Name/Title: Mayim, Mayim – Israeli Folk Dance (September 2009)

Purpose of Event: Students will learn an authentic Israeli folk dance, phrases from the Hebrew language, along with the geography and climate of the country of Israel.

Suggested Grade Level: 3-8

Materials Needed: A scarf for students who do not like holding hands (The scarves should be held in the right hand.) Music can be purchased from: http://www.amazon.com/Maym-Mayim/dp/B000QLDCSA

Beginning dance formation: One large circle -- students will be holding hands or scarves

Description of Idea

View/Print this entire dance (PDF file)

Anticipatory Set (tell students this as an intro before teaching the dance: This dance was done in Israel in 1938 to celebrate the discovery of water. After a ten year search water was discovered on a kibbutz. A kibbutz is a rural communal settlement where people live and work together. A more detailed description of the kibbutz can be found at: www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Society_&_Culture/kibbutz.html

Steps of Dance:

1-8 Step R foot in front of L (1), Step L foot to side (2)
Step R foot in back of L (3), Step L foot to side (4)
Step R foot in front of L (5), Step L foot to side (6)
Step R foot in back of L (7), Step L foot to side (8)
1-8 Repeat all of the above 8 counts

1-8 Run 4 steps into center of circle RLRL (1-4) Students will raise arms as they run
As the class runs into the center of the circle raising their arms they will chant:

Hebrew Lyrics: Mayim, mayim, mayim, mayin
English Translation: Water, water, water, water

Run 4 steps backward, away from the center of the circle RLRL (5-8)
Students will lower arms to starting position as the run back.
As the class runs back from the center of the circle they will lower their arms and chant:
Hey mayim besason (be-sa-sone): Joyful water

1-8 Repeat the runs and the chants moving in and out of the circle

1-4 Entire circle will run to the right - stepping RLR and touching L foot while turning to face

the center of the circle.

On the four runs to the right the class will chant: Hey, hey, hey, hey

1-8 Hopping on R foot point L foot forward (1), hopping in L foot point R foot to the side (2) hopping on R foot point L foot forward (3), hopping in L foot point R foot to the side (4), hopping on R foot point L foot forward (5), hopping in L foot point R foot to the side (6), Hopping on R foot point L foot forward (7), jump with feet together (8)
1-8 Reverse all of the above, hopping on L foot and touching front and side with R foot.
Dancers will drop hands and clap each time the R foot is pointed forward. Remind students to hold on to the scarf in their right hands.

On the hops and points to the front and side the class will chant:

Mayim, mayim, mayim, mayim, mayim, water, water, water, water, water, water
Mayim, besason joyful

Students will join hands and begin the dance again. Continue to repeat the dance until the end of the song. Emphasize that the dance is lively and fast because it is a celebration!

View Israel Map here
View Israel and surrounding states here

Translation for the Hebrew phrases was taken from:

www.shira.net/music/lyrics/mayim-mayim.htm

Variations:

The dance can be taught initially without scarves or even holding hands. The scarves can be added as a way to keep the circle formation and add to the performance. As students learn the footwork for the opening 16 counts, ask them to add leaping motions to the combination by leaping on the front and back crosses.

Assessment Ideas:

Students can be asked to define each of the Hebrew terms that were presented. If target heart rate has been discussed, students can take their heart rates at the end of the dance and discuss the cardio-vascular benefits of the dance.

Teaching Suggestions:

Here is very interesting material that either the PE teacher or classroom teacher can share with the students or put this up on a bulletin board.

Cultural Information: Climate and animals of Israel: Israeli is a little smaller than the state of New Jersey, yet its landscape is quite varied! The climate of Israel is characterized by long, hot, dry summers and short, cool, rainy winters. January is the coldest month. It may even snow at the higher elevations of the central highlands, including Jerusalem! The rainfall is very sporadic. June and August are often rainless! It is very dry (2-12 inches of rain per year) in the southern part of the country called the Negev Desert. Negev in Hebrew means “south”. The animals in Israel are very interesting. There are such animals as the Nubian Ibex, the wild boar, striped hyena, and Arabian Oryx. Some of the animals are herbivores and some are carnivores.
Hebrew terms: Kibbutz – communal settlement, plural is kibbutzim, Mayim – water, Besason – joyful, Negev – south

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Submitted by **Brenda Goodwin** who teaches at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 8/31/2009**.

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