

## **Around the World in Thirty Days**

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People are people. They laugh, cry, feel, and love, and music seems to be the common denominator that brings us all together. Music cuts through all the boundaries and goes right to the soul.

-Willie Nelson, *The Facts of Life and Other Dirty Jokes*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Just walk into our first grade classroom on any given day, and before too long you are likely to see students drumming on the table, tapping their feet, wriggling their tiny bodies, and on and on. They have energy and they want to use it! I have also found that they are quite fond of music in any form. They are quick to join in a sing-along and hum along to instrumental music while pretending to play an interesting assortment of accompanying instruments. The students only have forty-five minutes per week of music education, so incorporating music and dance into the regular classroom should be enjoyable for them as well as beneficial.

As I look back on my own early education, I realize that some of my most vivid and positive memories come from music. I could not wait to go to school, and kindergarten was a delightful experience for me. I remember much of that first year of schooling. Mrs. DeLind had a blue piano in our classroom and led us in songs every day. We had a tiny songbook called "Little Tunes," and I loved to read the words as I sang along. We also put on two performances that year. The first was a circus show and the second was a musical based on Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit*. I played the part of Peter Rabbit's mother and sang "A Spoonful of Sugar" from *Mary Poppins* as I fed my bunnies medicine. I do not recall too much music in the classroom after kindergarten, but I do remember quite a bit from our music class with Mrs. Gaffner. I can still name at least a dozen of the songs we sang, and we also learned to play Orff instruments and the recorder. When I was in the third grade, I went to see our high school's production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The show lasted beyond my 8:30 p.m. bedtime, but I kept my eyes wide open for the entire performance. This experience cemented my desire to make the performing arts a part of my life. Now I am a classroom teacher and it is my turn to share uplifting fine arts experiences with my students.

Just as my own experiences with song and music helped me learn to read and socialized me toward group cooperation, my students might benefit from additional music instruction in many ways. Participating in the arts can stimulate creativity, promote higher-order thinking, encourage collaboration, and even relieve stress! Can first graders be "stressed out?" Absolutely. The primary focus in many schools today is on increasing standardized test scores. Pressure is placed on the principals to improve their school ratings. This pressure is passed along to the teachers and then it trickles down to the

students. In order to ensure that our students have maximum instructional time devoted to standardized-test and promotion standards preparation, our school does not have recess. This forces the teacher and the students to try to deal with all their energy during instruction. One of the goals I have for this project is to provide a thematic unit aligned with the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) guidelines that will channel some of the students' unending sources of energy into educationally-sound activities that meet defined curriculum goals. William Anderson and Joy Lawrence state:

Through the arts, the child develops his/her own expression of feelings and grows in the ability to understand and appreciate how artists throughout the world have expressed these same feelings, thus enriching the quality and meaning of life. (Anderson and Lawrence, 2)

My primary intention for creating this unit is to provide an enjoyable way to introduce students to cultures from around the world. According to the National Council of Social Studies, the main objective of social studies is to “help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions...as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (*Project CLEAR*, 1). After the tragedy of September 11, it has become even clearer to me that as citizens of the world, we must try to learn about the varied beliefs and traditions of people from different cultures. Most importantly, we must attempt to find common ground amongst our world neighbors while continuing to respect and honor our differences. Janice J. Beaty refers to this shift in thinking as “a new people-perspective...what we must do is *focus on our likenesses and celebrate our differences*...people who appreciate their common bonds come to celebrate their differences with pride” (3).

I have found that most of my students do not have the opportunity to travel outside of Houston or sometimes even their own neighborhoods. What little experiences they do have of other cultures, whether “good” or “bad,” come primarily through images seen on a television screen. With limited resources, it can be a very challenging task to introduce young students to different cultures without boring them. I want the students' experiences with new cultures to be real, something that they can feel throughout their entire bodies.

## **UNIT BACKGROUND**

This month-long unit will be a study of different peoples and their cultures, beginning with the traditions found in our own community. After exploring the more familiar traditions of our own neighborhood, we will look at our neighbors and their rich customs. Our first destination will be Cuba in the Caribbean Sea. Then we will fly across the ocean to Ghana in Africa. From Africa, we will continue north to Europe, where we will devote our studies to Ireland.

