

University of Northern Colorado

## Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC

---

Master's Theses

Student Work

---

12-2018

### Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: a Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences

Sarah Avery Kulchinsky  
*University of Northern Colorado*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digscholarship.unco.edu/theses>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Kulchinsky, Sarah Avery, "Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: a Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences" (2018). *Master's Theses*. 72.  
<https://digscholarship.unco.edu/theses/72>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC. For more information, please contact [Nicole.Webber@unco.edu](mailto:Nicole.Webber@unco.edu).

© 2018

SARAH AVERY KULCHINSKY

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

COLLABORATING, CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING:  
A COHESIVE PROJECT-BASED LEARNING SOCIAL  
STUDIES UNIT WITH THE GOAL OF DEEPENING  
THIRD GRADE STUDENT LEARNING  
EXPERIENCES

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

Sarah Avery Kulchinsky

College of Performing and Visual Arts  
School of Theater Arts and Dance  
Dance Education

December, 2018

This Thesis by: Sarah Avery Kulchinsky

Entitled: *Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: A Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences*

has been approved as meeting the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the College of Performing and Visual Arts, School of Theatre Arts and Dance, Program of Dance Education

Accepted by the Thesis Committee:

---

Sandra L. Minton, Ph.D., Chair, Advisor

---

Christy O'Connell-Black, M.A., Committee Member

Accepted by the Graduate School:

---

Linda L. Black, Ed.D.  
Associate Provost and Dean  
Graduate School and International Admissions  
Research and Sponsored Projects

## ABSTRACT

Kulchinsky, Sarah Avery *Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: A Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences*. Unpublished Masters of Arts thesis, University of Northern Colorado, 2018.

The purpose of this research study was to integrate dance in a social studies project-based learning (PBL) unit. The incorporation of dance in this unit was not only a learning experience for the students, but for the dance teacher and classroom teacher alike. The teachers worked cooperatively to plan and create this unit of study and through their collaboration taught the subject using their individual teaching styles. The classroom teacher used traditional instructional methods, while the dance teacher taught the same subject matter through the use of movement and dance. Throughout the unit, the teachers consulted to ensure student learning and progress. Twenty-nine students were included in this study along with the dance and classroom teachers.

The researcher posed the following essential questions which guided the thesis study: What were the possible effects of integrating dance in the development and delivery of a PBL unit? Did the level of student involvement in a class change when both movement and dance were included in a PBL unit to deliver content? What were the teacher and student responses to the use of movement and dance included in the PBL unit of study?

This research project was intended to benefit and advocate for the collaboration of dance with classroom subject content. The researcher found the unit of study was enjoyed

by both students and teachers. This research project also demonstrated when given the time, collaboration amongst educators across subject areas, using interdisciplinary teaching methods allowed for successful student learning.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would have not developed to its present form without the assistance of the following:

Dr. Sandra Minton (Advisor) & Christy O'Connell-Black for your guidance and professional assistance.

My twenty-nine student participants who allowed me to love what I do and share my passion for dance.

My colleague and educator, Liz. I would not have been able to complete this study without you. Thank you for believing in the importance of dance integration. Your passion and dedication for education inspires me each and every day.

My mother, Amy for believing in me and encouraging me to pursue my dream of being a dance educator.

Alex for his constant love and support and for being my biggest fan.

Dana and Max, for not only being my brother and sister, but my best friends.

Lastly, to the nine amazing women of my cohort that shared this journey with me. We shared a lot together and I will always be grateful to all of you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Goal of Thesis	
Purpose of Study	
Significance of Study	
II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
How the Arts, Especially Dance, Can Enhance Learning Experiences	
Learning and the Importance of Movement	
Project-Based Style of Teaching and Learning	
Working with a Classroom Teacher to Develop a Project-Based Learning Unit	
III. METHODOLOGY.....	21
Preparation for the Study	
Research Study	
Data Analysis Procedures	
Summary	
IV. DISCUSSION.....	28
Students' Data	
Teacher's Data	
Summary of Dance Integration Project-Based Learning Unit Experience	
V. CONCLUSION.....	42
Significance of Dance Integration	
Reflections on Research Study	
Furthering Dance Integration	
WORKS CITED.....	47



APPENDIX A. IRB Documents.....	49
APPENDIX B. Research Instruments.....	58
APPENDIX C. Sampling of Lesson Plans.....	71

## LISTS OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1: Student Pre-Test Survey Question 1 .....	29
FIGURE 2: Student Pre-Test Survey Question 2 .....	29
FIGURE 3: Student Pre-Test Survey Question 3 .....	30
FIGURE 4: Student Reflection Survey Question 1 .....	31
FIGURE 5: Student Reflection Survey Question 2 .....	31
FIGURE 6: Student Reflection Survey Question 3 .....	32
FIGURE 7: Student Posttest Survey Question 1 .....	33
FIGURE 8: Student Posttest Survey Question 2 .....	34
FIGURE 9: Student Posttest Survey Question 3 .....	35
FIGURE 10: Student Posttest Survey Question 4 .....	36

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Goal of Thesis**

The arts, especially dance, has the power to enhance student academic and lifelong learning. Having a dance teacher on staff in a public school allows students to become creative movers. Through dance, students are given the opportunity to experience curriculum and express themselves in a kinesthetic way, which is unavailable in a traditional classroom.

Perhaps the most important reason that movement experience should be an integral part of the elementary school curriculum is the impetus it can have for learning. Piaget states that the stage of “concrete operations” is usually reached between the ages of seven and eleven. He recommends that the teacher provide a very *active* curriculum particularly early in this stage. (Green Gilbert 7)

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a mode of teaching where students gain knowledge and skill while learning the curriculum and ultimately create a project at the culmination of the unit. The PBL format has been proven in aiding students to become college and career ready as they must learn, problem solve, and ultimately create a final project.

Project based learning is an instructional approach built upon authentic learning activities that engage student interest and motivation. These activities are designed to answer a question or solve a problem and generally reflect the types of learning and work people do in the everyday world outside the classroom. Project based learning is more than just assigning a classroom project. (Leat 162)

Project based learning also involves collaboration. Collaboration is a skill used by all. It is not only important for students to work with one another, but it is also important that teachers collaborate with each other. When collaborating amongst their grade level and subject, teachers are able to ensure that the students in the school are receiving equal opportunities and learning experiences. Collaboration can also be successful when teachers of different disciplines create learning experiences together, with vertical team planning. On a vertical team, classroom teachers work closely with a specialist to create units of study where student learning is expanded beyond their homeroom class. When a dance teacher collaborates with the classroom teacher, the dance teacher will be able to use the classroom curriculum and present the information to the students through movement. In this manner, kinesthetic learning in collaboration with typical classroom instruction can achieve success and a deeper understanding of a topic.

Our teachers are provided with time to have the conversations about the curriculum, strategy and task design. Better planning is achieved when teachers truly collaborate, rather than undertaking it as a solo task. Once the teachers establish the content that needs to be covered, they can then translate this into relevant questions and provocations for the students that will allow them to learn most of this curriculum content for themselves. (Leat 117)

One of the goals of this study was to examine the outcomes of collaboration between the classroom teacher and the dance teacher to create a cohesive unit. Another goal was to show that the integration of dance in the PBL unit will support student learning and student involvement. One researcher had the following to say about the use of PBL.

Many of the qualitative studies in this review sought to illuminate student reactions to participation in project-based instruction, and to create a window to some of the less-tangible effects of learning through projects. In all studies where student attitude was examined, project-based learning was perceived positively by participants, and described as fostering greater engagement with the subject

matter. Students reported enjoying the active, hands-on approach to content, as well as improved perceptions of the subject matter. (Holm 8)

### **Purpose of Study**

Collaboration between faculty members enables continued growth in teachers' knowledge of content, planning and execution. For this specific study, teachers among different subject areas collaborated to create, plan, and execute a social studies unit of study for third grade students. More specifically, the effects of student learning and outcomes was studied as a result of the collaboration between the classroom teacher and the dance teacher. "Dance is one of the few places in the school curriculum where groups get the opportunity to work together for a common goal" (McCutchen 296).

Working alongside classroom teachers to create and implement a unit of study where students will be engaged and learning the same content in both their classroom and in dance could strengthen student comprehension of the subject. Although the following quotation refers to the 1994 National Dance Standards, it is also relevant to the connecting standard found in the current National Core Arts Standards in Dance (National Dance Education Organization).

Creating connections between dance and academics is also a goal of both the fifth and seventh national dance standards. The fifth dance standard states that students should be able to demonstrate and understand dance in various cultures and historical periods, while the seventh standard advocates having students make connections between dance and other disciplines. (Minton 2)

When being taught the same social studies content in both the academic classroom as well as in dance class, students of all learning abilities and styles comprehended lesson content to a greater degree. Since students learned similar content in both social studies and dance, the curriculum was reinforced as each teacher presented the information in different ways.

Academics and researchers cited yet other reasons for including dance in our schools as part of the regular curriculum.

The third reason for including dance in our schools is that learning to dance and learning to make dances can be connected to classroom learning. For example, when children learn a dance, they focus on and observe the teacher's movements. They must also remember the order of movements in a dance and the number of times each action is performed. In addition, when dance making is part of lessons, students solve movement-based problems, leading to feelings of accomplishment. (Minton 3)

When considering collaborating with other teachers within the school, planning time is necessary. It is important to have time set aside during which all teachers who are participating can meet and plan. Without planning time, lessons that connect content between the classroom and the dance class will not be congruent or coincide appropriately. Brenda McCutchen suggested teachers need to:

Coordinate instruction with other teachers to assist each other. Promote interdisciplinary work when projects cross disciplinary lines; this improves general curriculum. Make authentic connections that go further than acting out the life cycle of a seed! Share unit goals between disciplines and create a broad instructional matrix to support learning. Dance education is more than an isolated dance event. (303)

Having the dance educator as part of the planning team can assist in teaching all learners in the classroom, including the kinesthetic learners. The addition of dance integrated into a PBL unit of study can encourage students to learn in an active setting in addition to learning the content in their traditional classroom setting. "Integrated units created around a dance style use the style to build context" (McCutchen 425).

Having curriculum content explored through dance can bring a level of interaction among students. All students can benefit from this collaboration, as all students will be given the opportunity to embody the subject content and bring this information to life through movement and dance. By working alongside the academic classroom teacher, all

teachers involved collaborate to ensure the flow of the unit between the classroom and the dance class. Academic vocabulary was used in both classroom settings to enhance collaboration. In the collaboration process used in this study, the students experienced a continuation of learning between their social studies class and their weekly dance class. It was hoped that this continuation of learning would support student growth and comprehension of the content area. The following comments were made about a study that included project-based learning.

Teachers in this study also reported a reduced need for disciplinary actions during project-based study, citing increased student engagement as the chief reason. Additionally, several studies indicated that the beneficial academic effects of project-based instruction were most pronounced for middle-to low-achieving students. (Holm 9)

The integration of dance within a child's academic schedule can also aid in teaching 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, leadership and responsibility, social and cross-cultural skills, flexibility and adaptability. Through a PBL unit of study, students take on a leadership role as they take responsibility in the creation and final product of the culminating project. An author who has worked with dance-based interdisciplinary learning noted: "Movement and dance experiences develop students' high-level thinking skills by engaging them in exploration, creative problem solving, and decision-making" (Zakkai 14).

