



## Going Global – The New Seven Wonders of the World

Presented by: Kathy Wagner

2008 National Elementary Teacher of the Year

Wichita Collegiate School, Wichita, KS

E-mail: [kathywagner@wcsks.com](mailto:kathywagner@wcsks.com)

School web page address: [www.wcsks.com/wagner.htm](http://www.wcsks.com/wagner.htm)



### **General Information:**

1. This area of study was done with early childhood and kindergarten students. It was based on the “New” Seven Wonders of the World and the fourteen remaining finalists. The new wonders were selected via an internet vote and announced on 7-7-2007.
2. The seven winners are: Chichen Itza - Mexico, Christ Redeemer Statue - Brazil, the Great Wall of China, Machu Picchu - Peru, Petra - Jordan, the Roman Colosseum - Italy, and the Taj Mahal - India.
3. The remaining finalists include: The Acropolis - Greece, Alhambra - Spain, Angkor Wat - Cambodia, the Eiffel Tower - France, Hagia Sophia - Turkey, Kiyomizu Temple - Japan, the Statues of Easter Island - Chile, the Kremlin and Red Square - Russia, Neuschwanstein Castle - Germany, the Statue of Liberty - United States of America, Stonehenge - United Kingdom, the Sydney Opera House - Australia, and Timbuktu - Mali. The Pyramids of Giza, in Egypt, were listed as an honorary finalist, due to its current status as the only remaining ancient wonder of the world. My original plan was to only study the actual “New” Seven Wonders, but when I researched the topic, I discovered that many of the 14 finalists were more familiar to children, thus, I did all 21 candidates.
4. We generally spent two days studying each country. I always researched the “wonder” before discussing it with the children. Students were given basic historical information about the “wonder” and the country in which it was located. We often discussed customs and I occasionally brought in clothing or items from the country. I also used sought out information or assistance from parents who were from a particular country that we were studying. They were more than willing to share their knowledge.
5. When planning a physical activity, I had to consider the age of the children with whom I was working. Therefore, most activities were simple and could be taught in a very short amount of time. I wanted the children to be active as soon as possible. I also tried to balance fine motor and gross motor activities. I made each activity relate either to the actual “wonder” or the country in which it was located. For example, children built their own Stonehenge from wooden blocks, but made their way through an Amazon rain forest obstacle course when we studied the Christ Redeemer Statue in Brazil.
6. A large bulletin board with pictures of all the 21 candidates and a map showing their locations was placed in the hallway. Each time we studied a country, a passport stamp was placed on the picture. I made passport stamps from small pictures I found on the internet. These pictures can be found on my school physical education web page at [www.wcsks.com/wagner.htm](http://www.wcsks.com/wagner.htm). (Look under the heading “Workshop Handouts” for *Passport Stamp Idea*.) For fun, I used the school’s official seal embosser to make each passport stamp look authentic. The bulletin board generated much discussion among students and parents and served as a constant reminder of the countries we had visited.
7. I made passports for each class that hung outside their classroom door. During Physical Education activities, I took photos, resized them, and printed them off on a word document with an explanation of the “wonder” and the activity that the students did. This was a lot of work but worth it. The passport served as a wonderful tool for showing parents what students were learning in P.E. Parents often told me of the information their children shared.

# New Seven Wonders of the World Activities

## **General Information:**

1. There are many activities that could have been used for several countries. For example, soccer could have been used for Mexico, Brazil, Germany, Italy, France, England, or Peru. I tried to use an activity only one time.
2. I used several dances, as these were generally quick and easy to teach.
3. I researched games from each country, but discovered that there is rarely any game “original.” There are many variations of the same games all over the world.
4. If a special holiday or celebration for a country came up during our study, we studied that country at that time. For example, we studied the Great Wall of China during the Chinese New Year, and Chichen Itza, Mexico, during Cinco de Mayo.
5. Although I chose simpler activities for my students, there are many options for activities. For example, I chose the Kinder Polka for Germany, but older students would be able to handle a regular polka. Although I did not use it, bocce ball is a great activity for almost any European country and can be adapted for inside using beanbags. Soccer is also a very popular game in Africa, South America, and Europe. In addition, every country has some variation of a tag game.

## **Activities Used for the New Seven Wonders of the World Finalists:**

1. **The Statue of Liberty (USA)** – We held a relay, with several groups racing against each other. We turned a small cone upset down and placed a small red foam ball inside of it for the torch. Each student carried a book in the left hand at hip level. This could be done with each student having his own equipment or passing equipment off to the next person.

