

# Deepening Appreciation of Apache Traditional Dances through Performance-Based Activities

Writing a Research-Based Personal Essay

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## Context

Children are vital to the preservation of the community's culture. They are the next generation that will inherit its tradition and will also pass down to the next generations. Apparently, they are very essential in keeping the heart of a community. In other words, the people in the community have to be tenacious and consistent in teaching the young ones about their culture, tradition, language, including their dances that primarily speak about their identity in the society.

Traditional dances are an aspect of cultural identity. Apache is one of the tribes that have a vibrant culture, and notwithstanding of the many challenges the Apaches went through over time, they have bravely shown valor in preserving their culture. The web defines dance as "the movement of the body in a rhythmic way, usually to music and within a given space, for the purpose of expressing an idea or emotion, releasing energy, or simply taking delight in the movement itself." But for the Apaches, dance is a way of life.

Their traditional dances have been significant in their lives as both a common amusement and a solemn duty. Each dance tells a different story and serves a different purpose – in religious rituals, to guarantee success in hunting, harvesting, giving thanks, celebrating womanhood, living in harmony, among others. The traditional dances create a deep sense of pride.

Like the Apaches, Filipinos also enjoy a rich cultural heritage which includes a diverse collection of traditional dances. From the well-known national dance, the *Tinikling*, which pays homage to the movements of a much-loved bird called *tikling*, to dances that reflect elements of daily Philippine life, these folk dances all offer a glimpse into the history, culture, and identity of the country. For the young Apaches, it is important to cultivate upon them the value of their traditional dances that have been a part of their long history, their culture, and identity.

### *San Carlos Apache Reservation*

Some say 'Apache' is the most famous name of any Native American people in the Grand Canyon State. 'N'dee' is their name for themselves – meaning 'the People'. Encompassing 1.8 million acres, the San Carlos Apache Reservation spans Gila, Graham, and Pinal Counties – a landscape visitors find begins with panoramic views across saguaro-studded low desert, proceeding up through chaparral and high desert prairie – into thick forests of pine and fir trees above 6,000 feet.

The San Carlos Apache Reservation was established by executive order on November 9, 1871. Over one-third of the community's land is forested, which means covered with forest or reserved for growth of forests which is 175,000 acres, or wooded, area not classified as forest which is about 665,000 acres. Forest lands, with their jumbled topography, create a naturally superior habitat for many wildlife species causing elk, mule deer, turkeys, black bear and mountain lion to be at home on this reservation. A portion of the reservation is contiguous with the largest stand of ponderosa pines in the world.

The Apaches are descendent of the Athabascan family who migrated to the Southwest in the 10th century. Over time, many bands of Apache were relocated to the reservation from their traditional homelands, which once extended through Arizona and New Mexico.

### *San Carlos Unified School District*

The San Carlos Apache School District was established in 1965 and has around 1,550 students. It is one of the few districts in the state of Arizona that has a rich cultural heritage, which is essential to the way of life for the Apache.

The district lives with its mission to educate and empower students to become culturally responsive, global Nn'ee. Also, it is determined to be an effective student focused learning community graduating culturally confident citizens.

### *Rice Elementary School – Primary*

This is my second school year in Rice Elementary School. Last school year, I was the PE teacher in the Intermediate which caters 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students. This school year, I will teach PE in the Primary. My students are from Kindergarten to 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade. However, this curriculum unit is intended for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. The proponent of this curriculum unit intends to integrate English Language Arts, specifically writing.

Rice Elementary School – Primary envisions to empower students to achieve holistically and become influential citizens. It has a mission to make sure that every child will be effectively educated Academically, Culturally, Emotionally, and Socially through rigorous instruction, moving forward as 21st Century Nnee.

The school has a strong focus on cultural awareness and celebrates the rich cultural heritage of its students. It offers programs and activities that promote cultural understanding and appreciation through Apache language class and culture week celebration.

