

Pieces at Play!

Strongsville School District Professional Development Day

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By

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State Standards

In the publication, “The School Music Program – *A New Vision: The K-12 National Standards, Pre-K Standards, and What They Mean to Music Education*” distributed by the National Association for Music Education, Multi-Cultural education is addressed in the following way:

“The music studied should reflect the multimusical diversity of America’s pluralistic culture. It should include a broad range of genres, styles and periods, including music from outside the art music tradition, music from various cultures and ethnic groups that comprise American society, and authentic examples from the various musical cultures of the world. **Many communities and many schools themselves are already smaller versions of the global village. The school music program should reflect that fact.**”

Hoe Ana – Tahitian canoe dance

This is a canoe paddle dance of the Rarotongo Islands/Tahiti. This lovely dance can be adapted for many different environments – especially ones with desks/chairs/risers! The unison, fluid movement is a wonderful way to center a group or relax after a challenging music class. We can also use some of the movement ideas from this dance to help create a new dance later on. Think about the meaning of each movement – you may want to create a story based on your movements!

*Dance taught to me by Sanna Longden – used with permission
Music found on Longden’s “Dances of the Seven Continents Vol. II”*

Part I:

- Waves – right then left
- Rock canoe – R, L, R, L
- Repeat
- Swirl the water – right then left
- Look for land – R, L, R, L
- Sun and Moon – fist R, fist L
- Four directions

Part II:

- Paddle (2) Right – “Hoe Ana, hoe Ana”
- Repeat on left
- Repeat Right and left
- Swirl water
- Bring land back to me – reach out and then back to the body

Part III:

- Fast paddle R then L
- 8 stars in the sky
- Dive into the wave
- (rest) clap, clap
- Repeat all of part III

(repeat whole dance)

Notes:

(How would I adapt this for my classroom? How would this work with the age group I teach? What would need to change? How does it fit my curriculum? What would I add or how could I extend it?)

“Stomp” – Rhythmische Übung pg. 22 #75

“Stomp” is actually a short rhythmic piece that can be found in Gunild Keetman’s classic Orff Schulwerk text, Rhythmische Übung, a collection of rhythmic exercises to learn, explore and improvise within the music classroom. This exercise gives us the opportunity to take an engaging rhythmic canon and work on music literacy, practice technique on different instruments and finally to improvise and create new arrangements and possibly choreography.

- Teacher performs
- All join on snap
- All join on stomp and snap
- Perform B section
- Practice stomp/clap/pat combination
- Put all together
- Perform in canon
- Switch to desk sounds (or other instruments)
- Canon with new instrumentation
- Small groups create new sections with existing rhythm creating new variations
- Perform as a rondo or other group form

Notes:

(How would I adapt this for my classroom? How would this work with the age group I teach? What would need to change? How does it fit my curriculum? What would I add or how could I extend it?)

Ram Ram – Indian

Indian classical dance and music are time honored traditions that takes years of practice to learn. For the purposes of the music class, we can take elements and concepts imbedded in the traditions and use them to create movement and music that helps the students engage in the music and culture of India in a way that is special and unique.

The dance style that we draw on today is South Indian Classical Dance. Our song is from the Marathi tradition which comes from Western India.

I have two separate reasons for using this song in my music class. I have a student whose father is Indian and it honors her heritage and allows her to be our “ambassador” of Indian culture. We also celebrate Diwali, the Indian festival of lights in October. Since we have many Indian students at our school, it is important to recognize the special holidays of all our students.

The second, and most important, reason for using this song is that it is perfect for my curriculum in teaching Do, Re, Mi for second graders as well as the concept of four beat patterns. I use the lesson in Kindergarten as a movement exploration and “Dalcroze type story telling”. First graders clap the rhythm of the song through stick notation before singing it. I use the lesson in third grade to practice more extensive instrumentation and small group choreography. This lesson with 4th graders works on reviewing B, A and G on recorder as well as all the afore mentioned concepts.

Warm-Up

Recorded music - exploration of the jungle (under and over – around and through.) Isolations with beat eyes/head/body half/hands *Mohenjo Daro, “Diwali” 1997*

Discussion and Storytelling

The story of Diwali, in many parts of India, is that King Ram has been living in exile for 14 years in the forest with his wife, Sita, the people of the village are calling Ram to come back to them and they are leading him back with lights. The deeper meaning of Diwali is the recognition of our own inner light – this is called “Atman.” This is the belief that there is something special beyond the physical body. With the realization of the “Atman” there is universal understanding, compassion and love for all beings. This is the reason for the festival of lights.

“The Celebration of Diwali is the most popular Hindu festival. It is celebrated in India and all over the world. The word “Diwali” means a row of lights. Diwali is a festival of lights and light means removal of darkness from our lives, through knowledge, friendship and unity.” – Debolina Ghosh – 4th grade

Diwali is celebrated with fireworks, lights, flowers, sharing of sweets, and worship. There are 5 days of Diwali although many Indian-Americans celebrate just the one day. This festival also marks the end of the harvest and hopes for a bountiful harvest in the coming year. For many, the celebration is the welcoming in of the Goddess Lakshmi – the goddess of wealth and prosperity.

Gesture

Using gesture as a means to tell information or a story – we can do that with the Indian hand gestures and we can also do that with solfege to learn the Marathi song, “Ram Ram.” Use hand gestures to echo phrases.

Another way I like to reinforce my curriculum while giving a flavor for Indian Mudras is the fingerings on recorder. Have the students show the fingering for B by pressing the index finger and thumb together. This looks very much like the second Mudra on the right. I have students choose between B, A and G fingerings to create their own Mudras.

A creative extension of this is asking the students to create Mudras based on the story they are telling.