Another option is to do something to country music like scatter square dancing. Handouts for this activity, along with a flag routine to “This is My Country/This Land is My Land”, and a sparkle wand routine to “God Bless the USA” can be found on my school web page at [www.wcsks.com/wagner.htm](http://www.wcsks.com/wagner.htm) . Information on how to make sparkle wands can also be found.

2. **Stonehenge (United Kingdom)** – I borrowed big wooden blocks from the early childhood teachers. I divided the children into as many groups as sets of blocks that were available. Students worked together to create their own Stonehenge. There were some wonderful creations and it was fun to see children using their imaginations. You could use almost anything for building. Older students like the creative challenge. Be sure to take pictures of their final architectural masterpiece.

If you have the equipment or can adapt baseball equipment or paddles, cricket is a great sport to do for England. If you have upper elementary students, rugby is also an option. This game can be challenging for students so make sure to give them plenty of time to practice.

The wrapping of the Maypole also originates in England so this could be done around May 1.

**3. The Eiffel Tower (France)** – We did step aerobics to the song “Movin’ on Up,” by M People. We talked about the number of steps (704) to the second observation deck of the Eiffel Tower and questioned if we could walk that many steps before the end of the song. I wore a step counter (older students could wear their own) and the entire class stepped till the end of the song. We then read the step counter to determine if we had stepped up to the observation deck. If not, we had to turn the music back on and keep going. This is a good activity for estimating steps.

Despite being a little silly, even the boys get a “kick” out of joining in a chorus line to do the “can can” kick. It’s a fun challenge to see if all students can work together to do this skill. The actions are: right knee up, right foot touch down, right straight leg kick, right straight leg touch down, and repeat with the left leg. Keep repeating these actions.

**4. Neuschwanstein Castle (Germany)** – We did the Kinder Polka or Children’s Polka. Children are placed with a partner and the entire class forms a circle. Partners join hands and face each other with their shoulders facing the inside of the circle. (This dance does not require boy/girl partnering.) Perform the following actions:

Hold hands with partner and slide (more like a step - close) into the circle 2x  
Stomp 3x – starting with foot that led in first  
Hold hands with partner and slide out of the circle 2x  
Stomp 3x – starting with foot that led out first  
Repeat above sequence one more time  
Slap own thighs slow 1x, clap own hands slow 1x, hit partners hands 3x  
Repeat slap, clap, hit sequence one more time  
Put out R heel and point R finger at partner and shake it 3x saying, “Now you be good.”  
Put out L heel and point L finger at partner and shake it 3x saying, “Now you be good.”  
Each person takes 4 steps in a circle to the right to face partner again  
Stomp 3x – R, L, R  
*Repeat entire dance until music ends*

The Kinder Polka music is from the CD “Young People’s Folk Dance” Vol. 1. Another option is the German Clapping Dance. Instructions and video for the version we might do are on the internet at <http://www.mts.net/~jinks/fd/germancl.htm> .

**5. The Acropolis (Greece)** – We played a game called “Oyster Shell,” which, supposedly, is how some Greeks decided arguments. It’s like flipping a coin except the dark side or light side of the oyster shell determines the winner. I placed my students into two lines facing each other a short distance apart. A home base line was placed behind each team. I gave each side a different color of swim noodle for tagging. One team was the dark side of the oyster shell and the other the light side. I used a paper plate folded in half, stapled, and painted black on one side. I tossed the “oyster shell” in the air and the side that landed up got to chase the other team to their home base. Any students tagged had to change noodles and go over to the other team. This was a great game of anticipation and students loved it.

**6. The Kremlin and Red Square (Russia)** – I taught the Russian Troika dance. Although it moves quickly, students loved the pace. It was challenging and fun! Students are in groups of 3 that face counter clockwise in a large circle. The three students hold hands and follow the group of three ahead of them in the circle. Perform the following actions:

Jog 4 steps to the right diagonal – r, l, r, l

Jog 4 steps to the left diagonal – l, r, l, r

Jog 8 steps forward

The person on the right runs under the raised arms of the other two people-8 steps

The center person follows and turns to face forward-part of the 8 steps above

The person on the left runs under the raised arms of the other two people-8 steps

The center person follows and turns to face forward-part of the 8 steps above

The outside people in the group of 3 joins hands to form a circle – turn 12 steps L

Stomp 3x – l, r, l

Turn circle 12 steps R

Stomp 3x – r, l, r

Outside people unhook hands and the entire dance is repeated

**7. Hagia Sophia (Turkey)** – We played a game from Turkey called, “Run, Rabbit, Run.”

Students joined hands in a circle and placed one person inside the circle as the rabbit. Another person was the dog and stood outside the circle. The object of the game was to protect the rabbit by keeping the dog out of the circle. The circle had to stay connected but could move their arms up and down to keep the dog out. The circle could also turn. If the dog got into the circle, then the circle let the rabbit out and tried to keep the dog inside. More than one game could be going at once and the rabbit and dog were changed often.

