

Unit: Social Studies & Dance
Grade Level: 1-3



Overview: This unit will be presented for students 1st-3rd grade that have spent a semester learning about the continent of Africa. The participating students are a part of a Montessori program and Africa has been the school theme for the semester. Students have learned about Africa in regards to its geography, culture, and traditions. Students have had multiple experiences of exploration and project-based learning opportunities.

Dance experiences will be integrated following this larger unit of study of the continent of Africa. An 8-lesson unit of dance will be added to celebrate and enhance the learning of Africa. The dance experience will include both creative exploration and cultural & traditional dances of Africa will be included.

STAGE 1 – DESIRED RESULTS	
Unit Title: Out of Africa	
Established Goals:	
Goals include learning outcomes in four domains: physical, cognitive, social and affective.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use movement as a mode to learning and communicating. • To integrate creative process to demonstrate ways of knowing. • To use the elements of dance • To make connections of how and why dance influences culture. • To demonstrate characteristic movements, purposes, and qualities of African dance. • To promote dance literacy through variety of experiences. 	
Understandings: <i>Students will understand that...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement patterns can prepare both your mind and body for learning. • Information can be communicated through movement. • Dance has different meanings for different people. • Culture can influence one’s perspective of dance 	Essential Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What must a dancer do to prepare the mind and body for artistic expression? • How do I communicate ideas through movement? • Where do choreographers get ideas for dances? • In what ways can dance be used to celebrate one’s culture? • How is a dance understood? • How does dance deepen our understanding of ourselves, other knowledge, and events around us? • What is the purpose of the dance? (to tell a story, entertain, celebrate, etc?) • How does knowing about societal, cultural, historical and community experiences expand dance literacy?

<p>Students will know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic fundamental movement patterns • Animals and characteristics of the African Rainforest. • Stories can be communicated through movement. • Folktales have been passed down from generation to generation to uphold traditions. • At least two characteristics of African dance. • At least one traditional African dance. • 	<p>Students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately perform movement patterns that prepares both mind and body for learning. • Apply understanding of aspects of Africa (geographical, habitats, culture, etc.) creatively. • Transform understanding of how specific animals make adaptations to their environments through movement and class discussion • Identify at least three reasons as to why people dance. • Recognize movement characteristics of African dance. • Expand dance literacy through cultural and community experiences.
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STAGE 2 – ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE	
<p>Performance Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will demonstrate the eight fundamental movement patterns of the Braindance. Students will accurately perform use of breath, tactile, head-tail, core-distal, upper-lower, body-side, cross-lateral and vestibular movement patterns. • Students will compare and contrast two African folktales. A movement phrase will be created that communicates similarities and differences. • Students will choose two animals of the African rainforest. Using the elements of dance, students will demonstrate characteristics of the each animal and how it lives and travels in it environment. Students will create 16 counts of movement to represent each animal. The movement will then be put in an ABA choreographic pattern. • Students will perform at least one African dance. Students will learn a basic African dance, such as “Harvest Dance.” Students will demonstrate movement patterns and rhythm sequences of the 	<p>Other Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class discussion • Transformation of knowledge in a creative way. • Sharing of “voice” through body and creative expression. • Through written or verbal expression, students will define three reasons, “Why people dance?”

dance tradition.	
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<p>Key Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can describe the continent of Africa from variety of perspectives. • Can perform each of the 8 fundamental movement skills. • Can recognize similarities and differences in two folktales and can communicate and support understanding. • Can create movement phrase that demonstrates the beginning, middle, or end of two stories utilizing the elements of dance. • Can clearly describe characteristics (verbally & kinesthetically) of animals found in African rainforest. • Can embody many aspects of dance on culture. Can identify more than one reason why people dance.

