Tikki Tikki Tembo

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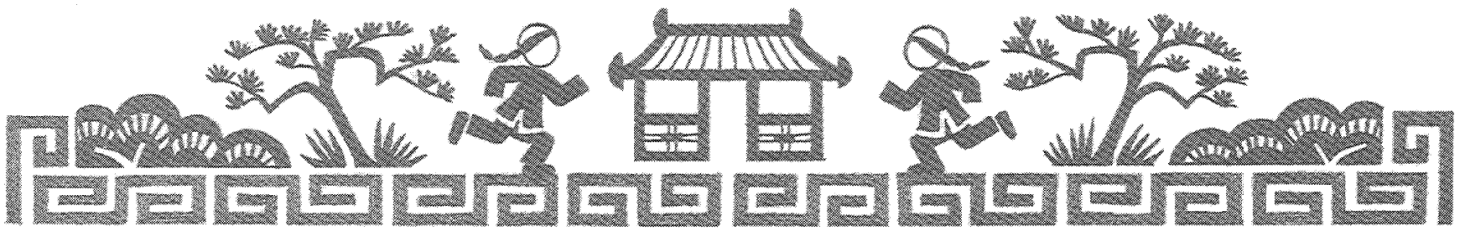

MOVEMENT AND DRAMATIC PLAY

Young children enjoy exploring experiences with their bodies as well as their minds. Before the children act out *Tikki Tikki Tembo*, encourage them to discuss actions portrayed in the story, act them out, and try to feel the characters' emotions. Talk about feelings and how we use our faces and bodies to show emotions. Ask children to think about what it would be like to fall into a deep well with water in it. Have them pretend to balance on the edge of a well and then tumble in. Next they can pretend to be washing clothes by a stream or flying a kite on a windy day. Have them act out other situations they remember from the story.

In the musical, the old man hobbles to the well. Make a list of other words that show movement, such as *walking, running, tumbling, loping, rolling, reeling,* and *hobbling.* Have the children act out the words on the list.

In China the people practice a form of physical exercise and mental control called *t'ai chi ch'uan.* This gentler form of the martial arts is usually done outdoors in the morning or during lunch breaks and is done in groups. Lead the children through some slow controlled exercises that include flexing and relaxing muscles and balancing. You may want to begin the school day with a short period of this type of exercise.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The tale of *Tikki Tikki Tembo* serves as a wonderful introduction to a unit on China. As they read or hear the story, the children will note some facts about Chinese culture. It is important to talk about modern China versus China in the past. Show some pictures of modern China and the Chinese people. If there are any Chinese people in the school or community, they may be willing to offer a rich look into their native land and its traditions and customs. UNICEF shops, found in many cities, offer culture kits on China for classroom use. These kits can include clothes and examples of ceremonial objects for hands-on learning.

Festivals were an important part of life in old China. The lunar New Year celebration was one of the major festivals in old China. On the Chinese New Year, everyone had a birthday and became a year older. Therefore a baby that was born a month before the New Year would become one year old after one month of life. Choose a child whose birthday is late in the year and determine whether that child would have been considered to be a different age in old China.

The Chinese New Year is considered to be a time to clean house and put on new clothes. Have a room cleaning session in your classroom or in your house center.

During the New Year celebration, Chinese children are usually given money in special red envelopes. Red is considered to be a lucky color by the Chinese. Have a "lucky day" in your room. Give each child a "lucky" penny. Have the children make rubbings of their pennies. Then have each child wrap the penny up in red tissue paper and hang it with red yarn on the "lucky money tree." (This can be a tree branch standing in a coffee can full of sand.) At the end of your study of China and following the performance of the musical, the children can take their lucky pennies home.

There are many other activities you can do on Lucky Day. You may want to serve fortune cookies for snack or in the house center. The children may also enjoy learning the Chinese Fortune Game. To create this game for your class, you will need a juice can, ten craft sticks, a marker, and a sheet of paper. On each stick write one numeral from one to ten. Then have the class help you write down on paper one fortune to correspond to each number. To play the game, each child shakes the can up and down gently. The number on the first stick to fall out of the

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can will correspond to the number of that person's fortune. Read that fortune from the sheet of paper.

Another way to celebrate the Chinese New Year is to prepare a special Chinese meal for the children to eat. There are many different Chinese foods to choose. You may want to make the fried rice recipe listed in the SCIENCE section of this resource book. Have the children try to eat the meal with chopsticks that can be purchased in bulk at import shops and some grocery stores. You may want to serve tea with the meal. If you are not able to cook in your room, serve pieces of rice cakes that can be purchased in the grocery store. These are somewhat dry and might need some kind of jelly spread on them.