**8. Angkor Wat (Cambodia)** - Students learned various hand positions (bud, flower, leaf and fruit) for a simple Cambodian dance that I made up. I got the hand positions from the internet and music from I-tunes. Students also participated in a children’s game called “ptat kao sou.” In this game, squares were made on the floor with masking tape. Two opponents placed 5 rubber bands about 12 inches from a square and placed one finger inside a rubber band. The object of the game was to flick the rubber band into a square marked on the floor. Any rubber band landing on a line or outside the square was not counted. Students had fun working on this fine motor skill and counting the number of rubber bands that landed inside the square.

**9. Kiyomizu Temple (Japan)** – At this temple there is a building called the Jishu Shrine, dedicated to Okuninushi, a god of love. At the shrine, there are two stones that one can walk through with eyes closed. If this is accomplished, even with a helper, then the person will find true love. We did this in PE by working with a partner. One person closed his eyes and followed the voice of a leader who guided him through two cones set up across the gym. This is a fun trust activity.

We also had a chopstick relay. I divided the class into small teams and placed them behind cones. At the opposite end of the gym I placed a hula hoop with chopsticks that had been rigged with a piece of paper and a rubber band to operate more like a pair of tweezers. (Chinese restaurants usually know how to do this.) There was also a Styrofoam rice bowl and about 20 cotton balls. The object of the relay was to run down, pick up one piece of rice, put it in the bowl, leave the chopsticks, and run back to the next person who took his turn. The relay continued until all the rice was in the bowl.

**10. Sydney Opera House (Australia)** – We tried our luck with a boomerang but it was not very successful with early childhood and kindergarten students. Older students, however, would probably find the boomerang fun and challenging. Small plastic boomerangs have been sold at discount stores in the past and they work quite well. My students had more success using the hippity hops for kangaroo races. Another fun kangaroo race is having students place a tennis ball between the knees and attempt to hop a designated distance or through a simple obstacle course.

11. **Alhambra (Spain)** - We played two games from Spain; Las Cuatro Esquinas, meaning The Four Corners, and Los Relojito, "The Little Clock." In the first game, four hoops were set up in corners. Students were evenly divided into the four hoops and anyone left over was placed in the middle. On the word "go" students changed hoops trying to get there before a person in the middle could beat them to it. Anyone left without a hoop (remember - only a certain number could be in each hoop) went to the center to try on the next turn. In the second game, students turned a rope on the floor and a partner tried to jump over it. Partners traded places often.

12. **Timbuktu (Mali)** – This location was, at one time, an extremely wealthy community and the site of one of the first universities. Because of this, I chose to do a balance activity using books and plastic gold coins. The object of the activity was to walk down to a hoop filled with gold coins, pick up a coin, balance it on the book (older students used only one hand to carry the book), walk back to the starting line, and repeat the process. I wanted children to see how many coins they could accumulate on the book without dropping them off. Later we tried this activity without the book. Students had to balance the coins on the back of their hand. Any coin dropped was placed back into the hoop. If there are enough plastic coins, it is fun to do this activity with everyone in a group. They move around trying to dodge and feint to make another person's coin fall off. If the coin falls, the other person gets to take it and move on to a new person. The person who lost his coin goes to a designated area and gets a new coin to continue in the game. However, if he has accumulated any coins, he must use those coins first. Children love accumulating coins and they can go from none to a lot in a hurry, or vice versa.

13. **The Statues of Easter Island (Chile)** – We played a game called "Statues." From clipart pictures on the internet, I made cards that depicted various sports. Students worked with a partner. One person in each group came to me and got a card. Returning to his partner, he attempted to replicate the sports pose by placing his partner in the same position. No talking was allowed and the partner could not see the card. When the pose was complete, the statue had to guess what sport he was doing. Students traded places and could have as many opportunities as time allowed. This activity is also fun to do between groups, with one group guessing what sport the other group's statue is attempting to show.