During the course of the unit, we will become amateur ethnomusicologists. The field of ethnomusicology compares music of the world and looks at music as an aspect of human culture. While in each country, we will listen to samples of traditional music, maybe even attempting to make some of our own music representative of that country. We will also learn one simple dance while in each country. Janice J. Beaty suggests “music and dance are natural ‘languages’ that cross cultural barriers for children and speak to them in tones that they can quickly relate to” (201). She continues by implying that music may prove to be a more effective way to reach children than words are. This is not to say that music is the “universal language,” as has often been suggested. Anderson and Lawrence prefer to regard music as an “international phenomenon” as music is “constructed in very different ways” around the world (Anderson and Lawrence, 251).

My hope is that through this curriculum the students will begin to discover common links of humanity that bind us together through their “immersion travel” experiences. As Marcel Proust wrote in *Remembrance of Things Past*, “The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.” We may never actually leave our classroom, but our intensive investigation of world cultures will give us “new eyes.” At the close of the unit, with eyes wide open, I hope my students will be proud of who they are as members of both the diverse Houston community and the greater global community.

## **OVERVIEW OF TWO CULTURES AND MUSIC**

Our first and last countries of study, Ireland and Cuba, are both islands that have played a significant role in the history of our own nation, the United States. Peoples from both Ireland and Cuba migrated to the United States in search of a better life. Irish immigrants came first, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. They settled in urban areas on the east coast, including Boston, New York, and Savannah, Georgia. Large numbers of Cubans migrated to the United States in the early twentieth century to seek new economic opportunities following Cuba’s liberation from Spanish rule. During the 1950s and 1960s, refugees from Cuba arrived in the United States, unwilling to live under communism. Cubans settled in large enclaves in Miami and New York. Through the study of music and dance of the Irish and Cuban peoples, one discovers how closely linked “Americans” are to these different cultures. Traditional Irish music would have died without the influence of Irish immigrants in the United States and other American music traditions. Cuban music took on a life of its own in the United States where it became popular with many other Latin American and Caribbean peoples. American Latinos took Cuban music to their home countries, and eventually its transnational popularity gave rise to the birth of salsa in New York.

### **Ireland**

Ireland is an island slightly larger in size than West Virginia. Ireland is often thought to be a “green” land, and this is true, as over seventy-five percent of the terrain is meadows

and pastures. The country holds fast to its agrarian roots with over forty percent of the people living in rural areas. Approximately another one-third of the population lives in the capital city of Dublin (*Background Note: Ireland*, par. 1, 2). The Irish people are primarily descendants of the Celts who spread across Europe and Great Britain, arriving in Ireland in the fourth century B.C.E. The Celts brought a rich pagan culture with them. Popular legend claims that St. Patrick came to Ireland in 432 C.E. to convert the Irish to Christianity (*2001 Curriculum Guide on Ireland*, 42). Whether true or not, the Celtic religion tradition was lost to Christianity, but the Celtic tribal and social patterns were preserved.

Ireland's history includes an 800-year power struggle with England, beginning in the twelfth century. Scottish and English Protestants were sent to Northern Ireland in the early seventeenth century. Ireland experienced a severe depression and famine when the potato crop failed from 1846-48. This produced the first wave of Irish immigration to the United States. The Anglo-Irish War of 1919-1921 ended with the division of the island into Ireland and Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland remains a part of the United Kingdom with limited self-government while the Republic of Ireland is a free state within the UK (*Background Note: Ireland*, par. 12-16).

Irish music is made primarily for music's sake. Irish instrumental music consists mainly of dance tunes and is traditionally played by solo musicians. Solo playing is enhanced through ornamentation and variations in rhythm and melody. The instruments typically used are the fiddle; tin whistle; a wooden, side-blown flute; concertina; the uilleann pipes; and accordion. With the exception of the pipes, all of these instruments were brought to Ireland from other lands. Set dancing for the common people appeared in Ireland during the 1800s. Set dancing took dance forms from neighboring areas and enhanced them with Irish music. Dance music is always played fast and it takes five different forms: the jig, reel, hornpipe, polka, and march (Shields and Gershen, 382).

