

## Introduction to the “Moving & Learning” Workshop

The purpose of this workshop is to learn (1) space, behavior and time management for leading dance activities (2) creative dance activities related to the art form -- body shapes, nonlocomotor (in place) movement, locomotor movement and expressive qualities -- that also teach essential skills (3) evaluation ideas for self-reflection

Some activities involve doing movement modeled by the teacher. In this workshop, I will often use the strategy of “**model and copy**” so that you can experience concentration, listening and direction following as students would. I will also **co-construct**, or build the activity with you as students: collecting ideas, selecting and sorting. This promotes confidence in imagination, divergent thinking and creative problem solving, and also cultivates a community of learners.

### I. Management Strategies

*“Children should learn to work together and think alone.... rather than think together and work alone.”*

#### A. Self-Management: Building responsibility in students

##### ◆ Develop intrapersonal skills

1. **Concentration** (*pantomime blinders, cupping your hands on either side of your eyes*): focusing your mind on what you are doing, paying attention.
2. **Imagination** (*pantomime twinkling your fingers away from your head, like ideas flying out*): opening your mind to all of the possibilities, creative thinking, and coming up with lots of ideas, visualizing.
3. **Body Control** (*pantomime gripping your two arms, crossed in front of you*): knowing where you are in space, not running into others, controlling your mouth.
4. **Memory** (*pantomime pointing a finger at the top of your head*): remembering what we did, being able to walk back through your mind to repeat it.

##### ◆ Create familiar rituals

Familiarity = comfort. Novelty = stress, excitement

## **B. Space Management**

Ask for these **body shapes** by name and signal them with drum, handclap, or word:

### *Find a Perfect Spot*

- Scatter formation, standing or sitting
- Empty space on either side of you
- Facing the leader
- Not near a “whispering partner”
- Not near a wall or furniture
- Do a “helicopter check”

### *Stand Tall, One and All*

- Standing tall; arms at sides

### *Ready Position*

- Sitting, legs crossed. “Eyes and nose facing me”

### *Talking Circle or Dance Circle*

- Ready position in a circle

### *Find a partner*

- Go toe to toe (back to back, elbow to elbow) with a partner.
- Connect with body parts, quickly. Students focus on the body part and less on the specific partner. Change partners frequently for multiple interactions.

## ◆ **Work often in a circle**

### *To **Make** a Circle (4 different ways!)*

1. Move to the nearest place in the circle.
2. Toes on the circle (if working in a gym, or if a center circle is available)
3. Take Hands to Make the Circle Round: Group takes hands but does not pull back. Drop hands immediately.
4. Go elbow to elbow with everyone else

### *To **Open** a Circle*

- Take a...micro (or mini) step back, Jump step back, Wiggle step back, Crocodile-sized step back, Stiff step back

### How much space between you and the person next to you?

*Invisible-person space* (about the width of a person)

*Santa- sized space* (double wide)

## What Do We Call The Space?

**Self Space** – The space around you when you stay in one place to move and explore concepts. “Self Space Stay!”

**General Space** – The space we share as we travel. “General Space Go!”

**Empty Space** - “Move into the empty spaces so you don’t get hurt.”

### C. Behavior Management

1. Drumbeat or Handclap signals: Freeze! Sit Ready Position
2. To ask for quiet: Bodies Move, Mouths Don’t
3. Give choices: “You can sit here or here.” “You can dance or watch.”
4. Give responsibilities: “Everyone put away the scarves and sit ready position on a perfect spot.”
5. Put slow learners and behavior problems on either side of you (in a circle).
6. Put additional behavior problems opposite you (in a circle or scatter formation).

#### ◆ Get your high-needs students on your side

- 1) Model new ideas with them as your partner
- 2) Have them stand before the group to review expectations, as you feed them the lines
- 3) Don’t drop everything to correct behavior, but move among your students and physically correct them without speaking or looking directly at them, even as you are giving other instructions.

### D. Teaching Strategies

- 1) **See, Hear, Say and Do** – By seeing the concept on the board, saying it, hearing how it sounds, and doing the action associated with the concept, students retain the information!
- 2) I model, you copy.
- 3) You do, I say what I see, (even if I don’t see it), to get diverse results.
- 4) I give the concept, you explore it.
- 5) Co-construct: use student ideas to flesh out the structure
- 6) Use student demonstrators.
- 7) Repeat: Novelty, Repetition, Repetition, Repetition
- 8) **The Three Rs: Relate – Reflect - Repeat**

◆ **Teach to diverse learning styles**

1. Auditory: Double beat on the drum means, “Freeze, sit, ready position.”
2. Memory: Make a talking circle
3. Visual: Show me with your fingers how many feet on the floor for a jump (students hold up two fingers).