I was a teacher in the Philippines for eleven years. I taught different subjects in which Physical Education was among them. Last year, I decided to try my luck to be part of the Teach Exchange Program. The Teach Exchange Program is part of the Department of State's Bridge USA Programs specifically to promote the interchange of U.S. and foreign teachers and enhance mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries. The program aims exchange teachers to sharpen their professional skills and participate in cross-cultural activities in schools and communities, and they return home after the exchange to share their experiences and increased their knowledge of the United States and its educational system. Such exchanges enable foreign teachers like me to understand better the United States culture, society, and teaching practices at the primary and secondary levels, and enhance U.S. students' knowledge of foreign cultures, customs, and teaching approaches. I was fortunate to get hired in Rice Elementary School, San Carlos, AZ as PE teacher.

With all honesty, last school year I was accustomed to focusing more on sports activities, exercises, and did not incorporate Apache Traditional dances in teaching the special subject. Although, I considered modern dance as warm-up exercises, but I thought, it could have been beneficial to include Apache Traditional Dances even in a form of video presentation. Definitely, this school year it is going to be different.

## **Rationale**

In my home country, the Philippines, dance is said to be the highest symbolic form. It transcends language and is able to convey emotions, collective memory, and articulate a meaningful purpose. It is the fundamental expression of a complex message and intention. These become reasons why dance is evident in the curriculums starting from the elementary to college education.

I am not a professional dancer; however, I can dance if I need to. I started dancing when I was in the elementary. I could still remember, I participated in various school dance activities. During those times, I never experienced any feelings of shyness, after all, I was only a child at the time. I reckon, whenever I would make a mistake, I felt as though I would be forgiven. When I reached high school, there were occasions that I needed to dance again. I would say, I was able to dance a number of our traditional dances, especially during Filipino National Month Celebration which takes place annually. When I entered college, the only reason I danced was so that I could get through the Physical Education class. After that, I thought I would never dance again. But, that's not what happened.

I have been in the field of teaching for twelve wonderful years. In those years, I couldn't count in my fingers how many times I participated in dance activities – from the daily classroom delivery of learning instruction, during seminars and trainings, cultural celebrations, to Teachers' Day celebrations. I was able to dance not only our traditional dances, but even contemporary, Hawaiian, and the popular KPop dances.

In my country, it can't be denied that there is an existing problem when it comes to inculcating and cultivating among students the learning of traditional dances. With the emergence of dances from other countries, these dances have become popular to Filipinos across various generation, especially among children. From social media down to actual stage performances, these kinds of dances are still highly demanded. On the other hand, in the academe, observations show that because of modernization, students learn faster and better in modern and other form of dances (Buedron, 2017). Also, they are more fascinated to dance and watch popular dances than to perform traditional dances (Hernandez, n.d.). The growing of modern culture influence specifically modern hip-hop dances somehow causes the students to sometimes ignore and jeopardize the importance of Philippine's culture and tradition (Reyes et al., 2020).

In my first year in Rice Elementary School teaching PE, it seemed to me that most students were unreceptive when it comes to dancing. Some would stay in the corner just standing, others would move their hands for a second and stop after, there were few who would move their feet back and forth, side-to-side but would sit when the music changed its rhythm. I thought, they didn't like modern dance as exercise. I thought they never liked to dance at all. After that, I stopped.

When we had the Cultural Week Celebration, the school invited students from Cibecue and Alchesay High School to perform two of Apaches traditional dances, Crown Dance and War Dance. Before the performance, one of the teachers from Cibecue said that she herself would like to invite students from our school, Rice Elementary to perform in Cibecue. After being said that, the Rice Primary Principal at that time, Dr. Rea Gocklish, approached the former PE teacher, Jennifer P. Canete, who is a Filipino as well to come up with a dance group to perform Apaches

traditional dances in school activities. Ms. Canete told me about the desire, and I believe it would also be a good avenue for the kids to perform and express themselves, but most importantly to show appreciation and respect to their culture.

Before the performance of the students from Cibecue was about to end, the Rice students, from Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade were invited to dance along with them. Their homeroom teachers brought them on the side of the field where they could dance. I was completely ecstatic to see our students moving their feet back and forth, holding hands with each other, with their teacher in the middle, nodding their heads, and enthusiastic. When it seemed to me that they were passive in dancing, I realized that they were not. They only needed a little push of encouragement.

I, together with the other Filipino teachers performed three of our traditional dances as well. During the entire presentation, we received a positive and overwhelming applause and cheers from the students. After our dance, one of the students even told me that we danced well, and did a pretty good performance.

