

ART FORM

Dance

LEARNING AREA

PE

SUBJECT

Physical Education

TARGET GROUP

Key Stage 1 + 2

MATERIALS

A CD Player
A selection of CDs
Examples: Totally Kids CD,
Classical Chillout CD

Optional extras:
Coloured spot mats

SPACE

A hall or room such as the gym.
Space for dance is vital.
Please ensure that your space is safe, warm, well-lit and ventilated. While a sprung floor is preferable, be sure that the floor is clean and without obstacles.

DURATION

Approximately one hour.

NB: Warming up and cooling down are important, so be sure to leave enough time for each component within the session.

ARTIST'S INTRODUCTION

Dance has the capacity to engage everyone whatever our ability. It is a fun and enjoyable activity and art form which can enhance our fitness and health, our personal and social understanding and our learning skills. We are all dancers but the older we get the further we become from our ability for natural movement.

Exercises and warm-ups introduce the idea of isolated body part movement to encourage exploration in ways of moving in relation to space time and other people. Further development allows creative exploration of and decision making to compile short performance sequences.

Young at Art has worked with artist Nicola Curry on a range of projects to introduce approaches to dance with children. Most recently, Nicola ran similar workshops with the School Friends – 12 affiliated primary schools throughout Northern Ireland – resulting in positive responses from children and teachers alike. Prior to that Nicola has worked with Young at Art on projects approaching literacy and storytelling through dance and drama.

NB: Warming up and cooling down are important, so be sure to leave enough time for each component within the session.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Performance Skills – identify different parts of the body in movement. Develop choreographic strings/sequences. Perform to music.
- Working with Others – whole class and pairs.
- Creative Skills – working as an individual, developing movement phrases, exploring a range of body actions and improvising freely.
- Self confidence in movement through observation of self and others.

INSTRUCTIONS

WARM UP (ALLOW 20 MINUTES)

Alphabet body parts

1. Have the group stand in a circle, with their arms extended to the side. Ask them to turn slowly right around without touching anyone else. Explain that they need that personal space within which to move. (Stand on coloured spot mats if this helps)
2. Choose one person to name a body part excluding fingers and toes. e.g. elbow, right shoulder, left knee etc.
3. Using the chosen body part have everyone draw the first letter of their own name in the air.
4. Repeat taking two counts to complete the action.
5. Start again with a new body part, drawing the second letter to counts 3&4.
6. Encourage use of a body part on the opposite side, or on a different level of the body, for each new letter.
7. Recall the movement for the first letter and add the second to counts 1-4.
8. Try a third letter, and a different body part to counts 5&6.
9. Recall the first and second movements, and add a third to counts 1-6.
10. Add a fourth letter using a different body part to counts 7&8.
11. Recall and perform the complete sequence to counts 1-8.

Stop and Go

1. Ask the group to leave the circle for 8 counts. They can walk anywhere in the general space, but do not follow, nor bump into anyone else.
2. At the count of 8 they stop and stand still like a statue.
3. When the group are ready, add the sequence of movements from the Alphabet Body Parts game.
4. Begin in the circle, take 8 counts to walk away and stop. Standing in that place, take 8 counts to perform their own alphabet body

parts sequence.

5. Take a final 8 counts to walk back to their position in the circle.

Speed

1. Ask the group to find a space anywhere in the room and stand still.
2. Explain that on a scale of speed from 1-10, that standing still is a 0.
3. Liken it to a stop sign on the road.
4. Ask the group to start walking slowly. Explain this is speed 1-3.
5. Increase the speed to a normal walk, this is speed 4-6. Relate these differing speeds to those for different traffic speed limits.
6. Explain and show that a slow jog is speed 7-8 and a faster run has a maximum safe speed of 10. □When acceptable speed limits are established, begin work on direction of movement.

Direction

1. From a standing start, ask the group to walk in different directions.
2. Have them walk backwards, forward, to the left, and to the right and stop.
3. Vary the speed and direction by combining instructions, e.g. "Forwards 4".
4. Don't forget to bring the speed back to 1 to keep good control over the exercise.

DEVELOPMENT AND EXPLORATION (ALLOW 30 MINUTES)

Body Weight & Step Direction.

1. On the spot ask the group to take step forward on the right leg while leaving the left foot 'glued' to the floor. □The weight of the body should be over the left leg.
2. Bring the feet together by moving the right leg back to centre.
3. Next ask the group to take a step backwards, moving the right leg back, with the left foot 'glued' to the floor.
4. Bring the feet together, by moving the right leg forward to centre.