Music and dance were highly valued social practices in rural Ireland during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Dance and music thrived through two different venues. Crossroads dances were played outdoors for local peoples who danced and socialized at these events. The music was provided by professional or semi-professional traveling musicians, generally a piper and a fiddler. The second outlet for music was the céilí. The céilí was a gathering of friends and neighbors enhanced by drinking, singing, dancing, storytelling, and music making for one another. During the economic depression of the 1930s, traditional dancing and céilí declined (Shields and Gershen, 390). The Dance Hall Act of 1935 banned crossroads dancing and dance halls were forced to close. Traditional music playing declined with the loss of dancing (Vallely, 103).

Interestingly enough, the céilí band was revived outside of Ireland, within Irish immigrant communities of Britain and the United States. These communities were influenced by popular dance bands of the 1920s-50s in England and the U.S. The new céilí band eliminated the ornamentation of traditional solo playing and fleshed out the arrangements with multiple fiddles, flutes, accordions, a piano, and a drum set. With the

rebirth of the céilí band came a revival of traditional Irish music (Shields and Gershen, 390).

The revival of traditional Irish music can be attributed to four distinct happenings. The movement began in the 1960s with an increase of recording of music from the rural areas and the subsequent national broadcasting of this music. At the same time, sponsored competitions of Irish music began to appear. The competitions were fueled by musicians who gathered to play at “pub sessions.” These sessions combined music and socializing, much as the earlier crossroads dances had. The boundary between the performers and the audience were subtle. Sessions generally took place once a week at a selected pub (Shields and Gershen, 390, 391). The U.S. revival of folk music in the 1950s also helped propel the Irish revival. Irish immigrants imitated ballad singing by accompanying traditional songs from their homeland with guitars and banjos (Vallely, 19, 20).

Sean O’Riada was perhaps the most influential force behind the Irish music revival. He invented a new tradition of Irish music, which included training in classical music, fresh ideas about Irish music, especially the reintroduction of the harp (Ireland’s national symbol), and working with the melodies and styles of present-day musicians. O’Riada helped Irish music evolve by arranging pieces with alternating solos and combinations. This new form of Irish music paid homage to its roots by highlighting the unique individual styles of the musicians. O’Riada’s music became very popular with the urban middle class and Dublin’s art scene. Musicians associated with O’Riada eventually formed the Chieftains, now world-famous performers of Irish music (Shields and Gershen, 391-392).

Records of Irish step dancing exist from the late eighteenth century. Dance masters traveled around the rural areas of Ireland teaching step dances and other set dances to the local people. In these early years of step dancing, most of the dancers were men and the dance was confined to a very small space. Performances were made on half doors, flagstones, and even the tops of barrels. Step dances were performed at weddings, fairs, pilgrimage days, feast and holy days, and crossroads (Vallely, 380).

The Gaelic League held a céilí festival of traditional song and dance in London in 1897 and similar festivals began both in Ireland and in Irish immigrant communities. Dance schools devoted to step dance in Ireland began forming in the 1920s. With the resurgence of step dance, dance competitions became the primary venue for performances. The Irish Dancing Commission (IDC) was created in 1929 to establish standards for step dancing, training, and competitions, and the IDC now controls this art form internationally. Major competitions are held in Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. The annual World Championships began in 1969 and are held in Ireland with close to two thousand competing dancers (Vallely, 380).

Part of Irish step dancing's worldwide recognition today can be attributed to *Riverdance*. *Riverdance* is a "spectacular Irish step-dance stage-show, with a traditional ethos orchestra and the Irish choral group Anúna" (319). The impetus for *Riverdance* was an intermission act for the 1994 Eurovision song contest telecast, starring Michael Flatley. The spot was a seven-minute jig performance by Flatley, the first American to win the World Championships in Ireland. One year later, *Riverdance* opened in Dublin. Touring companies took *Riverdance* around the world and in 1999, *Riverdance on Broadway* opened at the largest Broadway theater, the Gershwin. The show was so popular that the limited engagement was extended many times over. People around the world have experienced *Riverdance* in theaters, on video, on PBS television, and on CD (Barnes, 98). *Riverdance*'s popularity spawned numerous other touring productions of Irish dance, so it looks like the once nearly-extinct art form is here to stay.