Like Filipino children, Rice students are also exposed to modern dances. It is then imperative upon the elders in the community and teachers to inculcate among the children the importance of traditional dances, of deepening their appreciation to their culture and identity.

This curriculum unit intends to deepen the understanding and appreciation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students of Rice Elementary School about their culture and identity through their traditional dances. There would be performance-based activities which include picture story, big book, and dance presentation. Also, since I am part of the J-1 Teacher Exchange Cultural Program, I would intend to have a student dialogue among Filipino and Apache students about their culture. A video of Filipino students dancing one of our traditional dances would be shown to the Apache students.

A positive sense of identity is developed when kids learn about their culture and traditions. They learn where they come from and what makes them unique. This knowledge gives them a sense of pride in who they are and helps them understand and appreciate the cultures and traditions of others (Anan, 2022). If Rice students can be appreciative of the traditional dances of the Filipinos, the more they become appreciative, respectful, and proud of their own.

## **Topic Summary**

Culture is the heart and soul of the citizens (Plato). Across various definitions of culture, certain common themes have emerged. These are:

- (i) that culture consists of the totality of learned behaviors of a people;
- (ii) that it is transmitted from generation to generation, that is, from elders to children;
- (iii) that people construct their own culture in order to give meaning to life by creating a world view that helps to explain their own reality;
- (iv) that it consists of a people's shared beliefs, values, ways of making things, customs, behaviors, traditions, and lifestyles;
- (v) that it offers a community of people with a set of social norms and moral values on how life should be lived;

- (vi) that, via a culture's art, music, dance, folklore, and other forms of creative expression, culture captures the soul, character, and essence of a people; and
- (vii) that culture is important to a group of people because it promotes a sense of kinship, belonging, and group identity.

It can be understood that culture is a way of life. Nietzsche gives his famous definition of culture in the book, *Untimely Meditation*: “Culture is, above all, unity of artistic style in all the expressions of the life of a people.” Dance is an artistic expression. This includes the cultural or traditional dances which people of a certain tribe or group identifies themselves. The tradition and norms which is important in every culture can be represent in a way of dancing, a graceful dance, colorful props and costumes, slow movements and fast that catches the attention of everyone. Cultural dancers can be a story teller, tells the story in every movements and sequence of their dance (Kadir, 2016).

This curriculum unit has three primary objectives, namely: (1) develop a deeper understanding and respect for Apache traditional dances through basic writing and speaking exercises; (2) introduce Filipino traditional dances among 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students through the use of video presentations; and (3) have the students’ experiences and understanding on Apache traditional dances be demonstrated through performance-based activities which include picture story, lapbook, bookmaker, “I can” book, and actual dance presentation.

Upon writing this curriculum unit, I have learned that from our Apache Language Teacher, Ms. Judy Shorten that the songs, chants used in performing their traditional dances, like the war dance are sacred that children could not just simply perform them. She said that the children or the youth needs to know more about their dance and music. When they perform them, they need to pray first.

Teaching cultural dance to children is a great way to increase their understanding of diverse people and places. Since most cultures have a dance that is unique, children can identify with that culture through movement. Children grow in their own self-awareness and expand cognitive learning at the same time. Finally, dance is a creative outlet that allows for individuality. Engaging children in cultural dance allows them to express themselves freely without fear of judgement from others. This is a hallmark of teaching diversity awareness (Meier, 2018.)

It is said that the history of the Apache people has left a cultural legacy that is extremely rich and extends back several centuries. Their traditional dances have a long and significant history, and they are performed in order to maintain a link to their ancestors. The significance of the dance was conveyed through each and every step and movement. Throughout their history, the Apache people have been subjected to a variety of challenges and incursions onto the areas that were traditionally theirs. The War Dance, which is one of their traditional dances, has become a metaphor for resiliency and perseverance in recent years. When faced with misfortune, Apache people faithfully turn to their traditions, searching for consolation and strength within the intricate motions and moving melodies of their traditional dance.

In this unit, there would only be three Apache traditional dances that would be focused on – Gaan dance, war dance, and the sunrise dance. These dances have great relevance to the culture of the Apaches.