The purpose of this study was to collaborate with the classroom teacher on a social studies PBL unit. It was thought that adding dance to this unit could help teach students to have an awareness of other cultures. Thus, dance was used as one teaching strategy to teach students awareness of other cultures and each other. In the project, the researcher attempted to answer the following questions:

- Q1     What are the possible effects of integrating dance in the development and delivery of a PBL unit?
- Q2     Does the level of involvement of students in a class change when both movement and dance are included in a PBL unit to deliver content?
- Q3     What are the teacher and student responses to the use of movement and dance included in the PBL unit of study?

Certain limitations arose in this study, in part, because the researcher had also been the dance teacher for two years prior to the study. Another limitation was that the research instruments were created by the researcher and were not validated.

### **Significance of Study**

Using dance as a teaching tool can be a fun, helpful interactive way to reach students. Teaching through dance allows students to learn in a creative environment. Students who may struggle in the typical classroom setting can be successful learners in dance. This is a way to help some struggling students learn. “Tactile-kinesthetic learners think concretely and understand by doing. They rely on physical interactions while learning” (Minton 4). These students can also gain confidence when they are able to be successful in learning the curriculum.

Working creatively can develop our thinking skills and empower us as individuals. Our lives are also enhanced when we experience the artistic expression of others—such as a dance, musical compositions, or paintings. We participate in a special kind of human communication in which we speak the same language even though no words are exchanged. Sometimes artists invite us to look at people, issues, and designs through a “different lens.” (Zakkai 15)

Integrating dance in the PBL unit can also lend a cultural diversity element to this unit. Students will not only learn about another culture, its history and traditions, but they will also experience the movement performed by the people of that culture. Experiencing



movement can provide students with new movement vocabulary. With this new information students were expected to create and choreograph their own work.

Project-based learning can be described as student-centered instruction that occurs over an extended time period, during which students select, plan, investigate and produce a product, presentation or performance that answers a real-world question or responds to an authentic challenge. (Holm 1)

Dance and movement can and should be used as a teaching tool in the elementary school setting. The student body of each class is composed of different types of learners because students learn and obtain information using different learning styles. Integrating dance in the school curriculum may reach more learners. Movement enhances learning for the kinesthetic learners as they are physically moving their bodies as they learn. Visual learners can watch or observe movement being performed and then perform the movements. Auditory learners can interpret the teacher's verbal instructions and relate to music they hear while creating a dance. All types of learners in the class can benefit from dance and movement integration. When working together all learners can collaborate, and become creative choreographers and movers.

Using movement and dance as a teaching tool incorporates the natural connection that exists between brain, mind, and body. This is true because students must recognize and understand academic concepts with the brain-mind, followed by performing concept-based movements with the body. A traditional dance class, particularly one that includes dance making, also explores the brain-mind-body connection. Initially, dance movement is discovered by moving the body, but later the movements are manipulated and arranged in the context of the dance by using the brain-mind. (Minton 9)

Experiencing dance and movement activities as a part of a child's school day has the potential to cultivate creative movement in children. Dance teaches students discipline and allows for self-expression. Dance and movement can create a feeling of freedom and relieve stress and anxiety. Movement and dance can also be self-soothing

and therapeutic, allowing students to free their mind from the stress and testing in the classroom and become a creative mover and thinker.

Having to sit still for long stretches of time can actually create tension in some children. Others carry with them the stresses of their lives outside the classroom. Moving the whole body improves circulation and sends oxygen to the brain. It also releases endorphins which ease stress and promote a sense of well-being. (Zakkai 10)

This study addressed arts integration with the possibility of enabling all students to become successful learners. This study showed there are some benefits to interdisciplinary learning. It also described the outcome of collaboration amongst a classroom teacher and the dance teacher who work full time in the school setting. This study could advocate for further collaboration opportunities allowing teachers to teach the same content, but present the curriculum using different teaching strategies. By using a variety of teaching strategies to present the content, students of all learning styles could be accommodated.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **How the Arts, Especially Dance, Can Enhance Learning Experiences**

The arts including dance have the power to enhance student learning through a multi-faceted process. Dance is a form of expression, while at the same time, it can be utilized as a teaching tool. Learning through dance allows students to embody their education in a kinesthetic form. The words from textbook pages come to life when dance integration occurs within the classroom. Through dance and movement students can improve their understanding of a subject without speaking or writing. Dance enables all people to become creative learners through movement.

#### *Using the Arts to Enhance Learning*

Art educators are always searching for ways to present content in an exciting way for their student learners. Dance, music, and visual art teachers are fortunate to be able to use different approaches to present content in a way that is nontraditional. Further, these teachers can differentiate lesson content from typical classroom teaching strategies. Elizabeth McPherson is an elementary school dance teacher who is extremely interested in arts integration. McPherson and the music teacher at her school collaborated and developed a world studies curriculum alongside classroom teachers for third grade students. Some of the reactions to this integrated arts curriculum are reported below.

Students were excited and enthusiastic about the tie over between their homeroom studies and special subjects (dance, music, art). They termed it, “Cool!” In dance, they would eagerly ask what country would be next and when. They began to integrate the knowledge so that, for instance, in my dance room they would tell me interesting facts about the Aboriginal culture or quickly draw for me an Aboriginal pattern they had studied and explored in art class. (McPherson 58)

Arts integration is a potent teaching tool, which excites students and can provide them with greater interest in their own learning. Through the arts, students can feel the content awaken. Students can also apply and embody their classroom knowledge by creating their own drawings, music, and dances thus expressing academic content through the arts. When working together to create art, students cultivate community and trust within one another through collaborative work. “Students gain a better understanding of concepts if they have a chance to transform those concepts into movement” (Minton 49).

There are many life skills that students can develop through arts integration. Creativity is one such skill. “If the ability to think in a creative way is important to the future of the world, then teaching students how to think creatively should be part of education” (Minton 49). Through arts integration teachers can guide students and foster creativity because students are free to explore the art form in a singular and introspective way.

### **Learning and the Importance of Movement**

Movement is important throughout childhood. It is one of the many ways infants and young children learn and explore the world. Young children touch, feel and digest the world through movement. They are interminably curious about their surroundings.

It is remarkable that movement is not used today as a teaching strategy throughout all levels of education, considering the connections that exist between mind and

body. While preschool, kindergarten, and 1<sup>st</sup>-gradeteachers recognize the need to have students move and dance, those who teach grades 2 through high school use movement as a teaching strategy more sparingly. (Minton 45-46)

Differentiation within each dance integrated lesson can help meet the needs of the learners within the class. Dance easily connects with common core standards and is an alternative approach to teaching and learning.

Active learning also uses interdisciplinary teaching strategies. In an active form of learning, children process information through oral expression or written work, but they can also make diagrams or drawings, do peer teaching, and present performances or demonstrations. From this description, we can see that during active-learning students are involved with more than one discipline—in this case, reading, writing, the visual arts, and one or more performing arts. (Minton 1-2)

### *The Role of Movement in Childhood Maturation and Learning*

Students begin learning through movement from an early age. From crawling to creative play, children are imaginative and willing learners. Before grasping fluency of language, children communicate through movement, specifically through gestures. One could say that movement is the first form of communicative language children discover and practice.

Children, after all, are used to experiencing life through motion. From infancy, they learn by physically interacting with their environment. They investigate objects through touch, and crawl through living spaces like world explorers. After much experimentation, they stand, balance, and walk. Soon their repertoire expands to running, hopping, skipping, and twirling. Until they master the spoken language, children depend on a variety of gestures to express their needs and responses to the world around them. (Zakkai 7)

According to Piaget's four stages of cognitive development, the first stage a child experiences is the sensorimotor stage. A child goes through this stage from the time they emerge from the womb through their second year of life. During this stage, infants learn

and experience the world through movement, action and sensation. Through movement and touch, children learn that other people and objects exist.

A child's sensorimotor stage is similarly a period in which his body is the source for his understanding of space, time, energy and self-identity. Both Piaget and Kephart understood that children need to build up a large body of primary physical experiences as precursors to higher cognitive learning. (Gottlob and Oka 15)

Movement experiences can also aid children in the development of their thinking skills. As children move they explore new shapes, pathways and actions. Further, students acquire an aesthetic awareness. When students participate in movement and or dance classes, they are being mindful as they are moving (Zakkai 44).

This concept examines what is called whole-brain learning and is derived from research on how the brain learns. As a part of this conceptual framework, many researchers and theorists believe that specific, directed physical movements help prepare the brain for learning or improve brain function. (Lengel and Kuczala 4-5)

### *Using Movement and Dance to Enhance Learning*

Creative movement is unique in that it is never wrong, unlike a multiple-choice test in which there is only one correct answer. Students can explore movements that feel right in their own bodies and which relate to content they are studying. When dance integration is used in the classroom, educators connect on a more natural level with their students.

“Movement and dance experiences develop students’ high-level thinking skills by engaging them in exploration, creative problem solving, and decision making” (Zakkai 14). These are all skills students need and develop as they mature through their education. These skills enhance student learning and are supported through 21<sup>st</sup> century learning,

which promotes higher level thinking such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity.

Educational dance plays a critical role in developing many of these 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, such as working with diverse cultures; creativity and intellectual curiosity; self-direction; the ability to frame, analyze, and solve problems; social responsibility; and interpersonal skills. (McCutchen 38)

As they mature, children develop an oral vocabulary to facilitate verbal communication. Through movement and non-verbal communication, students interact with one another during improvisation and choreography exercises. During the choreographic process, students work together and problem solve towards a common goal. Despite different personalities, students can develop patience and empathy for others through movement and collaborative dance experiences. When students move together in unison, they learn about their peers.

A person who is free to express himself or herself through movement will be more sensitive to others' movements and their meanings, and ultimately, should be more understanding of others' moods and problems. (Green Gilbert 6)

Many students have a difficult time sitting still for a single class period or an entire school day. When arts integration, specifically dance integration is used within a school day, students are given the freedom to move around as part of their learning process. When used as a teaching strategy, movement and dance provide students exercise, freedom, and self-expression. Using creative movement and dance to enhance student learning helps hone student creativity while educators can maintain their course curriculum.

The benefits of inviting students to work with movement and dance are numerous and far-reaching. Movement and dance helps students focus and engage in learning, apply their kinesthetic intelligence, understand concepts and themes, develop and refine their higher level thinking skills, communicate in unique ways

and appreciate expression of others, develop spatial awareness, cooperate and collaborate with each other. (Zakkai 10)

Arts and dance integration also encourage students to think outside the box. When learning through integration teaching strategies, students can develop deep understanding of the topic and content presented to them. Dance can be used within the classroom to teach a variety of subjects and concepts. Students of all ages can learn through movement and dance.

Sandra Minton, explained the type of learning described above as active or experiential learning (Minton 1). This type of learning encourages and supports student learning because it helps students understand and retain information that is presented by the teacher. Thus, new information is processed through the act of moving.

Many educators believe that children learn best when they are doing because they become engaged with the subject matter. Students who are actively participating are also more interested in what they are learning. Research shows that active learning is more effective than traditional teaching methods in providing understanding, learning problem solving, stimulating curiosity and independence, and creating positive feelings about school. Active learning also assumes different children learn in different ways. One way to actively learn is to learn by moving and dancing. (Minton 1)

As the movement is experienced in the body and repeated through repetition, lesson content is experienced physically in a concrete way and is stored for later usage. As students continue to experience new concept-based movements there is an increased curiosity for learning more new material while practicing and connecting the new information to what was previously learned. Teachers can encourage students to be creative movers by providing the students with opportunities to incorporate and explore movement alongside curriculum content.