## **Cuba**

Cuba is the seventh largest island in the world (Sheehan, 7), about the same size as Pennsylvania. The land is primarily flat with some small mountains located on the eastern and western edges of the island. Cuba has a tropical climate with a rainy season from May through October. Seventy percent of the people live in urban areas (*Background Note: Cuba*, par. 1, 2). In 1492, Christopher Columbus became the first European to land in Cuba. In 1511, Columbus' grandson established the first European settlement on the island. The Spaniards enslaved the native Taino population to search of gold. The Tainos were forced into extinction due to disease and overworking in the mines and plantations. (It was not until the mid-eighteenth century, however, that sugar and tobacco plantations brought Cuba commercial success.) As the Taino population dwindled, the Spaniards began to rely on slaves from West Africa (Sheehan, 18-20).

Unlike the population of Ireland, the people of Cuba are racially diverse. About half of the people are of mixed African and European descent, another one-third of the people are Caucasian, and about ten percent are direct descendents of West African slaves (*Background Note: Cuba*, par. 2). The establishment of Cuba as a Spanish colony was only the beginning of such a wide range of ethnicities. Cuba's population continued to diversify when French, Spanish, and other European colonists from Haiti, Hispaniola, and Louisiana sought refuge there in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Sheehan, 20). As the African slave trade ended in the Americas in 1865, Cuba began to rely less on slaves from West Africa and turned to China for indentured laborers to work the plantations (51).

Like Ireland, Cuba's history is full of power struggles. During the mid-nineteenth century, animosity grew between Creoles, native-born Cubans, and peninsulares, Spanish-born Cubans. The Creoles felt that Spain discriminated against them, giving favors and control to the peninsulares. The Creoles sought emancipation from Spain, while the peninsulares were content with the Spanish colonial rule (21). The Ten Years' War (1868-1878) was led by a small band of Creoles who proclaimed Cuba's

independence from Spain. Many lives were lost, but at the close of the revolt, Spain remained in control of Cuba. Rebel forces united again in 1895, this time under the leadership of José Martí, Cuba's national hero (22).

The United States stayed clear of conflicts raging in Cuba but kept a close watch on events as it held a key interest in the sugar industry. In February 1898, the *U.S.S. Maine* mysteriously exploded in Havana Harbor. The U.S. blamed Spain for the event and declared war. The Spanish-American War ended within six-months, and in December 1898, Spain relinquished its control of Cuba with the Treaty of Paris. This treaty gave the United States military control of Cuba. Many Cubans were unhappy that they had fought for freedom for so many years, only to be ruled by another outside country. In 1902, the United States granted self-rule to Cuba (23).

As an independent nation, Cuba sought to create a national identity that would include its varied ethnicities. Peter Manuel points to the role of music in this identity: "Insofar as this goal has been achieved, music has played an important role in the formation of such an identity" (Manuel, 35). Cuba's music has been equally influenced by its European settlers and West African slaves. A wide variety of European music traditions were brought to Cuba, including ballet, opera, and ballads. Slaves and their descendants created Afro-Cuban music, music derived from African traditions. The development of Afro-Cuban music was enhanced by two significant factors. Slaves in Cuba were not banned from drumming and dancing, as most slaves in the United States were. Also, Cuban slaves were able to buy their freedom more easily than slaves could in the United States. Large communities of freed slaves began to form in Cuba by the early eighteenth century. Within these communities, musical and religious events were celebrated alongside slaves who lived in the towns (20).

Rumba is the most well-known Afro-Cuban music and dance genre (outside of religious practices). It is important to note here that the traditional Cuban rumba is not the same as the "watered-down form" that was popular in the United States dance halls during the 1930s (Roberts, 95). The rumba is not an African music or dance, but is a new style of performance created in Cuba, bearing similarities to the dances of slaves from the Congo (Manuel, 24). Rumba began in the late nineteenth century in urban, lower-class black neighborhoods. Blacks formed mutual-aid societies called *cabildos* and one of their functions was to preserve African traditions. As peoples from different African cultures combined, new traditions were born, including the rumba. Rumba referred to a type of music and dance as well as a festive gathering of people (Boggs, 32-33).