The Gaan dance is a healing and renewal ceremony to protect the Apache from disease and their enemies. The performers are the embodiment of the Mountain Spirits (the Gaan); they become them. They wear hooded masks with elaborate painted crowns and wield painted wands during the dances. The Gaan dancers are a structured group, consisting of four members and a clown, who have specific roles in the dances. The leader is recognized as having the highest crown. The “clown” may wear the smallest crown, or in some way stand out as different in the group.

Gaan dancers perform a Gaan Dance on the final night of the Sunrise Dance ceremony. The Gaan dancers chant and keep beat with the same dance step as the girl, while in motion they lead the participant guests about the plaza. Eventually the girl follows the “clown” Gaan around the plaza and the guests fall in line after her. Upon returning to her original position, the Gaan surround the girl. The “clown” holds a mixture of ochre and corn pollen that is sprinkled or brushed over the girl by the other Gaan. Any remaining pollen may be emptied from the basket over her head and body. The Gaan bring a powerful spirituality to the ceremony as the Apache girl is transformed and attains womanhood.

Traditionally, the War Dance was a major event in itself that was performed after a battle to record the brave feats performed in battle, or to prepare for an upcoming battle. War dances, often using weapons and fighting movements, were used throughout history as a way of training young warriors and preparing them emotionally and spiritually for battle.

The use of video presentation will be used as a resource material in this curriculum unit. Aside from their actual experiences and encounters on the dances, videos of the traditional dances will be shown to the students. As I have mentioned that there will be an integration of ELA subject, the students will have writing and speaking activities. They will be writing in simple sentences and speak to the whole class their experiences and reflections on their traditional dances.

Donald Graves, an American author, and educator who specialized in the field of writing education, once stated, “Children want to write. They want to write on the first day they attend school. This is no accident. Before they went to school, they marked up walls, pavements, newspapers with crayons, chalk, pens, or pencils...anything that makes a mark.” Children as young as two years of age demonstrate their writing abilities in various ways, such as scribbling, drawing, and making letter-like formations. This is an early foray into communicating and expressing their feelings with others (Ivy Camps USA, 2022).

According to Lev Vygotsky, “By giving our students practice talking with others, we give them frames for thinking on their own.” The students will be given an avenue for them to express their thoughts to one another through think-pair-share, or to the whole class. Definitely the students have several experiences or have heard from their elders about the traditional dances and they could tell these pieces of information or even stories to their classmates.

The second primary objective is on introducing Filipino traditional dances among the students through video presentation. Specific countries like the Philippines have dances that identify with a region and its culture immediately. When you study dances as part of a culture, you are using different lenses to see each dance in its cultural context. The Philippines have traditional dances,

but they are actually evolving products of history, colonization, wars, and political and societal changes of the people who perform them.

In learning other cultures traditional dances, students need to consider learning the following:

- (1) Dances of aboriginals or first people.
- (2) Dances of early settlers who migrated to the area and brought their culture to their new home. In various historical eras, the dances may have colonial or postcolonial versions.
- (3) Blended dances created after wars changed a people and their culture. These dances are not created overnight. In an invaded country, the original people and the new arrivals may or may not embrace each other's cultures or dances. A cultural clash may occur, and the two groups may resist each other's influence. Blending outside influences into existing traditions takes place over time.
- (4) Newer variations of traditional dances that evolve from generation to generation. These dances absorb and blend personal, group, and societal trends that can change a dance and its performance.
- (5) Dances of tribes, first people, and ethnic groups who strive to keep their ancestral traditions alive in contemporary society. People preserve these dances to share their heritage with the young people of their community.

Participating, viewing, and learning about cultural dance and the roles it plays in societies leads to awareness and appreciation of other people and their cultural values. Experiencing a cultural dance means taking a look at the movement from the perspectives of both the cultural dancer and the requirements of the dance. The ideas you have learned about other dance forms so far or will encounter in this book may not apply to cultural dances. So, discard your preconception of cultural dances, and involve yourself in perceiving and experiencing the movement. Then you will be poised to find the meaning or essence of the dance and gain some insights about the dancers who perform it. Experiencing cultural dance requires you to observe through a different kind of dance lens; you must see as an ethnologist would, paying attention to the dance in the context of its home culture (Kassing, 2014).

