

# STUDY GUIDE

DISCIPLINE:  
**DANCE**

ARTIST:  
**INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES**

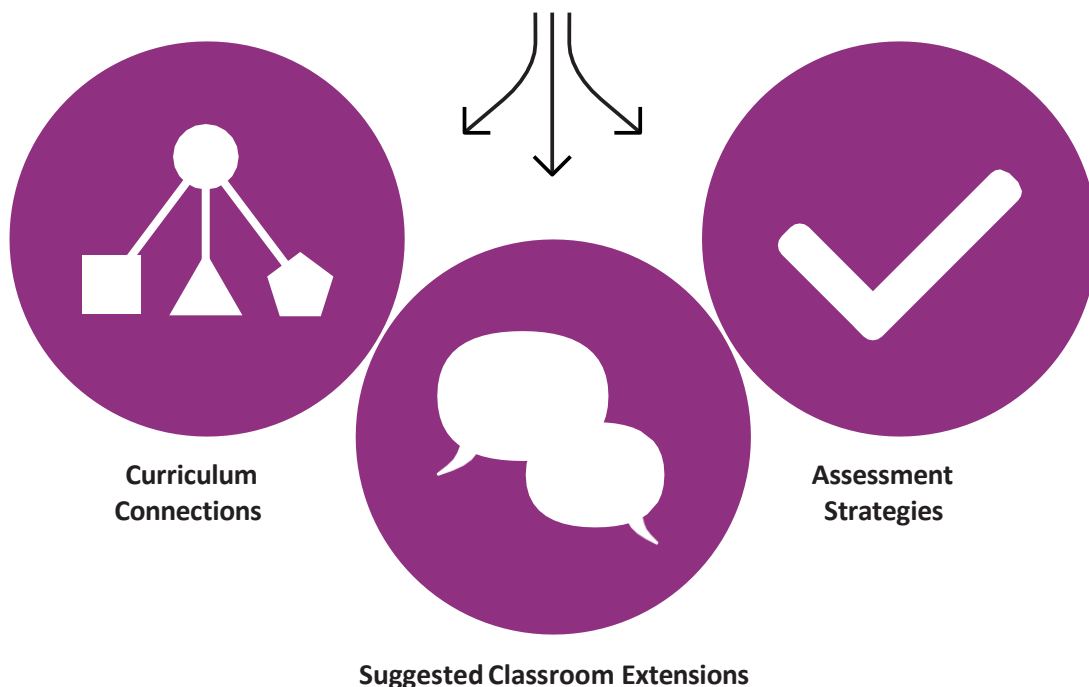


**The following package is provided as a supplemental resource to enhance and support the artist’s visit.**

It includes curricular connections, assessment strategies, and suggested classroom extensions. All materials are intended for use at the teacher’s discretion and may be adapted as necessary to suit the specific needs of the students.

## THIS STUDY GUIDE

Discipline / Artist Example:



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# STUDY GUIDE: DANCE

## VOD - HOOP DANCE

### Program Overview

**Artist Name:** Indigenous Experiences

**Artist Bio:** Indigenous Experiences offers authentic programs sharing the rich culture, teachings, and history of Canada's Indigenous Peoples from a First Nation perspective. Representing diverse native nations, the team highlights Indigenous cultures' evolution. Students engage in traditional activities and games, gaining meaningful insight into both historical and contemporary Indigenous life.

**Program Description:** The hoop represents the never-ending circle of life. It has no end or beginning and reminds all Nations that they are all connected. In this stunning contemporary hoop dance performance, participants will learn the history and meaning of the hoop dance, concluding with open discussion about First Nations culture with artists.

**Artistic Discipline:** Dance

**Recommended Grade Levels:** K - 12

**Session Logistics:** Online only

**Cultural Context:** 2SLGBTQIA+, Culturally Diverse, Indigenous, Men+, Person of Colour, Women+



Vocab bank/glossary: [Click here](#)



# VOD - HOOP DANCE

## Curriculum Connections

### Learning Themes:

- Express their responses to a variety of forms of drama, dance, music, and visual arts from various cultures and communities. (K)
- Strand B: Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing
  - Demonstrate an understanding of how societies present and past use or have used dance, and of how creating and viewing dance can benefit individuals, groups, and communities. (Grades 9-12)
- Strand C: Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts
  - Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of dance forms and styles from the past and present, and their social and/or community contexts. (Grades 1-8)
  - Demonstrate an understanding of the social, cultural, and historical origins and development of dance forms, including their influence on each other and on society. (Grades 9-12)

# VOD - HOOP DANCE

## Extend the Learning (Discussion Prompts)

Here are optional discussion prompts to extend the artist session in the classroom. These are recommended and are not mandatory. Please use what is best for your classroom. You can also find suggested activities in the additional resources package.

