



This is a physical development activity  
for children ages 3 to 5

# Acknowledgments

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# Tatanka, Tatanka



**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Developing movement skills (running, dodging); developing confidence; developing competence; developing social skills (cooperation); developing body control and spatial awareness.

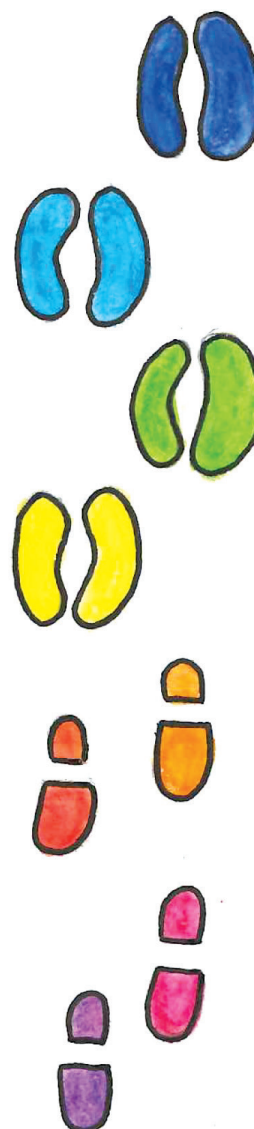
**Language/literacy links:** Playing with the sounds of the language (e.g. rhythm, chanting)

**Equipment:** None

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ Tatanka is the biggest of the buffalos and the leader of the herd. The buffalo was an important source of food and materials to the First Nation/tribe providing everything from meat, tallow, sinew for sewing, bones for tools and hide for blankets, clothing and their tipi covering. The entire tribe would be involved in rounding up and / herding the buffalo into the buffalo pound, or in driving them over the buffalo jump.
- ❖ In this game, younger children learn skills like chasing, catching, running, fleeing and dodging so that when they are old enough they can join in the all-important buffalo hunt.





# Tatanka, Tatanka (continued)

## Let's play

- ❖ Begin by choosing one child to be the "Tatanka". They will stand in the center of the playing area. The other children will line up against a wall, or boundary area.
- ❖ The child in the middle calls out "Tatanka, Tatanka", and the children against the wall will run across the gym floor or open space towards the opposite side. Every person the Tatanka tags becomes part of the buffalo herd and remains in the center of the gym.
- ❖ The children who have made it to the other wall will wait again for the Tatanka to call out "Tatanka, Tatanka" and will run across the space once again, trying to escape being tagged by all the other children who have joined the buffalo herd.
- ❖ This process is continued until only one child is left. They will now become the new Tatanka.

## MOVEMENT SKILL: DODGING



### Cues for your child

- Head up
- Push and turn

### Parts of the skill

- Keep head up, and a low body position
- Plant one foot into the ground
- Quickly change direction to get away from a chaser

### Tips

- Remind children to bend their knees when dodging.

## Other Skills

- Run





# Tatanka, Tatanka Cross the River



**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Vigorous physical activity; developing movement skills (jumping); developing confidence; developing competence; developing social skills (cooperation, teamwork); developing body control and spatial awareness

**Language/literacy links:** Movement words (jump, boundaries)

**Equipment:** Tape, towels (for "boulders")

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ First Nations people living on the prairies and plains were adept at traveling, navigating by the stars and landmarks. Their travels took them across rivers and mountain ranges along paths that were sometimes hard to travel and where the ability to be really good at jumping is essential.
- ❖ This game is a modification of a game already played in most schools on reserve "Tatanka, Tatanka." In this modification, there will be a race across an imaginary river. This modification will allow children to practice jumping and landing in a specific spot.





# Tatanka, Tatanka Cross the River (continued)

## Let's play

- ❖ Begin by placing tape on the gym floor to mark where imaginary boulders would be.
- ❖ Children would practice jumping across the boulders in order to cross the river.
- ❖ Children will be divided into two teams, Tatankas and Hunters. The race course will be made by creating two distinct rows of "boulders" parallel to one another; one for Hunters and one for Tatankas.
- ❖ Hunters will race Tatankas. If you don't beat the Hunter, you become a hunter. If you are a Tatanka and you win the race you get to stay a Tatanka.
- ❖ The race can last until there is one winner, or can run for a determined amount of time.

