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ED 680

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Lesson Plan: Exploring Rhythm and Pulse in Inupiat Dance Music

This lesson focuses on the music and dance of the Inupiat people and incorporates learning elements of rhythm, movement, and performance.

Age Level:

Appropriate for 6th grade music performance class, or 6th through 8th grade music appreciation class

Materials needed:

1 large frame drum

sheet music for traditional Inupiat song(s) (repertoire of songs for this lesson drawn from *Inupiat Dance Songs* by Tupou L. Pulu, a book of traditional dance songs compiled in Point Hope, AK)

Technology:

Will need access to computers and television screen to watch videos of Inupiat performing groups

Duration:

1-5 class periods

National Association for Music Education Standards Addressed:

- Standard MU:Pr5.3.E.5a
 - Novice will use self-reflection and peer feedback to refine individual and ensemble performances of a varied repertoire of music
- Standard MU:Pr6.1.E.5a
 - Novice will demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music
- Standard MU:Pr6.1.E.5b
 - Novice will demonstrate an awareness of the context of the music through prepared and improvised performances

Cultural Standards Addressed:

- Cultural Standard A – a culturally-responsive curriculum reinforces the integrity of the cultural knowledge that students bring with them.

- Section 1: a culturally-responsive curriculum recognizes that all knowledge is imbedded in a larger system of cultural beliefs, values and practices, each with its own integrity and interconnectedness
- Section 2: a culturally-responsive curriculum insures that students acquire not only the surface knowledge of their culture, but are also well grounded in the deeper aspects of the associated beliefs and practices;
- Section 3: a culturally-responsive curriculum incorporates contemporary adaptations along with the historical and traditional aspects of the local culture;
- Section 4: a culturally-responsive curriculum respects and validates knowledge that has been derived from a variety of cultural traditions;
- Section 5: a culturally-responsive curriculum provides opportunities for students to study all subjects starting from a base in the local knowledge system.
- Cultural Standard C – a culturally-responsive curriculum uses the local language and cultural knowledge as a foundation for the rest of the curriculum.
 - Section 3: a culturally-responsive curriculum incorporates language and cultural immersion experiences wherever in-depth cultural understanding is necessary.
 - Section 4: a culturally-responsive curriculum views all community members as potential teachers and all events in the community as potential learning opportunities.
 - Section 5: a culturally-responsive curriculum treats local cultural knowledge as a means to acquire the conventional curriculum content as outlined in state standards, as well as an end in itself.
 - Section 7: a culturally-responsive curriculum is sensitive to traditional cultural protocol, including role of spirituality, as it relates to appropriate uses of local knowledge.
- Cultural Standard D – a culturally-responsive curriculum fosters a complementary relationship across knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems.
 - Section 1: a culturally-responsive curriculum draws parallels between knowledge derived from oral tradition and that derived from books.

Essential Questions:

1. How are tempo and rhythm a part of your daily life?
2. How do music and dance reflect cultural values?
3. How do music and dance strengthen communities?

Goal:

Internalizing rhythm

Objectives:

1. To teach students fundamental musical concepts/skills of inner pulse and eurythmics through guided movement, kinesthetic learning, and performance
2. To teach students how to actively listen to a leader, to each other, and to the pulse of the music
3. To teach students the movements to a traditional Inupiaq dance
4. To teach students how to sing and play a traditional Inupiaq dance
5. To highlight the storytelling aspects of music
6. To show how music reveals the stories and cultural values of a people

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students should be able to move in time with a steady pulse
2. Students should be able to demonstrate a steady pulse while playing simple rhythms on a drum
3. Students should be able to move in time with the rhythm of a traditional Inupiaq song
4. Students should be able to demonstrate the correct movements to a traditional Inupiaq dance
5. Students should be able to sing and play (on a drum or another instrument) a traditional Inupiaq song

Assessment of Student Outcomes:

Students will be assessed and graded on the following criteria:

1. Participation in the activities
2. Ability to demonstrate correct dance moves, rhythms, and pitches of the song being learned
3. A performance of the traditional dance song learned in class time.

Description:

In this lesson, students will participate in a series of 6 sequential activities, some of which will be game-based and some of which will be performance-based. The lesson will meld learning basic music skills, such as inner pulse and eurythmics, with learning an Inupiaq traditional song and dance with the goal of performing it.