Movement and dance can help teach a wide range of curriculum topics including science, math, language arts, history, geography and social sciences. “For example, in language arts, we can put action words into motion to reinforce and demonstrate comprehension” (Zakkai 11). When teaching language arts, the class can look at a short passage or a poem and identify the action words in the text. Then, the teacher can lead the students through a guided improvisation activity using the action words from the text. Subsequently, students can work in small groups to create short dances using the movements based on the action words to retell the text through choreography.

In science, students can discover and experience movement when learning about force and energy. In social studies students can be exposed to cultural dances. Students can learn about shape and pathways when relating movement and dance to geography by transforming rivers into movement pathways and mountains into body shapes. As a class, students and teachers can create movements to represent different mathematical symbols and practice their math skills such as addition or multiplication through movement exercises. For example, students can combine different movement sequences together to produce a total number of movements found in the combined sequences. The use of different movement levels can demonstrate a number of movements that represent the numerator and denominator of a fraction.

You can see that movement and dance is integral to learning – from exploring a curriculum topic, such as letter shapes, or concept, such as cause and effect, to making a dance. The terms “movement and dance” encompass a full range of motion – from the movement that exists in the natural and human-made worlds around us, to everyday actions we all engage in as human beings, to the carefully crafted movements we know as dance. (Zakkai 9)

Many schools support arts integration amongst core classroom subjects.

Lindwood A+ Elementary School in St. Paul Minnesota believes in the importance of art

education. “It is a vision of arts-infused teaching and learning with a priority on planning and collaboration, the ultimate goal of which is to build a positive social and learning environment” (Mohn 121). It was reported the students at this school dared to explore new things because the school and teachers created a complete, safe climate for all.

The strategies of arts integration are educationally powerful because they are grounded in deep connections between the arts and cognition, and between learning, social, and emotional development. (Rabkin and Redmond 152)

### **Project-Based Style of Teaching and Learning**

Project-Based Learning (PBL), is an all-encompassing learning process in which students are immersed in the topic of study. PBL is a method of learning in which students gain knowledge and skill while learning the curriculum and ultimately creating a project at the culmination of the unit. The project students create demonstrates their comprehension of lesson content.

Project-based learning can be described as student-centered instruction that occurs over an extended time period, during which students select, plan, investigate and produce a product, presentation or performance that answers a real-world question or responds to an authentic challenge. Teachers generally serve as facilitators, providing scaffolding, guidance and strategic instruction as the process unfolds. (Holm 1)

#### *Describing Project-Based Learning*

“In Project Based Learning, students are pulled through the curriculum by a meaningful question to explore, an engaging real-world problem to solve, or a challenge to design or create something” (Hallermann and Larmer 5). PBL is a method of teaching which can be utilized at all levels of education; granted the way in which the PBL is delivered and carried out in an elementary school will differ than when a PBL unit is used in a high school. Since students are responsible for creating a project or performance at

the culmination of the unit, it is believed that students are more engaged in their learning as well as developing deep content knowledge.

PBL is a method which is based on scientific principals and encourages students to discovery learnings, enhances metacognitive strategies about the quality of life, results in realistic products following the authentic questions and topics. PBL can be defined as an investigative activity that develops cognitive structures and reconstructs knowledge in accordance with the perspective of Piaget's cognitive development. It includes activities such as metacognitive thinking, creates an original product, allows to be used communication skills in a group, class or society and presents the final products. (Ilter 488)

Educators believe that PBL supports seven core skills for students including: critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity and innovation, cooperation, teamwork and leadership, intercultural understanding, fluency in communication and information, computer and communication technology skills, and career and self-development.

PBL has also been shown to be an effective teaching tool for students from different age groups and who have varied learning styles. One researcher even reported using PBL with preschool students. She said:

Several studies looked at the effects of project-based learning on categories of learners or learner characteristics that are associated with school failure in traditional classroom situations. Beneke Ostrosky (2008) examined teacher perceptions of how project-based instruction affected diverse learners in seven preschool classrooms. Teachers reported that the real-world focus of the projects allowed students who did not generally shine in academic discussions to share their knowledge about subject matter that was familiar and accessible. Teachers in this study also reported a reduced need for disciplinary actions during project-based study, citing increased student engagement as the chief reason. (Holm 9)

*Project-Based Learning and  
Learning about Social  
Studies Content*

“Planning projects that focus mainly on science or social studies is a great way to put those subjects back in the elementary school day. You can include literacy and math in these projects, and/or art and music” (Hallermann and Larmer 20). Social studies is a

subject in which PBL has been used to teach content. The outcome of a study in which PBL was used to teach social studies is reported below.

Overall findings of the present study supported using of PBL in teaching social studies. In the study, project-based learning was found to create more positive effects on students' conceptual achievement and motivation to succeed academically than the control group's methods (whole class teaching and individual work in the work-sheet of the topics). The results indicated that students' conceptual understanding has improved as a result of project environments which are among innovative approaches in 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the experimental group, project work groups spent their time on various activities to develop their social studies understanding. They focused on the research and hands-on skills activities deeply to receive and memorize many social studies content knowledge through social interaction by participating in the projects actively. (Ilter 495)

Through social studies PBL lessons, the curriculum content comes to life.

Students might interview someone who experienced a historical event, and students also conduct extensive research on a topic to create their project. The use of PBL teaching approaches can bring excitement into a social studies curriculum. The projects can increase the student interest level as well as making the information more relevant to their learning of the topic.

### **Working with a Classroom Teacher to Develop a Project-Based Learning Unit**

Dance can be used within the classroom curriculum as a teaching tool. The power of the arts in education excites students about their learning experiences. Green Gilbert has stressed that one of the most important reasons for including movement in elementary school curricula because it can be a very important factor in student learning. For successful integration, it is important that both the classroom teacher and the dance teacher have an open line of communication while planning and implementing the unit of study.

### *Collaborating with the Classroom Teacher*

It is common that teachers amongst the same grade level or subject area meet and discuss curriculum that will be taught. They work closely to plan curriculum and discuss modifications that need to be made when the same topic is taught in the future. These teachers not only work together but they create appropriate, challenging lesson plans for their students.

We argue that when teachers collaborate in design teams as co-designers of new curricula, process of curriculum development and teacher professional development interact: curriculum development activities can lead to increased professional development, and, in return, increasing professional expertise can lead to further improving curriculum development. Through the co-design process, teachers collaboratively generate knowledge of practice. (Voogt et al. 123)

In the same way, in which teachers on a grade level collaborate to create lessons and units, collaboration vertically amongst teachers in different subject areas could lead to similar successes. When collaborating with teachers from different subject areas, many different perspectives are available on a given topic. “Schools have used PBL effectively in all grade levels and subjects, and for these special purposes: Integrating two or more school subjects and encouraging team teaching” (Hallermann and Larmer 13).

During the collaboration process it is important that opinions and ideas from each subject area teacher are heard. When a dance teacher collaborates with a classroom teacher, they each need to inform one another of how they will teach and present the content. It is vital that they stay in close communication throughout the delivery of the content.

While dance teachers bring a strong liberal arts background to our work in the public schools, perhaps the best source for learning about the “academic” content comes from the collaborative planning with the other specialists and the

classroom teachers. This planning will not happen, however, unless the school sets it as a priority. (Mohn 122)

In order for the integration of content to be successful students should be able to have the same learning experiences in each class concurrently. When learning the subject simultaneously in both the dance and classroom setting, the two teachers will be able to more thoroughly support student learning and comprehension of the subject.

Teachers need time to collaborate. This partnership cannot be successful without the time and support of the school administration.

School leadership includes purposeful curriculum, leadership, ensuring that student learning is taking place, teachers are being supported, collegiality is encouraged, vision and goals are developed and shared, and curriculum developing efforts are well coordinated and aligned. Efforts to improve teaching quality through collaboration build relational trust in a school. (Voogt et al. 124)

Without ample time, the collaboration between teachers cannot be carried out as planned.

It is important that teachers have the time to work together and meet before, during and after the unit of study. Before the unit is taught the teachers will plan the unit.

Throughout the duration of the unit the teachers must meet to discuss any changes that need to be made to accommodate student comprehension, as well as having a check-in point to ensure the unit is progressing as planned. Finally, teachers must have time at the conclusion of the unit to discuss the outcomes and make notes on any changes that might be needed for future teaching of the same unit, or new ideas on how to present the information.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Preparation for the Study**

The following chapter presents the methods used to conduct research on collaborating, creating, and implementing a cohesive PBL social studies unit in an elementary school. Prior to conducting this study, the researcher requested approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). To acquire project approval, the researcher submitted a narrative, which included the purpose of the study, procedures for collecting, analyzing and handling the data, possible risks and benefits, and any costs or compensations. IRB also approved the research instruments or tools and sample student, parent and teacher participant consent forms that were required to conduct the research. The IRB requested a revision to the application narrative before final approval was granted. The researcher received written approval from the IRB as well as the school administration to conduct her research study. (Appendix A)

#### **Research Study**

The purpose of this research study was to collaborate with a general education classroom teacher to create, and implement a PBL social studies unit, which included dance integration. The researcher wanted this learning and teaching experience to occur during the same time period in both class settings. To accomplish this, the researcher and the classroom teacher had to keep an open line of communication prior to the unit as well as throughout the progression of the unit. During meetings with the classroom teacher,

the researcher asked questions about the social studies academic curriculum. The cooperating teacher then described some major themes included in her curriculum such as traditions, customs, geography, and the celebration of the New Year. As a result of this discussion, the researcher and her cooperating teacher decided to focus on China as the topic for their PBL unit.

This research study was a qualitative research project in which the researcher sought to learn about the process of creating a dance integrated PBL unit and the students' and cooperating teachers' responses to it. There was also a quantitative aspect to this study in which the researcher compiled the number of times the same or similar theme appeared in the responses.

The specific questions that guided this research project were:

- Q1     What are the possible effects of integrating dance in the development and delivery of a PBL unit?
- Q2     Does the level of involvement of students in a class change when both movement and dance are included in a PBL unit to deliver content?
- Q3     What are the teacher and student responses to the use of movement and dance included in the PBL unit of study?

### *Research Participants and Classroom Settings*

This research study was conducted at an inner city public elementary school. There are approximately eight hundred students enrolled in this public school. The student demographics of the school included 52% male students and 48% female. The student body is made up of a diverse ethnicity including three students who are American Indian, 40% African American, 11% Hispanic or Latino, 3% Asian or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, 43% White and 2% Multicultural. Other groupings documented



by the school include 5% of students are English Language Learners (ELL), 19% are students with disabilities, and 54% are students whose families are economically disadvantaged.

The students who participated in this research study had been participating in dance for two years prior to the beginning of the research study. This means the students were already exposed to creative movement, the dance elements (space, time, energy/quality) and had opportunities to participate in dance making activities.

The participants in the study included twenty-nine third grade students, one general education classroom teacher and one dance teacher who was also the researcher. The students completed ascent forms and their parents/legal guardians signed consent forms. The collaborating classroom teacher also signed a consent form. All the consent forms described the purpose and intentions of the research study. All twenty-nine students and their parents completed both the ascent and consent forms, allowing the entire class to participate in the study.

