not as energetic as Fancy Shawl but there is more movement than Women's Traditional. The movement is intended to make the cones jingle. The dance step is in a zig-zag pattern.

Mens Traditional: Regalia has subdued colors, frequently decorated with bead and quill work and often incorporating things of nature such as feathers, leather and fur. Traditional dancers wear a single circular bustle of eagle feathers, representing cycles and the unity of everything (McCluskey, 2006). The traditional step is done with the ball of the foot touching the ground on beat 1, and the whole foot touching on beat 2. The traditional dancer's movements are patterned after animals and birds.

Men's Fancy: Dancers use two brilliantly colored feather bustles. Dance step is acrobatic, fast with fancy footwork and varied body movements.

Grass Dance: Dancer's clothing features a good deal of colorful fringe and lack the use of bustles and many feathers. Dancers should keep their heads moving either up or down with the beat of the drum, or moving side to side. The purpose of this action is to keep the roach crest feathers spinning. To keep the feathers spinning is the sign of a good dancer.

II) Students will be able to list the seven reservations of Montana:

Blackfeet Reservation: Blackfeet

Crow Reservation: Crow

Flathead Reservation: Salish, Pend d' Oreille, Kootenai

Fort Belknap Reservation: White Clay (Gros Ventre) and Assiniboine

Fort Peck Reservation: Nakoda (Assiniboine) and Dakota (Sioux)

Northern Cheyenne Reservation: Northern Cheyenne

Rocky Boy's Reservation: Chippewa Cree

Little Shell Band of Chippewa Indians: Landless, headquarter in Cascade County

Summative Assessment:

1) On a blank sheet of paper, have each students make a numbered column 1-8. Show eight different pictures in the book *POWWOW*, show the students pictures of the different dance styles to assess their recognition.

2) Play the round dance and intertribal songs. Allow the students to move to figure out which dance is which.

3) Make another numbered column from 1-7 and have the students list the seven different Indian reservations in Montana.

After collecting the sheets, review answers.

Great Performances Dance in America
American Indian Dance Theater: Finding the Circle

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- Track 1: Timed opening**
- Track 2: Mythic beginning**
- Track 3: Grass Dance**
- Track 4: Corn Field**
- Track 5: Zuni Rainbow Dance**
- Track 6: Eagle Dance with Native American Flute**
- Track 7: San Carlos Apache Crown Dance**
- Track 8: Native American Flute and Solo Dance**
- Track 9: Drum call – hand drum duet**
- Track 10: Traditional Suite – Women**
- Track 11: Traditional Men’s Dance**
- Track 12: Pow Wow parade**
- Track 13: Three hand drummers in old dance arbor**
- Track 14: Men getting dressed for dance**
- Track 15: Grand Entry**
- Track 16: Women’s Fancy Shawl Dance**
- Track 17: Hoop dancer ***
- Track 18: A Warrior Prepares**
- Track 19: Men’s Fancy Dance**
- Track 20: Plains Snake Dance**
- Track 21: Plains Buffalo Dance**
- Track 22: Team Dance with four Fancy dancers**
- Track 23: Sneak-up Dance**
- Track 24: Return to the Circle – Ending and credits**

*preview Track 17 before showing to class as dancer does not appear to be wearing underwear. May cause an uproar!

Wacipi Pow Wow ordering information:

Wacipi Pow Wow is available only as a VHS tape. It will not be converted to a DVD.

Cost is \$19.95 plus ship/hand \$6; total is \$25.95.

email or mail the Purchase Order to:

Twin Cities Public Television

172 East 4th Street

St. Paul, MN 55101

or you can call with a major credit card purchase.

Eileen Johnson/TPT Video

651-229-1508

At some point it will also be in TPT’s “Minnesota Video Vault” available to anyone via the web. It is currently in a beta version, with a few hundred programs available.

You can view other programs about Native Americans in Minnesota they have produced at

<http://www.mnvideovault.org/> like “Dakota Exile,” “Seth Eastman: Painting the Dakota,” or the “Diary: Native American Minnestoans” series.

Name _____ Class _____

Pow Wow Dance Styles Note-taking Sheet

**For each dance style describe at least two characteristics of movement
and two characteristics of dance regalia.**

Female Dance Styles

Male Dance Styles

Traditional

Traditional

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

4.

4.

Jingle Dress

Grass

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

4.

4.

Fancy Shawl

Fancy

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

4.

4.

Montana Maps

