

CORNERSTONE 2020 RESOURCE

Israeli Dance *Specialty Track 2*

AUTHOR(S):	Erica Goldman
SUMMARY:	Israeli dances and methods for teaching them as well as how to utilize Israeli dance to teach about Israeli culture and Jewish values. - <i>Submitted by Erica Goldman</i>
TOPIC(S):	Dance-Movement, Community Building, Arts and Culture, Israel
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will learn Israeli dances (both classics and modern ones), tips on how to teach them, ideas on how Israeli dance can be used as a ritualistic bonding activity for a camp group, ideas on how Israeli dance can be used to teach aspects of Jewish and Israeli culture and history.
AUDIENCE:	Group size: 6-60 people
TIMING:	70-90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Israeli dance-handout2.docx (Lyrics to Boker, also included here)
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Sound system and music, plus handouts
SET-UP DETAILS:	Usually larger, non-carpeted indoor spaces, with open space to dance but some places to sit during discussion components as well

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

1. Simon Says Warm Up [Five Minutes]

Invite everyone to spread out in the room and face the leader for a quick game of Simon Says just like in Session One with the addition of “mayim” and “tzerchessia” as movements along with “touch your head” and “touch your toes” etc. Goals are the same as Session One and should be explicitly mentioned. After, leader will point out that the “Ritual Comfort” effect as discussed in Session One probably kicked in when participants walked in and understood that this day would start out the same way as day before.

2. Three Dances with a Theme [Fifteen Minutes]

Do Mayim Mayim, Or, and Shemesh (from Session One), and talk briefly about how the names of these dances represent something about where they come from: they mean “Water”, “Light”, and “Sun” and are reflective of the main concerns of people living in a desert. Leader will give short history of the dance Mayim Mayim: in 1937 on Kibbutz Na’an in then-Palestine/“Eretz Yisrael” (before the State of Israel) after a prolonged search for a source of water to sustain the community, a source was found and this dance was done in celebration. The movements of the mayim step mimics that of water, the jumping up and down is reflective of the joy of the discovery, and the words of the song are Biblical, so at that time (in 1937) the dance combined the emotions of that specific moment, the events

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of that moment, and reminded everyone of their roots of Judaism through the lyrics. Today it ties dancers to the history and emotions of the founding of the state of Israel as well as their Judaism. Leader should also explain about global nature of these (and all the other) Israeli dances; the same choreography is done to this music everywhere around the world that Israeli dancing is found, including Australia, Poland, Venezuela, etc. Even if someone didn't know how to speak any French or know any French people, if they show up to an Israeli dancing session in Paris on a Thursday night and if the dance leader played Mayim or Od Lo Ahavti Dai, everyone would be doing the same exact steps as the person learned at camp in the US, or in Israel, or anywhere else.

3. Teach all or part of challenging dance [Thirty Minutes]

Leader will teach all or parts of Boker, a dance from 1997 by Shmulik Gov-Ari. This dance is much more challenging than the previous ones, so it will take more time and may be split into parts. Leader will introduce terminology of "cha-cha-cha" if it hasn't already come up. (Boker is chosen in 2020 because of the Hitoreri Hitoreri! theme; in other contexts, Adama V'shamayim by Gadi Bitton is a good option.)

4. Do Debka Kafrit again and maybe Od Lo Ahavti Dai with variation [Five Minutes]

(Leader could substitute in other dances that are done holding hands.) Od Lo variation is to make smaller inner circle and bigger outer circle, if there are enough participants. Inner circle faces out, takes hands, and does the exact same dance as choreographed/learned previously (starting crossing right foot over left etc), just facing out. Outer circle faces in as normal, also doing same steps. Result is that inner circle rotates counter clockwise while outer circle rotates clockwise. On part two when dancers walk forward, instead of clapping they give the opposite person a high-five. Important: no other steps are modified in any way. (Afterward, leader will point out that for this to work, inside circle must be smaller than outside circle and will suggest ways to facilitate this with groups at camp.)