The research study was conducted in two separate classrooms—the dance studio and an academic classroom. Both classrooms had an inviting and welcoming environment to help students excel in their learning. The dance studio was a big open room with plenty of space in which students were able to dance and explore movement. This was a safe space that fostered creativity and individuality. Portable mirrors were located in the dance studio, which were used as a teaching tool and enabled students to observe their movements. There were also many visual aids in the dance studio such as posters that included the dance elements and New York City Blueprints. The New York City Blueprints included benchmarks for teaching and learning in the Arts by describing

what students should be learning and doing at different grade levels. The dance teacher also posted daily learning objectives so the students knew what they would be learning each day. There was also a promethean board in the dance studio which was used as an interactive teaching tool. The promethean board was used in this study so students could view videos as well as look at images throughout different lessons.

The academic classroom was another classroom that provided students with an engaging space for successful learning. Student desks were grouped together into clusters of five tables; which allowed for student collaboration. This academic classroom also displayed current student work on the bulletin boards. A promethean board was used in this space by the academic classroom teacher. The teacher had access to classroom computers and several laptops for students to conduct their research.

Students visited the dance studio once a week for forty-five minutes. In the dance studio, students participated in movement and dance-based lessons taught by the researcher. Students were taught their social studies curriculum from their classroom teacher in their homeroom class. Students also conducted their research and created their final project in their homeroom classroom.

### *Research Instruments*

A number of research instruments were used throughout the study. They included surveys completed by the students, the researcher and the cooperating teacher. The researcher also recorded her observations of the students based on the quality and level of their participation and involvement in the classes.

### **Student Research Instruments**

The students were given a pre-test survey before the unit began in order to assess their factual knowledge about China, as well as their previous experience with participation in PBL units (Appendix B). The students then participated in the lessons that were part of the unit of study. These lessons were taught by both the dance teacher and the classroom teacher.

Mid-way through the study, the students completed a reflection survey. This survey questioned the students about their experience and participation at this point in the PBL unit as it was taught in both their academic classroom and their dance class (Appendix B).

Finally, students completed a posttest survey. This survey asked students to share information they learned about China, their learning experiences in both the academic classroom and the dance classroom, and in what way movement and dance, in particular, assisted their learning during the PBL unit and contributed to their overall enjoyment (Appendix B).

### **The Teachers' Research Instruments**

Both the dance and classroom teachers completed surveys throughout the process of conducting the research study. The classroom teacher completed pre-test, reflection and posttest surveys. The dance teacher who was also the researcher completed observation notes and a posttest survey.

The classroom teachers' pre-test survey included four questions. The first question was about her previous experience with planning and executing PBL units. In the second question, the researcher inquired if the teacher had ever collaborated with

other teachers other than those who taught at the same grade level. The next question was a follow up question, in which the researcher wanted to know if having prior experience with a teacher outside of their grade level was successful, and in what way was it successful. The last question on the classroom teacher's pre-test asked what the teacher wanted to accomplish through collaboration with the dance teacher to create and implement a PBL unit (Appendix B).

Midway through the unit the classroom teacher completed a reflection survey. This survey was included to act as an opportunity for the teacher to check in. In this survey the classroom teacher answered questions concerning communication and meetings with the dance teacher, student learning behaviors and any suggestions or modifications needed in the collaboration process.

At the same point in the project, the researcher observed the students in their classroom setting during a social studies teaching period and took notes on the students' behaviors. The researcher paid close attention to the students' focus and concentration, so she could compare their behavior and level of participation in the classroom versus their behavior in dance class. The lesson content, based on China, was taught by both teachers.

At the conclusion of the study, both teachers completed the posttest surveys. In these surveys, the teachers described their collaborative experiences and their descriptions of any changes they noticed in students' level of participation and other types of student responses during this unit. Both teachers also noted that more time to meet and consult with one another would be helpful (Appendix B).

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Following the conclusion of the study, the researcher analyzed the data completed by all the participants. Throughout the study all participants were identified only with a numeric code to help ensure confidentiality. The researcher also used the codes to identify participants for data analysis procedures. The researcher read through the responses to each survey (pre-test, reflection and posttest) and searched for themes that emerged in the all the responses, including those made by the students, researcher and classroom teacher. The researcher created bar graphs to represent the number of times the same or a similar theme emerged from the responses made by each participant to all questions. The same qualitative procedures were used to analyze the researcher's observations. The bar graphs added a quantitative aspect to the analysis of data since each bar represented the number of times the same or a similar theme emerged from the responses.

### **Summary**

The surveys used in this project guided the research and helped provide answers to the researcher's initial questions. The outcome of the surveys used in this research project provided qualitative data in the form of emergent themes. The researcher then counted the number of times the same or a similar theme was identified and presented these numbers in the form of a bar graphs. This part of the analysis lent a quantitative aspect to the outcome of the project. The outcome of this project will be revealed in the next part of the thesis, chapter four or the discussion chapter.

All surveys completed by the twenty-nine students, classroom teacher, and the researcher/dance teacher will be discussed in terms of the themes discovered as well as those discovered from analyzing the researcher's observations.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

As stated in Chapter One, the researcher was interested in studying the collaboration of a dance teacher and a classroom teacher while creating, planning and implementing a social studies PBL unit. In addition, the researcher also examined the level of student involvement in their learning when dance was integrated into academic subjects. This chapter will address the outcome of the qualitative and resulting quantitative analysis of data collected throughout the course of the study.

#### **Students' Data**

Student data were collected at three different times throughout the study. The students completed a pre-test survey at the beginning, a reflection survey half-way through the study, and a posttest survey at the end of the study. All students answered the survey questions and recorded their responses in handwritten form.

#### *Analysis of Data from Student Pre-Test Survey*

The pre-test survey was distributed for students to complete on the first day of the study. This pre-test survey was titled "Student Pre-Test Survey." This survey can be viewed in Appendix B. In the first question, the researcher asked students to list three facts they knew about China. The researcher analyzed the student responses and found that nine themes emerged from the data. These themes can be seen listed along the vertical axis of the graph in figure 1.

### Student Pre-Test Survey: Question 1

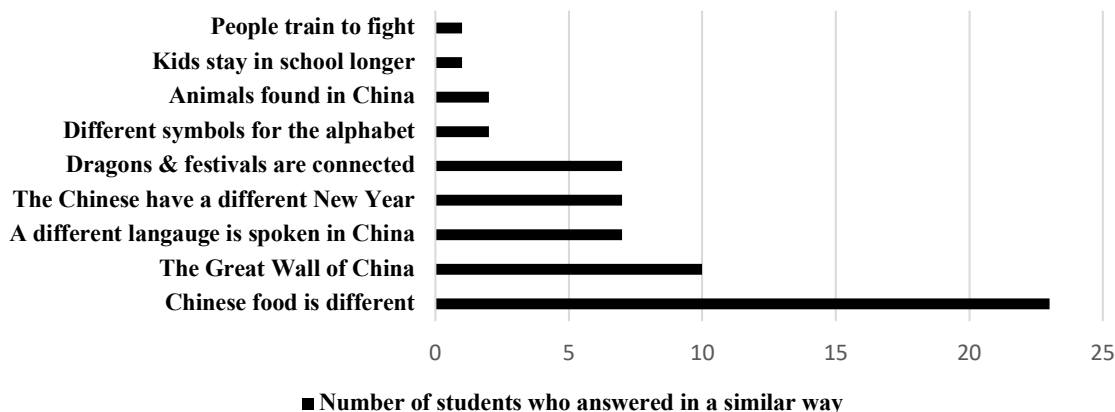


Figure 1: Themes from students' answers on pre-test survey, question 1.

Question two was: Have you ever participated in a PBL unit? The students' answers for question two on the pre-test survey revealed that the majority of the students had previously participated in a PBL unit. Twenty-four students answered "yes" that they had prior experience participating in a PBL unit. Five students responded "no" to this question. The data from responses to this question are documented in figure 2.

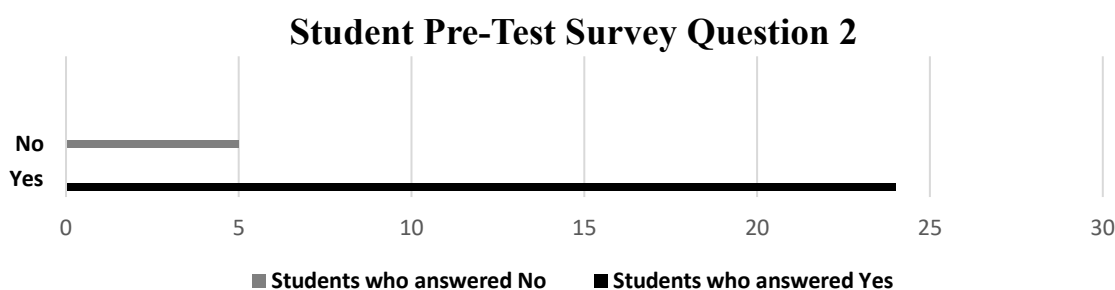


Figure 2: Data from students' answers on pre-test survey, question 2.

The final question on the student pre-test survey asked students what they would like to learn through dance and movement in this PBL unit based on China and Chinese culture. The researcher again sought out common themes from student responses. Five



themes emerged and are documented in figure 3 along with the number of students who responded with the same or similar theme.

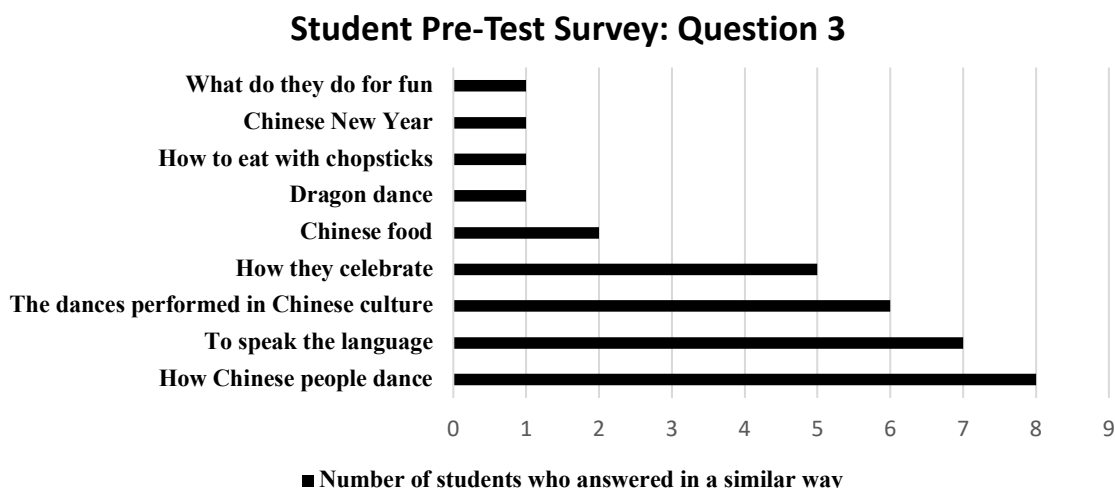


Figure 3: Themes from students' answers pre-test survey, question 3.

