

# Jingle Dancer

## A RIF GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COORDINATORS

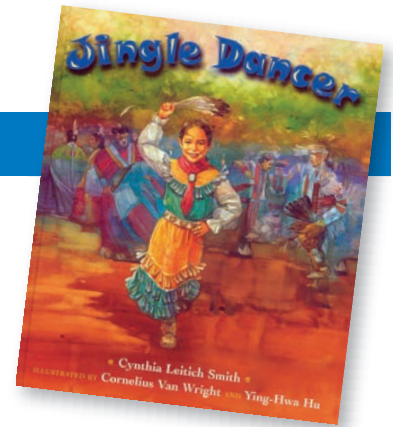
**Themes:** American Indian Culture, Tradition, Celebration, Sharing, Family

**Grade Level:** K to 3rd grade

**Book Brief:** A young girl finds a way to make her dress “sing” so she can jingle dance at powwow.

**Author:**  
Cynthia Leitich Smith

**Illustrators:**  
Cornelius Van Wright  
& Ying-Hwa Hu



## TIME TO READ!

**Before reading:** Ask the children if they know what a powwow is. Have they ever been to one? Find out what kinds of festivals, holidays or gatherings they participate in. How do they participate? Do they dance, like Jenna? Do they play certain games or eat special food?

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### LINE DANCING (AGES 5-12)

Have children form a big circle and put on a good dancing song. Pick one child to start. This child should perform one dance move, like a shimmy or a spin. The next child in the circle should do the same move and add a new, different move of their own. Keep going down the line like this. See how complicated your dance can get before someone forgets a step! The child who messes up should start the next round.

### PINCH POTS (AGES 5-12)

Materials: modeling clay, toothpicks

Roll a chunk of modeling clay to form a ball. Using your thumbs, press down into the center of the ball to create a well. Keep pinching until you have a pot. Wipe outside of pot with damp cloth to prevent cracking. Use toothpick to draw designs on outside of pot. Let dry.

### DANCE CHARADES (AGES 5-12)

Materials: paper, pen or pencil, small container

Write down on small slips of paper the names of books your group has read recently. Put the slips in a container and let each child or small group of children choose one. Make sure they keep it a secret! Have them act out the plot of the story using a dance. Let the other children guess the name of the book.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### OTHER BOOKS ABOUT AMERICAN INDIAN CULTURE

*Powwow's Coming*, Linda Boyden (2007), *A Boy Called Slow*, Joseph Bruchac (1998), *Coyote Places the Stars*, Harriet Peck Taylor (1997), *Saltypie*, Tim Tingle (2010), *Home to Medicine Mountain*, Chiori Santiago (2002).

### TECHNOLOGY LINK FOR KIDS

[www.rif.org/kids](http://www.rif.org/kids)



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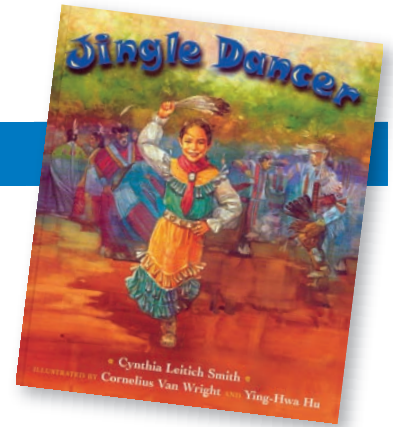
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**Content Connections:**  
Social Studies, Music



## TIME TO READ!

### BEFORE WE READ, LET'S LOOK AT...

**The Cover:** Have students make predictions about the text based on the title and front cover illustration. Who is the girl? What is she holding? What's on her dress? Where do you think she is? Who's in the background?

**The Pictures:** For younger students, take a brief picture walk. What do the pictures show? Who are all of these people? Where is the girl at the end of the book? What's she doing? See if students can make connections between the title and the final pictures of the girl dancing.

**Prior Knowledge:** Find out what students know about powwows. Have any students ever been to a powwow? Find out what kinds of festivals, holidays or gatherings your students participate in. How do they participate? Do they dance, like Jenna? Do they play certain games or eat special food?

**Vocabulary:** powwow, bounce-step, moccasins, regalia

**Purpose for Reading:** Set the following purpose: “As we read today, think about how the author paints pictures with words. We call that *figurative language*, like ‘light blurred silver.’ Why does the author do that?”

## WHILE WE READ

### MONITORING COMPREHENSION

- ◆ Why do you think Jenna wants to dance?
- ◆ Why doesn't she have her own jingles to put on her dress?
- ◆ Why doesn't she want her aunt's dress to “lose its voice”? What does that mean? Can a dress sing?

- ◆ Why does everyone lend Jenna jingles for her dress? Why don't they dance themselves?
- ◆ How do you think Jenna feels while she's dancing?
- ◆ How do you think her family feels watching her dance?

## LET'S THINK ABOUT

**Our Purpose:** Revisit the purpose: “The author uses a lot of figurative language. What did it add to the story? Can you think of some examples from the book? Think of places she paints pictures for us with her words.”

**Extending Our Thinking:** A powwow is a special celebration. Point out the way Jenna dresses every day compared to the way she dresses up at the powwow. Ask students if they have any similar celebrations where they dress up, eat special food or put on special performances.

### NOTE TO EDUCATORS

- ◆ Extension Activities for Educators also available.
- ◆ Vocabulary Scaffolding Sheet also available.