## MOVEMENT SKILL: HORIZONTAL JUMP



### Cues for your child

- Two Feet
- Swing your arms
- Reach for the sky
- Bend knees to land
- Land on two feet with knees bent

### Parts of the skill

- Arms back, bent knees
- Arms swing up and forward
- Take off and land on both feet simultaneously
- Bend knees to absorb force

### Tips

- Encourage the children to start with their **arms back** and their **knees bent**.
- Or use a rhyme:  
Swing your arms as you fly up high,  
bend your knees to softly return from the sky



# Bowling-Ball Hunting

**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Developing movement skills (rolling); Developing social skills (taking turns, cooperation); developing confidence; developing competence.

**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. observing, describing, story-telling)

**Equipment:** Balls, stuffed animals, or printouts of various animals

**Let's Make:** Stuffed animal or printouts of animals (children may want to colour the print outs of the animals)

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ Winter is a difficult time to hunt. Some small animals do not hibernate in winter but still live in burrows under the snow. Different skills are required to hunt for these kinds of animals who live under the snow or ice. Long ago, hunters in North America used spears thrown along the ground or ice to hunt. Hunting gave First Nations people a way to provide for their families. It was very important to provide for the children. Children were considered to be so precious that no one wanted to see a child go hungry. Young children learned to hunt by going along with their parents during hunts. Hunting in winter gave them a chance to get outside and seek small game.
- ❖ This activity is an adaptation of the original game called Snow Snakes that used spears thrown along the ice. Skills were developed by children as they watched their parents and tried to do what their parents did.





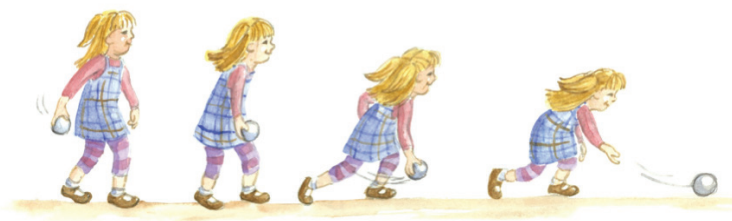


# Bowling-Ball Hunting (continued)

## Let's play

- ❖ Begin by lining children up in rows with 5 or 6 children in each row. Row 2 lines up behind row 1, row 3 lines up behind row 2. Each row moves forward when it's their turn. The row in front will be the hunters.
- ❖ Using a larger ball, try to be a successful hunter by knocking the stuffed animal/target down by rolling the ball at the target.
- ❖ With a row of stuffed animals set up as targets, an entire row of children can roll their ball toward the targets, retrieve the balls and return it to the next row of children waiting to play.
- ❖ This encourages cooperation and makes retrieving the balls a fun part of the game.

## MOVEMENT SKILL: ROLL AND UNDERARM THROW



### Cues for your child

- Face the target
- Step and Swing
- Hand in the Air
- Let go close to the ground (roll)
- Let go with throwing hand in front of the body

### Parts of the skill

- Stand front on, arm back
- Long step with foot opposite "ball hand"
- Bend knees and hips to release the ball close to the ground

### Tips

- Encourage the children to take a **big** step, so they get **long** and **low**.
- Pointing to the target after the throw will help children improve their aim!
- An underhand throw is just like a roll except you release the ball into the air instead of on the ground. Stand up tall to do an underhand throw.



# Hoop and Stick

**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Developing movement skills (hand-eye coordination, timing); developing confidence; developing competence; developing social skills (cooperation, taking turns); developing body control and spatial awareness.

