“Cuban Culture is the result of intricate dialogues and cultural conversations among individuals from all over the planet. Dance and music are absolutely relevant.”

- Fernando Saez Carvajal, Founder/Executive Director of Malpaso Dance Company

Essential Question: How does our culture inform how we dance, tell stories, create art and make meaning in the world around us?

Lesson Outcomes:
Participants will be able to:
• Agree upon a clear definition of ‘culture’
• Recognize key technical elements, vocabulary and terminology used in both Salsa Suelta and contemporary concert dance
• Understand the process of transforming a conceptual idea into a movement idea
• Build community and bring ideas of community to life in the classroom
• Demonstrate and lead several call and response movement exercises that will prepare students for moving (and give physical examples of building community)
• Understand and articulate several qualities of Cuban Culture and of their own Culture
• Present background information on the key creative figures associated with Malpaso and “24 Hours and a Dog”, and be able to discuss the importance of their collaborative relationship.
• Guide their students through a meaningful movement experience to embody their own unique culture, working collaboratively to build a group piece
• Create a collaborative group movement study using gesture and tableaux and potentially text
• Articulate cross curricular connections

Key Vocabulary: parallel, plie, isolation, undulation, pelvis, Salsa, Son, clave, levels, resistance, partnering, mirroring, tableaux, improvisation, unison, cannon, articulation, intention, expression, gesture, focus, text, collaboration, retrograde
Essential Skills:
• Working together as a group, participants will develop a shared understanding of culture and articulate their unique cultural values.
• Working with improvisation individually, in partners and also in small groups, participants will learn to translate big ideas and movement and express emotion, physically.
• Learning basic Salsa Suelta, contemporary dance vocabulary and basic improvisational skills, participants will have tools to lead and build phrase work with students.

Chat & Chew - dinner discussion about Malpaso, about life in Cuba (two stories: about the Malecon and Taxi) and about the piece (24 hours and a dog)

Task: Call and response in Spanish - Building Community (Pie Pie Pie, Mi Cabeza, Pasa el movimiento, Salsa Suelta)

Criteria:
• Demonstrate focus and attention
• Demonstrate physical clarity
• Understand and practice call and response
• Perform movement that is unfamiliar
• Express willingness to move outside of current physical vocabulary

Task: (Individual) Movement Name Exploration: Create a short (30 seconds approx.) solo character study using name and personal sharing. Each participant shares and the group performs back their movement. Build a group phrase together

Criteria:
• Demonstrate bravery and creativity, moving beyond comfort zone
• Incorporate gesture, clear body positions and facial expressions
• Demonstrate emotional clarity
• Demonstrate strong focus and ability to repeat the phrase

Task: (Large Group) Cultural Values brainstorm - begin with ‘pick an image and share’, then move through group brainstorm of La Habana, Cuba / Los Angeles, CA / School example

Criteria:
• Share openly
• Demonstrate critical thinking
• Listen to the ideas and contributions of others
• Work democratically to find shared definition
• Work in partners to translate cultural values into physical gestures, tableaus, movements
Task: Small Group Collaboration: Create a short (1-2minute) small group movement phrase using themes/ideas from the Cultural Values brainstorm

Criteria:
- Work democratically
- Feature all performers
- Demonstrate emotional clarity
- Incorporate key movement elements such as gesture and tableaux
- Demonstrate understanding of more complex choreographic elements such as isolation, intention, retrograde and cannon

Assessment Strategies:
- Group discussion: What learning skills/processes are developed when integrating elements of dance and storytelling? Where could you see using (some of) these strategies in other areas of your teaching/work with students?
- Performance-based assessment, and self-assessment ongoing throughout all movement and group activities.

Curriculum Integration & Social-Personal Development:
- Common Core ELA Anchor Standards - Speaking & Listening 6:
  - Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate
  - Engaging in group and individual research activities centered on developing academic language and discipline-specific vocabulary
- Math - Pattern, Sequence
- Social-Personal - Personal Engagement, Focus, Self-awareness, Risk-taking, Cooperation, Adaptability, Self-discipline

VAPA: Artistic Perception, Aesthetic Valuing, Creative Expression, Applications and Connections

Quote about Malpaso’s “24 Hours and a Dog”:

"Inspired by the daily life of dancers in Havana, the work is a non-stop barrage of fluid movement, supported by admirable technique and an easy musicality."

— Kathleen Smith, NOWTORONTO