Name/Title: Tinikling - Philippine Bamboo Dance (December 2009)

Purpose of Event: Students will learn a dance that is frequently performed in the Philippines, as well as the legend and history surrounding the dance. They will also be introduced to the history of this country, along with the country's geography and languages.

Suggested Grade Level: 4-12

Materials Needed: 2 bamboo poles, wooden dowels or PVC piping, each 8-18 ft. long; two 2x4's cut 30 inches long, with tape marks placed on the blocks approximately 3" from each end -- This will provide a guide that will show the width to separate the poles. * Ideally, a set of poles and 2x4's should be provided for every four students. Authentic music for the dance can be found by searching for "music for tinikling" or try these web sites:

http://www.imeem.com/warburrton/music/dz6zkKD_/fiesta-filipina-tinikling/
http://www.giancruz.com/portfolio/imd110/city/musicvideos.html

Beginning dance formation: If enough tinikling sets are available, students should be put into groups of four and spread around the gym floor. If there are not enough sets of equipment for every four students, six-eight students can be put at a set of poles. A rotational order for dancing and moving the poles will need to be established.

Description of Idea

Click here for the full lesson (PDF)

Rhythm of the poles: 3 counts – in-out-out with the poles always maintaining contact with the boards

Ideally, those students who are moving the poles will need to sit on their knees on the floor as illustrated in the pictures. The rhythm created by moving the poles is begun with the poles together in the center of the boards. The poles are hit together for count 1. The poles are then separated and tapped wide on the boards 2x. These are counts 2 and 3. This 3 count movement continues throughout the dance. It can be cued by saying: "in-out-out." Allow the students who are manipulating the poles to practice without the dancers. Remember to cue and keep the rhythm of the poles steady and consistent.

It is important for the students who are creating the rhythm with the poles to be told to slide the poles along the boards when they are separating or closing them. Lifting the poles could catch the ankles of the dancers and trip them. Also caution students about holding the poles; remind them that fingers need to be on the outside of the poles. Failure to hold the poles properly could result in slammed fingers when the poles are brought back together.

** Dance Patterns:

Basic Step – ¾ Meter –Cue with the words: Out-in-in, out-in-in. Begin with R shoulder to the poles:
– Step on L foot (count 1)
– Leap with R foot then L foot to center of poles (counts 2-3)
– Leap to opposite side of poles with R foot (count 1)
– Leap to inside of poles with L,R (counts 2-3)
– Leap outside with L foot (count 1 – continue repeating step as described above)
This step can be reversed by beginning with the L shoulder to the poles.

Rocking Step – Facing poles
– Step on L foot (count 1)
– Leap R to center, Hop on R foot (counts 2-3)
– Leap L foot to opposite side outside of poles (count 1) Back is now to the poles
– Reverse movement placing R foot back between the poles and hop (counts 2-3)
– Leap on L foot back to original starting position (count 1 – continue repeating step as described above)

Jumps – Begin facing either end of the poles
– Jump and straddle poles (count 1)
– Jump 2x in center of pole (counts 2 & 3)
– Jump and straddle the poles (count 1 – continue repeating steps as describe above)

After students have practiced all the steps, ask them to perform the steps in a combination: 4 basic steps, 4 rocking steps, 4 jump steps. Repeat the entire sequence.
Variations: If students have gotten very good at the steps listed above ask them to take 2 sets of poles and boards and arrange them in a “tic-tac-toe” formation.

Each dancer will begin in a corner and attempt to move around the formation. Ask the students to figure out how to use the basic step so that all four dancers can move simultaneously around the poles. After the dancers have determined how to move around the poles, they will find it a challenge to get everyone moving together and dancing around the poles to get back to their home positions!

HINT: Dancers will do the basic step, making a ¼ turn on each step and moving around the poles!

Variations:

This activity can be made into a Christmas presentation by making ankle bells (jingle bells threaded on elastic) for each dancer and wrist bells for each person moving the poles. Look for a Christmas song with a ¾ time signature. (“Silver Bells” would work great and would make the tinikling activity a festive holiday celebration!)

Assessment Ideas:

Students can be assessed on both their ability to execute the steps properly and rhythmically move the poles. Older students can be asked to develop their own steps and put them together in a routine. A rubric can be set up that is based on rhythm, memory, creativity, and presentation of the routine. Encourage students to use the internet to watch performances done by the Philippine peoples and incorporate new steps into their own choreography.

Teaching Suggestions:

The Legend of Tinikling: In the 1500s, the natives lost control of their land and became caretakers of the land for the King of Spain. The people who worked too slowly would be punished. Their punishment was to stand between two bamboo poles cut from the grove. Sometimes, the sticks would have thorns jutting out from their segments. The poles were then clapped together to beat the native's feet. By jumping when the bamboo sticks were apart, the natives tried to escape this cruel form of punishment.

Origin of Tinikling: Tinikling originated in the Visayan Islands, on the Island of Leyte. Dancers imitated the tinikling birds' legendary grace and speed as they walked between grass stems, ran over tree branches, or dodged bamboo traps set by rice farmers.

The Dance Today: The legend of punishment later became the dance of today. Tinikling soon became a challenge, an art and a dance. It is performed on certain Sundays in the Philippines, and the movement of the sticks is now smooth and the clapping is gentle.

The Philippines: The Visayan Islands are an island group in the central Philippines, one of the four main groups of islands of the Philippines, lying in the Visayan Sea. Leyte and Samar—the largest of the Visayans—form the eastern edge of the group, shielding the remaining islands from Pacific storms. (See map)

Language of the Philippines: The official languages of the Philippines are English and Filipino. However, there are 175 individual languages listed for the Philippines. Of these 175 languages, four have no known speakers.

Weather of the Philippines: In the Pacific hurricanes are known as typhoons (native name is bagyo). These storms usually occur from June to October. There are generally three seasons in the Philippines. Winter is from December –February with dry, cool weather. Summer is from March-May with dry, hot weather. The rainy season is from June-November when there might be thunderstorms and typhoons.

References:

http://www.southtravels.com/asia/philippines/weather.html
http://www.bethel.edu/~shenkel/PhysicalActivities/Rhythms/Tinikling/TinikleIdeas.html
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYQOFJCcAZ4
http://www.mapsorama.com/physical-map-of-philippines/

Images:

Image 1 Image 2

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http://pecentral.com/images/dance/dance2.png

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http://pecentral.com/images/philippinesmap.png

Image 3

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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: 8/2/2012**.

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