

Funga – The Welcome Dance with Nondi Wontanara

Grades 1 – 5

This lesson introduces students to the African dance, Funga, and challenges them to use information they learn about the purpose of the dance to create dance movements, visual art, and a story that reflects how the meaning of the dance can be applied to their own lives.

Materials: Your body and space to move, paper, pencil, drawing supplies (optional).

The Lesson:

Part 1: Funga Alafia Asé

Summary - Students are introduced to the meaning of the dance, the song, three movements of the dance, and the meaning of each movement.

Challenge - Create dance movements of your own that reflect something you would do to make a guest feel welcome in your home. Would you offer them a nice cool drink? Would you offer them a blanket if they were feeling cold? Would you play a board game with them? How would you show these actions using movement? Explain why you chose these movements.

Part 2

Summary - Introduce three more steps and their meanings.

Challenge - List the names of the dance steps we did in the correct sequence. Write how many times you did each dance movement, then add the total number of steps in the dance.

Part 3

Summary - Finalize the dance with the last few steps and their meanings.

Challenge 1 - Put all the movements together from parts 1-3, and perform it with a partner or a small group of people. Post a video of your performance.

Challenge 2 - Create a **Funga** story of your own. Imagine that there was a special event happening in which you needed to welcome a large group of people. Give this event a name, and tell what activities will be happening at this special event. Tell the things you would do to make your guests feel welcome. Draw a picture of this event. Write your story.

Connection to the Nevada Academic Content Standards for the Fine Arts

- **Creating:** Conceiving and developing new artistic work and ideas.
- **Connecting:** Relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context.

Dance Standards: DA:Cn10.4.1 - Relate the main idea and content in dance to one's own other experiences.

Nevada English Language Arts Standards: W.4.3 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Connection to Literacy:

This lesson connects with literacy through the challenge options that are outlined in the lesson. Each section of the lesson offers students the opportunity to utilize what they have learned and apply it in a manner that activates creative expression and growth in an academic context. All of these challenges combined enhance literacy through their writing and speaking components, recall, analysis, and synthesis of information, and finally the creation of an end product that calls for students' individual creative expression.

About the Artist

Nondi Wontanara

Nondi Wontanara Multi-Cultural Performing Arts Company is a performing arts group that was started in Las Vegas in March of 2015. The members of the group have been a part of the grassroots Las Vegas dance community for a combined total of 20 years, and have trained with master instructors from Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Ghana, and the Ivory Coast. These dance and drum enthusiasts came together to share with the world the beauty of traditional African cultures by singing, dancing, and drumming traditional rhythms from countries throughout the western region of Africa. Nondi Wontanara aims to educate the community and build an appreciation of the beautiful and rich traditions of African culture.

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Nevada Arts Council Teaching Artist Roster

The Nevada Arts Council Teaching Artist Roster is an online resource for schools, organizations and communities seeking to engage teaching artists. Roster artists are experienced in collaborating with schools and communities to conduct arts learning and cultural experiences in, through and about the arts.

Explore the roster at <https://www.nvartscouncil.org/rosters/teaching-artists/>