**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. observing, describing, story-telling)

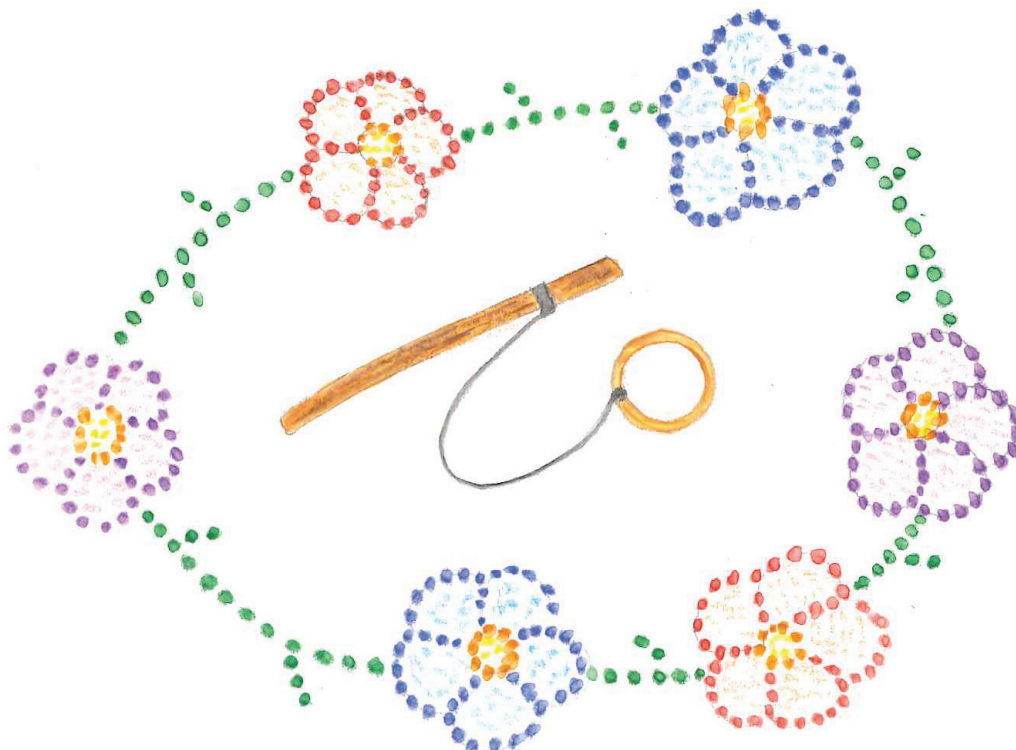
**Equipment:** 1 hoop and 1 stick for each child

**Let's Make:** Hoops (butter or yogurt plastic lids)

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ Hunting was an essential skill for First Nations young people to learn. They began early with toys that encouraged them to develop skills. Hoop and Stick toys were created out of a slice of buffalo leg bone (the hoop) or a willow stick bent and fastened into a circle forming the Hoop. This Hoop was attached to the end of a Stick by a string. Once it is attached, the player holds the stick and swings the hoop up in the air. When it is aloft the goal is to spear the hoop with the stick.







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# Hoop and Stick (continued)

## Let's play

- ❖ Children can begin the activity by starts by holding the stick and pointing it toward the ground.
- ❖ When they are ready, children can attempt to quickly bringing the stick up in front of themselves, causing the hoop to fly up in the air
- ❖ The child then can attempt to catch the hoop it by using their stick as a spear and attempting to spear through their hoop
- ❖ The player can take as many turns as needed to spear the hoop with the stick.



# Hunting

**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Developing movement skills (throwing); developing social skills (taking turns, cooperation); developing confidence; developing competence.

**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. observing, describing, story-telling)

**Equipment:** Balls, stuffed animals, or printouts of animals

**Let's Make:** Stuffed animal printouts or printouts of various animals (children may want to colour printouts of animals)

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ First Nations people did not have stores in which to shop for their food. They depended on their brothers, the animals, to feed them. Their belief is that the animals gave themselves to the people so that the people will not be hungry. This sacrifice by the animals required the hunters to develop great skills to hunt and harvest the animals without causing suffering for the animal. Knowing that a lance or arrow through the ribs to the lungs or heart was the most quick and efficient way to kill the animals, hunters would try to make the kill quick and with as little pain as possible. This required hours upon hours of practice.
- ❖ Each hunter had to make their own arrows, lances and knives out of stone, which took long hours. If their talents weren't good at making arrowheads and flint knives, they had to find goods to trade for those precious items. This makes the arrowheads and lance points very valuable, another reason to be very careful with them when hunting. Accuracy mattered greatly.
- ❖ Finally, when on the hunt, the Hunters would then pray and show respect for the animals they hunted, giving an offering of precious sacred tobacco when the animal was killed to show their gratitude.