#### *Analysis of Data from Student Reflection Survey*

Mid-way through the study students completed the reflection survey which consisted of three questions. In the first question, the researcher wanted the students' opinion of the lessons, asking "Are you enjoying learning PBL in dance at the same time you are working on PBL with your classroom teacher? If yes, why?" In response, all twenty-nine students answered "yes" they enjoyed learning PBL in dance. When answering why, however, the students gave a wide range of responses, although the most common theme which emerged was the students enjoyed this experience because "I am learning more about the same topic in both classes." This was the response from twelve students. The remaining themes found in the students' answers can be found in figure 4.

### Student Reflection Survey: Question 1

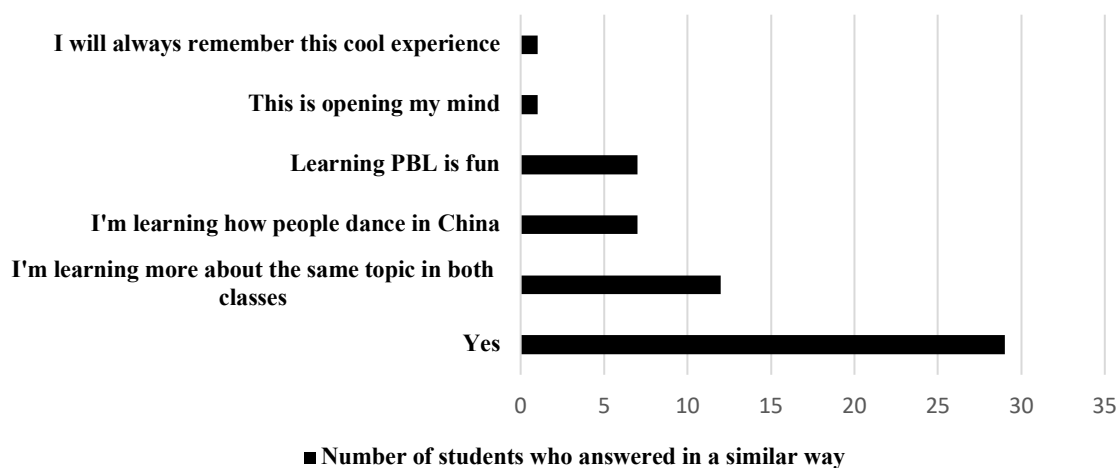


Figure 4: Themes from students' answers on reflection survey, question 1.

In the second question in this reflection survey, the researcher inquired about what students enjoyed most when learning Chinese culture through dance. The responses to this question varied. Some students enjoyed learning Chinese cultural dances, with the use of props. Many students enjoyed creating their own dances based on the information that they had been learning. Additionally, some students enjoyed learning about dances performed in the Chinese culture. Figure 5 displays the themes found in the students' reactions to question two.

### Student Reflection Survey: Question 2

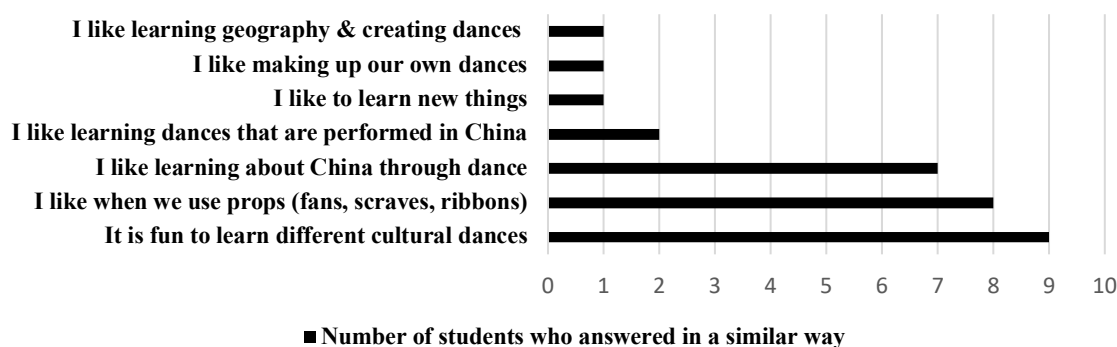


Figure 5: Themes from students' answers on reflection survey, question 2.

In the last question in the reflection survey, the researcher asked students if they would like to learn more of their classroom subjects through dance and movement. Twenty-six students said they would like to learn about more of their classroom subject matter through dance and movement, while three students responded no. Of the three students who responded no, only one student supported their answer with a reason. This student reported that “no I would not want to learn more subjects through dance because I get exhausted from dance class.” The other two students did not provide a reason why they would not want to continue learning future classroom subjects through dance. Many of the students who answered yes, supported their reasoning by stating that it is more fun to learn academic studies through dance. The remaining themes that emerged from students’ answers can be found in figure 6.

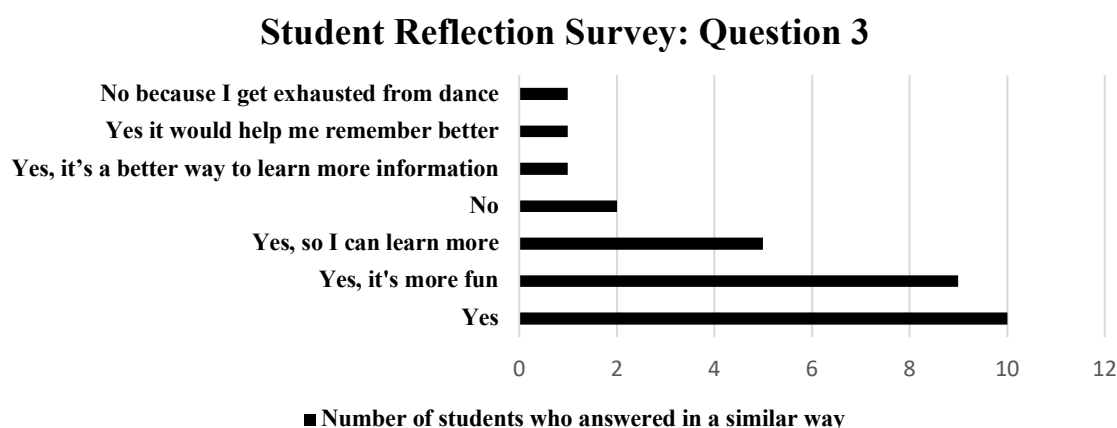


Figure 6: Themes from students’ answers on reflection survey, question 3.

#### *Analysis of Data from Student Posttest Survey*

At the conclusion of the study, the students completed a posttest survey, which consisted of five questions. The first question was the same question students answered initially in the pre-test survey. In this question the students were asked to list three facts

that they learned about China. In these answers, different themes emerged after the students had participated in a complete unit of study. The themes that emerged from the students' responses can be seen in figure 7.

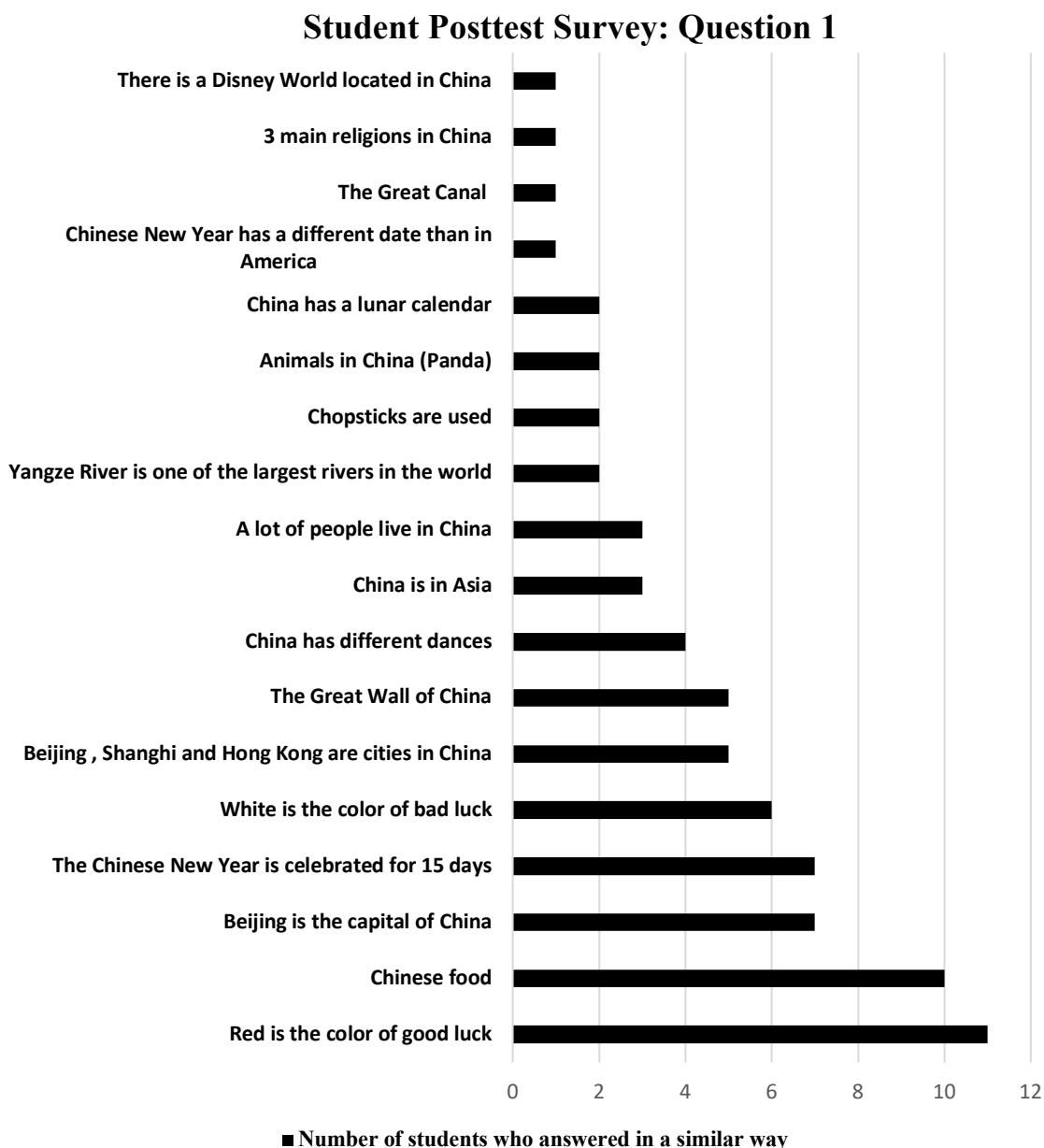


Figure 7: Themes from students' answers on posttest survey, question 1.

In the second question in the posttest survey, the researcher asked students to describe their experience in learning the PBL unit in dance. All twenty-nine students

reported that they had a positive experience. Four main themes emerged from student replies as to why participating in this unit was a positive experience. One theme which emerged was that students liked learning about different dances performed in Chinese culture. Many of the students enjoyed the arts integrated lessons in which they learned about geography and created their own dances with a partner. A large majority of the students also enjoyed either learning their dance for the show, or performing in the show. Figure 8 provides descriptions of the themes found in students' responses to question two.

