



PRE- AND POST-PERFORMANCE LESSON PLAN:  
Elementary School

for the

Alys Robinson Stephens Center  
Meet the Artist

## **Peking Acrobats**

**Monday, March 29, 2010; 10 a.m.**



**This Lesson Plan created exclusively for Meet the Artist by Curry and Curry, LLC.  
[www.curryandcurry.org](http://www.curryandcurry.org)**

### **Overview and Background for Teachers:**

The roots of Chinese acrobatics date as far back as 221 BC in the early years of the Ch'in Dynasty. Since then the art of acrobatics has been passed down for centuries, and each new generation is expected to add improvements and embellishments. From gymnastics and trick cycling to seemingly-impossible displays of balance and contortion, the Peking Acrobats will amaze students and teachers alike in their newest performance at the ASC.

From <http://www.chineseacrobats.com/pa.php>:

“These acrobats have re-defined audience perceptions of Chinese acrobatics. They perform daring maneuvers atop a precarious pagoda of chairs; they are experts at treacherous wire-walking, trick-cycling, precision tumbling, somersaulting, and gymnastics. They defy gravity with amazing displays of contortion, flexibility, and control. They push the envelope of human possibility with astonishing juggling dexterity and incredible balancing feats, showcasing tremendous skill and ability.

“They are masters of agility and grace. Often accompanied by live musicians skillfully playing traditional Chinese instruments and high-tech special effects that coalesce with the music, and awe-inspiring feats to create an exuberant entertainment event featuring all the excitement and festive pageantry of a Chinese Carnival!

“THE PEKING ACROBATS have been featured on numerous television shows and celebrity-studded TV Specials including NICKELODEON’S UNFABULOUS, ELLEN’S REALLY BIG SHOW (TV Special with host, Ellen DeGeneres), THE WAYNE BRADY SHOW, THAT’S INCREDIBLE, ABC’S WIDE WORLD OF SPORTS as well as NBC’s RING IN THE NEW YEAR HOLIDAY SPECIAL.

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“THE PEKING ACROBATS recently made their debut at the Hollywood Bowl. They performed as part of the Hollywood Bowl’s Fireworks Season Finale. They perform often on Television and in Films.”

**Teachers: Earn 2 free tickets to the ASC series event of your choice!** Complete a short survey about this Lesson Plan and the concert! Contact Kimberly Kirklin at [kkirklin@uab.edu](mailto:kkirklin@uab.edu) for more information.

The survey of teachers is necessary to our continued funding to bring schools to the Stephens Center at no charge. Your participation will help us evaluate our programs and respond to your students’ needs.

### **ABOUT MEET THE ARTIST AT THE ASC**

This series allows the ASC to share the arts with area students and aspiring young artists. These one-hour performances by internationally acclaimed artists enable students to experience the thrill of a live performance in a world-class performing arts venue. During these interactive presentations, performers engage students with anecdotes about their professional training as well as their experiences as touring artists. They also provide insight into the pieces they perform. Reservations are taken first-call, first-reserved, so call early for the next event!

## **NATIONAL ARTS EDUCATION STANDARDS**

These standards were developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, through a grant administered by The National Association for Music Education (MENC). They can be accessed at [www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teach/standards](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teach/standards). The following standards are appropriate to elementary through grade 12 and to all *Meet the Artist* events:

Content Standard 1: Identifying and demonstrating movement elements and skills in performing dance.

Content Standard 2: Understanding choreographic principles, processes, and structures.

Content Standard 8: Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

## **ALABAMA COURSE OF STUDY**

Content Standard for Physical Education, Grade 3:

- 5.) Discuss concepts that improve the quality of movement as it relates to space, effort, and relationships.
- 7.) Combine locomotor, nonlocomotor, and manipulative skills in a variety of activities.
- 9.) Associate results of daily fitness activity with personal health status and ability to perform various skills.

