

Rhythms of the Earth: Dances from Space

Learning Activity – Celebrating Diversity from Space Association of Space Explorers

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Description

Description: “Rhythms of the Earth: Dances from Space” will be an interactive, educational dance activity where students learn regional dances inspired by video footage of Earth captured from the International Space Station (ISS). The activity aligns regional dances with video footage of corresponding geographical locations as seen from space. This program offers students a unique experience to connect with cultures worldwide through movement and awareness, fostering a sense of global unity and appreciation for Earth’s diversity.

Mission

Mission: To cultivate a global perspective in students by using dance and mindfulness to celebrate cultural diversity, connect with Earth’s landscapes, and experience the world from space. This activity encourages students to appreciate and respect different cultures through the art of dance, fostering a shared identity as inhabitants of a connected planet.

Vision

Vision: “Rhythms of the Earth: Dances from Space” envisions a world where students see themselves as part of a global community, unified through shared human expressions like dance, and grounded in mindfulness by blending the beauty of Earth from space with regional-inspired dances.

Grade Level

Middle School (6-8)

Duration

Two 50-minute classes

Learning Goals

Promote Cultural Awareness: Introduce students to the dance, music, and cultural symbols of diverse regions worldwide.

Foster Global Unity: Help students recognize our planet as a shared home through visuals from the ISS, building a sense of unity and respect for diversity.

Encourage Mindful Movement: Integrate mindfulness exercises before and after each dance, helping students reflect on each region's unique qualities.

Inspire Environmental Stewardship: Create a deeper appreciation for Earth's beauty, encouraging students to consider how they can protect and respect their environment.

Objectives

- Students will research and present cultural and ecological aspects of a selected Earth region.
- Students will create and perform a dance inspired by the cultural traditions and natural habitats of the chosen region.
- Students will reflect on the interconnectedness of Earth's systems and cultural diversity.

NGSS Standards:

Performance Expectations:

- MS-ESS2-1: Develop a model to describe the cycling of Earth's materials and the flow of energy that drives this process.
- MS-LS2-5: Evaluate competing design solutions for maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Science and Engineering Practices:

- Developing and Using Models
- Engaging in Argument from Evidence

Disciplinary Core Ideas:

- ESS2.A: Earth's Materials and Systems
- LS2.C: Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience

Crosscutting Concepts:

- Patterns
- Stability and Change

Audience

The primary audience includes students of all ages who will engage in dance and movement activities inspired by cultural traditions worldwide. Teachers and facilitators will guide students through warm-up exercises, teach simple dance moves from each selected region, and incorporate mindful practices to deepen their connection to each dance and its cultural significance as they follow along videos recorded by the Emi Bahena Academia dance studio.

Materials:

- Access to the internet for viewing videos and conducting research
- Projector and screen
- Speakers for audio playback
- Art supplies for costume or prop creation (optional)
- Notebooks or journals for reflection

Lesson Activities:

Engage:

Begin by showing students a video segment from Earth Music Theater's "Your Playlist" that features a specific Earth region as seen from the International Space Station (ISS).

Facilitate a class discussion with questions such as:

What natural features did you observe in the video?

What do you know about the cultures inhabiting this region?

How might the environment influence the lifestyle and traditions of the people living there?

Explore:

Divide students into small groups and assign each group a different region featured in the video.

Instruct each group to conduct research on their assigned region, focusing on:

Key cultural facts, including traditional dances, music, and attire

Prominent natural habitats and ecosystems

How the environment influences cultural practices

Encourage groups to find and share examples of traditional dances from their region, noting movements, rhythms, and cultural significance.

Explain:

Have each group present their findings to the class, highlighting the relationship between the region's environment and its cultural expressions.

Discuss as a class how Earth's diverse environments contribute to a rich tapestry of cultural traditions, emphasizing the concept of biodiversity and cultural diversity.

Elaborate:

Guide each group to create a short dance sequence inspired by the traditional dances of their assigned region, incorporating elements that reflect the natural habitats and cultural practices they've researched.

Allow time for groups to rehearse their dances, considering aspects such as:

Movement quality and style

Spatial patterns

Use of props or costumes that symbolize regional characteristics

Facilitate a performance session where each group presents their dance to the class.

Evaluate:

After each performance, conduct a reflective discussion with questions like:

How did the dance movements represent the region's environment and culture?

What did you learn about the connection between Earth's systems and human cultures?

How can understanding diverse cultures and ecosystems contribute to global awareness and conservation efforts?

Assess students based on:

Depth of research and understanding of the region's cultural and ecological aspects

Creativity and accuracy in translating research into dance movements

Engagement in discussions and reflections

Extensions:

Invite local cultural dance groups to perform and conduct workshops with students.

Encourage students to create multimedia presentations combining their dance performances with visuals and information about the regions studied in a green screen.

Organize a school-wide "World Dance Day" where students showcase their dances and share insights about the regions they've explored.

Modifications:

Provide additional support and resources for students with limited research skills.

Adapt dance movements to accommodate students with physical disabilities, ensuring inclusivity.

Offer alternative assignments, such as creating visual art or music pieces inspired by the regions, for students uncomfortable with performing dance.