# Hunting (continued)

## Let's play

- ❖ Begin by securing stuffed animals, or drawings of the animals onto the wall. These will serve as targets for throwing a tennis ball (or mini lance shaped from a dowel or pool noodle).
- ❖ In this game, the children form rows with 5 or 6 children in each row. Row 2 lines up behind row 1, row 3 lines up behind row 2. Each row moves forward when it's their turn. The row in front will be the hunters.
- ❖ The hunters each have a tennis ball to throw at their target. They get 4 chances to hit the target. After each throw, they have to wait for everyone to finish throwing before retrieving their ball (this is especially important when using the lance)
- ❖ After the last retrieval of the ball, they hand it over to the next row to take their turn. Balls can be marked the way that arrows were traditionally marked, with color stripes to identify the owner.

## MOVEMENT SKILL: THROW



### Cues for your child

Use a rhyme:  
Stand side-on,  
make a star  
Point your finger,  
throw it far

### Parts of the skill

- Stand side on
- Take your arm down and back
- Step a big step forward with opposite foot
- Look where you're throwing and bring arm forward
- Let go of the ball when you see your fingers coming through

### Tips

- Encourage children to follow through by pointing towards the target long after the ball has left their hand.





# Tipi Toss



**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Developing movement skills (throwing and catching); playing cooperatively, developing confidence; developing competence.

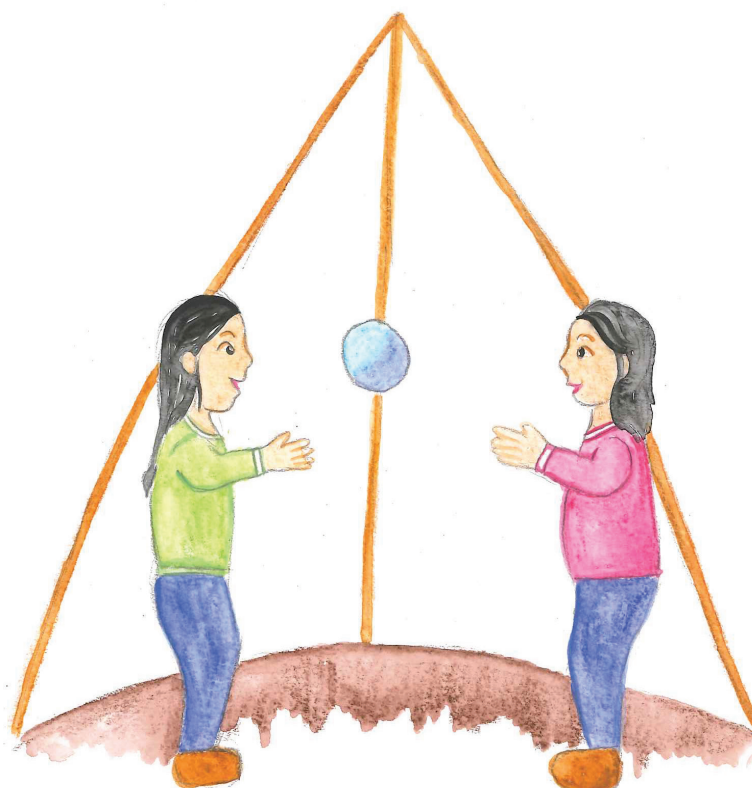
**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. story-telling)

**Equipment:** Small balls

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ Living in a small space like a lodge or tipi, especially in cold weather, caused many games to evolve. Balls made of leather scraps were used in a football game that could range far and wide across the plains in warm weather as there were no boundaries. This wouldn't be possible in snow or stormy weather, but the ball was still a favorite toy. Smaller games with balls can be used inside. Living in small spaces in large family groups, First Nations people taught their children to be respectful and careful of one another's safety and comfort within the tipi.
- ❖ Tipi teachings were essential and guided family life. Each pole of the tipi represented a teaching within First Nations' life. The tipi poles represent: Obedience, Respect, Humility, Happiness, Love, Faith, Kinship, Cleanliness, Thankfulness, Sharing, Strength, Good Child Rearing, Hope and Ultimate Protection.
- ❖ Inter-connectedness is represented by the tipi flaps and the rope represents the Sacred Bond or our connection to the Universe.