Content Standards for Arts Education/Dance, Grade 3:

- 2.) Demonstrate sequences of movements that combine elements of space, including shape, level, direction, and relationships. Examples: creating parallel lines with the arms, creating 45 degree angles with the legs, filling negative space.
- 6.) Analyze movement for content. Example: asking questions, including who, what, when, where, why, and how. • Identifying ways that lighting, costuming, sound effects, makeup, props, and sets enhance dance productions
- 8.) Demonstrate safe ways to move while dancing with a group. • Connecting to others with various body parts, including elbows, knees, toes, and head.
- 10.) Apply concepts from other content areas while improvising movement. Example: Applying group dance safety to gymnastic routines; translating a dance movement into words or choosing music to accompany it.

### **Approximate Duration of Lesson:**

Pre-Performance Classroom Lesson: 45 minutes

Post-performance Lesson: 45-minutes; however, a second class is recommended to get the full benefit of this learning experience.

### **Materials and Equipment:**

- 1) Print pre- and post-tests, below
- 2) Accepted Audience Behavior printout (Appendix A of [www.alex.state.al.us/standard](http://www.alex.state.al.us/standard))
- 3) Flip chart or whiteboard for student writing workshop

### **Technology Resources:**

- 1) Computer with Internet connection to view the Peking Acrobats website (above) to read in-depth about the acrobats and their collaborators in choreography, staging, multi-media technology, and music composition.

**Use of the Peking Acrobats Study Guide:** The URL below takes you to the troupe's Study Guide, which has information for children through adults of all ages. Although it is too complex for most age groups, you can refer to it for background information about China, its arts and culture including its long tradition of acrobatics, and its government.

<http://www.chineseacrobats.com/resources/TPA-StudyGuide.pdf>

## Learning Activities, Pre- and Post-Performance

### BEFORE ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

**A. Introduce the Lesson:** [First, print the vocabulary for this lesson--the words underlined below--that are appropriate to your students' age and grade on a flip chart so you can point to them as you use them, make them available for students to use in learning activities, and cover them for vocabulary tests/evaluations.]

[Tell the students the following:]

We are going to see a troupe, or company, of amazing athletes who are also dancers. [Note: This word is a homophone for troop—a group of soldiers.]

This company is called the Peking – pronounced “pay-king” --Acrobats. They took their name “Peking” from the capital of the nation that we call China. You will see that this troupe is made up of brightly costumed tumblers, acrobats, cyclists, jugglers and clever clowns. All of them are trained in gymnastics<sup>1</sup>.

These acrobats also specialize in tumbling, juggling, cycling, tightrope-walking, or balancing themselves on such objects as a tower of chairs!

Peking is the capital city of China. The spelling of the city Peking was changed to Beijing – pronounced “bay-jing”] in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century because foreigners kept mis-pronouncing it. Peking was the host city for the 2008 Summer Olympics; you might remember watching these events on TV.

The ability to perform feats that look impossible is rooted in centuries of Chinese history and folk art. From the Ch'in Dynasty<sup>2</sup> (221 B.C. – 207 B.C.) on, Chinese manuscripts and books have described acrobatic acts. Chinese acrobats through the ages have continued to perfect what has become an evolving—meaning adapting and changing--folk art<sup>3</sup> form. The Chinese have a traditional belief that each generation of acrobats should add its own improvements.

Because the feats involved are so difficult, people skilled enough to become acrobats are honored<sup>4</sup> by their government and the people. An acrobat can be considered the Chinese equivalent<sup>5</sup> of an American popular music star. With every generation, the Chinese acrobatic tradition gets stronger because of the continued innovation<sup>6</sup> of the artists. Their performances sell out, and they clearly have adoring<sup>7</sup> fans.

When we attend the performance by THE PEKING ACROBATS, we will be seeing an ancient<sup>8</sup> folk art tradition, yet a tradition made up-to-date with computer technology and some contemporary music. As a Seattle newspaper reported: “Nearly everything THE PEKING ACROBATS did last

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2 Ch'in: the family name of rulers who unified many lands into the place now known as China. Dynasty: a series of rulers from one family.

3 Folk art: art made by people who did not get trained in schools to be artists. Alabama has several famous folk artists, including the painter Mose T and storyteller Katherine Tucker Windham.

