

SHAMANISM AND KOREAN DANCE

GRADE LEVEL: Nine through ten

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SUBJECT: Interdisciplinary: English, Social Studies, Art or Physical Education

TIME REQUIRED: Five to six class periods (can be expanded)

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will work in groups.
2. Students will appreciate the cultural contribution of dance/movement.
3. Students will understand how dance can tell a story.
4. Students will practice critical reading skills.
5. Students will be able to assess each other's work.
6. Students will create an interdisciplinary piece (multiple intelligences).
7. Students will create an original mask.
8. Students will practice diary writing.

MATERIALS REQUIRED:

- set of dance photos
- introductory questionnaire about dance
- *Great Tales in Asian Art* (DVD) Kultur Video, 2006
- Moo-Sook Hahn, "Shaman's Daughter," in *Encounter: A Novel of Nineteenth Century Korea*, trans. O. Chang (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 105-126.
- pre-reading questions
- post-reading questions
- vocabulary practice quiz
- assessments for final project
- art supplies (paper, crayons, water colors)
- drum

BACKGROUND:

The English and/or Social Studies teacher should review the Korean social class structure as well as Confucianism and Buddhism (which is usually learned when studying China).

PROCEDURE

There are three sections or lessons. Each section can be taught independently or can be combined, leading to a final group performance project. If possible, involve the art teacher (mask making) and the physical education teacher (general movement exercises).

Lesson One:

1. Have students answer the introductory dance handout.
2. Have students share their responses in a general class discussion.
3. Place various dance photos around the room, creating a photo gallery effect. Have students walk around the room looking at each photo. Ask students to answer the following questions: Who are the people? Why do they dance? Who is a professional? How can you tell? What are their ages? What moods are evident by facial expressions, body positions, etc.?
4. Show the excerpt "Korean Masked Dance Drama" from *Great Tales in Asian Art*. Hand out film questions.

(Have the film available to students during lunch or after school time to be used as a reference source for the final project.)

Evaluation: Credit should be given for the completion of all handouts and participation in general class discussions.

Lesson Two:

1. Hand out pre-reading questions for "Shaman's Daughter." Have the students answer all questions, then get into groups of three to discuss their answers.
2. Hand out "Shaman's Daughter" for silent reading and annotation.
3. Place students in the same groups of three to answer the post-reading questions that will be handed in for a group grade.
4. Show a picture of a shaman dancer to the class. Ask what they remember about the shaman dancer in the video shown the previous day. Ask them what movements a shaman makes.

Evaluation: Individual credit given for completion of pre-reading questions; group credit given for completion of post-reading questions.

Lesson Three:

This section's time requirement depends on whether there are art and physical education teachers involved. Some projects—mask making and general movement exercises—could be accomplished in these classes instead of the English class.

1. Students are placed in groups of five.
2. Each group will create a five minute dance/movement piece. There will be four characters in each piece and one musician (drummer).
 - A.) Each piece must have a shaman.
 - B.) Selection of the other three characters are taken from the following: *yangban*, courtesan, old man, old woman, young girl, servant, concubine.

Evaluation: Each group will be assessed by the class and by the teachers involved using assessment handouts.

RESOURCES:

- *Great Tales in Asian Art* (DVD) Kultur Video, 2006
- Moo-Sook Hahn, "Shaman's Daughter," in *Encounter: A Novel of Nineteenth Century Korea*, trans. O. Chang (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 105-126.
- Korean Folk Village Catalog. <http://www.koreanfolk.co.kr>: National Folk Museum, Seoul, Korea.
- Tae-kon Kim, *Korean Shamanism: Muism* (Seoul: Jimoondang International, 1998).
- Korean performance photos (Sharon Shambourger)

INTRODUCTORY DANCE QUESTIONS:

Name _____

1. Why do people dance?
2. When do people dance?
3. When do you dance?
4. On what occasions do your family members dance?
5. How do you feel when you dance?
6. What kind of music do you dance to? Your parents?
7. What is the difference between dance and movement?
8. Have you ever taken dance lessons? If so, what type of dance?
9. What musical instrument would be easiest to play in order for the dancer to keep a steady beat when dancing or moving?