The rumba is a dance for one or two people. The musical ensemble includes three different conga drums; a pair of sticks (*palaitos*) which are tapped against one of the drums; a pair of hardwood sticks (*claves*) tapped against one another; and a lead singer and chorus. Occasionally, a small wooden box may also be used or it may be used rather than one of the small conga drums (36). Many varieties of rumba were performed in the early twentieth century, but only three have endured: *guaguancó*, *yambú*, and *columbia*.

The guaguancó is a flirtatious dance between a man and a woman. The yambú is very similar to the guaguancó, but it is slower. The columbia is a very athletic solo dance for a male (Manuel, 25). It is also the only rumba to incorporate African-derived words in the lyrics; rumbas are typically sung in Spanish (Boggs, 35).

The most popular form of rumba is the guaguancó (Manuel, 24). The guaguancó consists of three sections: the diana, the canto, and the montuno. The diana establishes the rhythm as well as the tonal range and melody (Boggs, 37). The canto follows the diana and is the main part of the song. At this time, the lead vocalist sings the verses of the song and the chorus joins in the refrains. During the montuno, the lead singer and chorus engage in a call and response pattern (Manuel, 25). When the montuno begins, the dancers begin “to dance in a pantomime game of coy evasion on the woman’s part and playful conquest on the man’s” (25).

While rumba is clearly an African-influenced music form, Cuba’s son combines equal parts of African and European influences. Son arose in eastern Cuba in the early twentieth century. The European influences are more pronounced than the African and include the use of string instruments, the guitar and the tres (similar to a guitar). Spanish features are also apparent in the moderate tempo of the son and the “song”-like first section. The African influence on the son is witnessed in the bongo drums and the marimbula, a bass instrument of the thumb piano family. The son also employs call and response patterns in the second section, much like the rumba, as well as some African words. The lyrics of the son usually related to the life of the Afro-Cubans (36).

The son became very popular in Havana during the 1920s. This is when the trumpet was first added to the ensemble. In Havana, the son ensemble typically included a guitar, tres, maracas, claves, bongo, and marimbula (Roberts, 97). The son continued to evolve beyond its Afro-Hispanic roots to include influences by jazz harmonies from the United States. Cuban Arsenio Rodriguez came to New York in the 1940s. While in New York he enlarged the son ensemble, adding a conga, piano, and a second trumpet. Most importantly, he insisted that all of his musicians play precomposed or standardized parts, thereby ending the improvisational structure of the traditional son (Manuel 37).

The late 1940s also saw the invention of the mambo. The mambo is dance music played by a big band with Afro-Cuban rhythms. It is also thought to be the first Latin American music developed primarily in the United States (Roberts, 123). Indeed, mambo reached its height of popularity in New York City in the 1950s, having both Latino and Caucasian fans (Roberts, 125). Perez Prado, a Cuban bandleader, was the first to reach non-Latin audiences (Roberts, 127). One of the best-known mambo performers to come out of New York was Tito Puente, who was of Puerto Rican descent and came to be known as the “King of Mambo” (Roberts, 125). The cha cha cha, a medium-tempo music with a simpler dance, became popular in the 1950s in Cuba as well as in the United States (Manuel, 41). Afro-Cuban music spawned another popular form in New York when the Dizzy Gillespie orchestra added a Cuban conga-player to form a Latin big band in 1947.



This Latin jazz, or Cubop, was primarily for listening, not dancing, as the other Cuban-inspired music had been (Roberts, 113, 116).

The rising popularity of Cuban music in New York led to the development of a new genre of music, salsa. Salsa was created by Puerto Ricans in the United States seeking a fresh and powerful identity in the 1960s (Manuel, 73). Interestingly, salsa was not based on traditional Puerto Rican music and dance, but in Cuban dance music, primarily the son. About ninety percent of salsa songs are “modernized versions of the Cuban son” (83). Salsa musician Sergio George described the new genre as “The musical fusion of New York with Puerto Rico, with Cuba and with Africa; that whole fusion was for me the true roots of salsa in the late 60s, early 70s” (74).