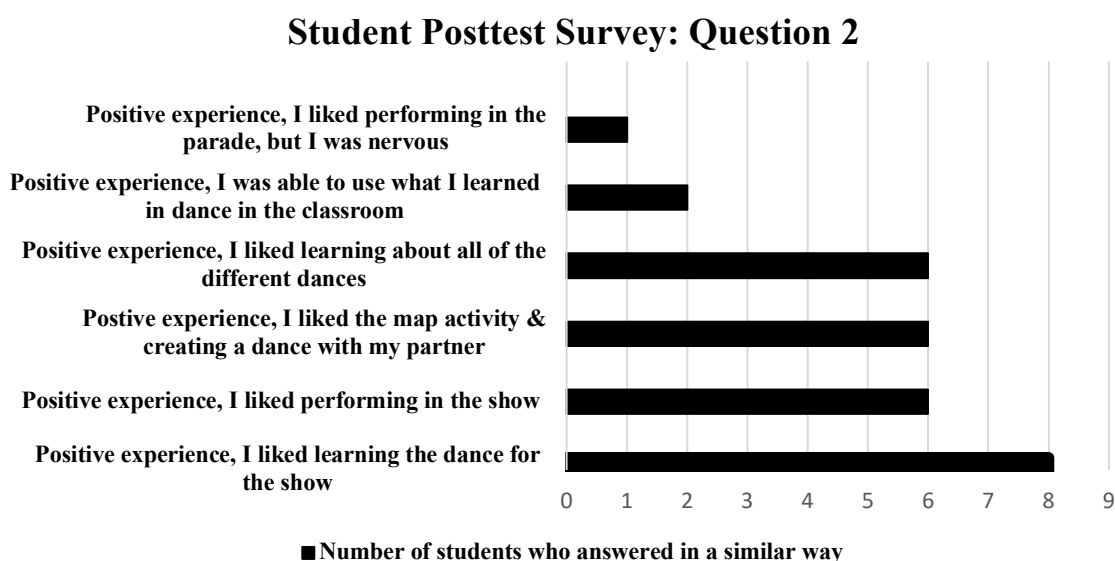


Figure 8: Themes from students' answers on posttest survey, question 2.

In a third posttest question, the researcher wanted to know if the students felt dance helped them understand what they were learning with their classroom teacher. Here twenty-eight students reported that dance helped them understand classroom curriculum content. These students provided detailed answers to explain why dance aided what they were learning. Only one student answered no to this question. This student stated that more facts about China were learned in the academic classroom setting.

Eight students discussed a specific dance lesson in which the class looked at the map of China and discussed facts about China afterward. The map activity and discussion were followed by creating a dance based on the map. In this dance, the students followed movement pathways that copied rivers, roads and other details found on the map. The themes that were found in the students' responses can be seen in figure 9.

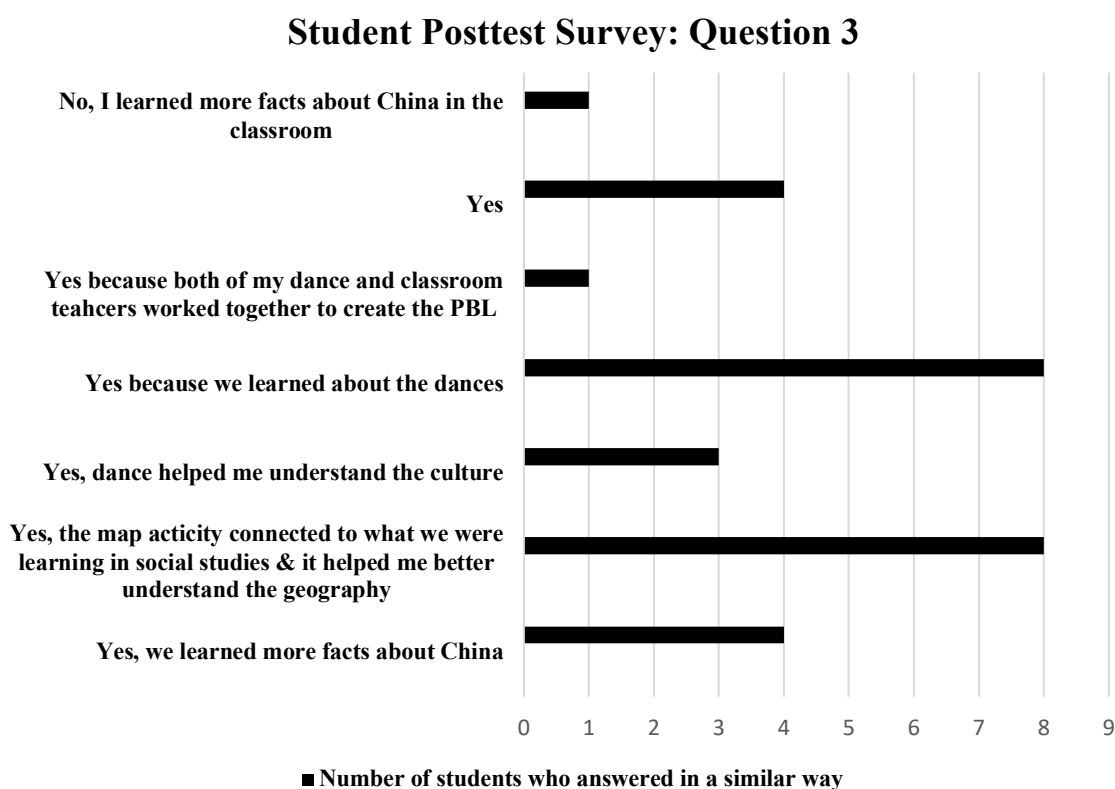


Figure 9: Themes from students' answers on posttest survey, question 3.

In question four in the posttest survey, the researcher was interested in learning specifically what content in the dance unit helped the most in understanding content taught by the classroom teacher. The most common responses were as follows: fourteen students wrote about the geography and dance lesson and ten students stated that learning the Chinese dances helped them. A summary of the themes that emerged from the students' responses to question four can be found in figure 10.

### Student Posttest Survey: Question 4

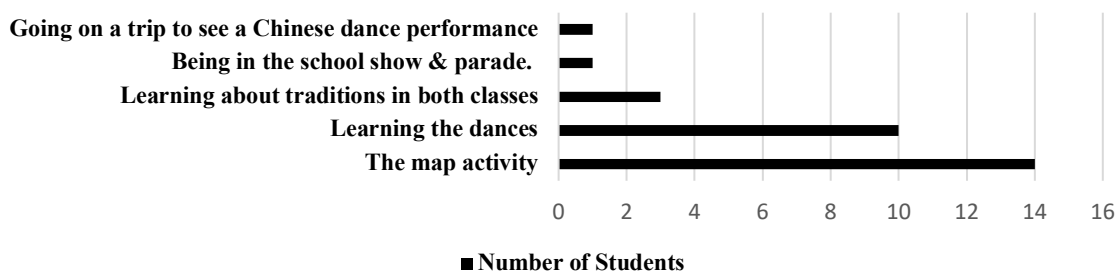


Figure 10: Themes from students' answers on posttest survey, question 4.

The final question that students answered in the posttest survey was “If you did not enjoy learning dance as a part of the PBL unit please explain why.” None of the student participants answered this question.

### Teachers' Data

Both teachers involved in the study completed research instruments throughout the study. The classroom teacher completed a pre-test survey, a reflection survey, and a posttest survey. The dance teacher completed an observation form, and a posttest survey. After the completion of the study, the researcher analyzed the data provided by both teachers.

#### *Analysis of Data from Classroom Teacher's Pre-Test Survey*

The classroom teacher completed a pre-test survey in which the researcher asked four questions, but the teacher answered only three of the four questions because one question did not apply to her. When asked about her previous experiences with creating and planning PBL units, the teacher stated,

I have planned several PBL units. All of them were done in previous years when I was teaching kindergarten and first grade. Last year when I taught first grade, I planned a social studies PBL on economics. The class created a book store and sold books to other students in the school.

In the second question on the pre-test survey, the researcher wanted to know if the classroom teacher had ever collaborated with other teachers other than teachers who taught the same grade level. In her answer, this teacher indicated she had only collaborated with her grade level teachers.

The final question in this same survey involved what the classroom teacher wanted to accomplish through collaborating to create a PBL unit with the dance teacher. She responded, "I am hoping that by collaborating with the dance teacher we can create a memorable learning experience for the students." The classroom teacher's pre-test survey can be found in Appendix B.

#### *Analysis of Data from the Classroom Teacher's Reflection Survey*

Mid-way through the unit the classroom teacher responded to four questions on the reflection survey (Appendix B). When asked if she had been able to meet and/or communicate with the dance teacher thus far she stated: "Yes, we have been meeting and discussing what we are doing in both of our classes."

In question two of this survey, the researcher asked whether the classroom teacher noticed a change in her students' interest in the unit in comparison to other units she taught that did not include the dance component. The classroom teacher responded, "I think when we link other subjects to the topic it immerses the students learning so they can focus more on the subject."

The researcher was also curious if the classroom teacher noticed her students making connections in her classroom between what they were learning in dance and the academic content. The teacher reported, "Yes, when we have been researching, students



wanted to look up all of the different Chinese dances. The students are really enjoying learning about China and are really looking forward to performing their dance.”

In the final question on the teacher’s reflection survey, the researcher asked if there were any suggestions or modifications that the classroom teacher wanted to make in the collaboration process. The teacher’s only suggestion was to add more planning time. Unfortunately, due to scheduling at the school, there were limited times the dance teacher and the classroom teacher were able to meet.

#### *Analysis of Data from the Dance Teacher’s Observations*

The dance teacher/researcher completed an observation form at the mid-point in the research study because she wanted to record the students’ behaviors when they were engaged in a social studies lesson in their classroom. The researcher was curious if there were any differences in the way students acted or participated in their classroom in comparison to how they acted and participated in the dance studio.

After observing the students in their classroom, the dance teacher/researcher answered four questions. To answer the first question, the researcher had to describe what she noticed about the students’ focus and concentration. In her answer to this question, the researcher stated, “The students were very engaged as they were researching information about China for their PBL projects.”

Next the researcher had to describe the students’ behaviors in more detail. Here, the researcher commented on the students’ high level of involvement and noted that the students were working collaboratively by sharing research in preparation for creating the first draft of their PBL project.

When asked if she saw a change in students' behavior in the classroom lesson in comparison to student behavior in previous dance lesson, the researcher noted that the "students are actively engaged in both classroom settings and they are eager to learn!"

The final question was similar to the third question. The researcher wanted to know more about the student's level of participation and behavior. "I noticed similar behavior in the students as I see in my dance class. I noticed that these students are happy to complete the assignment as they are taking responsibility and showing a sense of pride in their work." A copy of the questions used in the preceding observations is in Appendix B.

#### *Analysis of Data from the Classroom Teacher's Posttest Survey*

At the conclusion of the study, the classroom teacher completed a posttest survey in which she answered three questions related to her experience collaborating to create the PBL unit. The researcher asked whether the classroom teacher enjoyed the collaborative process with the dance teacher. The classroom teacher indicated, "YES!! It was wonderful to coordinate what the class was learning with dance. It worked out so well! Would love to have more time to plan a new unit!"

In the second question, the researcher asked if the classroom teacher would want to collaborate again with the dance teacher or any other arts teacher. Again, her response was, "Yes!! Integrating other subjects and teacher's ideas into the class curriculum would be great!"

In the final question, the researcher wanted to know if the classroom teacher noticed any differences with student participation or in their responses throughout this unit? If so, the researcher also wanted to know if dance seemed to be a motivating factor

in the students' behaviors. The teacher reported, "the students really enjoyed researching China. I think adding the dance element made it a more hands on experience." The classroom teacher's posttest survey can be viewed in Appendix B.