14. **The Pyramids of Giza (Egypt)** – I talked to my students about the theory that the large stones of pyramids were moved via a rolling method on some type of cylinder shape like large tree trunks. We decided to imitate this motion. I divided the class into groups of three and provided each group with 6 cardboard blocks (stones), one swimming kickboard, and ten half swim noodles. The object of the activity was to transport a student who was carrying one "stone" down to a designated area where the stone would be placed. The team would begin making a pyramid (a pattern of 3-2-1). This would be accomplished by placing swim noodles under the kickboard and sitting a person on top of it holding a stone. A teammate would push the person on the shoulders to move the kickboard while the last person moved the swim noodles from the back to the front so the kickboard could travel. Once the stone was placed, the kickboard and noodles were picked up and carried back to the starting line. Students changed places and a new stone was carried down. This rolling activity takes a lot of time, so make the distance obtainable.

Another fun activity is an exercise bingo game that I modified and renamed "Exercise Hieroglyphics." I made 16 different "stick man" exercise cards and placed them randomly on the four walls of the gym. Each card was numbered 1-16. Exercises included jumping jack,

mountain climber, knee lift, toe touch, washing machine, football kick, lunge, sit-up, coffee grinder, arm circle, regular push-up, side bend, single knee raise, knee push-up, kangaroo jump, and jog in place. Students had a piece of paper that had a pyramid on it with 16 numbered triangles inside the pyramid. Students worked in groups or with a partner to travel to the various cards, do the exercise, and draw the picture (hieroglyphic) inside the triangle on their paper. One person drew while the others did the exercise. The drawing responsibility changed with each new card. Students did not have to do the numbers in order but had to travel to a different wall on each turn. This activity had students moving around the gym continuously and it was fun to see the drawings of the students when the pyramid was completed. The paperwork for this activity is included in a PowerPoint that accompanies this handout.

The CD “Holiday Songs Around The World,” by Catherine Slonecki, has a simple dance from Egypt called *Little Gazelle*. Although directions come with the CD that designate a different formation, I find the footwork easier to teach facing forward and then dance in a circle.

### **Activities Used for the New Seven Wonders of the World Winners:**

1. **The Great Wall of China (China)** – I researched the date for the Chinese New Year and planned a Chinese Dragon parade. I had done this before so I already had many of the items for the parade. I made a dragon head from boxes, drew and colored another dragon on a long sheet of paper, provided ribbon and sparkle wands for shaking, made paper lanterns, and borrowed small instruments from the music teacher that would make noise (tambourines, bells, wooden blocks, etc.). I dressed up and led the parade with a gong. We went through the halls and outdoors. Many of my Asian students came in traditional dress. It was awesome! If you have a battery operated CD player, you can have a student carry it and play the song *Feast of Lanterns*, from the CD “Holiday Songs Around The World,” by Catherine Slonecki.

I also set up a balance beam which became our Great Wall of China. Children practiced walking and balancing. Other activities might include a Chinese fan dance, chopstick relay, ribbon wand dance, yo yo’s, or Chinese jump rope.

2. **The Taj Mahal (India)** – I wanted a way to use the scooters during my unit so worked them into this activity. I told students about the Taj Mahal originally being decorated with beautiful gems. I borrowed colorful, flat stones (gems) from the early childhood teachers (they sell them at craft stores). I put students with a partner and placed a container of gems in front of them. A short distance from the lines I placed white boards (the color of the Taj Mahal). Each person had his own scooter and his own white board (I borrowed these from teachers, as well.). The object of the activity was to scoop gems into a spoon, ride the scooter down to the Taj Mahal and place the gems on the board. Any gem falling off the spoon or landing off the white board had to be returned to the container. It was a race against a partner to see who could get the most stones on his Taj Mahal. When time was up, students counted their stones. I liked this activity because it was a good combination of fine motor skills (scooping and carrying) and gross motor skills (riding the scooter), as well as a good counting activity.

Dances from India are very elaborate and beautiful. Our school had a guest dancer from India and the children were amazed at her skill. Any opportunity to bring in a guest from another country always excites the children and gets them talking about the country.

3. **Petra (Jordan)** – Petra was, at one time, a wealthy community because it found a way to dam up the water on the mountain and hoard the water supply. Passersby were then charged for water. I took students outside to do a water brigade activity. I divided the students into two long lines and gave each student a cup. The first person in each line had a pail of water in front of them and the last person had a large container that had to be filled. The first person scooped the water from the pail and passed it on to the next person's cup. This continued down the line, with the last person pouring the water into the container. This continued until one container was overflowing. As simple as it was, the early childhood and kindergarten students loved this activity and talked about it for weeks.

