

Intercultural Dance Sample Lesson Plan

Title of Unit: Finding Inspiration in Mexican Folkloric Dances

Title of Lesson: Pre-Hispanic México-Aztec Danza de Concheros

Lesson Duration: 120 minutes

Unit Objectives targeted in this Lesson:

At the end of this unit, the students will:

- Reinforce and/or acquire knowledge of the history and development of the Aztec Danza de Concheros.
- Analyze the impact and influences of Mexican Folkloric Dances and other World Dance traditions in contemporary dance practices.
- Apply the concept/model of choreographic design of Mexican traditions into the reinforcement/acquisition of history and development of folkloric dances.
- Integrate Mexican Folk choreography, individual inspirational sources, and group collaboration into the creative process of choreography design.

Lesson Activities:

Pre-impact phase of this class include the following readings (10 minutes):

- Garner, S. (Fall, 2009). Aztec Dance, Transnational Movements: Conquest of a Different Sort. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 122(486), 414-437.
- Harris, M. (Spring, 1996). Moctezuma's daughter: The role of la malinche in Mesoamerican dance. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 109(432), 149-177
- Prokosch K. G. (1956). Dance relatives of mid-Europe and middle America: A venture in comparative choreology. *The Journal of American Folklore*, (69), 273, 286-298

Introduction (5 minutes):

As an introduction to the class, I open with discussion about the readings. Students will share their observations, connections, and ideas of the historical and social contexts of the readings in relationship to the generic concept of dance as a cultural expression (Baseline Assessment). We will write these ideas on the board and will create a list of relevant thoughts. Students will use their graphic organizer individually. (See attached assessment tools).

Presentation of theme (15 minutes):

At the lecture area, students will gather around whiteboard to observe power point presentation. I will introduce the Pre-Hispanic Mexican Concheros Dance from the Aztec Empire culture. I will incorporate Mosston 's command, reciprocal, and guided discovery teaching styles while keeping the midway model as presented by Smith-Autard.

This will facilitate the power point presentation that will recapitulate important background information, including the following aspects:

- The Aztec Empire dominated large parts of Mesoamerica from the 14th to 16th centuries.
- Spoke Nahuatl "people from Aztlan" language ""(mythological place for the Nahuatl-speaking culture of the time).
- Later adopted as the word to define the Mexica people.
- Often the term "Aztec" refers exclusively to the Mexica people of Tenochtitlan (now Mexico City), situated on an island in Lake Texcoco.
- From the 13th century, the Valley of Mexico was the heart of Aztec civilization: here the capital of the Aztec Triple Alliance, the city of Tenochtitlan, was built upon raised islets in Lake Texcoco.

- In 1521 Hernán Cortés, along with a large number of Nahuatl speaking indigenous allies, conquered Tenochtitlan and defeated the Aztec Triple Alliance under the leadership of Hueyi Tlatoani Moctezuma II.
- The Spanish founded the new settlement of Mexico City on the site of the ruined Aztec capital, from where they proceeded with the process of colonizing Central America.
- Archaeological evidence found in Templo Mayor in Mexico City; indigenous bark paper codices; eyewitness accounts by Spanish conquistadors such as Hernán Cortés and Bernal Díaz del Castillo; and the 16th and 17th century descriptions of Aztec culture and history written by Spanish clergymen and literate Aztecs in the Spanish or Nahuatl language.
- The Concheros dance, also known as the Chichimecas, Aztecas and Mexicas,
- Important traditional dance and ceremony with feathered costumes, indigenous dance steps and indigenous instruments such as drums.
- However, the name Concheros comes from a type of lute made with an armadillo shell, showing Spanish influence.
- The dance in its current form was the adaptation of the old “mitote” dance to Catholicism as a means of preserving some aspects of indigenous rite. The power point presentation will be followed by a video of the Ballet Folklórico “Estado de Mexico” in their Gala performance 2010 dancing *Águila blanca*, *Adoración al sol*, *La paloma*, and *Xochiquetzal*.

Guided Instruction (30 minutes):

For the practical section of the class I will ask the students to face the mirror in straight lines. I will teach the basic steps of *Danza de Concheros* or *Danza Azteca*. We will execute the movements and steps facing different fronts of the rooms and also in a circle.

Individual Activity (5 minutes):

I will lead and allow them to practice individually. I will circulate around the studio assessing their individual work. I will offer verbal and tactile feedback as appropriate.

Group Activity (25 minutes):

I will form small groups to facilitate collaboration and allow for rehearsal time and peer-assessment. Student will be able to gather in groups, circles, lines, and any other formation that facilitates their work. I will make reference to the video we just observed to engage them into locomotion of the movements. I will have the students try the whole material with music and will explore possible formations and transitions as a creative project.

Group Activity/Choreography Project (25 minutes):

Student will review whole material with music and will explore possible formations and transitions as a creative project.

Group Activity/Reflection (5 minutes):

As a learning community, we will reflect on all activities. Open up discussion for feedback, final thoughts and observations.

Formative Assessment will include video recording analysis of the choreographic projects as well as journal entries that reflect the students’ analysis of historic, social, religious, artistic components that influential for the development of Aztec Dance as we see/understand it nowadays. They will make reference to the reading and visual material.

Summative assessment will include formal and informal feedback, assessment tools attached and collaborative work.

Overview of Feedback for Practical Work:

Students will receive productive and encouraging verbal and tactile feedback based on the anatomical, reciprocal, and performance quality expectations. I will be mindful to offer positive verbal feedback before addressing a weakness. Constructive comments from the instructor as well as encouraging for supportive constructive peer-feedback will ensure the environment remains positive and educational (Koff, Lecture, 2013). Tactile feedback may

be necessary in certain instances in order to lead gentle physical corrections. Tactile feedback has been established as a possibility during our first sessions while reviewing course management plan.

Materials

- Dance studio: mirrors, sprung and marley floors, bars (mounted and portable),
- Electronics: sound system, auxiliary cables, CD, MP3, ipod, video camera, external flash drives.
- Music/live accompaniment: percussion instruments/drums.
- Lecture room/space: desks and/or tables with chairs, computer with internet access, projector, whiteboard, and books.
- Safety: CPR and First aid kits/ ice-packs.