‘Pause and Effect’
by
Maiden Voyage Dance
Teacher Resource
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ABOUT YOUNG AT ART

Young at Art is one of Northern Ireland’s leading children’s arts not-for-profit companies and home of Belfast Children’s Festival. From its base in Belfast’s city centre, Young at Art coordinates not only an international festival and a touring events agency, but also a wide variety of projects that encourage children and young people under 18 to enjoy the arts.

Young at Art believes passionately that every child should have the right to access exciting and original creative experiences, regardless of who they are or where they come from. The company believes that arts provision should be FOR children and young people as well as BY children and young people. In this, it promotes child-inspired work by professional artists with an emphasis on performance and exhibition content over participatory activities.

Pause & Effect Teacher Resource was compiled by the Education Officer with exercises adapted from All About Plays, developed by Mary Jordan and Young at Art, All About Playing, developed by Nuala O’Neill, Emma Berkery and Young at Art.

To find out more about Young at Art, our performances and resources, please view our website www.youngatart.co.uk. Alternatively, please contact Emma Berkery Education Officer on 028 9023 0660 or education@youngatart.co.uk
HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This resource is intended to support teachers whose pupils are attending a performance of Pause and Effect during Belfast Children’s Festival 2016. It outlines pre and post-performance activities that can be utilized to both prepare pupils for the performance and also enable them to unpack and process the experience afterwards. While the pre-performance exercises will greatly aid the appreciation of the production, it is also extremely beneficial for pupils to be given the opportunity post performance to explore the elements of the show, what they thought and felt about it. The performance can be used as a starting point for a number of exercises and lesson development long after the original experience.

The pre-performance activities outlined in this resource are designed to prepare your pupils for attending this performance. The activities can serve as warm-up games and exercises that engage the children in creative thinking, quick physical responses to suggestions, and experimenting with performance. It’s also helpful to introduce the vocabulary and skills, which will maximise children’s engagement with the performance on the day, and help to shape their critical responses. The suggested activities below include both active experimentation with performance and more reflective exercises based on teaching by questioning. The pre-performance activities can be reflected upon as a class and used to illustrate key concepts the children might encounter in a live theatre performance.

These concepts include:

- The imaginative and non-literal use of props
- The use of non-naturalistic scenery
- Actors taking on multiple characters
- The role of an audience in the process of ‘collective make-believe’

If children are familiar with these concepts before experiencing a performance, there will be less of a ‘shock factor’ when they encounter them onstage. This leads a deeper appreciation of the performance they will see.

Post-performance activities aim to elicit responses from the pupils, by
encouraging critical appraisal of the performance they have seen as a class. The activities allow the students to explore how they felt about the performance, what they remember and what they thought of it raised. They also act as tools that can be used to encourage the children to express their own ideas and emotions in a safe, imaginative and creative way. Both sets of activities are intended to be adapted by teachers as they see fit to suit their own, and their classes’ needs and interests.

**Learning Outcomes**

Pupils will be encouraged to:

- Work as a team (cooperating, listening, negotiating, leading)
- Work individually (focus, recall, thinking creatively and critically)
- Make predictions and decisions (based on a range of cues and information)
- Express opinions, ideas and emotions
- Experiment with performance
- Explore colour, shape and composition
- Expand their imaginations and creativity
Pause and Effect is a Maiden Voyage Dance production. It explores how we fill time with movement and music inspiring our imaginations. A fun and engaging performance, Pause and Effect features both classical music and traditional music using a variety of live musical instruments. Performed by four dancers, it has no spoken narrative; instead its focus is dance, rhythm and sound.
CAST & CREW

CHOREGRAPHER
Eleesha Drennan

MUSIC DIRECTOR/COMPOSER
Willie Drennan

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Joe Fletcher

STAGE MANAGER
Claire Sheppard

COSTUME DESIGN
Llinos Griffiths

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Nicola Curry

COMPANY MANAGER
Eibhlin de Barra

DANCERS
Carmen Fuentes Guaza
   Ryan O’Neill
   David Ogle
   Vasiliki Stasinaki

MUSICIANS
Willie Drennan
   Davy Angus
Theatre visits and attending live performances, provide the opportunity for different modes of learning within the curriculum. These experiences include the independent experience as an audience member, cooperative learning through group discussion and group play, and practical activities pre- and post-performance. Specific curriculum links which can be made to Pause and Effect at varying levels include:

**The World Around Us, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

- Demonstrating how characters' actions and decisions influence their environment and relationships with others
- Dealing directly with children's experiences and perspectives to build confidence in the value of their contribution to the world
- Creating imagery or spaces based on aspects of our world that can facilitate conversations on reality and the imagined
- Promoting greater awareness and understanding of other people's feelings through the establishment of characters in performances
- Subverting language barriers, by storytelling through physical theatre and dance to highlight our shared experiences, emotions and challenges

**Language and Literacy**

- Building vocabulary and use of language through viewing live drama/dance and discussing personal responses afterwards
- Interpreting spoken and non verbal narratives
- Experiencing, enjoying and reflecting on the creative work of others
- Demonstrating how stories can be told in different ways that can inform children's future written and dramatic work

**The Arts**

- Stimulating imagination, creative thought and expression through exposure to a range of artistic experiences
- Developing observation and interpretive skills in drama and
dance contexts
• Encouraging children to express their views and understand their responses to performances and music
• Increasing visual awareness through observation/discussion of the different materials used in set and costume design

Understanding how lighting and sound are used in performances to convey meaning and create imaginary spaces
PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

To prepare children for viewing the performance

The following exercises will need a large open space for the children to move, a hall is perfect but equally fine is a classroom with chairs and tables pushed back. They can be used pre-performance but are also perfect to be used as warm-up exercises post-performance.

ISOLATIONS

Materials: None
Set up: Children stand in a circle in an open space
Specific curriculum links: The Arts; Language development; Early Mathematical Experiences; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical development and movement; The world around us.

How to play

• The children stand in a circle with enough space either side to reach their arms wide without touching the person either side of them. Explain that it is important for dancers to warm up before they go on stage to stretch their muscles so that they can move in the way they want. Ask the group to imagine that there is a string coming out of the top of their heads and reaching straight up to the ceiling. Explain that the string is keeping their bodies very straight like puppets on strings. The group are going to move different parts of their bodies to warm up and stretch their muscles. The children will be concentrating on one part of their bodies at a time and when they are stretching that part they have to try and keep all the other parts of their bodies still and straight.

• On each Isolation count out loud to ten. (Note – each isolation needn’t be ten rotations, this is rather an opportunity to allocate a length of time for each and can be longer or shorter as feels
appropriate)

• Head - First the group are going to roll their heads from one side to the other very slowly. Emphasise that this should be done slowly and carefully with all other parts of the body remaining still. Follow with eyes by winking and blinking and then mouths, by opening and closing like goldfish and sticking out and rolling around their tongues.

• Shoulders, arms and fingers - Instruct the group to imagine that they are holding some chalk in their fingers and that they are going to draw small circles on top of their legs with the chalk. They do this by rolling their shoulders forwards with their arms down straight by their sides. Begin with drawing little tiny circles, getting bigger and bigger until the children are drawing the biggest circles they can, while only moving their shoulders. Then reverse the direction. The speed of the movement can also be varied with very fast or very slow circles. Next lift arms out straight and hold them out at shoulder height. Wiggle fingers and thumbs without moving the rest of the body.

• Body – Ask the children to roll their hips to warm up their tummies and bottoms. Try to keep heads and feet still and in a straight line. Instruct the group to place their hands on their hips and imagine that they are drawing a large circle with their bodies.

• Feet - Lastly the group move their feet by standing on one foot and then the other and shaking them from the ankle. The children can spread out their arms to help them balance, the rest of their bodies should stay still.

Unpacking the learning – Questions after the activity

Was that difficult? Why? Why did we need space either side of us? Why do we need to warm up and stretch our muscles? Are there any muscles or body parts that we forgot to warm up?