This activity can also be done a different way by using the long accordion type hoses that attach to a dryer vent. Spread the children out along the dryer hose with a bucket of tennis balls (water) at the top end and a mini parachute (where the water pools) at the other end. Two to four children will need to hold the parachute to make the pool. Have the first person drop a ball down the dryer hose. The children will wiggle the hose so the ball travels through and drops in to the parachute. Another person at the end of the parachute can take the ball out and place it in a bucket or you can simply see how many tennis balls can accumulate in the parachute. If you choose to place balls in a bucket at the end, have the last person run the full bucket to a designated location in the gym, as if he was actually carrying water back to his town. This activity can be varied by having the person who drops the ball rotate each time to the end of the hose and a new person move up into the "dropping position." Emphasize quickness if choosing this adaptation. This game can be timed as a cooperative activity or done as a race between two teams if there are two dryer hoses. Dryer hoses can be purchased at a store like Lowes.

4. **Machu Pichu (Peru)** – This was a place where I concentrated more on the country than I did the "wonder." For Peru, I decided to do a popular sport that the country loves - soccer. The weather was uncooperative so we had to play indoors, but soccer is always a favorite with the students, no matter where we play.

If you are lucky enough to have a climbing wall, this is a great activity for Machu Pichu, as it is high in the Andes Mountains. In fact, it is so high that it went undiscovered for 300 years.

5. **The Roman Colosseum (Italy)** – My students were very interested in the gladiator fights at the Colosseum and even though I tried to downplay the "to the death" aspect, this structure became one of their most recognizable wonders. We held our own gladiator fights, concentrating on knocking a ball off of a cone, rather than hitting another person. Each person used a small, upside down cone with a foam ball placed in it. (For older students, decrease the size of the cone and the ball to make it more challenging.) A swim noodle (sword) was placed in the other hand. The activity ended up to a look a little bit like fencing, with the object of the competition to knock the ball off of the cone in the opponent's hand. Winners moved on to play a new person and the other gladiator stayed in place to receive a new opponent. Children loved this activity.

If you choose to use a dance for Italy, the Tarantella is a fun and simple dance for students. Directions can be found on the internet. I have used this dance and had students make their own tambourines by stapling small paper plates together with beans inside. Ribbon streamers can be taped or glued to the bottom of the tambourine or threaded through a hole punched in the rim of the paper plate.

6. **Christ Redeemer Statue (Brazil)** – Since I had already used the “Statues” game for another wonder, I decided to concentrate on the country of Brazil. Since the Amazon rain forest runs through this country, I made an obstacle course that took up the entire gymnasium. We caught tree frogs in scoops, jumped over hurdles like jaguars, walked across the balance beam to avoid the snakes, crawled through caves (tunnels), swung out on a vine (rope) over caiman crocodiles, climbed like monkeys up a rope, walked across stepping stones to avoid the quicksand, used scarves to fly like butterflies, and drove boats (scooters) to navigate our way around the piranha in the Amazon River. Many students mentioned the obstacle course as their favorite activity of our study.

If you are looking for an easy dance for this country, try *La Conga* from the CD “Holiday Songs Around The World,” by Catherine Slonecki. This is a simple conga line dance with three steps and a kick to the side. The kick simply alternates to the other side after each three steps.

7. **Chichen Itza (Mexico)** – This was the last activity of the seven wonders unit of study and since the “wonder” was in Mexico, I coordinated this activity with two others that often take place at our school – Cinco de Mayo and Mother’s Day. On the Friday before Mother’s Day, we invite mothers to school for a couple of hours. Coming to the gymnasium for an activity is one of our offerings on this day. This year I decorated the gym and invited mothers to a Mexican Fiesta with their children. They danced the Mexican Hat Dance and the Macarena, sang a song in Spanish, and cracked “cascarones” over the heads of each other. Cascarones are confetti filled eggs that are used in several celebrations in Mexico. I had been saving eggs and making cascarones for the entire year. To make a cascarone, crack an egg carefully around the top and remove the small shell. Use the egg for cooking. Rinse out the egg and dye it in food coloring, if desired. Let it dry. Fill the egg about half full of confetti. (I often use paper from the cross shredder at our school.) Cut a small square of wrapping tissue paper approximately 2”x3”. Glue it down on top of the egg to hold in the confetti. Usually a person sneaks up on another to crack the egg, but I had a different plan. I let the child crack it over the parent’s head first (emphasizing “gently”) and then had the parents do it to the child. When we were done, the gym was a mess, but students and their mothers both had a good laugh.

## Final Notes:

My ideas are merely a starting place for the possibilities that I know others will create for this unit of study. Whatever you chose to do, I wish you and your students an exciting trip!

Thanks to my friend, Sandy Noel, 2008 Midwest Teacher of the Year, for the inspiration to expand upon her study of the continents and the New Seven Wonders of the World.