One of the highlights of the Lunar New Year festival is a large dragon that travels through the streets. Your class can create its own giant dragon. The children can make the head out of a box decorated with many colors of crepe paper. One child can wear this head and all the other children can get underneath a red blanket or piece of cloth to form the dragon's body. (Illus. 1) Have a parade down the hall or on the playground.

The Festival of Lanterns is also part of the New Year celebration. Each child can make a lantern out of construction paper by cutting slits in the paper, folding it around, and gluing it. The child can then attach crepe paper strips to the lantern. (Illus. 2) Hang these lanterns from strands of Christmas tree lights to make the room very festive.

The BIBLIOGRAPHY lists some books that will be helpful when planning any kind of Chinese New Year celebration.

The next few curriculum areas include ideas for continuing the study of Chinese culture in those specific areas. As you read through these ideas, you can decide which of them you want to develop with your class.

Illus. 1

Illus. 2

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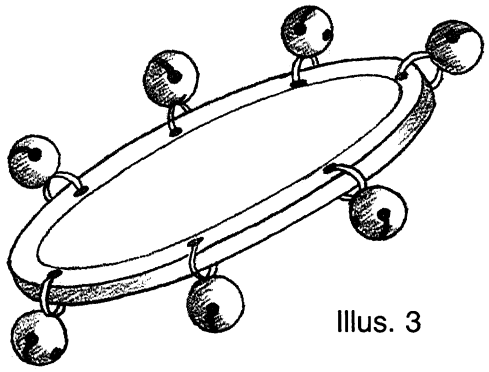
MUSIC

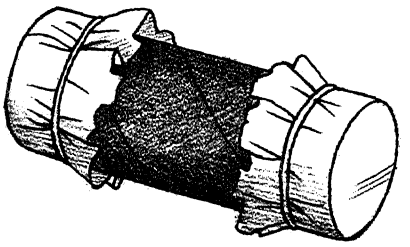
Discuss the fact that a musical is different from a play because a musical is a story set to music. When the children have written or told their own stories, as suggested in the LANGUAGE section, they can make up a song to tell part of their story. This activity can also be done as a group.

Discuss the importance of a chorus. Talk about the fact that a chorus tells the audience many important facts that they need to know in order to understand a musical. During the performance of *Tikki Tikki Tembo*, most of the children in your class will be members of the chorus. Be sure that these children are made to feel as important as the actors.

You can form a Chinese orchestra to provide accompaniment during the musical. The orchestra members would be part of the chorus but would also play simple rhythm instruments. You can use regular classroom instruments, or the children can make special instruments for the occasion. Children can make simple tambourines from plastic margarine lids with jingle bells attached around the edge. (Illus. 3) Shakers are easy to create from toilet paper tubes. Put dried beans inside the tubes then cover the ends with paper. (Illus. 4) Sticks and pan lids can be hit together, and sandpaper-covered blocks can be rasps. You and the children will probably think of many other instruments to make. Be creative!



Illus. 3

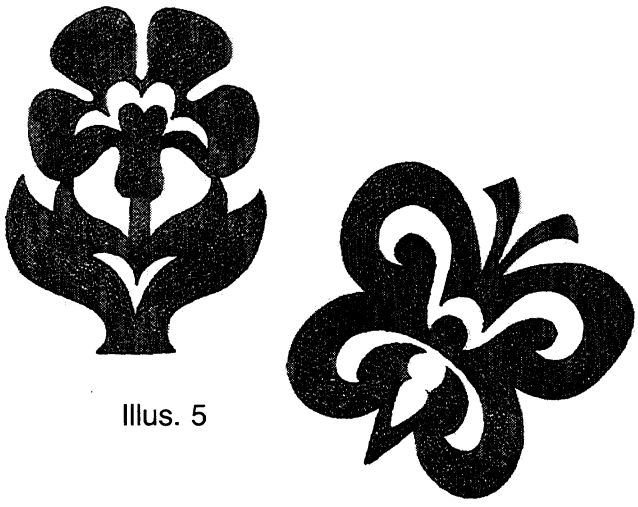


Illus. 4

ART

The art center can become a very important area for experimenting with some traditional Chinese art forms. Children can try brush painting with black paint on white paper. They can also try the ancient art of making papercuts—creating a picture by cutting it out of one piece of paper that remains in one piece. (Illus. 5) The BIBLIOGRAPHY at the end of this guide lists books that are excellent sources for details on the art of papercuts.

There are many Chinese people who are experts at making sculptures. Children in China make little toys out of a salt dough. Some of the common forms made are snakes, pandas, tigers, and birds. To make salt dough, mix 1 cup salt with 2 cups flour and 1 cup water. (This makes enough dough for 8–10 children.) Knead this mixture. Give each child a small



Illus. 5

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