

STUDY GUIDE

DISCIPLINE:
DANCE

ARTIST:
STACEY CAN-TAMAKLOE

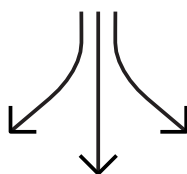


The following package is provided as a supplemental resource to enhance and support the artist’s visit.

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:



**Curriculum
Connections**



Suggested Classroom Extensions



**Assessment
Strategies**

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STUDY GUIDE: DANCE

GHANAIAN DANCE WORKSHOP

Program Overview

Artist Name: Stacey Can-Tamakloe

Artist Bio: Stacey Dela Can-Tamakloe is a professional dancer and international student from Ghana, holding a Master's in Music and Culture from Carleton University (2023). She explores gender roles in Ghanaian music and has coached Carleton's West African Rhythm Ensemble. Stacey also contributed as a Graduate Research Assistant for the "Reimagining the Global Music Ensemble" project in Canada.

Program Description: This captivating and multifaceted experience combines the joyous elements of Ghanaian dance, singing, and traditional games, creating an immersive cultural journey. Participants will learn the vibrant dance movements, traditional songs, and engaging games of Ghana, enabling them to embrace the rhythmic expressions, vocal harmonies, and interactive play that are integral to the country's rich cultural heritage. By encompassing these different elements, participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of Ghanaian culture and its expressive forms, fostering a deeper connection to the cultural traditions and enhancing the overall learning experience.

Artistic Discipline: Dance

Recommended Grade Levels: K - 12



Session Logistics: In person only

Cultural Context: Ghanaian Culture

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



GHANAIAN DANCE WORKSHOP

Curriculum Connections

Learning Themes:

- Strand A – Creating and Presenting
 - Learn foundational Ghanaian dance steps, posture, and body isolations.
 - Move in sync with traditional Ghanaian drum patterns and call-and-response rhythms.
 - Use facial expression, gesture, and energy to convey the celebratory or storytelling nature of the dance.
- Strand B – Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing
 - Identify what specific gestures, patterns, and formations represent in Ghanaian cultural contexts.
 - Recognize the social purpose of dance in engaging the community.
- Strand C: Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts
 - Learn that Ghanaian dances are rooted in social, ceremonial, and storytelling traditions from different ethnic groups.
 - Understand how dance became a symbol of national pride and unity after Ghana's independence.

GHANAIAAN DANCE WORKSHOP

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.

GRADES K-3

Pre

- What do you think will happen in a singing game?
- Have you ever sung with a group before?
- How do you think singing can be part of dancing?

During

- When do you know it's your turn to sing?
- How can we make our voices match each other?
- What do the drum sounds make you want to do?

Post

- Which song or chant was your favourite?
- How did it feel to sing with everyone at the same time?
- What do you remember most about the songs?

GRADES
4-6

Pre

- What do you think “call and response” means?
- Why might a community sing together?
- Where have you seen music and dance used together before?

During

- How does the leader guide the group’s singing?
- How does rhythm help you stay together as a group?
- What story or feeling do you think the song is sharing?

Post

- How is this style of singing different from ones you already know?
- What part of the workshop was most fun or challenging?
- What did you learn about Ghana through the songs?

GRADES
7-8

Pre

- How do you think music shapes a dance performance?
- Why might call-and-response be important in a community setting?
- How could singing affect group energy and focus?

During

- How does the drum pattern influence your singing and movement?
- What techniques help keep the group in sync?
- What meaning or cultural value do you think the song holds?

Post

- How is singing in unison different from call-and-response?
- How might these songs connect to other African or diaspora music?
- How could group singing be used to build teamwork in other settings?

GRADES
9-12

Pre

- What role has call-and-response played in African and diaspora music traditions?
- How can communal singing strengthen cultural identity?
- What challenges might arise in leading a group song?

During

- How do vocal phrasing, tone, and dynamics change the feel of the song?
- How do drum language and vocal melody interact?
- What cultural messages are carried through the lyrics or rhythms?

Post

- How might Ghanaian songs adapt or change in a diaspora context?
- What leadership and listening skills did this singing style require?
- How could this tradition be preserved and shared in contemporary settings?

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:

- **Call and Response:** Leader sings/chants, group answers.
- **Chant:** Short, rhythmic phrase, often repeated.
- **Drum Language:** Drumming patterns imitate spoken language tones/rhythms.
- **Ensemble:** Group of performers working together.
- **Improvisation:** Making music or movement on the spot.
- **Lead Singer / Leader:** Starts and guides the song or chant.
- **Lyrics:** Words of a song.
- **Melody:** Main tune of a song.
- **Oral Tradition:** Passing songs/stories by word of mouth.
- **Polyrhythm:** Two+ rhythms at the same time.
- **Refrain:** Repeated part of a song (chorus).
- **Tempo:** Speed of the music.
- **Tone Language:** Pitch changes alter word meaning; connects to drum language.
- **Verse:** Section of song with changing words.
- **Vocal Percussion:** Using the voice to make rhythmic, drum-like sounds.

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