4 Verb or Adjective (here a verb): Praised in public for doing something that most people or no one else has done.

5 Adjective: the same as

6 Noun: Something that no one else has done; the root word “nova” means “new.”

7 Adjective: loving, almost worshipping

8 Adjective: very old, usually many centuries old

night was amazing – and stunning, and breathtaking and WOW!” Clive Davis of the New York Post summed up the show he saw thusly: “ THE PEKING ACROBATS [are] pushing the envelope of human possibility…Pure artistry!”

**Here’s what the Peking Acrobats will do at the show:** They will demonstrate, or show, some of their standard--meaning basic--acrobatic techniques: separate moves that they put together to create a routine. They will also demonstrate how two or more acrobats work together on stage. They hold the Guinness Book of World Records Number 1 spot for balancing on a tower of chairs.

We have all seen professional dancers, whose routines are choreographed--a choreographer maps out who moves where, and how, and to what music, and what props such as chairs or a unicycle they will use. As you watch the Peking Acrobats, ask yourself how their acrobatic routines are like dances. Also ask yourself how the acrobatics are NOT like dances! One of you might also want to ask these questions to the Peking Acrobats during Question-Answer time.

They may also describe the theme, or meaning, of some of their acrobatic routines--or of the whole show-- and explain what the title can tell us about what the acrobats are doing. They may explain the music and the stage setting, including lighting.

[Next, show a video clip or at least some photos, one of them reproduced on the cover of this Lesson Plan; others are on their web site: <http://www.chineseacrobats.com/pa.php>

**and see them performing on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/iaipresentations>**

They also have a DVD for sale on YouTube.

B. [Leave the words above visible, but erase for now or cover the definitions. Administer the Pre-test, below, in writing. [Pre-test and Post-test questions 1-3 are identical; Post-test adds an open-ended question.]

[Tell the students:] This pre-test is only for me to find out what else you can learn to prepare for enjoying the performance.

[Take up and score the pre-test; record the scores so you can compare them to the post-test.]

### **Pre-Test**

1. What is special about the city for which the acrobats are named?
2. What is folk art?
3. a. What do acrobats do? [tumble, balance, walk tightropes, juggle, ride unicycles]

### **Post-Test**

[Questions 1-3 same as the Pre-Test]

4. Tell one new thing you learned about acrobats from the Peking Acrobats program we saw.

## **AFTER THE PERFORMANCE**

A. Procedures/Activities.

1. [Have 3 students lead a classroom discussion for 10 minutes. They should ask these questions along with others based on the performance:]
  - (1) Tell about one routine that you saw. Why did you like it?
  - (2) Describe the music you heard in this routine or another routine. How did it make you feel?
  - (3) What movements, techniques, or health practices that we have practiced this year were the acrobats using?
  - (4) How are the routines that we saw different from the dancing or acrobatics you’ve seen in pop music videos? How are they different from Cirque de Soleil, if

- you've seen one of its shows?
- (5) What kinds of training, and for how many years, did these acrobats train to become professionals?
  - (6) What is one of the techniques or moves that you saw for the first time at this performance?

2. [Immediately after the discussion, have students do brainstorming. Tell them to choose one of the discussion questions above, and, in their journals or notebooks, to write whatever comes into their minds on this topic. Tell them to keep this for the next class period if you are assigning a writing/presentation project.]

### **B. Assessment**

1. Administer the Post-event Test: Repeat the Pre-test questions. Collect the students' post-tests and score them according to the number correct. (1, 2, 3, or 4).
2. From the brainstorming exercise, direct students either to write a personal essay of 1 page or more, create a PowerPoint presentation of 4-6 slides, design a web page [they can download a photo from the Peking Acrobats web site], or—if you are a physical education or dance instructor—choreograph and demonstrate a routine inspired by the show.
3. Evaluate/grade these assignments.
4. Have students present some to the class or to a group of parents/visitors. Post some or all of them on your class home page. (Videotape acrobatic routines.)

**Remediation and Accommodation:** Work individually, or assign another student to work with students who do not demonstrate an adequate understanding of the performance or of the acrobats' answers to the students' questions. Suggestions:

1) Start by showing one of the routines on YouTube or their web site, then asking a simple open-ended questions about it. Let the student see you printing his or her answers on a computer screen or notebook page—that shows that you value the answer.

