

Written Summary

Name of student(s): Courtney Egotak, James Bolt, Keisha Nivingalok

Grade: 7

Project Name: Drum Dancing

School: Kugluktuk High School

Describe Your Project:

Our Project is all about the background of drum dancing and its culture.

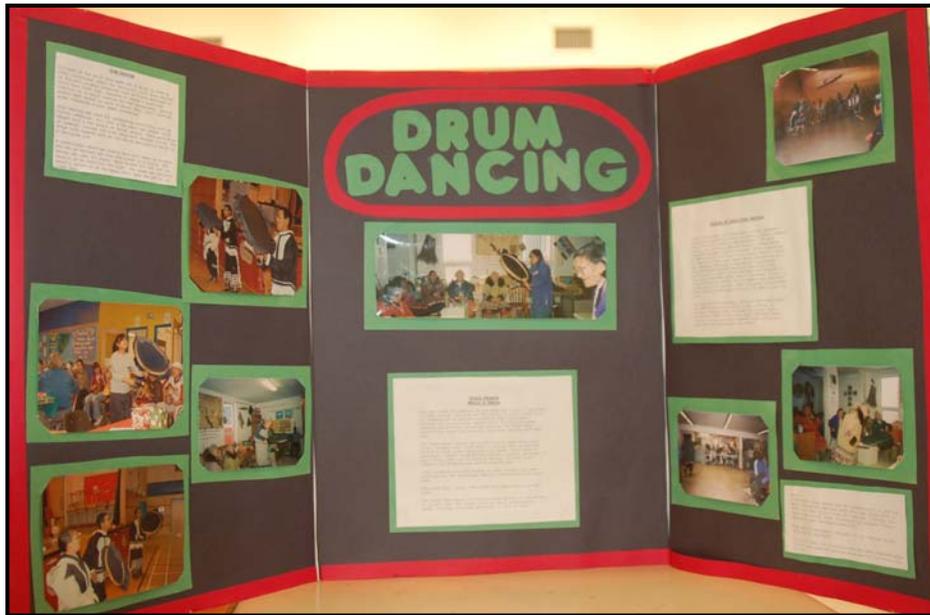
Resources: Researching on the internet, interviewing an adult and got pictures from the Brighter Futures program.

What did you find out as a result of your research?

We found out that the Inuit drum danced as part of celebrations, births, boy's first hunt, marriage and visitors. We also found out that the men were always the drummers and women as singers.

Describe your personal interest in the project and why you chose it.

To keep the tradition alive.



Drum Dancing

Cultures of the Inuit have made use of drums in some of their traditional music for centuries. Inuit drum dancing is a big part in many occasions such as births, marriage, an Inuit boy's first hunt, changing of season's, greeting visitors, or to honor someone who had passed away. Special events were spread by word of mouth. Many Inuit traveled great distances to attend these ceremonies.

Drum dancing was used for celebrating everything such as births, weddings, etc. Just a few years ago dances could happen with a few people or enough people. There were songs of lampoon, contest and even songs with obscene lyrics. The songs told legends such as the one of Qallupillik which is a centuries old.

A traditional dance was mostly done with woman as singers and men as dances and they are formed in a circle. The dances can last for hours, (with breaks for tea) and can usually go on long into the night. The women and children usually joined in on the dance until hear the end in the olden days.



Origins of Inuit Drum Dancing

Pihiks (vocal songs) are a combination of body movement, singing and drum beating. Songs are usually sung by someone else (frequently a woman or several women). The songs usually tell a story or describe an event. A drum dance song might be used to settle a dispute, offer a challenge, or even ridicule, drum dance's were usually held in dance or igloo snow houses a good dancer knows just when to yell out. Because of the size of the drum and the strength required to play the drum dancing is generally a male activity, but in recent years some woman have acquired in this skill. Sometimes almost 90cm in a diameter is used. A cover of de-haired caribou skin is dampened and stretched across the circle, and then lasted into place with braided sinew cords; a wooden beater (katuuti) is used to play the drum.

Drum Dancing: In a drum dance, voice and instrument blend and harmonize to create a mood, to tell a story, or entertain. Beat patterns are played on a large drum, coupled with chants or narrative songs. The drum dance tradition extends across the Canadian Arctic. Playing a large drum requires strength and stamina.



Inuit People Music & Dance

For centuries the beating of the drum was always a good way to stay active. The drum in the north, is heard especially in celebration of special occasions they drum dance! Singers sit in a circle, dancer swirl the pulsing drum, dancing and hitting the wooden part of the drum. Most adults have their own personal song that defines who they are.

The Inuit drum, qilaut was traditionally made from drift wood & caribou skin, with seal or walrus skin around the handle or with other materials available. Inuit drum to celebrate. Common celebrations are for a birth, marriage, a boy's first hunt and to welcome spring. In many Inuit communities drumming was mostly done by men.

Inuit drumming was once banned in many communities when missionaries and government was now comfortable with Inuit ways.

The Drum more likely used today is made with nylon and wood.

The songs that people sing while drum dancing is now known as ayaaya song. The songs could be about celebrations, games, stories, hardship and songs to sing to kids.



Margo:

I know that drum dances are for celebrations, a time for people to gather and they make their own songs after a catch, or they tell a story of a person's lifetime. You cannot use actual words of animals say example: "Tuktu" (caribou), they use (naguit, antlers).

Drum dancing has been a big part of our culture in the north and it way back.

I'm not to sure how it started but who ever invented drums to music was awesome, because drum dancing is a beautiful culture.