This is symbolic in welcoming in relatives and guests to Diwali celebrations. This is also the welcoming in of wealth and prosperity for the New Year.

At Diwali, people decorate their houses with Diyas (lamps) and make beautiful chalk or grain designs at their houses. They hang garlands of marigolds or mango flowers on their doors. Most will go to temple to offer *puja* or worship. It has the feeling of a New Year’s celebration.



The ten most important mudrās

Song

Students learn the song through note or rote depending on their age group.

Ram Ram

coll. G. Kiester
arr: Webster

The musical score for 'Ram Ram' is written in 2/4 time and consists of six staves. The top staff is for Voice/Recorder, with lyrics: 'Ram, Ram, Ram, Ram, Si - ta Ram, Si - ta Ram.' The second staff is for Glockenspiel, which plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The third staff is for Finger Cymbals, which plays a simple rhythmic pattern of quarter notes and rests. The fourth staff is for Tambourine, which plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The fifth staff is for Frame Drum, which plays a rhythmic accompaniment of quarter notes. The sixth staff is for Xylophone, which plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The score is divided into four measures, each with a double bar line at the end.

Arrangement

- Begin with tambourine
- Add drum
- Add Bass Xylophone
- Add Glockenspiel
- Add finger cymbal when song begins
- Sung or played on recorder.

Dance

Body Part Isolation Dance is created by the whole group.

- What body parts are used? Make sure to include the eyes – this is an important part of Indian Classical dance.
- What is the sequence? Eyes/head/arms/torso/etc?
- What is the whole group shape? A circle? A scattered formation? Lines?

Raas – Northern Indian Stick Dance

Dance learned from Riya Jagettia

** Music – India bangra “Rass”*

This stick dance is popular at weddings and special events throughout India as well as in India communities here in America. Originally this dance was done with Indian classical music and was considered the dance devoted to Krishna. The sticks represent swords. Traditionally this dance is done in circle formation, but here in the United States it is often danced in two contra lines.

Riya Jagettia, my fourth grade Indian student, informed me that many times this dance will be choreographed after the initial folk elements are performed which therefore gives us permission to adapt the dance with our own folk elements – try using other folkdance formations like casting off, solo/ensemble moments, fancy stick work etc. This dance is a great way to discuss form in music/dance. Create your own form in your classroom.

*Dance learned from Riya Jagettia – 4th grade student at Hathaway Brown School * Music – India bangra “Rass”*

- Students each have two sticks
- Face teacher to learn sequence
- Begin with stick hit down on right side with weight transfer to back right foot (1)
- Transfer weight to center and sticks point in parallel up to the right in the air (1)
- Sticks point in parallel to the left (1)
- Stick repeat the back hit on right side (1)
- One full turn with right stick up and say “good-bye”
- Practice with the music
- Find a partner – face partner and do the same sequence, but when sticks go up to the right and left, they tap the partners’ sticks in a tic-tac-toe pattern – when you turn, your right sticks hit together
- Practice this a few times so all are comfortable with the pattern
- Practice with the music
- Bring partners into a contra line
- Practice with all in two lines
- Add in the mixer – when you turn you move down two people
- Practice the turn in isolation
- Put all together with the music

Ram and Sita – a story of Diwali from India –

Retold by Laura Webster

There once was a very powerful and handsome prince named Ram. He fell in love and married princess Sita.

(Composed group dance with Ram Ram Song)

Ram's wicked stepmother wasn't happy – she sent them away to live in the dark and dangerous forest.

(Recorded traveling music – improvised movement with Over/Under/Around and Through)

One day while Ram was out hunting, an old beggar man approached Sita. “Please just a little rice?” Sita was too soft hearted, as she reached out to help the man, he magically transformed into the evil demon king, Ravana and he whisked her away to his castle.

“Come here and talk to me!”

“Oh, hello.”

“Please just a little rice?”

“I don't know.”

“Won't you help a begger man?”

“I should go!”

“I've got you now Sita!”

“help me Ram – OHHH!”

When Ram found out that his lovely Sita had been stolen away, he called upon Hanuman, the monkey king of the sky, to help him. Hanuman called on all his monkey subjects to help Ram build a bridge of stones across the ocean to the castle of evil King Ravana.

When Ram got to the castle an epic battle began.

(STOMP piece with Relationship dance)

Ram finally defeated King Ravana with his magic bow and arrow. As Ram and Sita returned to their village on the back of the flying Hanuman, they saw below the lights of the people guiding them home. Everyone rejoiced because good triumphed over evil.

(Dandiya Raas dance)

Questions

- How does this relate to bringing in cultures in a curricular way to the classroom teacher?
- What are some concerns we have in approaching families about their traditions?
- How do we check for authenticity?
- How do we explore these cultures in an expert way without claiming to be an expert in that culture?
- If we have many traditions, ethnicities to choose from, how do we choose which cultures to do?
- If we have very few children with different ethnic backgrounds, how do we bring those cultures to our classrooms in effective ways?
- How could I adapt this for my classroom?

References

Keetman, Gunild, *Rythmiche Ubung* pg.22 #75 Schott Publishing 1970

Longden, Sanna, *Dances of the 7 Continents: for Kids and Teachers, Volume Two*,
“Hoe Ana” – accompanying CD track #8. 2007

Song for jungle traveling music:

Mohenjo Daro, “Diwali” 1997

Song for Raas dance:

(the one we used is obscure, I’ve tried many times to find it, but the one I’m listing works very well and can be found on itunes.)

Pamela Jain (SoorMandir, Surmandir), *Radha Govalani Na Ghar*, [album title – “Gopi (Non Stop Raas)”]

Guber, Tara and Kalish, Leah, “Yoga Pretzels: 50 Fun Yoga Activities for Kids and Grownups” Barefoot Books 2005