2) Ask the student to pick one question and his/her answer to say more about. Brainstorm with the student to flesh out this topic and turn it into a Power Point, an essay, or a story.

Praise what is done well. Re-direct from what is not relevant.



**PRE- AND POST-PERFORMANCE LESSON PLAN:  
Middle School**

**for the**

**Alys Robinson Stephens Center  
Meet the Artist**

**Peking Acrobats**

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Content Standard for Physical Education, Grades 7:

5.) Develop a transitional rhythmic sequence or dance. Examples: creating a juggling or gymnastics tumbling routine, developing a cooperative jump-rope routine

Content Standards for Arts Education/Dance, Grades 6–12, Level 2:

3.) Create appropriate lighting using traditional or computerized light programs to accompany a dance. Examples: suggesting lighting for a class improvisation, designing a lighting chart for a dance production

10.) Solve a movement problem that reflects concepts from other content areas. Example: discovering movement sequences that represent mathematical patterns

And Level 3:

7.) [change to acrobatic performance:] Evaluate a dance performance to determine performance skills displayed by the dancer. Example: critiquing a professional ~~or student~~ performance

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[Tell the students:] This pre-test is only for me to find out what else you can learn to prepare for enjoying the performance.

[Take up and score the pre-test; record the scores so you can compare them to the post-test.]

### **Pre-Test**

1. What is special about the city for which the acrobats are named?

2. What is folk art?

3. a. What is acrobatics, and b. what is gymnastics?

[alternate way of asking this question:] How does an acrobat differ from a gymnast?

### **Post-Test**

[Questions 1-3 same as the Pre-Test]

4. Tell one new thing you learned about acrobats from the Peking Acrobats program we saw.

## **AFTER THE PERFORMANCE**

A. Procedures/Activities.

- [Have 3 students lead a classroom discussion for 10 minutes. They should ask these questions along with others based on the performance:]
  - (1) Tell about one routine that you saw. Why did you like it?
  - (2) Describe the music you heard in this routine or another routine. How did it make you feel?[or:] How does the music enrich the audience's understanding or appreciation of the acrobatic feats?
  - (3) How are the routines that we saw different from the gymnastics some of you have learned? From the dancing or acrobatics you've seen in pop music videos? How are they different from Cirque de Soleil, if you've seen one of its shows?
  - (4) What kinds of training, and for how many years, did these acrobats train to become professionals?

(5) Please describe one of the techniques or moves that you saw for the first time at this performance.

2. [Immediately after the discussion, have students do brainstorming. Direct them to brainstorm either a) an ALEX Learning Objective, above, which you have chosen because it fits what the class is studying now; or b) one of the discussion questions above: In their journals or notebooks, they should write/diagram (if choreographing) whatever comes into their minds on this topic. Tell them to keep this for the next class period if you are assigning a gymnastic routine/choreography/writing/presentation project.]

### **B. Assessment**

1. Administer the Post-event Test: Repeat the Pre-test questions. Collect the students' post-tests and score them according to the number correct. (1, 2, 3, or 4).
2. From the brainstorming exercise, direct students either to write a personal essay, create a PowerPoint presentation, design a web page [they can download a photo from the Peking Acrobats web site], or—if you are a physical education or dance instructor—choreograph and demonstrate a routine.
3. Evaluate/grade these assignments.
4. Have students present some to the class or to a group of parents/visitors. Post some or all of them on your class home page. (Videotape acrobatic routines.)

**Remediation and Accommodation:** Work individually, or assign another student to work with students who do not demonstrate an adequate understanding of the performance or of the acrobats' answers to the students' questions. Suggestions:

1) Start by showing one of the routines on YouTube or their web site, then asking a simple open-ended questions about it. Let the student see you printing his or her answers on a computer screen or notebook page—that shows that you value the answer.

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Praise what is done well. Re-direct from what is not relevant.