5. Arts as Reflection of Cultural Values - discussion [Twenty Minutes]

Leader will lead a discussion on how people design their societies to reflect what is important to them and their histories, and art of all kind reflects that as well. When it comes to social dancing or folk dancing, the way people interact is a physical *embodiment* of their values. In the folkdances of some European countries, for example, the men and women always have different steps; the men have "macho" showy steps with lots of clapping and boot-slapping while the women have dainty steps and use their skirts to make patterns. In English country dancing, all dances are done by couples and the woman's hand is always placed on top of the man's hand. Leader will ask what we know about the values of Israeli society given what we know about Israeli dancing, allowing participants to make some guesses and put forth some theories. Leader will include the following ideas in the discussion:

Many of the pioneers ("chalutzim") who built pre-state Israel lived on kibbutzes (communal settlements based around economic and social equality) and were strongly committed to ideals of socialism and equality. This is represented in the dances they made: the formation is the circle, a symbol of equality and a formation that allows everyone to participate the same way without some dancers getting to be in "special" positions closer to the front or the center. The hand-hold, learned in Session One, specifically embodies the equality value by not allowing anyone to dominate or be pushed out of the circle: everyone has one hand on top and one hand on the bottom, whether old or young or rich or poor or male or female, etc. The same idea applies to why everyone does the same steps.

Participants will be invited to share some ways their camp's culture reflects what is important to them: one camp might have their basketball courts and baseball fields right in the center of camp because they are very sports-oriented, another might point out that their dining room is huge because it's important for them that everyone in the entire camp eats meals together as a community, another might say that the only air-conditioned or carpeted room in their camp is where they hold services because it's important to them that everyone feels physically comfortable while praying, etc. These

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can be used as examples if participants are having trouble coming up with their own, but they should be given the time to think of some before too many examples are given by the leader.

6. Back to Dancing [Twenty Minutes]

Review/do the dance Or again, learned in Session One, being sure to point out connection between word and movement on “koach” (strength/power). Leader will finish teaching or will review Boker. (Leader should point out how dances get easier not just with practice but also with time off for the learning to settle in. Even though no one was thinking about the steps to Boker during the last half hour, suddenly it’s easier to do or to remember. If participants are not feeling this effect yet, leader will tell them they will feel it the next day.]

Leader will distribute the lyrics to Boker and make the connection to the Cornerstone theme. If there’s any extra time, do Bim Bam Bom (the mixer) again and any other dances the participants wish to repeat or review.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

These specific dances can be used with almost any size group of any age starting entering-fourth grade and up.

The conversation about cultural values expressed in arts (folkdance) is best with a group that has already done some Israeli dancing and already has the sense of the circle dynamic, holding hands equally etc, already, from another time and not from the same moment – then it’s a more interesting reveal of “*that’s why we do that!*”. It can also be adapted to teaching more about Israel by including lessons about what the name “Israel” means, why its flag (and those of other nations) looks the way it does (in this case, art materials for drawing flags should be given to campers when they are designing their own planets), why the national anthem is what it is and why. This can also be used as an introduction to a lesson or other activity about kibbutzim, teaching what they were and how they functioned, each one self-sufficient and everyone having a job to contribute to the well-being of the whole, etc.

Mayim Mayim (and/or the other nature-themed dances) can be used as an introduction to a lesson or activity about water conservation in modern Israel, or a lesson or activity about tree-planting in Israel.

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Israeli Dance, Session 2

BOKER

Yom rishon baboker ve'ata omer li,
Kama tov lehitorer kan letzidech.
Shemesh melatefet ben hatrisim u-
vli siba muchedet ba li lechayech

Kumi kumi mami, kach ata omer li
Numi numi od enayich atzumot
Veharadio mekashkesh bisfat
hakodesh
Al ha'omes sheben rishon leganot

Chorus:
Shir katan mitnagen baboker
As the day begins - shir muar.
Od daka chadashot
nekave sheze beseder
Good morning good morning

Tishmei hechlateti – kach ata omer li
Ani ve'at nos'im velo la'avoda
Ulai nivkok et hamiflas al haKineret
O bishvil shoko nitgalgel ad Yotveta

Chorus...

MORNING

Sunday morning and you tell me
how good it is to wake up beside you,
The sun fondles the blinds and -
with no special reason I feel like
smiling

Get up - get up darling you tell me,
sleep, sleep, your eyes are still closed,
And the radio chatters in the holy
language (Hebrew)
About the load of cars between places

Chorus:
A little song plays in the morning
as the day begins - a bright song
In a minute we'll hear the news,
Let's hope it will be good news -
Good morning good morning

Listen, you tell me, I have decided that
you and I are going but not to work
Maybe we'll check the level of the
water in the Sea of Galilee
Or for a small chocolate drink we'll roll
to Yotveta*

Chorus...

* Yotveta is a kibbutz in Israel's South next to Eilat and is very famous for its dairy products.

Lyrics and music by Achinoam Nini and Gil Dor
Sung by Achinoam Nini (Noa)
Israeli dance choreographed by Shmulik Gov-Ari