

THE ESSENCE OF MEXICO

Mixteco Ballet Folklórico

Grades: 1-12

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Travel south of the border with Mixteco Ballet Folklórico! The group presents dances from the Northern state of Nuevo Leon, which were first brought to Mexico from European countries such as Germany, Austria, Poland and Czechoslovakia. In the state of Veracruz, the “Zapateados”, or footwork, are very intricate and reminiscent of the Flamenco dances from Spain. The group’s final numbers are from the state of Jalisco, where the Mariachi music is believed to have originated. The dynamic sounds of trumpets, violins and guitars come alive, as the dancers make their grand entrance. Next, the Mexican cowboys known as “Charros” dance their way onto the stage, with their wide brimmed “sombreros”. In closing the show, the group performs their final number, “The Jarabe Tapatio”, or better known around the world as The Mexican Hat Dance. ¡Viva México!

TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) & National Dance Standards – Gr 1-5 :

Gr	Lang.Arts / Rdg.	Soc.Studies	Dance	The Student Will: * Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work in dance. * Develop knowledge and execution of technical dance skills and a variety of dance genres and styles through performing. * Relate artistic dance ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding. * Demonstrate an understanding of cultural, historical, and artistic diversity as communicated through dance. * Understand and use new vocabulary correctly. * Write stories and poems to express their ideas and feelings. * Work productively with others in teams. * Identify customs, celebrations, and traditions of various cultural groups and understand both their contributions to society and the similarities and differences within and among cultures. * Research information using a variety of resources and create a written, oral or visual presentation.
1	1.6, 1.18, 1.24, 1.25,1.26,1.29	1.15, 1.17	Std. 1,11	
2	2.5, 2.18, 2.25,2.26, 2.27,2.30	2.16, 2.18	Std. 1,11	
3	3.4, 3.18, 3.26,3.27,3.28, 3.31	3.13, 3.17	Std. 1,11	
4	4.2, 4.16, 4.24,4.25,4.26, 4.29	4.19, 4.21	Std. 1,11	
5	5.2, 5.16, 5.24,5.25,5.26, 5.29	5.22, 5.24	Std. 1,11	
MS	6.2, 6.15, 6.23,6.24,6.25, 6.28	6.18, 6.22	1.3, 1.4	
	7.2, 7.15, 7.23, 7.24, 7.28	7.19, 7.22	2.3, 2.4	
	8.2, 8.15, 8.23, 8.24, 8.28	8.23,8.29,8.30	3.3, 3.4	
HS	I.1, I.14, I.21, I.22, I.26	USH.26 &.30	I.3, I.4	
	II.1, II.14, II.21, II.22, II.26	WH.30	II.3, II.4	

	III.1, III.14, III.21, III.22, III.26	WG.22	III.3, III.4	
	IV.1, I V.14, IV.21, IV.22, V.26		IV.3, IV.4	

STAAR (State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness):

Writing	Grades 4 & 7	Reporting Category 1	The Student Will: * Compose a variety of written texts with a clear central idea; coherent organization; sufficient development; and effective use of language and conventions. * Demonstrate an understanding of geographic and cultural influences on historical issues and events.
	English I, II, III	Reporting Category 4	
Social Studies	Grade 8	Reporting Category 2	
	US History	Reporting Category 2	
	World Geography	Reporting Category 3	
	World History	Reporting Category 3	

Academic Vocabulary:

Folkloric Dance are “dances of the people” that reflect the customs, traditions, beliefs, legends, and lifestyles of people in particular countries and regions. Folkloric Dance expresses the life and spirit of a people through its music and movement. It is both historical and current, preserving traditions of the past yet moving with the present times.

Tradition	Heritage	Mariachi
Culture	Sombrero	Charro
Choreography	Import	Export

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS:

Before the performance:

Find out what students already know about dances and music of Mexico. Discuss.

After the performance:

Discuss which forms of communication seemed to have had the biggest impact on you – body movement, colors, use of space, lighting, music? What were your feelings during the performance? How did the music impact your understanding of the performance?

Language Arts:

- Retell stories and other reading selections through dance.
- Create similes and metaphors to describe the sights and sounds of this performance to someone who hasn't seen it. Turn your figurative language into a poem. Think about the following:
 - ✓ What did the music sound like?
 - ✓ What did the stage set look like?
 - ✓ What did the costumes look like?
 - ✓ What did the lighting look like?
 - ✓ What kind(s) of movement did the performers use?
- Write a review of the performance. Like a critic who writes for a newspaper, your job is to review the performance for the public. Include important elements of reviews, such as the name of the theater and performance, your opinions about the choreography and dancing and your opinions about other artistic elements such as music, costumes, lighting and scenery.
- Talk about or write about your own identity and heritage. Describe yourself by various means, including family, friends, ancestry, hobbies, music, sports, and books. Do a body tracing – trace an outline of your body and create an identity self-portrait by drawing, painting and collaging within the image. Hang your body tracing in the classroom.