**PRE- AND POST-PERFORMANCE LESSON PLAN:  
High School**

**for the**

**Alys Robinson Stephens Center  
Meet the Artist**

**Peking Acrobats**

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“They are masters of agility and grace. Often accompanied by live musicians skillfully playing traditional Chinese instruments and high-tech special effects that coalesce with the music, and awe-inspiring feats to create an exuberant entertainment event featuring all the excitement and festive pageantry of a Chinese Carnival!

“THE PEKING ACROBATS have been featured on numerous television shows and celebrity-studded TV Specials including NICKELODEON’S UNFABULOUS, ELLEN’S REALLY BIG SHOW (TV Special with host, Ellen DeGeneres), THE WAYNE BRADY SHOW, THAT’S INCREDIBLE, ABC’S WIDE WORLD OF SPORTS as well as NBC’S RING IN THE NEW YEAR HOLIDAY SPECIAL.

“They set the world record for the Human Chair Stack on Fox’s GUINNESS BOOK PRIMETIME TV show where they astounded audiences with their bravery and dexterity as they balanced six people precariously atop six chairs 21 feet up in the air without safety lines! THE PEKING ACROBATS are also making the scene on the silver screen. Company members were featured in Steven Soderbergh’s hit film *Ocean’s 11* playing along with Hollywood’s elite such as Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt and George Clooney. PEKING ACROBATS’ alumnus Shaobo Qin also appeared in that film’s two sequels, *Ocean’s 12* and *Ocean’s 13*.

“THE PEKING ACROBATS recently made their debut at the Hollywood Bowl. They performed as part of the Hollywood Bowl’s Fireworks Season Finale. They perform often on Television and in Films.”

**Teachers: Earn 2 free tickets to the ASC series event of your choice!** Complete a short survey about this Lesson Plan and the concert! Contact Kimberly Kirklin at [kkirklin@uab.edu](mailto:kkirklin@uab.edu) for more information.

The survey of teachers is necessary to our continued funding to bring schools to the Stephens Center at no charge. Your participation will help us evaluate our programs and respond to your students’ needs.

### **ABOUT MEET THE ARTIST AT THE ASC**

This series allows the ASC to share the arts with area students and aspiring young artists. These one-hour performances by internationally acclaimed artists enable students to experience the thrill of a live performance in a world-class performing arts venue. During these interactive presentations, performers engage students with anecdotes about their professional training as well as their experiences as touring artists. They also provide insight into the pieces they perform. Reservations are taken first-call, first-reserved, so call early for the next event!

## **NATIONAL ARTS EDUCATION STANDARDS**

These standards were developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, through a grant administered by The National Association for Music Education (MENC). They can be accessed at [www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teach/standards](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/teach/standards). The following standards are appropriate to elementary through grade 12 and to all *Meet the Artist* events:

Content Standard 1: Identifying and demonstrating movement elements and skills in performing dance.

Content Standard 2: Understanding choreographic principles, processes, and structures.

Content Standard 8: Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

## **ALABAMA COURSE OF STUDY**

Content Standard for Physical Education, Grades 9–12:

15.) Explain the influence of participation in a physical activity on fostering appreciation of culture, ethnicity, gender, and physical activity.

Content Standards for Arts Education/Dance, Grades 9–12:

8) Describe the elements and skills of dance using appropriate vocabulary. Examples: *assemblé* – to assemble, *Jeté* – to throw, *piqué* – to prick, *grand plié* – large bend

15.) Formulate compositions emphasizing change in spatial designs or floor patterns.

16.) Create dance compositions that change the degree of energy in various parts of the composition.

17.) Create compositions using different compositional forms. Examples: rondo, canon, palindrome.

18.) Incorporate spatial design, levels, and pattern repetitions when changing an existing study from a solo to a trio.

21.) Critique professionally choreographed works identifying the emotional elements exhibited.

22.) Explore the use of nonverbal communication skills: • Observer – receiver. • Participant – initiator

23.) Create a dance for production including costuming, lighting, sound, and make-up.

25.) Describe similarities and differences in steps and movement styles of folk and/or classical dances from various cultures.