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## A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

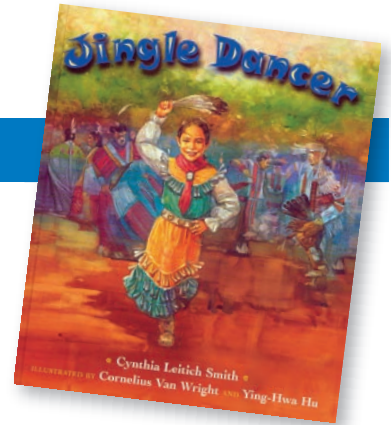
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## TIME TO READ!

### Before reading, make connections:

Find out what your child knows about powwows. Have they ever been to one? What do they think happens at a powwow?



**While reading, pay attention to the language:** This book uses a lot of *figurative language*, like “Jenna’s dress could sing.” What does that mean?

### After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ Why did Jenna want to dance?
- ◆ Why did she have to borrow jingles?
- ◆ Why did everyone let Jenna borrow their jingles?
- ◆ Has anyone ever let you borrow something really important? If so, what?

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### WORD ART

Materials: paper, pencil, colored pens or thin markers

On the paper, have your child draw their face in pencil. Along the pencil lines, have them use colored pens or markers to write phrases or sentences describing themselves figuratively. (For example, write “My eyes are chocolate” around the eyes.) Erase the pencil lines to enjoy a picture painted in words!

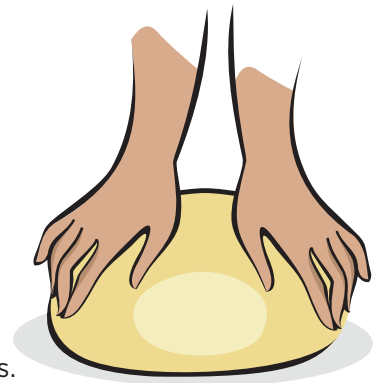
### OUT AND ABOUT

Powwows are usually free and open to the public. Find one near you at: [www.powwows.com/calendar](http://www.powwows.com/calendar). (Check to make sure it is open to everyone before you go.) You can also go online to watch real jingle dancers at: [www.youtu.be/BZFefZKIR3g](http://www.youtu.be/BZFefZKIR3g).

### INDIAN FRY BREAD

Ingredients: 4 c. flour, 1 tbsp. powdered milk, 1 tbsp. baking powder, 1 tsp. salt, 1 1/2 c. warm water, oil

1. Mix dry ingredients. Add water. Knead until soft, then set aside for one hour.
2. Shape into small balls. Flatten each ball into a circle with a rolling pin or by hand.
3. Fry in a pan half-full of oil until golden brown on both sides.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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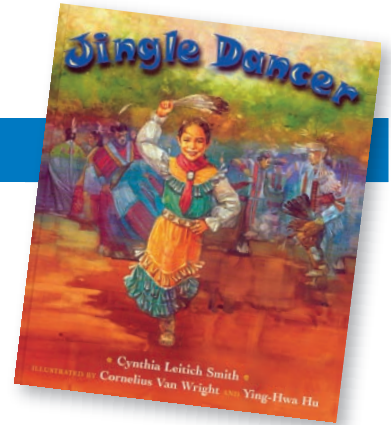


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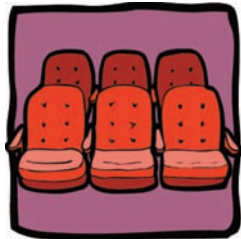
## A RIF VOCABULARY SCAFFOLD



**blur:** to become hard to see



**row:** a line of something



**borrow:** to use something that belongs to someone else for a while



**strolled:** walked



**burrowing:** digging



**daydream:** to imagine or dream about something while you're awake



**fetches:** got



**duplex:** a kind of apartment or house with two places side by side



**law firm:** place where lawyers work



**clasping:** holding





# Jingle Dancer

## RIF EXTENSION ACTIVITIES FOR EDUCATORS

### FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING

*Jingle Dancer* contains a lot of figurative language. Write a poem about your family using figurative language like metaphors and similes.



### IF THESE SHAWLS COULD TALK

In the book, Jenna talks about the jingle dresses having voices. That figure of speech is called *personification*. What if clothes really did have voices? If your favorite outfit could talk, what would it say? Does it like you? Do you take good care of it? What kind of adventures have you gone on together? Write a story about a day in the life of your favorite clothes.

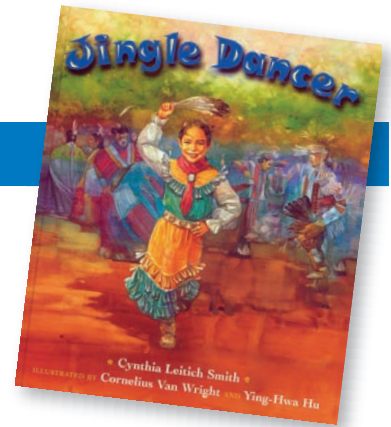


### MAPMAKER, MAPMAKER

Materials: markers or crayons, a map template of your state (online at: [www.50states.com/maps](http://www.50states.com/maps))

Make a map key and color in the locations of early American Indian tribal lands that used to be within the borders of your state as well as those still present today.

These can be found at the following site:  
[www.native-languages.org/states.htm](http://www.native-languages.org/states.htm).



### LET'S FIND OUT

Use the internet to find out more about powwows. What kind of dances could you see at a powwow? Why is the drum so important? Have students work together in groups or pairs to make an informative poster or brochure.



### JINGLE MATH

Girls' jingle dresses usually have 100, 130 or 140 jingles. Jenna wants her dress to have four rows of jingles. Each row must have the same number of jingles. How many jingles does Jenna need to put in each row if her dress has 100 jingles? 130? 140? (Hint: One answer will have a remainder!)

