**Egyptian Lesson for Nora Davis Magnet School (Fall 2016)**

**Researched & Instructed by USM dance majors in**

**DED 360 (Methods of Teaching Dance)**

**Written by Julie Hammond White**

*Nora Davis Magnet School is located in Laurel, Mississippi. Teachers teach academics artfully every day and in many ways. All four arts are taught as distinct disciplines in and of themselves at this school, and the arts specialists weekly work with regular classroom teachers to integrate arts and academics together. USM dance education majors do much of their fieldwork at NDMS for this reason – the teachers are dedicated to individualized and creative instruction, and the students excel in this curriculum despite most of them being on free or assisted lunches and living in a relatively isolated and socio-economically depressed town.*

*Researching, designing, and instructing this cultural dance class is an annual assignment for students enrolled in DED 360, organized and guided by myself. NDMS lets us know what culture we will present, as the larger school celebrates this culture not just in arts experiences, but in the food they serve, the attire they wear, the concepts they learn, and the activities they have that special day. It is taught to every student in the school as well – PreK – 6th, SPED and gifted and midline, thus the material (movement as well as supporting information and commentary) needs to easily be differentiated to stay developmentally and ability appropriate. There is an intentional balance between doing creative movement (focused on the dance elements) and traditional cultural dances with authentic music as accompaniment. The class is 30 minutes long and is taught seven times in a row. In this way, our majors get a “real life” experience with what K12 teachers do daily in terms of the amount of teaching they do, the stamina and energy this requires, and how many students are in their charge by day’s end. The lesson plan is written after instruction takes place so that best practices across the full spectrum of students and class periods are recorded and not just our original ideas. For this reason, this lesson is “tested and good to go” in terms of being immediately ready to teach. We hope you do!*

**Introduction**

* “Marahabaan!” Repeat this word after me (repeat three times). We just said “hello” in Arabic, the chief language spoken in Egypt. We are here today to teach you some cool things about Egypt with the help of dance.
* As you might know, Egypt is a part of the African continent. It has a famous river called the Nile that runs through the center of the country, and its landscape is mostly deserts.
* Egypt is known for its history as much as the society and culture it is today. This is the land of pyramids, hieroglyphs, mummies, and famous gods or dieties that protected this ancient people. Through dance, we’ll learn about many of these things in class today.
* Cue: When we need your attention we will clap three times and say the word “raqus” which means “dance” in Arabic. Let’s try it (repeat three times).

**Activity 1: Warm-Up**

To warm-up we are going to use our bodies to explore two of the most well-known things found in Egypt: the Nile River and pyramids.

* The **Nile** is big/wide, runs South to North, and curves throughout the country. Students will:
  + Make big wide shapes (four of them)
  + Explore levels from low to high (first with body parts, then whole body)
  + Make curved shapes (tracing, body parts, whole body, floor patterns)
* **Pyramids** were inspired by the spreading rays of the sun and are angular. Students will:
  + Be the sun (make a round shape with arms, shoot arms out like rays of the sun, be the heat of the sun)
  + Explore angular shapes (tracing, body parts, whole body, floor patterns)

**Activity 2: Traditional Egyptian Dance – The Tanoura**

* In ancient Egypt, this people worshiped over 1000 different dieties or gods. In Egypt today, over 90% of all Egyptians are muslims. The dance we are about to teach you is done for spiritual purposes, specifically finding peace and calm in one’s life. It is called the Tanoura and is from the Tanoura region. It is danced by adults and children alike. It has a girl and boy part, and is done in partners with props. Today, we’ll be learning steps from each and we’ll do it facing forward, but otherwise, know that you are learning a dance that is performed in Egypt today. The movement is as follows:
  + Forward and back for 4 counts with swaying arms (right and left)
  + Spinning to the right for 4 counts, done twice, with wrapped arms
  + Forward and back for 4 counts with swinging arms

**Activity 3: Hieroglyphic Alphabet Dance**

* The alphabet handouts will be given to students. They will be asked to work alone to create a shape for the first letter of their name based on the assigned word in the ancient Egyptian alphabet (pictures and words). Students will show their letters one half of the room at a time.

**Activity 4: Walk Like An Egyptian Dance**

* The students will dance to this popular song doing angular, isolated, and rhythmic movements that were done to this song and capture ancient Egyptian paintings/drawings where the whole body was shown and in this distinct way. Each of the FOUR movements will be repeated for eight counts, done in a set sequence, and repeated three times. These include:
  + Hands together palm to palm overhead with bent elbows, head isolations right and left
  + Strong angular poses that are 2 dimensional (teacher will set and lead)
  + Strut with pulsing arms (moving forward, side to side)
  + Slide side to side with arm swings (4 counts each) with a clap overhead after each

**Closure**

* We thank you for your attention, your creativity, and your dancing today! We say “Wadaeaan” to you, which means “goodbye” in Arabic. Have students say and repeat this.