### **Approximate Duration of Lesson:**

Pre-Performance Classroom Lesson: 45 minutes

Post-performance Lesson: 45-minutes; however, a second class is recommended to get the full benefit of this learning experience.

### **Materials and Equipment:**

1) Print pre- and post-tests, below

2) Accepted Audience Behavior printout (Appendix A of [www.alex.state.al.us/standard](http://www.alex.state.al.us/standard))

3) Flip chart or whiteboard for student writing workshop

### **Technology Resources:**

1) Computer with Internet connection to view the Peking Acrobats website (above) to read in-depth about the acrobats and their collaborators in choreography, staging, multi-media technology, and music composition.

**Use of the Peking Acrobats Study Guide:** The URL below takes you to the troupe's Study Guide, which has information for children through adults of all ages. Although it is too complex for most age groups, you can refer to it for background information about China, its arts and culture including its long tradition of acrobatics, and its government.

<http://www.chineseacrobats.com/resources/TPA-StudyGuide.pdf>

## Learning Activities, Pre- and Post-Performance

### BEFORE ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

**A. Introduce the Lesson:** [First, print the vocabulary for this lesson--the words underlined below--that are appropriate to your students' age and grade on a flip chart so you can point to them as you use them, make them available for students to use in learning activities, and cover them for vocabulary tests/evaluations.]

[Tell the students the following:]

We are going to see a troupe, or company, of amazing athletes who are also dancers. This company is called the Peking – pronounced “pay-*king*” --Acrobats. They took their name “Peking” from the capital of the nation that we call China. You will see that this troupe is made up of brightly costumed tumblers, acrobats, cyclists, jugglers and clowns. All of them are trained in gymnastics<sup>1</sup>.

Peking, you recall from world history or geography, is the capital city of the People's Republic of China. The spelling of the city Peking was changed to Beijing –pronounced “bay-*jing*”] in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century because foreigners kept mis-pronouncing it. Peking was the host city for the 2008 Summer Olympics; you might remember watching these events on TV.

The ability to perform feats that look impossible is rooted in centuries of Chinese history and folk art. From the Ch'in Dynasty<sup>2</sup> (221 B.C. – 207 B.C.E.—3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E.) on, Chinese manuscripts [hand-written documents that pre-date printing] and books have described acrobatic acts.

Chinese acrobats through the ages have continued to perfect what has become an evolving— meaning adapting and changing--folk art<sup>3</sup> form. The Chinese believe that each generation of acrobats should add its own improvements.

Because the feats involved are so difficult, people skilled enough to become acrobats are honored<sup>4</sup> by their government and the people. An acrobat can be considered the Chinese equivalent<sup>5</sup> of an American popular music star. With every generation, the Chinese acrobatic tradition gets stronger because of the continued innovation<sup>6</sup> of the artists. Their performances sell out, and they clearly have adoring fans.

When we attend the performance by THE PEKING ACROBATS, we will be seeing an ancient<sup>7</sup> folk art tradition, yet a tradition made up-to-date with computer technology and some contemporary music. As a Seattle newspaper reported: “Nearly everything THE PEKING ACROBATS did last night was amazing – and stunning, and breathtaking and WOW!” Clive Davis of the New York Post summed up the show he saw thusly: “ THE PEKING ACROBATS [are] pushing the envelope of human possibility...Pure artistry!”

<-> Exercises to develop the power to move, jump, and balance.

2 Ch'in: the family name of rulers who unified many lands into the place now known as China. Dynasty: a series of rulers from one family.

3 Folk art: art made by people who did not get trained in schools to be artists, and passed down over time by word of mouth (not written down)and by apprenticeships. Alabama has several famous folk artists, including the painter Mose T and storyteller Katherine Tucker Windham.

4 Verb or Adjective (here a verb): Praised in public for doing something that most people or no one else has done.

5 Adjective: the same as

6 Noun: Something that no one else has done; the root word “nova” means “new.”

7 Adjective: very old, usually many centuries old

**Here's what the Peking Acrobats will do at the show:** They will demonstrate, or show, some of their standard acrobatic techniques: separate moves that they put together to create a routine. They will also demonstrate how two or more acrobats work together on stage. They hold the Guinness Book of World Records Number 1 spot for balancing on a tower of chairs.

