

Jingle Dress Dance

Namid looks at the calendar. In three days she and her big sister will go to the powwow. In three days she will see her Ojibwe family. She can't wait.

Namid's favorite part of the powwow is the Jingle Dress Dance. Her sister says it's because her name - Namid - means star dancing. So of course she likes to dance!

Jingle dress dancing is extra special. It is just for women and girls. They wear bright costumes with rows of metal cones that give the dance its name. The cones make a noise like falling rain.

Namid's dress is red and pink. Last year it had 100 cones. This year she sews on 40 more. When she grows up she'll have a dress with 365 cones, just like a traditional jingle dress.

The Jingle Dress Dance started in the early 1900s. Namid's sister tells her the story of the medicine man whose granddaughter was very sick. He had a dream about a special dress and dance that would heal her. The medicine man made the dress and gave it to his granddaughter. The women in the community danced until the girl got better. Today the dance represents healing and pride for the Native American people.

Namid and her sister practice their steps. Their feet move in a quick pattern. Their footwork stays close to the ground. They kick out their heels and bounce.

Namid's sister gives her a gift. It is an eagle feather to wear in her hair. Many of the girls and women carry feather fans or wear eagle plumes. Now Namid has her very own feather to bring.

Namid knows she has the best big sister. She is so excited to dance the Jingle Dress Dance together at the powwow. She doesn't know how she can wait three more days!



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What does the name Namid mean?
 - a. Eagle feather
 - b. Star dancing
 - c. Little sister
 - d. Falling rain

2. What does the dance represent?
 - a. Life and health
 - b. Love and kindness
 - c. Healing and pride
 - d. Nature and peace

3. Why is the dance called the Jingle Dress Dance?
 - a. Because a person named Jingle invented it
 - b. Because the metal cones look like Christmas jingle bells
 - c. Because the metal cones jingle when the women move
 - d. Because the dresses are colorful

4. Why is Namid's sister the best?
 - a. Because she gives Namid a gift
 - b. Because she tells Namid the story of the Jingle Dress Dance
 - c. Because she practices with Namid
 - d. All of the above

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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