

Orlando's Presentation of Caribbean Dances

Grade Level: Junior High and High School.

Ideal Class Size: 30 to 45 students.

Goals/Objectives: - Introduce Caribbean percussion instruments.
- Teach how to dance.

Main Theme: The relationship between Caribbean dances and the percussion instruments.
Curriculum connection: American cultures, Dance and rhythm and Music Education.

Suggested classroom teacher preparation: Put on her/his dancing shoes.

Special room set up needs: Need a large space for dancing, a table to display the “percussion toys” and four chairs at the front of the class room, CD Boom box the students are preferred to sit in half circle.

Opening activity: Begin with a conga solo. Then introduce myself and explain the purpose of my visit and the activities that we will be doing.

Next activity: Introduce the Cha-Cha-Cha rhythm and the percussion instruments that are used to produce the rhythm. Explain the relationship between the dancer and the percussion instruments.

Next activity: Introduce the basic steps for the Cha-Cha-Cha and have all the students dance to a song with Cha-Cha-Cha rhythm.

Next activity: Introduce the Salsa rhythm and the percussion instruments that are used to produce the rhythm. Explain the relationship between the dancer and the percussion instruments.

Next activity: Introduce the basic steps for the Salsa and have all the students dance to a song with Salsa rhythm.

Next activity: Introduce the Bomba rhythm and the percussion instruments that are used to produce the rhythm. Explain the relationship between the dancer and the percussion instruments.

Next activity: The Bomba is a free-style dance. Students are asked to volunteer to show off their dance skills.

Next activity: Introduce the Merengue rhythm and the percussion instruments that are used to produce the rhythm. Explain the relationship between the dancer and the percussion instruments.

Closing activity: Introduce the basic steps for the Merengue and have all the students dance!

Testimonials by Teachers and Students

“Thank you so very much for making me feel included in every facet of your presentation. You have made a difference in these young people.”

- L. Wharton, Teacher

My most enjoyable presentation was the one presented by Mr. Orlando Cotto, who is from the island of Puerto Rico. He taught us dances from the Caribbean Islands. The first dance we did is very common in Central America, the Islands and the United States. We all know it as the “Cha-Cha-Cha.” This is a three-step dance that is very easy to learn. Next, we performed a dance called the “Salsa,” which is not too well known in North America, but it is performed widely in the tropical islands. The last dance, which was very enjoyable and interesting, was called the “Merengue.” The program was very interesting and educational. Learning about other cultures can expand one’s knowledge.

- Sierra Washington, Student