Skill Outcomes

Ability to concentrate and observe is developed alongside sustained attentive listening. There is opportunity for use of mathematical language and concepts; elements of counting, size, space, quantity and direction. An element of time passing is included for each component. An increase in self-control, increased balance control and increased coordination. Movement skills are nurtured. Increasing control of the fine motor skills. Recognition of parts of the body.
Building on
As the children use this game and become more skilled at controlling and isolating each body part, new areas can be added such as eyebrows, elbows, toes etc. The children can also join in and lead the game by suggesting body parts for isolation thus taking ownership of the game.

TICK TOCK WARM UP

Materials: Clock (with small and large hand)
Set up: Children stand in a circle in an open space
Specific curriculum links: The Arts; Language Development; Early Mathematical Experiences; Personal, Social and Emotional Development

How to play

• Explain we are going to warm up our bodies. It is important for dancers to warm up their bodies before going on stage, so they can dance without injuring themselves. Go through the shapes of the hands on a clock can make. Ask the group to copy the shapes of the hands of the clock with their own body.

• Look at shapes being made and discuss how some have arms close together and some the arms are far apart.

Unpacking the learning – Questions after the activity
What is a dancer? Why is it important that dancers warm up their bodies before a performance? What is the audience?

Skill Outcomes
The children gain confidence to use their body. They respond to beat and rhythm. They experience patterns in movement. Ability to concentrate and observe increases. They work as part of a group.

Building on
Go round the circle and ask each child to make a new body clock shape to remember it. Team with a partner, teach your move to your partner and perform both moves for the group. You can team with another pair and learn their moves and perform all four for the group.
POST-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

To unpack the experience of the performance

THINKING BACK

Materials: None
Set up: Large open space, children stand in a circle
Specific curriculum links: The Arts; Physical development and movement; The world around us; Mutual understanding

How to play

• Begin by generating a discussion with the children about the show. What do they remember about the performance? What were the most important/funniest/least enjoyable parts of the play? Did the lights/music change, and when? Why?

• Next repeat the Isolations exercise above. The teacher can then ask each child to talk about their favourite moment and further explore the pupils' positive memories of the play: Why did you like this? What made it funny? Were there any other parts that haven't been mentioned that you liked? The responses can be recorded for evaluation/feedback purposes.

• The exact same process is then repeated with the question: What was your least favourite part of the play?

Skill Outcomes

Developed language and social skills. Developed critical appraisal and memory skills. Developed sense of rhythm and awareness of sounds and their own voices.

Building on

To further this exercise the children can act out parts of the performance they liked. The teacher can ask ‘what would you do
next? to develop the play beyond recollection of the performance. Remember there’s no ‘wrong’ answers. Let the children’s imaginations flow using elements of the performance as a starting point.

**Magic Bucket**

**Materials:** An empty bucket

**Set up:** Children sit in a circle

**Specific curriculum links:** The Arts; Physical development and movement; The world around us

**How to play**

- Teacher introduces the magic bucket that is full of imagination and ideas, even though it looks empty to the eye! He/She explains that it can contain whatever each child wants.
- Teacher demonstrates how the bucket works by taking out an imaginary toothbrush and miming its use. The children can guess what it is and then take turns pretending to take an imaginary object out of the bucket and miming what it is. The rest of the group can guess what each object is.

**Unpacking the learning – Questions after the activity**

How did we use our imaginations? Did we need words to describe our object or were our bodies enough? What did the dancers in Pause and Effect tell us using their bodies?

**Skill Outcomes**

Expressing emotions, developing imaginative skills, creative thinking using imaginary props, being an engaged, active and responsive audience, respecting each others contribution, observation skills – looking, listening, taking turns. Non-verbal communication skills.

**Building on**

This activity can be further developed for older children through the children working together in pairs or small groups to create short dramas using a number of imaginary props from the bucket. Each group can then present their drama or prop to the rest of the class. The class can contribute ideas for what each object could be.
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