5. Ask the group to take a step to the side by moving the right leg out to the side, with the left foot 'glued' to the floor.
6. Then bring feet together, by moving right leg into centre.
7. Repeat the entire sequence, with the right foot 'glued to the floor, and the left leg stepping forward, then centre, backwards then centre, to the side and then centre.
8. Build the step sequences to a count, where 1st count is a movement of either leg away from the centre (forwards, backwards or to side), and 2nd count is movement of same leg back to centre. Build to an 8 count e.g.
 - 1) Right leg forward
 - 2) Right leg centre
 - 3) Right leg to side
 - 4) Right leg centre
 - 5) Left leg to side
 - 6) Left leg centre
 - 7) Right leg backward
 - 8) Right leg centre.
 - 9) You now have an eight count phrase.
9. Work with a partner to show how the stepping sequence can be performed in pairs, for example with pairs standing side by side facing the same direction.
10. Alternatively pairs may perform the sequence to a count facing each other, or back to back.
11. Take turns for half the group to perform a sequence together, with the other half watching.

Taking the Lead and Personal Space

1. Standing in a space, choose a body part to lead with e.g. head, elbow, shoulder or knee.
2. Divide into small groups where each group explores leading with one body part.
3. If e.g. the shoulder is chosen, have it lead the movement, forward, backward to the left, to the right.
4. Recall the different levels used in the warm up and incorporate, high, medium and low levels into the movement sequence. Build

- to an 8 count phrase.
5. Add directions 'up' and 'down'. Build to a 4 count phrase using these directions.
6. As a rule have the group think about stretching chosen body parts away from the centre of the body in a clear direction.
7. From the movements chosen by the groups, build in sequences to a 12 count phrase.

Partner Work

1. In pairs have one pair observe while the other performs their 12 count phrase, which explores 'leading body parts' and 'direction of movement'.
2. The observers watch out for clear movement, clear direction, use of body weight, and leading with chosen body parts.
3. Reverse roles so everyone has a chance to be observer and performer.
Were the pairs able to identify which body part led their partner?
Were movements to the count crisp?
Were movements to the count clear?

COOL DOWN (ALLOW 10 MINUTES)

The Seagull

1. Standing in a space on their own have the group spread their arms slowly outwards like a bird opening her wings.
2. Repeat arm movements while moving from one place to a new one.. □Stop and stand still
3. Repeat movement explaining that this is like a seagull swooping to catch a fish.
4. Let the arms fall back down, placing one hand in front of the stomach, the other behind the back.
5. With a movement from the waist, flick the arms gently upwards and outwards to repeat the wing sequence.
6. Use imagery of birds or planes to assist the group. Repeat the movements gently, several times.

Spider Climbing and Snow Melting

1. Have the group stand in their own space with feet shoulder width apart. □Then gently raise an arm, moving your fingers as if they were the legs of a spider which is climbing a window pane on a cold day.
2. Have the group bring fingers back down in a zig-zag, imagining snow melting on the window pane
3. Repeat the whole sequence using the other hand and arm.
4. Facing a partner have each of the pair move their arms and hands up in time with each other as the spider climbs up the window and down with the melting snow.
5. Repeat taking turns to lead and follow.

Slow Stretch

1. Lie down on the floor and curl into a small ball, tucking arms and legs into body.
2. Slowly uncurl to stretch the body, relax then curl again.
3. Repeat several times before coming to a stand to finish.

TEACHER'S TIPS

Loose and comfortable clothing that does not restrict movement.

(Tracksuit bottoms are preferable so that girls are not inhibited in leg movement.)

Trainers or bare feet

LINKS TO OTHER LEARNING AREAS

- The Arts – experience and appreciation of music, and rhythm; develop towards individual and group performance; creative expression and critical appraisal
- Science – body parts, movement and balance
- Maths and Numeracy – developing rhythm and dance sequences using beat and counting
- Personal Development – developing a positive attitude to body movement/dance
Building self-esteem through performance

of movement sequences to music; contributing to health and fitness; collaboration and cooperation

- Language and Literacy – expressing feelings and thoughts and developing specific vocabulary

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

These basic exercises can be enhanced and developed to allow short narrative sequences to be built. Allow the children to create their own images and pictures with their bodies. Record what they create to view afterwards and discuss the images. Remember however, to always allow warm-up and cool-down periods for every session.

Recommended reading:

Lets Go Shoolie Shoo Activities for Dance and Music, Helen MacGregor & Bobbie Gargrave Book and CD ISBN 0 -7136 -6615 -3

Don't forget to send feedback to toolbox@youngatart.co.uk

www.youngatart.co.uk/toolbox