# Tipi Toss (continued)

## Let's play

- ❖ Upon learning the meanings behind the tipi poles, children are ready to begin the activity.
- ❖ To begin, children will stand in a circle in the middle of the gym in their imaginary tipi.
- ❖ They will toss the ball to one another with the goal of cooperation accomplished by looking directly at each person they are throwing the ball to.
- ❖ If the targeted child catching the ball drops the ball, they're out and sit in the center until the next child drops the ball. Once the next child drops the ball the child on in the centre can rejoin the circle.
- ❖ The game continues until only one player remains who has not dropped the ball. Multiple rounds of this game can take place.
- ❖ To increase physical activity, there can be many games going on at one time with multiple small groups of children.

## MOVEMENT SKILL: CATCH



### Cues for your child

- Hands out and ready
- Watch the ball
- Bring it to your body

### Parts of the skill

- Arms in front with elbows slightly bent
- Watch the ball
- Reach toward ball
- Catch in hands

### Tips

- Encourage the children to have their arms in front and watch the ball.
- Or use a rhyme:  
Hands together,  
Fingers wide,  
Watch it land right inside

## Other Skills

- Throw



# Let's Dance!



## Storytime

- ❖ Among First Nations people, dance serves an important social and ceremonial purpose. Dance is used to gather people together in celebration. It is used to bind people together as in Societies who work together to share their special skills with their people. These societies might be warriors, healers or craftsman who have specific songs and dances just for them. Songs and dances also serve as ways to transfer knowledge and preserve stories of historical importance and to share concepts that the people lived by. Many songs and dances teach about animals and their habits, or elements of nature. By becoming a member of a society, a young person became a learner and gained the knowledge, mentors and help in learning the special skills and knowledge of the Society. They learned beside their mentors, the leaders of the Society. The learned by watching and then doing, with a mentor beside them to help them.







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# Rabbit Dance



**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Developing movement skills (jumping); creativity and self-expression; developing confidence; developing competence.

**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. imitation, story-telling)

**Equipment:** Drum, music box (this can be created from recycled materials you have in your centre or at home (e.g., an pail or plastic container)

**Website Links:** [binged.it/2ILdyhC](http://binged.it/2ILdyhC)

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ This dance was originally designed for children. By creating a special segment of the Powwow gathering for children, their importance in the community is recognized and honored. The Rabbit Society is a special society for children. As in other societies in North America, this society had a purpose. Its' purpose was to teach the smallest children that they belonged and had an important role in the community. Their responsibilities were to learn to dance when the Rabbit Dance song was sung. In this way, the children are assured that they too have a purpose within the community, to dance together, to enjoy one another and let others enjoy them.





# Rabbit Dance (continued)

## Let's Dance!

- ❖ Children dance with their fingers held to their heads forming the rabbit ears. They hop in a motion imitating the rabbit.

## MOVEMENT SKILL: HORIZONTAL JUMP



### Cues for your child

- Two Feet
- Swing your arms
- Reach for the sky
- Bend knees to land
- Land on two feet with knees bent

### Parts of the skill

- Arms back, bent knees
- Arms swing up and forward
- Take off and land on both feet simultaneously
- Bend knees to absorb force

### Tips

- Encourage the children to start with their **arms back** and their **knees bent**.
- Or use a rhyme:  
Swing your arms as you fly up high,  
bend your knees to softly return from the sky

## Other Skills

- Hop



# Butterfly Dance



**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Creativity and self-expression; moving throughout open space, developing confidence; developing competence.

**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. imitation, story-telling)

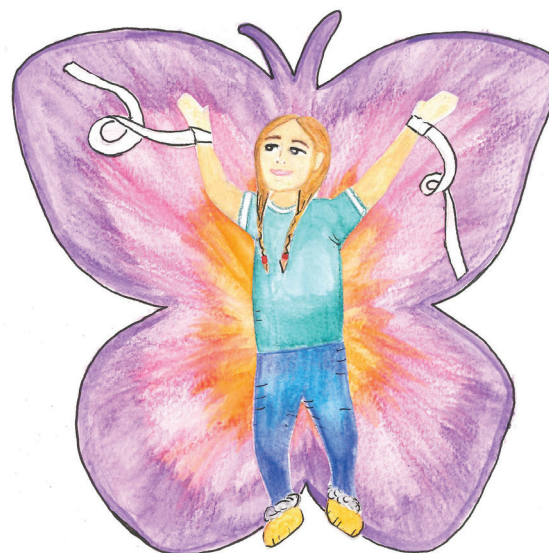
**Equipment:** Long ribbons to hang from wrists, music and speaker system

