



OKANOGAN REGION ARTS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP ARTIST PROFILE

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Dance: Tai Chi
All Districts

Preferred Age/ Grade Level: K-6

Residency Offered:

Solo Forms and Two-Person Interactive Forms

Tai Chi is foremost a martial art with its origins in China. Four styles are commonly practiced today: Chen, Yang, Wu, and Sun. Of the four, Yang style has the most complete curriculum.

Health benefits are primarily derived from strengthening the practitioner's core, increasing their balance and fine motor control, and from its meditative aspects. The solo forms are typically performed slowly while the two person forms vary from moderately slow to lightning fast. The Tai Chi syllabus contains three weapons: straight sword, saber, and spear; weapons are typically introduced after students have mastered at least the basics of the empty-handed curriculum.

Primarily due to its slow, focused practice, few children outside of China are attracted to the art of Tai Chi. Children can, however, be successfully introduced to Tai Chi if it is performed faster than usual and if emphasis is placed on the intriguing names of the postures: White Crane Spreads Its Wings, Snake Creeps Down, Repulse Like Monkey, etc.

Supplies, Equipment, Space, and Time Considerations:

A large empty space is needed for practice. If the weather is warm, Tai Chi can be practiced outdoors. A basic curriculum for young children may be taught in 3 sessions of 45-60 minutes each.

Teaching Experience:

I have been an active practitioner of Yang style Tai Chi for the past 19 years, with 15 years of teaching experience, primarily with teens, young adults, and adults. In recent years my focus has been on the empty handed syllabus and straight sword (although I like and practice both saber and spear).

I taught backcountry expedition skills and wilderness leadership for Outward Bound for 20 years before starting my own business teaching wilderness medicine courses.

Artist's Statement:

As a youth I studied wrestling, boxing, and taekwondo. Similar to many Americans, I began my study of Tai Chi in my mid-30s and have been captivated ever since. It calms my mind, keeps me strong, and helps maintain my health. I enjoy both the solo and interactive forms, particularly the empty-handed ones.