

CORNERSTONE 2021 RESOURCE

Israeli Dance *Specialty Track, session 3*

AUTHOR(S):	Erica Goldman
TOPIC (S)	<i>Dance and Movement, Israel Programming, Camp-wide/Large Group Programs</i>
SUMMARY	Israeli dances and methods for teaching them, as well as how to utilize Israeli dance to teach about Israeli culture and Jewish values
GOALS:	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:	Any group size (6 or more is best), age 11+
TIMING:	75 minutes
APPENDICES:	N/A
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Music: the dance cuts of any songs to be played, plus a method to play them (computer, bluetooth speaker, sounds system) and any other hardware needed to make that happen (playing music from an iphone on a speaker? Make sure the speaker is bluetooth enabled and/or that you have the correct wires to connect the devices, etc.) Water and cups!
SET-UP DETAILS:	Any large flat space. Best indoors on sprung floors (like a gym) but could be done anywhere there is room to spread out, a surface to dance on, and a sound system to handle the size of the space. Be sure participants have a place to put belongings (jackets, notebooks, bags, phones, whatever) out of the way so they are not in danger of being stepped on/broken or a distraction.

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05 - Warm Up: Name Game
- 00:05-00:15 - Tzaddik Katamar
- 00:15-00:30 - Culture of Israel
- 00:30-00:60 - Breakout room teaching
- 00:60-00:75 - Wrap-up and Review

SESSION OUTLINE:

- 00:00-00:05 - Warm Up: Name Game

Leader will invite participants to make up a movement to perform while saying their name. Leader will give some examples and then do one with her own name and tell everyone to repeat it (movement and name). Leader will invite someone else to do the same, and then have everyone try it, and then put both names/movements together in sequence.

Note: in person this should be done sitting in a circle. Over Zoom, leader should put order of names into the chat and invite participants to move the boxes on their screens around to match that order.

Leader will do this until everyone has done their name, stopping at various points to practice the whole sequence in order up to that point. Then everyone will do one whole round in slow motion and another round as quickly as possible. Leader will then put on a song and lead one more round without saying names but leading everyone in doing the full choreography to the rhythm of the song.

- 00:05-00:15 - Tzaddik Katamar

Leader will teach the dance Tzaddik Katamar, including the terminology of the step “double tzerchessia” and then do the dance with the recording of the music that starts slow and then speeds up. Leader will point out how increasing the speed can increase the excitement and how these dances build confidence by starting slow and only increasing gradually. Leader will point out how that was also done during the name game, and how putting different music to movements can change the feeling of the dance (as in doing the name game with saying the names vs. doing it to music with no names). Participants will be invited to brainstorm how they can use the idea of changing speed or music to change the emotion of an activity at camp. One example is making bunk clean-up time more fun by playing music and telling campers their movements have to match the speed and emotion of the song; counselors can then play one really fast and wild-sounding song (and allow campers to go a little crazy while cleaning) and then one really slow and melodic song (allowing them to clean up in slow-motion) etc.

- 00:15-00:30 - Culture of Israel

Review and dance Jaimalé. Then the leader will lead a conversation about the “basic steps” of Israeli dance, where they come from, and how they mirror Israeli society. Leader should elicit the names of these steps from participants (steps they have learned already and/or already know from Israeli dancing): Mayim, Tzerchessia, and Yemenite steps. Discussion will be about the story of Mayim

Mayim (discussed in Session Two) and how the “grapevine” is almost a universal step (also called “karaoke” in baseball) but the narrative about the kibbutz finding water makes it “Israeli” in context; about the fact that the “tzerchessia” step comes from Russia as in fact do many Israelis (about 20% of the current population of Jews); about the fact that the “Yemenite” step comes from Yemen as do many Israelis (In 1949 and 1950, the Israeli government airlifted 49,000 persecuted Yemenite Jews out of Yemen and into the new state of Israel in a secret operation called “Operation Magic Carpet” (nickname) or “Operation on Wings of Eagles” (real name).) Somehow, these three steps come from three different places and peoples in the world yet are magically the building blocks of “Israeli” dancing; together they form something unique and different than they are on their own. This is similar to how the immigrant populations of Israel come together to form something new, an “Israeli” culture that includes aspects of all the different places the population comes from. Participants will be prompted to think of other aspects of Israeli culture that come from different places (some might know about jachnun or malawach or other Yemenite foods, some might mention challah which is Eastern European, someone might mention the Mediterranean nature of falafel, etc.)

To bring this idea back to camp, leader can ask participants to think about how campers and camp staff may come from different parts of the country, different schools, and different family or religious traditions, yet when they come to camp they all become part of the camp culture. Some home traditions are brought directly to camp (their clothing and belongings, for example), some are blended into camp traditions (the birthday song just like it is sung at home might be part of a camp ritual that also includes banging on the tables or singing an additional song), some are only done at camp (Shabbat services or song session at camp might include totally different melodies or camp-specific songs). The camp culture is created out of all these methods, just as a country’s culture represents some aspects of its immigrant populations and some aspects that are special to that country. Discuss how this played out during the special way that physically separated people came together during the pandemic via Zoom and all the online programming.

- 00:30-00:60 - Breakout room teaching

Split participants into breakout rooms so that they can try teaching each other some dances. How this comes together will depend on the size of the group and the dances elicited during the previous day’s discussion. Give 15 minutes in rooms to teach and do dances, and then 15 minutes all together to share and debrief experience.

- 00:60-00:75 - Wrap-up and Review

Remind participants of the Jewish values of community embedded in Israeli dancing: It’s ok to make mistakes, everyone holds hands so they can help each other, no one is made to feel less or better than anyone else, it’s more about participation than skill, the Israeli equality ideas embedded in how we hold hands, etc. Leader will lead a short discussion about being supportive of dancers of all abilities and invite participants to make the connection to how that can play out in other areas of camp, like sports. If no one has mentioned it, leader will make the connection to intentionally being a supportive audience, for camp talent shows, melavah malkahs at some camps, etc.

Review other key points of all three workshops and list of dances taught, and then finish by doing any or all of the dances they've learned. Very last one should be one of the most accessible and upbeat ones so everyone leaves on a high note!

BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP & SHIFTING TO IN PERSON:

Name Game can be used as a getting-to-know-you activity or a group bonding activity at the beginning of summer or of a new "chug" if campers don't know each other and their names. Also very good for starting dance sessions with reluctant dancers, as it is a sitting activity and doesn't feel like "dancing" for some kids, but then they are caught up in participating and can transition more easily into standing up dances.

Tzaddik Katamar can be used as introduction or wrap for other activity or lesson about nature, water conservation, or tree-planting in Israel, or as a discussion of Psalm 92:13 and the meaning of what it means to be "righteous".

The Culture of Israel ideas can be expanded into larger programs that incorporate not just dance but also music, food, art, or any other aspect of Israeli culture that counselors wish to explore with campers.

In person or online, instead of splitting the group up to allow practice teaching, this can happen all together, with different participants taking turns teaching the same dance, even one that the group has learned together. The facilitator should clearly direct whose turn it is and what aspects they should practice.