**K**

### Pre

- What do you think a hoop dance might look like?
- Have you ever seen a circle or round shape used in a game or dance?

### During

- What did you notice about how the dancers used the hoops?
- How did the dancers move with the hoops?
- What do you think the circle or hoop might symbolize?

### Post

- Can you draw the hoop dance or the circle?
- Why do you think the hoop dance is important to Indigenous people?

**GRADES  
1-3**

### Pre

- What do you know about dances from other cultures?
- What might a circle or hoop represent in a dance?
- How do you think dance helps people share their stories?

### During

- What shapes did you see in the hoop dance?
- How did the dancers use the hoops to tell a story?

### Post

- Why do you think the hoop has no beginning or end?
- How does the hoop dance show connection between people and nature?

**GRADES****4-6****Pre**

- What is symbolism, and how might a hoop symbolize something bigger?
- Why are circles important in many cultures?
- How can dance be used to express cultural identity?

**During**

- What story or message did the hoop dance share?
- How did the dancers' movements connect to the meaning of the hoop?

**Post**

- How does the hoop dance reflect Indigenous values like unity and connection?
- Why do you think the hoop dance has lasted as a tradition over many years?
- How can we show respect for Indigenous dances and stories?

**GRADES****7-8****Pre**

- What role does dance play in preserving Indigenous culture?
- How might the hoop as a circle symbolize Indigenous worldviews?
- What connections might the hoop dance have to teachings about life and community?

**During**

- Analyze how the performance uses rhythm, movement, and visual symbolism.
- What cultural teachings did the hoop dance communicate?

**Post**

- How can traditional performances like hoop dance contribute to reconciliation and cultural understanding?
- How does learning about hoop dance broaden your perspective on Indigenous cultures?



**GRADES**  
**9-12**

**Pre**

- What is the historical and contemporary significance of Indigenous dance forms like the hoop dance?
- How do symbols like the hoop contribute to cultural resilience?
- In what ways can Indigenous performances challenge mainstream narratives?

**During**

- How would you evaluate the storytelling techniques and aesthetics used in the hoop dance performance?
- What themes of identity, community, and spirituality did you notice in the dance?

**Post**

- In what ways can Indigenous arts like the hoop dance serve as acts of cultural preservation and activism?
- How can Indigenous performances help educate non-Indigenous audiences about history and culture?

# DANCE OVERVIEW

Dance is a powerful form of cultural expression that celebrates diversity, fosters connection, and supports healing. By exploring various dance forms, students build empathy, challenge stereotypes, and gain global awareness. Dance promotes physical literacy and mental well-being through movement, creativity, and emotional release.

**The creative and critical analysis process** helps students generate, refine, interpret movement, encourage collaboration, resilience, and emotional intelligence. When used to complement artist-led sessions, these frameworks guide students to become thoughtful creators, reflective learners, and active participants in building a more just and connected world.

Dance also supports cross-curricular learning. It brings stories to life in language arts, explores cultural traditions in social studies, and connects to science through anatomy and body mechanics. These interdisciplinary links highlight the dynamic role of dance in education and deepen student engagement across subjects.



# APPENDIX

## Vocabulary bank/glossary:

- **Hoop:** A circular object used in traditional Indigenous dances, symbolizing unity and the circle of life.
- **Symbolism:** The use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities beyond the literal meaning.
- **Tradition:** Customs and beliefs passed down through generations.
- **Indigenous:** The original peoples of a region, with unique cultures and histories.
- **Culture:** The beliefs, customs, and arts of a particular group of people.
- **Unity:** The state of being joined or connected as a whole.
- **Connection:** The relationship or bond between people or with the natural world.
- **Performance:** An artistic presentation like dance or music shown to an audience.
- **Reconciliation:** The process of building respectful relationships and understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

# Student Health and Well-Being

## How did today's activity make you feel (body and mind)?

- Choose a colour to describe that feeling. Use one word to describe how your energy changed after the activity.

## Mini-Activity: Feelings Freeze Frame (Tableau)

- Ask students to create a freeze-frame (tableau) that shows how they're feeling right after the activity.
- Then, they can:
  - Share it with a partner or small group
  - Draw their freeze-frame in a journal
  - Write or talk about what made them feel that way

## Additional Resources

- Assessment Guide
- Cultural Protocol/Sensitivity Guide
- Evaluation Document
- Resource Database for Further Learning