*Analysis of Data from the Dance  
Teacher's Posttest Survey*

The first question in the dance teacher/researcher's posttest survey was, what did you enjoy about collaborating with the classroom teacher? The researcher stated,

I was happy to see that the classroom teacher was interested in what the students were learning in my class. The classroom teacher even came early to my class for a few minutes before several of the sessions to see what the students were doing. I was especially impressed when she allowed the students to continue sharing the dances they created during the geography lesson in her classroom since we had run out of time in the dance class.

In question two of the posttest survey, the dance teacher/researcher needed to describe what worked well in planning and executing this PBL unit. She noted, "Having an open line of communication allowed for success in this unit. Having specific meeting times allowed us to discuss and plan together."

The dance teacher also had to describe how she felt about the collaboration experience and if she would make any changes in the process. She reported that this was a positive experience and that she would like more planning time with the classroom teacher. The collaboration process was enjoyable and not difficult from the dance teacher's perspective.

The last question in this survey was about the dance teacher/researcher's evaluation of the success of the PBL unit. She said, "Yes! This was a great experience for students and teachers alike. I am hoping to continue collaborating with classroom

teachers in future units.” A copy of the dance teacher’s posttest survey can be found in Appendix B.

### **Summary of Dance Integration Project-Based Learning Unit Experience**

The intent of this study was for two teachers to collaborate and create lessons in dance and social studies which would support one another. The emerging themes presented above from student responses, indicate that dance integration can enhance the learning process from a student’s perspective. Each dance and movement lesson that was taught was well received by the students, and this was clearly shown through their eagerness to participate. The students’ answers supplied constructive feedback for the researcher. The positive information received from the collaborating classroom teacher supports using dance integration in schools.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

As previously mentioned, this study was conducted to create an integrated dance and movement PBL social studies unit while collaborating with the classroom teacher, followed by teaching that unit to a third-grade class. The objective was also to assess the outcome of integrating dance into a PBL unit. Another question the researcher was interested in answering was whether the level of student involvement changed when movement and dance were included in a PBL unit. Finally, the researcher was curious to hear the reactions of both the students and collaborating teacher on their experience of participating in the dance and movement integrated unit.

#### **Significance of Dance Integration**

“Dance class is a special time, just like math, reading or physical education class” (Green Gilbert 9). Students exposed to dance education learn to become creative movers and thinkers. Dance as a part of education allows students to develop and use their kinesthetic awareness. Since children naturally learn through movement, integrating movement and dance within classroom curricula supports taking an active approach to student learning. “Creative dance and physical education can become strong partners in the school curriculum at all levels” (Green Gilbert 8).

It is important to inform all educators about the significance and role dance can have in education within the school setting. General education teachers are inclined to educate their students using a traditional teaching style. Without having the information

and resources available that describe how dance integration can be used within classroom curricula, teachers will continue teaching in the same way, while students sit at desks and learn. When teachers are given the opportunity to see and experience other teaching methods, such as dance integration, they are able to enhance their teaching practices. Using dance integration in the classroom allows educators to differentiate their teaching and present curricula to students in more varied ways. Jennifer Zakkai wrote,

Recently I conducted a workshop in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, to help educators understand how movement and dance could be integrated into classroom learning. Debbra Lang, Executive Director for Instruction, later commented that the workshop had demonstrated ‘how the arts demand a rethinking of how we apply information. It wasn’t just moving, it was translating information into movement.’ (11)

Schools that are fortunate enough to have a dance specialist on staff will have an easier time incorporating dance integration with classroom content. When a dance educator is part of the school faculty, he or she can work closely with the classroom teacher. Once the dance educator is informed about what students are learning in their classroom, he or she can then plan lessons that support the classroom curricula. Such lessons can enhance and support student learning. When dance integration is used across subject areas, classroom teachers and school administrators will be inclined to learn more about the arts and become arts advocates.

### **Reflections on Research Study**

As stated throughout the chapters of the thesis, this research study was designed to integrate dance in a PBL unit while collaborating with a classroom teacher to create and implement the unit. The researcher wanted to introduce dance integration in the school in which the research was conducted. This process enabled her to reflect and gain insight on the outcomes of the unit.

The research methodology used in this study consisted of a pre-test, reflection surveys, and a posttest completed by the students and collaborating teacher. The researcher/dance teacher also completed an observation survey and posttest. The analysis methods were both qualitative and quantitative. In terms of her qualitative analysis, the researcher assessed the responses of the twenty-nine student participants, and found common themes in their answers on the pre-test, reflection survey, and posttest. From the emerging themes, the researcher also calculated the number of students who responded to each question similarly and grouped those student responses together. This provided a quantitative aspect to the study.

Another outcome of this project was that the researcher used the responses on the collaborating classroom teacher's posttest and reflection as a guide to meet the classroom teacher's expectations and needs. The posttest completed by the classroom teacher revealed she had a positive experience working alongside the dance teacher to create the unit.

The researcher/dance teacher also observed the students as they worked in their traditional classroom, since she was interested in comparing the students' behaviors and level of participation in the two settings. She found that students were engaged and participated fully in both settings. In her posttest responses, the dance teacher revealed the outcome of the unit of study and reported that the unit and collaboration with the classroom teacher were a success.

### **Furthering Dance Integration**

Support and advocating for arts, specifically dance in schools will be promoted and furthered by dance integration. When classroom teachers are exposed to dance

integration, they are more likely to be interested in including it in their own classrooms and school communities. The outcome of this study showed that the classroom teacher was excited to collaborate with the dance teacher because she saw how her students were able to make connections between both subject areas—dance and social studies. The classroom teacher noted that she would like to collaborate again with the dance teacher to create additional units of study.

### *Limitations of Study*

There were several limitations in this study. The researcher was also the dance teacher and had been teaching these students for the previous two years. This could have influenced the successful outcome of the study since the students had become accustomed to the dance classroom environment and expectations. Another limitation of this project was that the researcher created the research instruments, which were not validated.

### *Ideas for Future Research*

It is the responsibility of dance educators in schools to advocate for dance integration. When advocating for dance, the dance teacher must first educate his or her colleagues and administrators about the benefits of dance integration. The outcome of this study is an example of such a successful collaboration.

Based on this study, the classroom teacher is excited to continue collaborating and creating dance integrated units. However, one change in the future will be that more planning time was needed as noted by both the classroom and dance teachers. With this information in mind, both teachers plan to present ideas for their future collaboration to the administration by describing the success of their unit and the need for further



integration of dance and academics. In addition, both teachers will be advocates and promote their collaboration because dance integration also allows for differentiation in student learning. Both teachers are eager and excited to spread the awareness of and possibilities for teaching through the arts to other teachers in the school community.

## WORKS CITED

- Green Gilbert, Anne. *Creative Dance for All Ages*. The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1992.
- Green Gilbert, Anne. *Teaching the Three R's*. National Dance Education Organization, 2002.
- Gottlob, Stephanie and Yuji Oka. "Movement Curriculum for Pre-School Children with Emotional Disturbances: A Three-Stage Developmental Approach." *Journal of Dance Education*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2007, pp.14-24.
- Hallerman, Sara and John Larmer. *PBL in the Elementary Grades*. Buck Institute for Education, 2011.
- Holm, Margret. "Project-Based Instruction: A Review of the Literature on Effectiveness in Prekindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Classrooms." *InSight: Rivier Academic Journal*, vol. 7, no.2, 2011, pp. 1-13.
- Ilter, Ilhan. "A Study on the Efficacy of Project-Based Learning Approach on Social Studies Education: Conceptual Achievement and Academic Motivation." Research Paper. The University of Bayburt, 2016.  
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280928257>
- Leat, David. *Enquiry and Project-Based Learning: Students, School and Society*. Routledge, 2017.
- Lengel, Traci and Michael S. Kuczala. *The Kinesthetic Classroom: Teaching and Learning through Movement*. Corwin a SAGE company, 2010.

- McCutchen, Brenda. *Teaching Dance As Art in Education*. Human Kinetics, 2006.
- McPherson, Elizabeth. "Teaching Across the Curriculum: Explorations in Teaching World Studies Through Dance and Other Disciplines." *Journal of Dance Education*, vol. 6, no.2, pp. 57-59. Oct. 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2006.10387313>.
- Minton, Sandra. *Using Movement to Teach Academics*. Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2008.
- Mohn, Katherine. "Rocking the Curriculum: Dance and Academics at an A+ School." *Journal of Dance Education*, vol. 4, no. 4, 2011, pp. 121-123. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15290824.2004.10387273>.
- National Dance Education Organization. *National Core Arts Standards in Dance*, 2014.
- Rabkin, Nick and Robin Redmond. *Putting the Arts in the Picture: Reframing Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Columbia College Chicago, 2004.
- Voogt, Joke, et al. "Teacher Collaboration in Curriculum Design Teams: Effects, Mechanisms and Conditions." *Educational Research and Evaluation*, vol. 22, 2017, pp.3-4. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13803611.2016.1247725?needAccess=true>.
- Zakkai, Jennifer. *Dance as a Way of Knowing*. The Galef Institute, 1997.

APPENDIX A  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DOCUMENTS



*Institutional Review Board*

DATE: November 7, 2017

TO: Sarah Kulchinsky

FROM: University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [1140283-3] Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: A Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: November 7, 2017

EXPIRATION DATE: November 7, 2018

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this project. The University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB has APPROVED your submission. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on applicable federal regulations.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of November 7, 2018.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry May at 970-351-1910 or [Sherry.May@unco.edu](mailto:Sherry.May@unco.edu). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

**Your application is now approved. Please be sure to use the most updated version of the consent/assent forms in your participant recruitment and data collection.**

**Best wishes with your research.**

**Sincerely,**

**Dr. Megan Stellino, UNC IRB Co-Chair**

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB's records.



Institutional Review Board  
CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
(Teacher Consent)

Thesis Title: Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: A Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences

Researcher: Sarah Kulchinsky, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

Contact Information: [kulc4212@bears.unco.edu](mailto:kulc4212@bears.unco.edu)

Research Advisor: Dr. Sandra Minton, University of Northern Colorado,  
[sandra.minton@unco.edu](mailto:sandra.minton@unco.edu)

You are being asked to take part in a research study of the effectiveness in collaborating to create and implement a Project Based Learning (PBL) unit of study integrating dance and social studies content.

**What is the study about:** I am interested in adding dance and arts integration to the PBL units. Students will experience the dance curriculum that coincides with their academic learning in social studies. The project will attempt to answer the following questions: 1) What are the possible effects of integrating dance in the development and delivery of a PBL unit? 2) Does the level of involvement of students in a class change when both movement and dance is included in PBL to deliver content? 3) What were the teacher and student responses to the use of movement and dance included in the PBL unit of study? As part of a graduate research project, this research will help advocate for more arts programming in collaboration with classroom teachers and grade level curriculum. This research may also provide a model for arts advocacy and arts integration in public schools. Research will span the length of the course, four months.

**Risks:** The risk for participation in this study is minimal. As part of this study, you will be creating, implementing and revising a PBL unit in collaboration with the dance teacher. You will be asked to observe your students' responses, complete a pre-test, post-test and posttest, as well as a self-reflection survey.

Your answers will be confidential: No identifying information will be used for presentation or publication of study results. Only coded or fictitious names will be used. All written data will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home. Digital data will be stored on my computer and password protected. All videotapes, other data, and consent forms will be retained for three years and then destroyed.