Salsa took on its own identity with the addition of more trombones, timbales (two drums and a cowbell), and a few Puerto Rican elements (74). Song lyrics often dealt with the new self-consciousness arising in the Latino barrios of New York. Most salsa musicians were Puerto Rican, but Latinos from different nations, including the Dominican Republic and Panama, were also popular salseros. “Salsa was rooted in the New York barrio, but because the modern urban alienation it described was common to so many other Latin American cities, salsa soon became an international phenomenon, a chronicle of the urban Hispanic Caribbean.” Salsa quickly spread throughout the other Latino nations of the Caribbean (78). Cuban music and dance has experienced a resurgence and evolution across two continents. As with Ireland, the movement of peoples and their culture between the home country and the United States, and then beyond to other nations, has established a unique brand of Cuban music that lives in the hearts and souls of the greater world.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

This unit is intended for use as part of the social studies curriculum in my classroom. The lessons will focus heavily on the following TEKS Strands of Geography and Culture established by the Texas Education Agency (TEA):

- SS TEKS 113.3.b.1.4. **Geography.** The student understands the relative location of places.
- SS TEKS 113.3.b.1.5. **Geography.** The student understands the purpose of maps and globes.
- SS TEKS 113.3.b.1.6. **Geography.** The student understands various physical and human characteristics of the environment.
- SS TEKS 113.3.b.1.14. **Culture.** The student understands the similarities and differences that exist among families.
- SS TEKS 113.3.b.1.15. **Culture.** The student understands the importance of beliefs, customs, language, and traditions. (*Project CLEAR*, 4, 8)

Before each leg of our travels, students will locate our destination on maps and globes. Some questions that may be asked include “How far are we traveling?” “In which direction are we traveling?” and “How long do you think it will take us to get there?” Once we arrive, we will explore the physical and human characteristics of the land through books, pictures, and videos. We will take a look at landforms, bodies of water, natural resources, and weather. For example, landing in the Caribbean will provide a rich opportunity for the students to discover an island and island life. Human characteristics we will investigate include housing and other buildings, jobs, towns and cities, and roads.

After a brief orientation to each of our destinations, we will begin an investigation of the culture of that land. Culture includes how people live, the kinds of jobs they have, their religion, their language, and how they meet basic needs. The TEKS Culture Strand for first grade requires that students “describe and identify the importance of various family and cultural beliefs, customs, traditions and means of artistic expression” (*Project CLEAR*, 49). Through the use of literature, videos, music, and artifacts, we will discover how each culture is unique as well as what features it shares with other cultures. If possible, I would like to invite a guest to our classroom to speak about each country and share artifacts with us.

To generate enthusiasm and create a common thread that will carry us through the unit, we will no longer be students and teacher, but will become “world travelers” and “tour guide.” Each world traveler will create a “suitcase” from a folder to hold his/her research materials, commentaries, and gathered facts. Each traveler will also have a personal “passport” in which he/she can keep track of his/her travels. We will place markers on a world map to create a visual reminder of where we’ve been and where we are going next. At the end of the unit, each student will create a scrapbook chronicling his/her journey around the world. The “suitcase” used throughout the unit will provide most of the materials for the final scrapbook.

Throughout the course of the unit, the classroom library will be stocked with literature, both fiction and non-fiction, pertaining to our countries of study. The walls will be covered with maps, pictures, and posters from these countries. Travel brochures will be available to help students generate ideas of what they might see and do in each country. The library will also be extended to include a listening library. Within the listening library, students will be able to hear musical selections from each country of study. The students will learn one traditional dance from each of the countries to which we travel. Food Fair Fridays will be a special time to celebrate by sampling foods from our current country location. As resources permit, we will invite guests from the Houston community to our classroom to share costumes, music, dance, and other traditions from Cuba, Ireland, and Ghana.

## LESSON PLANS

### Lesson Plan 1: My Suitcase

The unit will be introduced with the creation of a “suitcase.”