We have all seen professional dancers, whose routines are choreographed—a choreographer maps out who moves where, and how, and to what music, and what props such as chairs or a unicycle they will use. As you watch the Peking Acrobats, ask yourself how their acrobatic routines are like dances. Also ask yourself how the acrobatics are NOT like dances.

They may also describe the theme of some of their acrobatic routines—or of the whole show-- and explain what the title can tell us about what the acrobats are doing. They may explain the music and the stage setting, including lighting.

[Next, show a video clip or at least some photos, one of them reproduced on the cover of this Lesson Plan; others are on their web site: <http://www.chineseacrobats.com/pa.php> **and see them performing on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/iaipresentations>** They also have a DVD for sale on YouTube.

B. [Leave the words above visible, but erase for now or cover the definitions. Administer the Pre-test, below, in writing. [Pre-test and Post-test questions 1-3 are identical; Post-test adds an open-ended question.]

[Tell the students:] This pre-test is only for me to find out what else you can learn to prepare for enjoying the performance.

[Take up and score the pre-test; record the scores so you can compare them to the post-test.]

### **Pre-Test**

1. Acrobats have been honored in China since which dynasty? Or if you don't recall the dynasty, since what century?
2. What does each generation of Chinese acrobats try to do? [to add techniques, moves, new routines and other innovations to the traditional repertoire.]
3. How does an acrobat differ from a gymnast?

### **Post-Test**

[Questions 1-3 same as the Pre-Test]

4. Describe one new acrobatic technique from the Peking Acrobats program we saw.

## **AFTER THE PERFORMANCE**

A. Procedures/Activities.

1. [Have 3 students lead a classroom discussion for 10 minutes. They should ask these questions along with others based on the performance:]
  - (1) Describe the techniques or the skills used in one routine that we saw. Why did you like it?
  - (2) Was any of the music you heard in this routine or another routine familiar? How does the music enrich the audience's understanding or appreciation of the acrobatic feats?
  - (3) How are the routines that we saw different from the gymnastics some of you have learned? From the dancing or acrobatics you've seen in pop music videos? How are they different from Cirque de Soleil, if you've seen one of its shows?
  - (4) What kinds of training, and for how many years did these acrobats train to become

professionals?

(5) Please describe one of the techniques or moves that you saw for the first time at this performance.

2. [Immediately after the discussion, have students do brainstorming. Direct them to brainstorm either a) an ALEX Learning Objective, above, which you have chosen because it fits what the class is studying now; or b) one of the discussion questions above: In their journals or notebooks, they should write/type or diagram (if choreographing) whatever comes into their minds on this topic. Tell them to keep this brainstorming work for the next class period if you are assigning a gymnastic routine/choreography or a writing/presentation project.]

### **B. Assessment**

1. Administer the Post-event Test: Repeat the Pre-test questions. Collect the students' post-tests and score them according to the number correct. (1, 2, 3, or 4).
2. From the brainstorming exercise, direct students either to write a personal essay, create a PowerPoint presentation, design a web page [they can download a photo from the Peking Acrobats web site], or—if you are a physical education or dance instructor—choreograph and demonstrate a gymnastic or dance routine inspired by the performance.
3. Evaluate/grade these assignments.
4. Have students present some to the class or to a group of parents/visitors. Post some or all of them on your class home page. (Videotape dance/acrobatic routines.)

**Remediation and Accommodation:** Work individually, or assign another student to work with students who do not demonstrate an adequate understanding of the performance or of the acrobats' answers to the students' questions. Suggestions:

- 1) Start by showing one of the routines on YouTube or their web site, then asking a simple open-ended questions about it. If the student is not proficient in English or has a disability that makes it impossible to write, print, or type, let the student see you printing his or her answers on a computer screen or notebook page—that shows that you value the answer.
- 2) Ask the student to pick one question and his/her answer to say more about. Brainstorm with the student to flesh out this topic and turn it into a Power Point, an essay, or a story.

Praise what is done well. Re-direct from what is not relevant.