



Weaving the World into Flower: Stories from Chiapas, Mexico

School Assembly Performance

Program Overview

Weaving the World into Flower is a narrated, 45-minute children's performance that is a portal through which students delve into the rich fabric of Mayan culture including history, art, values, landscape, clothing, traditions, and people. It is appropriate for students in grades Kindergarten through 5th.

The performance focuses on the fundamental elements of dance: the body, time, space and energy. We will also demonstrate: character development through movement principles; Cultural exploration and abstraction of cultural practices; community transformation; taking traditional objects and transforming their meaning through performance; transcending expectations of dance experiences.

Throughout the performance students will be given opportunities to respond to questions posed by the performers. During the student participation sections, 8 students will be brought onto the stage to participate as additional rhythmic time keepers, using some of the cultural props as percussion instruments. At the end of the performance, students will be given the opportunity to ask questions of the performers.

A study guide for the program is provided in Spanish and in English, highlighting the range of curriculum tie-ins and opportunities to increase spatial awareness, learn movement techniques and foster creative thinking offered through this program.

Learning Outcomes

In *Weaving the World into Flower*, contemporary movement invites students to study the rich mixture of Chiapas' history, art, values, landscape, clothing, traditions, and people.

Through the dance they will:

- Learn about weaving, the ancient artistic tradition, which conserves and conveys fundamental aspects of Maya myth and history
- Experience an indigenous festival that reinforces Chiapas values
- Participate in a dynamic weaving of rhythms and sounds
- Recognize the symbolic purposes of the machete
- Hear the vivid story of Mother Moon, the ancestral weaver
- Create relationships to family and traditions
- Learn about the roles of girls and boys in Chiapas culture
- Understand how and why stories are passed along

Our overall goals for learning are for: The student to use oral and visual strategies to communicate; The student to describe how the historical or mythical figures display positive character traits or fairness, respect for others, respect for the environment, courage, equality, tolerance, perseverance, and commitment; The student to describe the cultural and geographic system associated with the historical or mythical figures.

Arts Based Objectives and Academic Outcomes:

This program addresses the topics and standards for Fine Arts and Social Studies as quantified in the Georgia Core Curriculum standards, at a grade-appropriate level; educational standards vary from state to state but often are applicable elsewhere. The strands involved are: Dance, Music, Theater Arts, Civics, Economics, History and Social Studies.

Study Guide Suggestions for Classroom Teachers (also available in Spanish)

Dance is a unique and valuable way of engaging in a range of academic and artistic learning experiences.

- As audience members, students will identify moving elements such as use of space, changes in time and qualities of energy.
- Through the structure and sequence of this dance, students will begin to understand how dances are made; how dancers discover and invent movement based on their own ideas and concepts from other sources.
- Core Performance Company will initiate a dialogue with students about ways to create and communicate meaning with movement.
- Students will be creatively engaged in audience participation and residency activities that will apply critical thinking skills. For example, compare and contrast 2 spatial pathways in the Fiesta scene.
- This dance specifically introduces students a living culture, different from our American culture.
- Concepts in Math, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts can be learned kinesthetically; for example movement and music offer a template for learning sequence, patterns, and integration of multiple components into one whole.

Teachers can conduct movement, writing, math and music projects to build on the assembly experience.

- Mathematical concepts can be applied to rhythm. Clap a sequence of sounds; based on the number of beats you performed what fraction would you create?
- Write your own story based on a dream you had. Create 3 shapes or images from your dream.
- Describe 3 relationships in the dance where someone touched, shared weight, or shared the same movement.
- Movement is a language too. Create a story with movement that has a beginning, middle and end.
- Build a movement phrase. Weave your movement phrase together with 2 of your classmates.