

NEWS BREAK

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, June 18, 2017** of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

***Please remember to always preview the content of the article before sharing with your students.**

Article: Iran edict pushes Zumba underground

Section: MAIN, A10

Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you think these people are doing?
- Are there any clues in the picture that gives you details to what the article may be about?
- What is Zumba? Have you ever heard of it? Why do you think it's such a popular workout?
- Why would Zumba or other dance fitness classes be considered illegal in an entire country?

Comprehension Questions:

1. Iran has undergone a health revolution in recent years. What's happening in the country?
2. As in many countries, Zumba, an aerobics dance class, has attracted a wide following, especially among women. Why?

3. An edict issued this month by the head of the Sports for All Federation, a government institution promoting sports and a healthful lifestyle, effectively banned Zumba classes for being contrary to what?
4. Gathering for fitness dancing is just one of many examples of the tensions between Iran's changing middle-class society and whom?
5. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran's Shiite Muslim clerics have done what?
6. But they do happen, because enforcement can go only so far in a society completely changed over the last 40 years. While prosecutions can result in fines or caning, they are not common, and Tuesday, what took place in the streets to celebrate the Iranian national soccer team's earning of a spot in the World Cup?
7. In practice, this means popular but proscribed activities, including Zumba, are often tolerated if they take place where?
8. Until this month. In a letter, the head of the Sports for All Federation, Ali Majd Ara, decided Zumba wasn't one of the accepted sports. Why?

Discussion Questions, Extension Essay Questions or Journal Prompts:

Today, many Iranians shrug off most of these sins, saying it should be up to individuals to decide if they commit any.

- Iranians are in a difficult place. They have strong religious ties, but also want to live in a modern and free world. What do you think about dancing being called a sin? Do you understand why dance may seem risky to a strict religion?
- Should the individual choose what's right for them? Why or why not?
- Do you belong to a religion? Generally there are rules to follow. Do you think banning music and dancing from your life is an extreme rule? Why or why not?

"In all honesty, I couldn't help myself from moving in my chair," said the cleric, 66, who has chronic arthritis. "This seems like good exercise ... As a human being I immediately connected to the rhythmic movement. But as a cleric I am taught that dancing and music is pleasure-seeking and therefore haram, or unlawful."

Even jobs related to dancing and music are unlawful, he said, like cutting wood to make an instrument.

- ***What are connections you can make to dancing and music and potential sin, in a religious sense?***
- ***Where does music and dance fit into your own life, culturally, personally and socially?***
- ***Do you think music and dancing enhance your life? Why or why not?***

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