**Teacher's Initials** \_\_\_\_\_

Taking part is voluntary: Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you have questions: The researcher conducting this study is Sarah Kulchinsky. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact me with the information listed above. Please retain one copy of this for your records.

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, Office of Sponsored Programs, 25 Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910.

**Statement of Consent:** I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

---

Teachers Full Name (please print)

---

Teachers Signature  
(month/day/year)

Date

---

Researchers Signature  
(month/day/year)

Date

---

Printed Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent  
(month/day/year)

Date

All consent forms and data will be stored in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home. The researcher is the only person who will have access to the locked cabinet.





Institutional Review Board  
CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
PARENT/GUARDIAN

**Thesis Title:** Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: A Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences

**Researcher:** S. Kulchinsky, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

**Contact Information:** kulc4212@bears.unco.edu

**Research Advisor:** Dr. Sandra Minton, University of Northern Colorado,  
[sandra.minton@unco.edu](mailto:sandra.minton@unco.edu)

Your child is being asked to take part in a research study of the integration of dance and social studies in a Project-Based Learning (PBL) unit. I am asking for your permission for your child to take part in this study. This study will be conducted during your child's regular weekly dance class at \_\_\_\_\_ and the accompanying academic class. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to allow your child to take part in the study.

**What is the study about:** The aim of this research is to discover the answers to three questions: 1) What are the possible effects of integrating dance in the development and delivery of a PBL unit? 2) Does the level of involvement of students in a class change when both movement and dance is included in PBL to deliver content? 3) What were the teacher and student responses to the use of movement and dance included in the PBL unit of study? As part of a graduate research project, this research will help advocate for more arts programming in collaboration with classroom teachers and grade level curriculum. This research may also provide a model for arts advocacy and arts integration in public schools. Research will span the length of the course, four months. Some of the dance classes will be video recorded.

**Risks:** The risks and discomforts inherent in this study are no greater than those normally encountered during regular dance participation. The teacher will make every effort to warm students up properly in order to avoid injury. Students will be instructed to let the teacher know ahead of time if they have an injury or other reason they cannot participate in a particular activity. If students participate, they agree to take on all risks involved, and the teacher, university and the school are not liable.

**Parent's Initials** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your answers will be confidential:** Every effort will be made to protect your child's identity. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I make public, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify your child. A code system will be used to identify all participant responses including the pre-test, reflection and posttest information. No actual names will be used. I will use pseudonyms. The goal of the research is to simply document the success of dance integration with social studies. All data compiled from this study will be stored in a locked cabinet in the home of the researcher, and it will be destroyed after the completion of the thesis. Completed consent forms will be stored in a locked cabinet in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Dance Education co-coordinator Christy O'Connell-Black.

**Taking part is voluntary:** Participation is voluntary. Your child may choose not to participate in this study. If your child begins participation, you or your child may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you and your child are otherwise entitled.

**If you have any questions:** The researcher conducting this study is Ms. Kulchinsky. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have any questions later, you may contact me with at any time. Please retain one copy of this letter for your records.

Thank you for assisting me in my research. Sincerely,

*Ms. Kulchinsky*

**Parent's Initials** \_\_\_\_\_



Institutional Review Board  
CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
PARENT/GUARDIAN

**Thesis Title:** Collaborating, Creating and Implementing: A Cohesive Project-Based Learning Social Studies Unit with the Goal of Deepening Third Grade Student Learning Experiences

**Researcher:** S. Kulchinsky, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

**Contact Information:** kulc4212@bears.unco.edu

**Research Advisor:** Dr. Sandra Minton, University of Northern Colorado,  
[sandra.minton@unco.edu](mailto:sandra.minton@unco.edu)

Participation is voluntary. Your child may decide not to participate in this study. If your child begins participation, you or your child may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you and your child are otherwise entitled.

Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like your child to participate in this research. All written data will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home. Digital data will be stored on my computer and password protected. All videotapes, other data, and consent forms will be retained for three years and then destroyed. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future references. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, Office of Sponsored Programs, 25 Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910.

**Statement of Consent:** I have read the above information and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Child's Full Name (please print)    Child's Birth Date (month/day/year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent/Guardian's Signature    Date (month/day/year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Researcher's Signature    Date (month/day/year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Printed Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent    Date (month/day/year)

*This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by the IRB on (date).*



Institutional Review Board  
ASSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
(Child Assent Form)

Hello,

My name is Ms. Kulchinsky and I am the dance teacher at your school. I am conducting a research project to study the effects of using dance in a Project Based Learning (PBL) unit. I would like to work with third grade students to study how dance can help your learning experience during a PBL unit. If you want, you can be one of the students I work with.

If you want to work with me, you will be a part of the ten lessons that I create using movement and dance to help you understand what is being taught in the PBL unit. I will ask you to answer some questions at the beginning, halfway through, and at the end of the unit. This isn't a test or anything like that. The questions are about what you think about the lessons and using movement and dance to learn more about your PBL topic. I really want to know what you think about my lessons.

If you work with me, it won't hurt you. We will have to be careful because we will be moving around a lot though. Some of our dance classes will be video recorded so I can review the class. All documents from the study will be collected and stored in a locked cabinet or it will be password protected on my computer. Everything will be destroyed three years after the study is complete.

Your parents have said it's okay for you to work with me, but you don't have to. If you say, "yes" but then change your mind, you can stop at any time. Do you have any questions for me about my research?

If you want to work with me and be in my research, sign your name below and write today's date next to it. Thank you!

---

Student

---

Date

---

Researcher

---

Date

APPENDIX B  
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

## Student Pre-Test Survey

Student Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please list 3 facts about Chinese culture that you know?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever participated in a Project Based Learning (PBL) unit? (Circle one)

a. Yes

b. No

3. What would you like to learn through dance and movement in this PBL on China and Chinese culture?

---

---

---

---

## Student Reflection Survey

Student Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you enjoying learning PBL in dance at the same time you were working on PBL with your classroom teacher? If yes, why?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What are you enjoying most about learning the Chinese culture through dance?

---

---

---

---

---

3. Would you like to learn about more of your classroom subjects and topics through movement and dance?

---

---

---

---

---

## Student Posttest Survey

Student Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please list 3 facts about Chinese culture that you know?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please describe your experience in learning your PBL topic of China in dance. Was this a positive experience? What did you enjoy the most?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. Do you feel dance is helping you understand what you learned with your classroom teacher?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



4. Which part of the dance unit helped you in understanding what was taught by your classroom teacher?

---

---

---

---

---

---

5. If you did not enjoy learning dance as part of the PBL unit please explain why.

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Teacher Pre-Test Survey

Teacher Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. What were your previous experiences with PBL planning and execution?

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Have you ever collaborated with any other teachers? If so, what teachers have you worked with other than your grade level teacher team?

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. If you have collaborated with a teacher outside your grade level, what did you find was successful about the collaboration?

---

---

---

---

- 
- 
4. What do you want to accomplish through collaborating with the dance teacher to create and implement a PBL unit?

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Teacher Reflection Survey

Teacher Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you been able to meet and/or communicate and collaborate with the dance teacher throughout the execution of the PBL?

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Do you notice a change in your students' interest in this unit from others with the addition of the dance component at this point of the unit?

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. Do you notice your students discussing and making connections between what they are learning in dance within their academic learning of the social studies curriculum of China and the Chinese culture?

---

---

---

---

---

---

4. Are there any suggestions or modifications that you want to make in the collaboration process?

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Teacher Posttest Survey

Teacher Code \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did you enjoy the collaborative process with the dance teacher to create and implement this PBL unit?

---

---

---

---

2. Would you want to collaborate again with the dance teacher or any other arts teachers?

---

---

---

---

3. Did you notice any difference with student participation or their responses throughout this unit? If so, do you believe that the addition of dance to the unit was a factor?

---

---

---

---

Dance Teacher Observations (after recorded dance lesson and after observing social studies class taught by classroom teacher)

1. What did you notice about the focus and concentration of the students?

---

---

---

---

2. Describe the behavior of the students in this lesson.

---

---

---

---

3. Do you see a change in behavior in this lesson than from previous dance lessons?

---

---

---

---

4. After observing students in their classroom while participating in a social studies lesson, what did you notice about their behavior and level of participation?

---

---

---

---

### Dance Teacher Personal Posttest Survey

1. What did you enjoy about collaborating with the classroom teachers?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What worked well in planning and executing this PBL unit?

---

---

---

---

---

3. At the conclusion of the project, how do you feel about the collaboration experience? What changes would you make in the collaboration process if any?

---

---

---

---

---

4. What was difficult about the collaboration process if any?

---

---



---

---

---

5. Do you believe this PBL unit was successful? If not, please explain why.

---

---

---

---

---

APPENDIX C  
SAMPLING OF LESSON PLANS

## Overview of PBL Dance Lessons

---

### Lesson 1: Traditions

The class began by the teacher reading the book The Lion Dancer, by Kate Waters. Students participate in class discussion reflecting on the book. The dance teacher then asked students to explain what traditions are, and why are traditions important?

The teacher asked the students to think of a family tradition that is important to them. Students were then asked to draw a symbol to represent this tradition. After drawing the symbol, students created a movement transformation, where they turned their symbol into a body shape.

Students then created ABA dances where their dance began and ended (A) in the shape that represents their tradition/symbol. The middle section of the dance (B), was movement to show more detail about their family tradition. This section needed to last for at least 8 counts.

Finally, students shared their work with a partner.

---

### Lesson 2: Map it Out! (Geography)

How do we locate cities and locations of different countries? Using a map! When we use a map, we need to use a compass to identify the direction of a location. (Students have learned about the compass with their classroom teacher, remind them of **Never Eat Soggy Waffles**)

After this review of the compass, the dance teacher will review the stage directions (upstage, downstage, stage right, stage left). These are the directions we use in dance to determine our location. She will stand in one section of the room and use stage directions to identify my location ex: I'm standing downstage right, if I'm downstage right what direction would I be if I were using the compass? (answer: north east) Next the dance teacher will choose students randomly and ask them to identify their location in the dance studio using both the stage directions as well as the directions used on the compass.

The class will look at map of China on the smart board and together will discuss some "fun facts" about the major cities in China.

The dance teacher will model the map it out activity with a student. Working with a partner, choose 3 locations on the map of China. Then create a still body shape for each location. Next decide how to travel to each location. Rehearse the dance with your partner.

Students will be assigned a partner to complete the map it out choreography activity.

The class will end with an informal performance. Each group will be able to present and share what they have choreographed.

---

### Lesson 3&4: Chinese Cultural Dances

Students will learn about traditional Chinese dance. Some of the dances include the Lion Dance, the Ribbon Dance, and the Dragon Dance. The students will view a video of each dance. They will discuss what they notice throughout the dance including movements, costumes and props.

The dance teacher will teach the students variations of each of these dances. Students will then have the opportunity to create their own variation of each dance. Students will work with props such as ribbons and scarves. When learning the Lion Dance, students will learn about the skill shadowing.

Students will perform the dances they create for the class at the end of both class sessions.

---

### Lesson 5-8: Performance Choreography

The class will learn a dance that is a variation of the cultural Chinese dances that they have previously learned. They will rehearse this dance for several weeks, as they will be performing in a special Chinese New Year celebration for the school and parents.

After the students have completed learning the choreography, the teacher will record the students performing in the classroom. The students will then watch the video and provide self-assessment by giving themselves a compliment on a part of the dance they did well, as well as give themselves something to work on.