**Website Links:** [youtu.be/EFJMLXd9tnE](https://youtu.be/EFJMLXd9tnE)

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ Butterflies exist in nature as both beautiful in appearance and behaviour. Indigenous people honor that beauty. The beautiful colors of butterflies can be seen at a powwow on the regalia of dancers any weekend of the summer. Powwows have been in existence for centuries. Some evolved from warrior's returning to the camp. They gathered to give thanks for their successful homecoming. Women originally danced on the side to welcome them home and show their support. Over the years, powwows evolved to include many different tribal cultures. From the traditional dances, other dances became a part of powwow. One dance is said to have evolved or been influenced by the beautiful movement and colors of the butterfly.
- ❖ This dance is called the women's Fancy Dance. The women wear a beautiful shawl on their shoulders which they hold out to their sides. The fringes of the shawl fly through the air as the dancers spin and dance on the tips of their toes, using delicate but energetic footwork to move gracefully across the floor.



## Let's Dance!

- ❖ In this game, children extend arms and dance with in a forward skipping motion and spin occasionally to imitate the graceful movements of the butterfly.
- ❖ Ribbons can be looped around wrists to accentuate movement and evoke the beauty of the powwow dance of the Women's Fancy Dance.
- ❖ The dancers dance in their own pattern and steps moving in a clockwise manner. Their goal is to imitate the grace and beauty of a butterfly moving from flower to flower.





# Buffalo Dance



**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Creativity and self-expression; developing confidence; developing competence.

**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. imitation, story-telling)

**Website Links:** [binged.it/2IPPMB3](http://binged.it/2IPPMB3)

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ Buffalo were native to the prairies and continue to have a strong identity in Saskatchewan. They were once the main source of food for First Nation's people and were an important part of the economic relationship between Metis people who were engaging in the fur trade with early settlers. Their importance to Indigenous people made them the center of their life on the prairies.
- ❖ Their hides provided shelter as they were made into tipis which were the main dwelling among the bands of Indigenous people living on the prairie. The warmth of the hides was prized and used as blankets, coats and boots, saving the people both young and old from the harsh prairie winters. The horns, bones and bladders provided spoons, tools and containers for carrying water.
- ❖ The tons of meat of the buffalo fed many, many people. When a buffalo hunt was successful, there was sure to be a feast. Along with a feast, as befits a celebration, there was sure to be singing and dancing.



## Let's Dance!

- ❖ This activity celebrates the buffalo and his free spirit and the many essential things he provided to the Indigenous people on the prairies.
- ❖ Buffalos all dance in one circular direction clockwise, sometimes stamping their feet or shaking their shaggy heads.
- ❖ Children dance to a marching beat. With fingers held to their foreheads like the horns of the buffalo.



# Friendship Dance



**Physical activity/physical literacy links:** Creativity and self-expression; developing social skills (cooperation, team-work); developing confidence; developing competence.

**Language/literacy links:** Supporting activity with talk and sign (e.g. story-telling)

**Website Links:** [binged.it/2IOX5Jv](http://binged.it/2IOX5Jv)

**Where:** Indoors or outdoors

## Storytime

- ❖ The Indigenous people of the East Coast were the first to welcome the strangers to this continent. They were not the first to welcome new people into their community. For many generations, the Indigenous people of North America traveled.
- ❖ In their travels they were often taken in to new communities and welcomed and even adopted into the band. These friendly visitors were treated as relatives. They were fed, given gifts and their arrival was celebrated. They brought goods to trade, news of other communities and new stories and songs from other parts of North America.
- ❖ The friendship dance celebrates friends old and new.



## Let's Dance!

- ❖ Children join hands, forming a circle.
- ❖ The dance begins by stepping to the left in time to the drum. The beat of the drum mimics the beat of a heart.
- ❖ They continue dancing to the left until they are directed to go to the right.
- ❖ At another point they can dance away from the center of the circle, making their circle wider and then dance toward the middle raising their hands in the middle and with a shout, ending the dance.