STAGE 3 – LEARNING PLAN

<p>Summary of Learning Activities:</p> <p>The NCCAS Dance Standards used throughout this unit can be found in each part of the unit. The Dance Standards include both 2nd and 3rd grade expectations. The Michigan Social Studies Content Expectations are also introduced throughout the unit.</p> <p>Geography:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. G2 Places and Regions <i>Understand how regions are created from common physical and human characteristics.</i> 2 – G2.0.1 Compare the physical and human characteristics of the local community with those of another community. 2. G5 Environment and Society: <i>Understand the effects of human-environment interactions.</i> 2 – G5.0.1 Suggest ways people can responsibly interact with the environment in the local community. <p>HISTORY: H2 Living and Working Together in Communities <i>Use historical thinking to understand the past.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. H2.0.2. Explain why descriptions of the same event in the local community can be different. 2. H2.0.6 Construct a historical narrative about the history of the local community from a variety of sources (e.g., data gathered from local residents, artifacts, photographs). <p>1st part of unit: African themed Braindance:</p> <p>NCCAS Standards: DA:Pr5.1.3</p>

a. Replicate body shapes, movement characteristics, and movement patterns in a dance sequence with awareness of body alignment and core support.

- Students will learn a Braindance including movements and actions inspired by African themed images and ideas. The Braindance will be presented at the start of each lesson.
- Students will demonstrate fundamental movement patterns including breath, tactile, head-tail, core-distal, upper-lower, body-side, cross-lateral and vestibular movement patterns. The movement and actions will be inspired by African themed images and ideas.

2nd part of unit: Creative Dance and African Folktales:

NCCAS Standards:

DA:Cr1.1.2

a. Explore movement inspired by a variety of stimuli (for example, music/sound, text, objects, images, symbols, observed dance, experiences) and suggest additional sources for movement ideas.

b. Combine a variety of movements while manipulating the elements of dance.

- Read African Folktales, *The Orphan Boy* and *Anasi the Spider*. Discuss purpose of folktales.
- Students will learn about storytelling through dance. Students will identify similar beginning, middle, end events comparing two African Folktales.
- Students will choreograph a dance that compares/contrasts events from two African folktales.

3rd part of unit: Creative Dance and African Habitat

NCCAS Standards:

DA:Cr2.1.3

a. Identify and experiment with choreographic devices to create simple movement patterns and dance structures (for example, AB, ABA, theme and development

- Brainstorm of animals present in the African rainforest. Choose an animal from the list. As a class hone in on the senses as to what you see, hear, taste, smell, and feel (emotional and textural), followed by a list of action words as to how the animal moves in and through space. Repeat process with another animal.
- Students will be provided with time to explore through improvisation the many characteristics and actions of the animals found in African rainforest.
- A video of African rainforest animals will be played. Students will use observation skills to look for movement patterns and actions of the animal. Following the video, students will analyze the movement of the animal and perform the actions in own body.
- Students will use space, time and energy to demonstrate movement exploration. Students will be prompted with an African rainforest image to explore movement,

obstacles, etc.

- Students will create a short movement phrase after choosing two African rainforest animals to create an ABA movement pattern.

4th part of unit: African Dance and Culture

NCCAS Standards:

DA:Re7.1.2

- a. Find movements in a dance that develop a pattern.
- b. Demonstrate and describe movements in dances from different genres or cultures. Students will brainstorm why people dance.

DA:Re9.1.2

- a. Observe or demonstrate dances from a genre or culture. Discuss movements and other aspects of the dances that make the dances work well, and explain why they work. Use simple dance terminology.

DA:Cn11.1.2

- a. Observe a dance and relate the movement to the people or environment in which the dance was created and performed.

Read “*Drumbeat in our Feet*” by Patricia Keeler. Discuss rituals, traditions, costumes, rhythmic instruments and dances that have been passed down from generation to generation.

- Students will learn about traditions and how different cultures and generations past down rituals.
- Students will participate in learning the African dance, “Harvest.”
- Students will perform the dance for an audience in an informal setting.

The NCAS Standards in Dance Resources include lessons, units, Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs), and curriculum maps as well as guidance documents to help you understand and implement the National Core Arts Standards for Dance. Contributors include members of the dance standards writing and leadership teams and participants in the OPDI courses Implementing the National Core Dance Standards for Dance and Developing Cornerstone Assessments for the New Dance Standards. The contributor's name and bio is provided at the end of each document. Contributors represent all NDEO sectors, teaching in K-12, Higher Education, Private Studio, and Community and Performing Arts organizations. This cross sector representation demonstrates that the standards provide essential content to all constituencies.

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