

# Activity Plan

<i>Title</i>	<b>You're Invited to a Ceili: Exploring Irish Dance</b>
<i>Subject</i>	Dance: Connections
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<i>Grade level</i>	Grades K-4
<i>Time duration</i>	60-120 mins
<i>Overview</i>	In this lesson students will explore the world of Irish dance. They will listen to Irish music, learn about ceilis, which are festive dance celebrations, view the intricate costumes worn by Irish dancers, and listen to an Irish poem. After learning the steps to an Irish reel, the class will stage a dance performance
<i>Objective</i>	Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• View a video of an Irish dance performance</li><li>• Locate Ireland on a world map</li><li>• Listen to audio clips of Irish dance music</li><li>• Interpret a poem about dance</li><li>• Learn about Irish dance costumes</li><li>• Create an original drawing to be used in a theatrical backdrop</li><li>• Learn the steps to an Irish reel</li><li>• Perform an Irish reel</li></ul>
<i>Materials</i>	<b>Materials</b> <b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Audio</b></li><li>• <b><a href="#">Bogs of Allen</a></b></li><li>• <b><a href="#">Rakes of Clonmel</a></b></li><li>• <b>Image</b></li></ul>

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- [Stolen Child](#)
- Printable
- [Irish And Scottish Dance](#)
- [Reel Dance Rubric](#)
- Slideshow
- [Irish Dance Costumes](#)
- Video
- [Culkin School](#)
- [Culkin School](#)

#### Required Technology

- 1 Computer per Classroom
- Internet Access
- Projector
- Speakers
- Video Camera

#### *Activities and procedures*

#### ENGAGE

1. Ask the class what they know about Ireland and Irish culture. Record their answers on the board.
2. Show your class where Ireland is located on a world map. You can use an atlas, a globe, or an online map.
3. Project and explore the [National Geographic's: Ireland People and Places](#). Scroll through the five photos and the 16 facts. Then click on “video” and stream the informational video about Ireland.
4. Using the *Engage* tab Resource Carousel above, show students three examples of Irish Dance by the Culkin School of Traditional Irish Dance. After the students have finished viewing the video, tell them that they are going to create a list of ideas and information about Irish dance. Write the words “Irish Dance” on the board. Ask the class to brainstorm words that describe the performance. Also ask students to list their observations of body form, hand movements or positions, leg or feet movement and/or position, along with any individual or group movements or patterns they observe. Record the students’ ideas to create the list. Tell the students that they are going to continue adding information to this list as they learn more about Irish dance.
5. Play the songs in the *Engage* tab of the Resource Carousel. ["Bogs of Allen"](#) and ["Rakes of Clonmel"](#) are traditional Irish dance songs.

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6. After the students have listened to the music, ask them to brainstorm words that describe the mood of the music, and how the music made them feel. Add their responses to the “Irish Dance” list.

7. Using the Resource Carousel above, show students [images of various Irish dance costumes](#).

8. Ask students to brainstorm words that describe the costumes. Add their responses to the “Irish Dance” list.

#### BUILD KNOWLEDGE

1. Display, in the *Build* tab of the Resource Carousel, the excerpt of W. B. Yeats' poem, "[The Stolen Child](#)." Read the poem aloud to your students, or have a student or students read it aloud.

2. After you are finished, ask the students to write down a list of images this poem evokes (*alternately, you may allow them to draw images evoked by the poem*). For example, you might ask them to think to describe how they imagine the Irish dancers might look, or what the author might mean by the phrase “...and chase the frothy bubbles.” Encourage your students to understand they are able to react to and interpret poetry as individuals and that there are no right or wrong answers.

#### APPLY

1. Tell the class that they are going to learn a dance called the Irish reel in order to stage a ceili, or festive dance celebration. Have the students view an actual Irish Reel Dance.

2. Visit the [Thinkquest Irish Dance](#) website. Give the students a copy of the directions from the website.

3. Go over the website directions with the students step by step. Use students to demonstrate the steps.

4. Provide a piece of music for the students to use. Use the songs in the Resource Carousel or choose your own.

5. Teach your students the dance steps using the website directions. Divide the students into appropriate groups and have them read and discuss the directions in their groups. They should begin to create their dance movements and patterns. directions and brainstorm how they would execute them. Provide sufficient time for them to learn and practice.

#### *Conclusions*

##### Teacher Background

Teachers should have a general understanding of few subjects before teaching the lessons:

- The teacher should have a good working knowledge of Ireland and [Irish](#) culture.
- Teachers should also know about traditional Irish dances.

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- Visit the Thinkquest Irish [Dance](#) website.

#### Prior Student Knowledge

Prior to the lesson, students should:

- Be familiar with Ireland
- Understand that many cultures express their identity through dance and other arts

#### REFLECT

1. When you feel the class is ready, stage a performance of the Irish reel dance. Invite others in the school to view the performance, and if possible, videotape it.

2. Have students write a reflection on their experience. You may choose to use the following writing prompts:

- What do you know now about Irish culture that you didn't know before?
- In what ways is Irish culture the same or different from ours?
- Do you think America should have a traditional dance? Why or why not? What would it be?

*Adaptations*

*Links and Websites*