For the game elements of this lesson, one person will play a rhythm on a drum while the rest of the class listens and moves in time with the drumbeat. For the performative elements of this lesson, students will learn the notes, rhythms, movements, and cultural context of a traditional Inupiaq song and dance. The music teacher will lead the activities portion of the lesson, and an Elder or culture bearer will be invited to the classroom to teach the traditional Inupiaq dance song. With the blessing of the Elder or culture bearer, the music teacher will help the students rehearse the traditional song for a performance. Native students will be encouraged to mentor their peers and help with pronunciation, dance moves, and singing.

Intro/"Hook" Activity:

Have students watch the following YouTube video and answer the following explorative questions:

Excerpt from a performance at Kivgik 2013 in Barrow, Alaska

Performers: King Island and Little Diomedé Dancers

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PlxYH_ViZFA

Exploration Questions:

1. What types of instruments do you see in the video?
2. What are some of the animals that the dancers are portraying?
3. Describe some of the sounds you hear in the music.
4. Describe some of the body movements you see the dancers make.
5. What do you hear in the rhythm of the dance?
6. Describe some of the changes you hear happening in the rhythm.

7. What do you think these dances might be used for?

Here are five more videos to further explore the varied styles of Inupiaq drumming and dance and the different regions in which these dances are performed. Use these videos for further discussion, and feel free to pair them with the preceding exploration questions.

1. Performance at Point Hope Kivgiq, 1988

Performers: Point Hope Dancers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IHUX7GXYEA>

2. Performance at Alaska Federation of Natives Convention, 2013

Performers: Point Hope Dancers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wINonfze3qM>

3. "Raven Dance"

Performance at King Island, 1987

Performers: King Island Dancers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHqju02mYrl>

4. "Whaling Dance"

Performance at Barrow Kivgiq, 2011

Performers: Barrow Dancers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gytQknz6m4>

5. "Loon Dance"

Performance at Barrow Kivgiq, 2011

Performers: Barrow Dancers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9N6lm-03c>

The 6 sequential activities for the lesson are as follows:

1. The class will play a movement game with a drum. The teacher will be the leader for this round of the game. The teacher plays a rhythm on the drum, and the students must take one step per beat they hear on the drum. The leader can change the rhythm, increase the tempo, or decrease the tempo at any time. The students must stay with the drumbeat at all times.
2. The class will play a different version of the movement game with the drum. This time, each student will take a turn being the leader and playing the drum. On his or her turn, each student plays a rhythm on the drum, and the rest of the class must take one step per beat they hear on the drum. The leader can change the rhythm, increase the tempo, or decrease the tempo at any time. The rest of the class must stay with the drumbeat at all times.
3. The class will play a third version of the movement game with the drum, this time using the percussion rhythm of an Inupiaq song as the basis of the activity. The teacher will be the leader again for this round of the game. The teacher plays the rhythm of the percussion part on the drum, and the students must take one step per beat that they hear. The students' goal is to physically internalize the rhythm of the Inupiaq song.
4. The class will play a fourth version of the movement game with the drum. The teacher will be the leader. In this round, the teacher will play the melodic rhythm of the Inupiaq song on the drum. The students must take one step per beat that they hear. This will help the students to physically internalize the rhythm of the melody part.
5. The students will learn the body movements of the Inupiaq dance, which goes with the Inupiaq song to which they are being introduced. During this step, an Elder or culture bearer will be invited to teach the dance. Native students will have the opportunity to mentor their peers during this step. After students have successfully learned the dance movements, they will be asked to pair up with a buddy and mirror and critique each other's movements together as a way to reinforce and check the material they have just learned.
6. The students will learn to sing, play, and dance the Inupiaq song introduced earlier in the lesson. They will apply what they learned about eurythmics and inner pulse in the earlier movement/rhythm games to the song. Students will focus on pitch, rhythm, style, and performance in this step. An Elder or culture bearer will be invited to teach the dance song to the class. Then, students will rehearse the dance song and prepare for a performance. Peer mentoring will be encouraged as a way to build teamwork skills and reinforce material.

Possible Songs to Use in the Lesson:

(Material drawn from *Inupiat Dance Songs* by Tupou L. Pulu)

1. *Samaruna's Sayun* pg. 71-73
2. *The Children's Song* pg. 83-84
3. *Taliun* pg. 88-89
4. *Nalukataq Song* pg. 90-92

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