Philippine folk dances incorporate influences from immigrants and conquerors and at the same time maintaining distinctly Filipino roots. Philippine folk dancing is a true reflection of daily life in the past centuries while enchanting modern audiences at the same time.

There is no exact date as to when dancing became part of our lives in the Philippines. The dances were performed during festivals and remembrances of past military victories, and are still performed during celebrations of birth and weddings in modern times. Many modern folk-dance festivals still feature ancient dances performed in colorful costumes used during the tribal period of the Philippines.

The Apache tribe has the war dance. The Philippines has a dance that is the same with the war dance, the *Idaw*. This dance has many names and different versions. It depicts the hunting ritual performed before a tribal war. The tribesmen would go out and look up and watch out for the scared *Idaw* bird which is said to lead the tribe to victory. Considering the Philippines as a very humid country, the traditional clothing was made to cover not much of the body. As one of the



cordillera dances, this Bontoc dance depicts a war ceremony performed by warriors of rival tribes. *Idaw*, meaning “bird” is celebrated because it was the omen bearer of war.

Another traditional dance is the *Maglalatik*. The *Maglalatik* is an indigenous dance from the Philippines in which coconut shell halves that are secured onto the dancer’s hands and on vests upon which are hung four or six more coconut shell halves. The dancers – all male – perform the dance by hitting one coconut shell with the other.

Originally performed in Biñan, Laguna as a mock-war dance that demonstrates a fight between the Moros and the Christians, this dance is also performed to pay tribute to the town’s patron saint, San Isidro Labrador. Moro dancers wear red trousers while the Christian dancers wear blue. All dancers are male with harnesses of coconut shells attached on their chests, backs, thighs, and hips. Apparently, I have performed this dance when I was younger.

Among all the traditional dances of the Philippines, *Tinikling* is the most popular and best known and is honored as the Philippine National Dance. Dancers imitate the *tikling* bird’s legendary grace and speed by skillfully maneuvering between large bamboo poles. The name *Tinikling* means “bamboo dance” in English.

Considered as one of the oldest dances from the Philippines, *Tinikling* originated in the island of Leyte in the Visayas. The bird was named *tikling* from which the *Tinikling* dance got its name. Because of creativity of the people, they imitate the Bird’s movement between branches and stems using bamboo poles.

Although there are still a lot of Filipino traditional dances, the curriculum unit would only introduce the three. There will be videos of Filipino children, students from my former school in the Philippines performing those dances. Allowing Apache students to see these dances, aside from those dances which we performed during the culture week celebration teach them to appreciate the dances, the people, and the culture in general. Likewise, it would teach them to appreciate their own dances and culture.

The last objective would be to have the students’ experiences and understanding on Apache traditional dances be demonstrated through performance-based activities which include picture story, lapbook, poster making, and actual dance presentation.

In doing these activities, otherwise known as guided practice, the ‘I do we do you do’ structured teaching method will be used. It is one strategy that is useful when introducing students to completely new material, method, technique, word or idea. It helps to scaffold the learning process, avoiding overloading student’s working memory. The framework involves moving through the stages of teacher modelling, guided practice, and independent practice. It allows teachers to guide students through the academic spectrum, supporting novice learners to develop a deeper level of understanding and engage with their own learning (Morris, 2023).

This guided practice strategy includes demonstration, prompt, and practice. The “I do” is a demonstration and a set of instructions from the teacher which will teach the students how to accomplish the tasks step-by-step. The teacher has a prominent role in the delivery of the content.

As the students acquire new information and skills, the responsibility of learning shifts from teacher-directed instruction to student-processing activities. This activity is also intended to help those students who need extra time to process and understand the concept. Students will simply be listening and watching the process being modeled to them.

“We do” are activities that will enrich the demonstration while the teacher and the learners perform tasks together. The teacher will continue to model, question, solicit responses from the learners and provide cues to the students. This step enables a deeper level of learning to enhance. Students can do more than just listen and watch the model of their learning. This part allows the teacher to guide and encourage students through the process being taught, without leaving them to conquer the “beast” of the new learning material all by themselves.

“You do” is a drill that will reinforce the mentioned focus behaviors; hence, students demonstrate what they’ve learned by performing the tasks independently. In the “you do” part, there will be less teacher-directed instruction, thus, students will rely on themselves to complete the learning task. This step is where students demonstrate their initial level of understanding of the new concept being taught through independent practice.