*Objectives:* Students will locate places of significance on maps and globes. (TEKS 113.3.b.1.5)  
Students will identify and describe the physical and human characteristics of places. (TEKS 113.3.b.1.6)

*Materials needed:* Globe  
Chart paper  
Colored legal-size file folders  
Disposable travel tags from airline  
Construction paper, twine  
8 ½” x 11” copies of world map  
Scissors, paper, punch, glue, stapler, crayons, markers

The lesson begins with a discussion about travel. We will locate Cuba, Ireland, and Ghana on the globe. Next, we will brainstorm a list of items we will need to take with us. I will use the globe to point out that Cuba is surrounded by water and therefore is called an island. I will ask the students to consider special items they will need to travel to Cuba, keeping in mind that it is an island as well as its southern location. Students will note that Ireland is also an island, but it is located in the north and will require different clothing than Cuba. If necessary, I will ask, “What do we need to hold all of the items we are planning on taking?” to elicit the “suitcase” response.

Each student will be given one file folder. The sides will be stapled together to prevent materials from falling out. Two holes will be punched at the top of the folder, and we will use twine to create a carrying handle for the suitcase. Students will print their names and the school name and address on the travel tags and then attach them to the carrying handle.

Students will color their copies of the world map, using blue crayons for water and green crayons for land. (Students may refer to the globe or large world map for examples.) They will place a star sticker on the approximate location of Houston, Texas. Then they will cut out the map and glue it onto one side of their suitcase. Together we will locate Cuba, Ireland, and Ghana on the maps and place a star sticker on each country to mark where we will be traveling.

## Lesson Plan 2: Irish Dance

*Objective:* Students will understand the similarities and differences that exist among families. (TEKS 113.3.b.1.14)  
Students will understand the importance of beliefs, customs, language, and traditions. (TEKS 113.3.b.1.15)

*Materials Needed:* *Riverdance* videocassette  
*Riverdance* album  
Television  
CD player

To open this lesson, the students will create a list of different occasions on which they have danced. The list might include birthday and holiday celebrations as well as weddings. I will ask the students to describe the style of dancing they participated in as well as what kind of music they were listening to. Was there a DJ or did a band perform live music? If the students saw a band, what instruments were played? Then I will play a selection from the *Riverdance* album and ask them to guess where this music is played. The introduction will end with the students locating Ireland on a world map.

After a brief explanation of *Riverdance*, we will view a short selection from the *Riverdance* video. I will lead a discussion, asking the students what they saw, heard, and felt while watching the video. Then the students will create a written and drawn response to the video. First they will draw a picture of the performance, then they will write about their drawing. To conclude the lesson, we will learn a simple reel step.

R: right foot  
L: left foot

*Moving to the right, left foot crosses behind right foot*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R(up)	R	L	R	L	R	L

*Stationary, simply shift weight in feet:*

1	2	3	1	2	3
R	L(back)	R	L	R(back)	L

*Moving back to the left, right foot crosses behind left foot:*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
L(up)	L	R	L	R	L	R

*Stationary, simply shift weight in feet:*

1	2	3	1	2	3
L	R(back)	L	R	L(back)	R

### **Lesson Plan 3: West African clothing**

*Objectives:* Students will understand the similarities and differences that exist among families. (TEKS 113.3.b.1.14)  
Students will understand the importance of beliefs, customs, language, and traditions. (TEKS 113.3.b.1.15)

*Materials Needed:* Photos of children from around the world (books and magazines)  
One white t-shirt for each student (pre-washed)  
Rubber bands  
10-gallon buckets  
Fabric dye of various colors  
Water  
Newspapers  
Clothesline and clothespins

We will begin this lesson by discussing the types of clothes that we like to wear. We will talk about the different clothes we wear to school, work, play, and for special occasions. Then we will think of clothing that is appropriate to wear in different kinds of weather. I will ask the students why clothing is so important. I will ask the students to think about clothing that children may wear in other countries. We will look through books and magazines to find examples of clothing that is different from our own.

Then we will create tie-dyed shirts by using a technique similar to that used by people of West Africa when they create adire eleso cloth. West Africans create patterns on cloth by covering parts with a dye-resistant binding so that the dye will not penetrate those parts. When the cloth is untied, those parts stand out in a design against the dyed background. We will use rubber bands to bind the shirts and prevent the dye from reaching all of the cloth. Once the students have bound their shirts with the rubber bands, they will dip the shirts into a bucket of prepared dye. Then the shirts must be rinsed at least twice in cold water and hung up to dry. When the shirts are dry (it may take a day or two), the students will remove the rubber bands and examine their pattern.

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