Chapter 4: "Shaman's Daughter" in *Encounter: A Novel of Nineteenth Century Korea* by Moo-Sook Hahn

Main Characters:

Young man- Ha-Sang
Innkeeper- Chom-soe
Little sick girl
Shaman- Man-nyon

Vocabulary:

emanate: to originate from
promiscuous: sex with many people
trepidation: state of fear; anxiety
repertoire: group of songs/plays one can perform
novice: inexperienced; beginner
benevolent: helpful; kindly
effigy: life-like model of a person

rancid: stale; bad smell, taste
martyr: one who suffers for their beliefs
banter: teasing in good nature
arduous: difficult; much effort
blasphemy: disrespect toward God
myriad: vast numbers
solicitous: anxious concern

POST READING QUESTIONS:

Name _____

1. Which two religions are mentioned?
2. What does Ha-Sang believe about shamanism?
3. What are the steps that Man-nyon must complete before she is a shaman?
4. What are the two types of shamans? What is the difference between the two?
5. If shamans were regarded with contempt, why did people still ask for their services?
6. Why is Man-nyon dissatisfied with being a shaman?
7. Pretend that you are Man-nyon. Write a diary entry describing one of your rituals and how you felt about it.

VOCABULARY PRACTICE QUIZ

Name _____

Match the word with the best definition. There is an extra definition.

- | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------------------------|
| 1. blasphemy | _____ | A. state of fear; anxiety |
| 2. martyr | _____ | B. large numbers |
| 3. rancid | _____ | C. originate from |
| 4. trepidation | _____ | D. disrespect toward God |
| 5. solicitous | _____ | E. joyful |
| 6. emanate | _____ | F. suffers for beliefs |
| 7. myriad | _____ | G. stale |
| | | H. anxious concern |

Fill in the blank. One word is not used. (arduous, promiscuous, banter, effigy, novice)

1. The nun was not ordained yet; she is a _____.
2. He was so unpopular that the villagers burned him in _____.
3. To pass the Regents exams is an _____ task.
4. The boys get together for small talk and friendly _____.

GREAT TALES IN ASIAN ART
"Korean Masked Dance Drama"

Name _____

Vocabulary

yangban: a ruling class of aristocrats, officials and landowners during the Chōsun dynasty (1392-1910) in Korea

courtesan: a prostitute with wealthy clients

concubine: a secondary wife

satire: irony or sarcasm used to attack or expose folly, vice or stupidity

Questions:

1. List five characters mentioned in the dances.
2. What are two themes used in the dances?
3. How old is the mask tradition?
4. What part of the body moves the most in these dances?
5. What is the monk's most precious possession?
6. Why are the masks burned at the end of the performance?

PRE-READING QUESTIONS:
("Shaman's Daughter")

Name _____

1. What would be an important issue to think about if you decided that you wanted to join a religious order to become a nun, priest, monk or minister?
2. Why do you think some people become priests, nuns or ministers?
3. What qualities does an individual have to have in order to be effective in that role?
4. When, if ever, do you need a person like those above?

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Name _____

Group names _____

Characters
(well-defined)

EXCELLENT

GOOD

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

Storyline
(clarity)

Masks
(appropriate
to character)

Movement
(appropriate
to the character's
personality)

Drum
(tempo/intensity
appropriate to
movement
and mood)

Background Information on Shamanism

Shamanism is a traditional, natural religious phenomenon in which the shaman, boasting the special skills of trance-possession, communicates with the supernatural world, and by this transcendental power fulfills all needs that arise in man's life, including the telling of fortunes.

Female shaman: *mudang*

Ritual: *kut*

Mudang's song: *muga*

The origin of all existence is chaos. Chaos is a place outside time and space; a world without form, limit or space; a world without life or death, continuing forever; without a beginning or an end; the origin of all humans, and the place to which the human soul goes after death is a continuing cycle. Implicit is the idea that there is a directing force—a God—who controls this chaos.

The cycle:

chaos>cosmos>chaos>cosmos>chaos

There are two types of shamans: charismatic (from northern and middle Korea) and hereditary (southern Korea). There are three types of performances. During a *kut*, a shaman is invited into a home and performs a ritual. A family ritual is similar to a *kut*, but more private. The third type, a village ritual, occurs when an entire community requests a shaman performance in order to assure protection from evil or a good harvest.

Korean Dance

There are four genres: court dance, ritual /religious dance, folk and modern

Court dance: toes lifted upward, foot moves in flat position, heel contacts floor first- heel, ball, toe order; bent knee-gravity is lower than normal standing position=body raised and lowered by bent knee (supports upper body; reflects the inner life of the dance)

Folk dance: improvisation; movement is suspended, balanced on one leg ecstatic power (secret inner joy of motion; not interested in external aspects but rather metaphysical joy)

Ritual/religious dance: In shamanic dance, characteristic shamans always spin to the left. Once the shaman has established contact with the spirit, she jumps repeatedly in one spot, performing the dance of the spirit.

Modern dance: varies; abstract and purely lyrical dancing styles; gloomy expressionist themes and highly dramatic, expressive movements; combined movements borrowed from the Western tradition and the spontaneous and contoured movements typical of Korean dance; etc.

http://www.indiana.edu/~easc/resources/korea_slides/dance_and_music/7-1.htm