The “I Do, We Do, You Do” method is a simple, yet effective way to teach new concepts to students. When practiced consistently it will allow for a greater depth of understanding and confidence for students as they apply the concepts independently in the tasks and activities assigned to them, they may be in a form of writing, speaking, or the actual dance presentation itself.

## **Teaching Strategies**

Teaching strategies play an important role in classroom instruction. Without the use of a strategy, teachers would be aimlessly projecting information that doesn’t connect with learners or engage them. Strategies help learners participate, connect, and add excitement to the content being delivered. As students become familiar with the various strategies’ teachers use, some can even apply those strategies independently as they learn new material (Bouslog, 2019).

There would be four teaching strategies that would be used in this curriculum, namely: classroom technology, culturally responsive teaching, think-pair-share, and guided practice or the “I Do, We Do, You Do.”

### **(1) Classroom technology**

Technology is a great way to improve student engagement and get students excited for class, but it can be difficult to incorporate seamlessly into the classroom. There are an endless number of ways to make use technology to enhance lessons. One of these is the use of Video mini-lessons. TeacherTube offers an education-only version of YouTube, with videos on a number of core subjects. This makes the learning process more engaging, especially for visual learners.

By using video, teachers can keep students engaged in new and innovative ways. Studies have shown that video learning has positive outcomes on multiple levels, including increased motivation

and deeper learning, and can specifically impact students' ability to facilitate discussions and identify problems. Video learning is effective on both sides of the classroom; educators can use it to create time and space for active learning. Once a video is created, it can be reused and updated as needed, leaving more time in the classroom for live discussions and engagement with students. Video engages both the student and educator in a one-on-one relationship without ever being in the same room. A compelling 2016 study by the Online Learning Consortium found that video helped educators build and foster authentic relationships with students. The use of video also inspires thinking. Visual cues combined with audio play a huge role in the comprehension and retention of new material. Forrester Research analyst James McQuivey claims one minute of video equals approximately 1.8 million written words. Thus, when video is used in the classroom, students are forced to think critically when introduced to complex content (Umayam, 2023).

The use of video in this curriculum is pivotal considering that the students would watch traditional dances from the Philippines, particularly those that are performed by the students in my former school.

## (2) Culturally responsive teaching

Diverse classrooms are an amazing opportunity for teachers, but it can also be difficult to reach students with dramatically different backgrounds or learning styles. Culturally responsive teaching aims to link content with students' contemporary and ancestral cultures.

Research by Geneva Gay, Professor of Education at the University of Washington-Seattle and author of *Culturally Responsive Teaching*, shows that when teaching is tied to lived experiences for students, those experiences are more personally meaningful, appealing and learned more easily and thoroughly.

Dr. Christy Byrd, psychologist and Associate Professor at NC State University, has also published research which found that "elements of culturally relevant teaching were significantly associated with academic outcomes and ethnic-racial identity development."

To incorporate cultural diversity in the classroom, the teacher would start by getting to know the students — where do they come from? What do their parents or guardians do? What's their favorite after-school activity? Do they dance? Do they know their traditional dances? How do they express themselves?

The teacher presents a video to the students showcasing the importance of respecting their traditional dances, songs, and culture in general. For example, show a video of Apache Crown Dancers. Through this, the students are able to understand that before they perform the dance, it should start with a prayer. It is necessary for the students to know not only the dance itself, but also the ritual being done before the dance. From there, the teacher shall explain how a topic relates to different cultures, and make sure the classroom is a place where all students feel empowered. Encourage students to ask questions and share their experiences, either they are able to perform their traditional dance or have seen people perform them.

## (3) Guided Practice: "I Do, We Do, You Do"

Guided practice is a teaching practice pioneered by Barbara Rogoff that helps scaffold student learning through modeling and gradual release of responsibility to the student.

It involves three steps for practicing new skills in the classroom:

- (a) First, the teacher models how to do a task to the student.
- (b) Second, the student does the task with guidance from the teacher.
- (c) Third, the student practices the task independently.