Math:

- In small groups, create a dance to represent how to solve a specific word problem.
- Research the pyramids in Mexico and look at pictures of the Mexican pyramids. Use sugar cubes and math to build a pyramid. Display it in your classroom.
- Take a road trip through Mexico. You will travel to Nueva Leon, Veracruz, and Jalisco. Work with a partner to plan a budget with an allocation of \$4,500 for a round-trip vacation to Mexico by car. Track your route on a map and estimate the distance you will travel. Calculate your gas mileage, food, hotel and entertainment costs. Create a Vacation Expense Tracking Log to track your spending. Record every imaginary expense and purchase you make. Share your project with the class.
- Do a cost comparison between living in the Houston area versus living in Mexico City. How much does food cost (on an average) for a week? Gasoline? An automobile? Rent? Entertainment? Clothing? What kind of resources does each family have? Put your data on a chart and discuss your findings in a small group.
- Create original word problems set in Mexico. Exchange problems with a partner and solve each other's problems. Show your work.

Social Studies:

- In small groups, choreograph a dance to recreate important events in history.
- How does Mixteco Ballet Folklórico help us know more about the people of Mexico? Make a poster that expresses your thoughts on this matter.
- Make a cultural map of your classroom. Where do members of your class come from? What are the linguistic, musical and dance traditions in all of these countries and regions.
- Many of the agricultural products and textiles that are sold in markets here were produced in Mexico. Likewise, the U.S. exports many products to them. Research what products come into the United States from Mexico and what we export to them. Search through your home to find imports from Mexico. Research the wages of workers who make these products. Discuss how this compares to the wages of a worker in the United States? Why do U.S. companies make their products in other countries? Why is the pay rate so much lower in other countries? Share your findings with the class.
- Consult a map to take an imaginary cross-country road trip through Mexico. Create a travel journal to keep track of the towns and cities you go through, the major highways you travel, the rivers and mountains you cross on your journey. Include sketches, drawings, and pictures. Design a creative cover for your journal. In a small group, share your travel journal.

Science:

- Use dance to express the scientific process.
- The Maya civilization's astronomical skills were so advanced that they could even predict solar eclipses. Read about and make a model of a solar eclipse. Present your model to the class and explain what happens during a solar eclipse.
- Find out more about Richard Tapia and his efforts to promote science and math careers for Mexican-American students. Discuss your findings.
- Read about the dinosaur fossils found in Mexico. Find illustrations and make a poster of these dinosaurs. Present your findings to the class.
- Read about the Mexican holiday "Day of the Dead" and look at images of the skeletons used in this celebration. Read about the importance of having bones and identify the different bones that you have in your body. Create a skeleton mobile and hang it in your classroom.
- Explore the different habitats in Mexico. Make a poster with illustrations of the habitats and display the poster in your classroom.

Resources:

Related Websites:

<http://mrnussbaum.com/world-nations/mexico/>
<http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/videos/nature/mexicanjumpingbeanmoth.html>
<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/budgeting-trip>
https://www.google.com/search?q=mayan+pyramids+in+mexico&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=zfp0U82TGlaSggbOgYKIDQ&sqi=2&ved=0CCgQsAQ&biw=812&bih=429&gws_rd=ssl
<http://www.history.com/topics/maya>
<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/world-heritage/chichen-itza/>
<http://www.aztec-history.com/aztec-empire.html>
<http://www.mariachi-plaza.com/mariachi-facts.htm>
<http://www.donquijote.org/culture/mexico/music/mariachis.asp>

Related SmartBoard Sites

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/hispanic/index.htm>
<http://exchange.smarttech.com/search.html?q=mexican%20culture>

ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Founded in 1992 by Jose Sada, Mixteco Ballet Folklórico promotes the rich traditions of Mexican Folkloric dance. Jose, along with co-director Rosalia Chapa, emphasizes strong mental and physical discipline while adding their unique style of choreography to the traditional folkloric dances. This dynamic group of dancers provides Houston area youth with cultural activities and increases artistic awareness in the community. Since its formation, Mixteco has had overwhelming success throughout Houston, as well as throughout the United States and abroad by performing at various events and dance competitions. Mixteco Ballet Folklórico is dedicated to the research, preservation and education of Mexican customs, traditions and culture through the art of music and dance.