These would be the teaching strategies that are most suited to the current level of knowledge of the students, the concept to be studied, and the stage in the learning journey of the students especially when it comes to traditional dances, including writing and speaking, and actual performance of the dances.

### **Classroom Activities**

In this curriculum unit, five classroom activities will be utilized. These classroom activities are considered since they are more likely appropriate to the objectives of the curriculum.

#### (1) Bookmaker

Turn your child's writing into books. Paste her drawings and writings on pieces of construction paper. For each book, make a cover out of heavier paper or cardboard, and add special art, a title, and her name as author. Punch holes in the pages and cover, and bind the book together with yarn or ribbon. In this case, the students will paste a picture of a traditional dance assigned on the day, color the picture, and write a one sentence about the picture or image.

#### (2) Make an "I can" book

As your child learns to write, she'll also be learning other new skills. Making an "I Can" book will let her practice writing skills and keep track of her other accomplishments. Staple together a bunch of blank sheets of paper to make a book. As your child reaches a new milestone, such as learning to tie her shoes or hit a baseball, she can draw a picture on a new page of the book. The students can then write, "I can dance," write a few sentences about what their encounters or experiences about traditional dances.

#### (3) Picture Story or Picture Prompt Writing

A picture is worth a thousand words, and that's certainly the case with visual writing prompts. They help alleviate the burden of not knowing where to start while providing creative flexibility for students to pen their own stories. Through guidance, the students could write simple sentences with a simple subject and verb. The benefit of visual writing prompts is that it gives students a place to start. Not only that, it encourages them to use more adjectives and write in more detailed sentences. Picture prompts give kids just enough information to act as a stress-free starting point, and from there, they can tell their own stories (Mitchell, 2021).

In this activity, the students will also be writing. There would be certain questions and they will answer those questions based on their feelings, experience, and thoughts about the pictures.

#### (4) Lapbook

A lapbook is an interactive collection of completed learning tasks related to a specific subject. It's called a lapbook because of its large size, and it can be easily placed on your lap. lapbooks act like a file folder. They help to organize different sections inside to make it easy to find specific information. This will help children remember and revise for upcoming assessments, or just to

recap what they have learnt. Lapbooks also make lovely mementos of learning projects, and they can be put together in many ways for a personalized touch.

A lapbook can be tailored to any subject that your child has learnt, and it is designed to include all the important facts in one place. The main purpose of a lapbook is to hold information on a topic that is then sectioned and categorized. You should allow your child to put together the book by finding the facts themselves and decorating it to make it bold and bright, this will overall entice them to learn and revise.

Lap booking is a great hands-on way for students to research and learn all about a specific topic! It's basically just a file folder filled with fun little "mini-books" that contain interesting information about your overall lapbook topic. They're hands-on and make any subject a little more fun! Lap booking is also one of my favorite ways to reinforce lessons that I've taught as we go through our curriculum. When my kids were younger I would let them choose any topic they wanted and we would do a special lapbook unit on that as kind of an "elective" if you will (Arndt, 2019).

The first four activities are more for writing. According to Anna Hall, "In the primary grades, research has described a strong link between process-oriented teaching practices (e.g., choice of topic, extended opportunities to write, and showcasing student work) and students' positive attitudes toward writing. In 2012, What Works Clearinghouse released an educator's practice guide entitled "Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers." It is recommended that teachers:

1. provide daily time for students to write,
2. teach students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes,
3. teach students to become fluent with handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing and word processing, and
4. create an engaged community of writers.
5. dance Presentation

At the end of this unit, the students are expected to perform one traditional dance. There would be guided practices of the select traditional dances of the Filipinos and Apaches. Since I am here for a cultural exchange program, I could ask my former students to perform one Filipino cultural dance. Their performance would be recorded through a video and it will be shown to the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. On the other hand, the Apache students are expected to perform a dance, too. The students are encouraged to dance or perform the dance along with a guest performer during the culture week celebration. The culture week celebration happens in the month of April, last quarter.

### **Student Assessment Plan**

This curriculum unit understands the necessity of conducting assessment as a process of ascertaining, understanding, and improving student learning. Furthermore, conducting of assessment pushes instruction by stressing the importance of critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection thus creating a quality learning environment. Many techniques may be used to assess student learning outcomes (Fletcher et.al., 2014). Aside from formative assessment which allows

the students to practice the skill or test their understanding or knowledge about the topic or concept given, the main technique of assessment to be used in this curriculum unit is performance-based.

### Formative Assessment

In this unit, the formative assessment techniques that will be utilized will be in a form of the following: (a) writing a one or two sentences identifying or reflecting to the topic which is mainly about dancing and cultural dances; (b) activating students as learning resources for one another by sharing their experiences either personal or seen from people about performing cultural dances; and (c) identifying their cultural dances and those from the Philippines.

### Performance-Based Assessment

Performance-based assessments are a system of learning and assessing a student's knowledge through a display of skills. Students are encouraged to demonstrate critical thinking as they work through the challenges of these tasks, wherein they are given the opportunity to show what they know aside from writing down facts. However, in this unit, which integrates ELA to Physical Education, writing activities are also substantial.

The students will be making craftworks that require them to write something. These craftworks are about their traditional dances. The students are going to write about their experiences or their feelings. It is going to be in a form of reflection or realization. With these performance-based tasks, the students are able to develop their writing skills as well, which includes vocabulary and spelling.

A dance presentation will be the final assessment of this curriculum unit. During the culture week, the students are encouraged to perform or dance along together with a guest performer in the school.

Utilizing performance-based learning as a teaching strategy will encourage student ownership of the subject matter. Students are involved in every step of the process. They are more engaged and motivated because they feel connected, at the same time are able to express themselves to learning and take pride in their work. It is pivotal that students find enjoyment in what they are doing.

### **Alignment with Standards**

The following are the standards that are aligned to the curriculum's objective. The use of the standards will be according to the content being discussed. However, one or more than one standard will be used in a content, considering that ELA is integrated. The learning standards are from the following sources: (a) Arizona Standards for K-12 Physical Education; (b) SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Educators) America; and (c) Arizona's English Language Arts Standards.

#### Arizona Standards for K-12 Physical Education

(S1.E4) Performs a teacher and/or student designed rhythmic activity with correct response to simple rhythms.

This is the learning standard wherein students are to perform a traditional dance. In this case, the students are expected to dance along with other students, or with a guest performer during the culture week celebration. This will be their final assessment.

(S5.ES) Identifies and discusses physical activities that provide enjoyment and self-expression.

In this learning standard, the students are expected to identify that dance and writing are activities that provide enjoyment and self-expression. Both allow them to express their thoughts, experiences, feelings, and realizations.

SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Educators) America

(S1.E11.2) Combines balances and transfers into a three-part sequence (i.e., dance, gymnastics).

The students are expected to identify and combine the steps and sequences in performing a dance.

(S2.E2.2) Combines shapes, levels and pathways into simple travel, dance and gymnastics sequences.

The students are expected to identify and combine the steps and sequences in performing a dance.

(S5.H3 Self-expression & Enjoyment) Selects and participates in physical activities or dance that meet the need for self-expression and enjoyment.

Dancing is an art form that has been used for centuries to express feelings, emotions, and stories. It's a unique form of communication that allows us to create our own identity and tap into a powerful source of energy that can help us heal, grow, and connect with others (Sparks, 2023). In this learning standard, the students will be able to express their feelings through performing a dance, and able to find enjoyment in it as well.

Arizona's English Language Arts Standards

(2.W.3) Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events; include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal event order and provide a sense of closure.

This is the learning standard to be used in most of the performance-based activities wherein students will be writing in one or two sentences their thoughts and feelings about their culture, dances and songs.

(2.W.4) With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Aside from the learning standard mentioned above, this too will be used for the other writing activities intended for this unit. The teacher will give a writing task as a form of formative assessment in which the students will write about something a picture of a dance of a performer of a dance and express their thoughts about it.

(2.SL.4) Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.

As part of the formative assessment, the student will be asked and utter their answers regarding their experiences, and what do they feel every time they see Apache dancers or they themselves perform an Apache traditional dance.

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Appendix A

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Direction: Color the picture and write something about it in one or two sentences.

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Appendix B

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Direction: Identify the dances shown in the pictures below. Tell something about it in one or two sentences.



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Identify your emotion/s when you see Apache dancers perform your traditional dances.



Happy



proud



sad