◆ **Use imagery**

Be a potato! Eyes everywhere but no mouth!  
 Do a helicopter check  
 Put invisible person space between everyone  
 Don't be a puddle person (i.e. sit ready position!)  
 Make a pancake pile (of the props)

**E. Other important teaching strategies include:**

- Keep it SIMPLE!
- Know the plan.
- Have your music organized.
- Give directions clearly and simply.
- Demonstrate.
- Keep the flow going, by figuring out your transitions (reflection, rest, moving to another place in the space, getting help from your children).
- Use your voice dramatically.
- Model appropriate behavior, especially patience and respect.
- Teach to the core, and ignore the negative behavior.
- Establish a safe and nurturing environment, both physical and emotional.

**F. Time Management**

1) Transitions

Use Mountain Breathing and Reflection to calm between activities and for transitions

**Mountain Breathing**

Sitting ready position, arms overhead in line with the top of your head, with fingertips touching, elbows back and shoulders down. You are a still, quiet mountain. Take 3 slow, full, deep inhalations and exhalations. Then, float your wrists down to rest upon your knees. If your eyes were closed, you may open them, please.

**Reflection**

**Ten-second sharings** – “Tell your partner” keeps all learners engaged. Hear from a few people. Keep the pace brisk.

**Show Me** – students show they understand by doing a body shape or movement in response “Show me a big shape, a straight shape.....”

- 2) Balance instructional time with moving time
- 3) Teach in layers, not lumps
- 4) ‘Be in the present, and a little in the future.’ When cueing a transition, give students the information ahead of time so they are ready (e.g. 4 beats before the transition in a song & dance activity)

## **II. Creative Dance Activities**

### **A. Select a Concept Focus for the Activity**

Concepts can be the “lens” through which you “view” the activity. Use the concept vocabulary with your students. Build lessons that focus on one concept (or two concepts).

After you do the activity, check for understanding through reflection.

#### **Concepts include:**

##### Ideas related to Space

Place - self, general and empty space

Level – high and low

Size – big and small

Direction – (6 of them) forward & backward, up & down, side & and side

Pathway – straight, curved and zigzag

Focus – internal and external, awareness of more than one thing

##### Ideas related to Time

Speed – quick and slow

Rhythm – moving to a mixture of different pulses and stillness

##### Ideas related to Movement Qualities (also called ‘Force’)

Energy – expressive movement, and the four ‘S’s: shaky, smooth, sharp & swinging

Weight – working with gravity, getting lighter/rising, getting stronger/sinking

Flow – moving from our bones or from our muscles – stopping us from moving or letting ourselves move freely

##### Ideas related to The Body

Body Parts

Shapes – straight, curved, with corners and angles (angular), twisted, matching and not matching

Relationships – preposition places, the empty space between others and ourselves

Balance – control/grounded, sharing control, letting go/ungrounded

### **B. Select an Essential Skill for the Activity**



## MOVING & LEARNING

Essential skills prepare students for life and work environments. As our world changes, so do the needs of our students. These skills are outlined in the Framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning.

[http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=254&Itemid=120)

Two areas from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills are addressed in particular through movement activities. One area is ‘learning and innovation’: creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and communication. The other area is ‘life and career skills’: flexibility, adaptability, self-agency, productivity and responsibility.

Simplified, this includes: listening, taking turns, concentrating/focusing, collaborating, cooperation, creative problem solving, emotional development, using imagination, taking appropriate risks, helping others...

As you lead activities, you can develop and reinforced essential skills at the same time as you teach concepts.

### **C. Select a Reflection Question for the Activity**

Reflection is crucial to make sure that you not only covered the material, but the material covered the child!

Reflection questions encourage making choices and critical thinking. They give students an opportunity to recall, analyze, and select. With older children, reflection can be done in a pair share, so that everyone can process at the same time. Afterwards, you can hear from a few people. Or reflect as a whole group. Keep the pace brisk.

“Show me” helps you assess children’s understanding of concepts in a quick, nonverbal way.

*Reflection Question Examples (from Sodeo)*

*Reflection (Concept of Body Parts): What part of our body did we use when we walked? When we reached? Where is your back? Where is your elbow?*

*Show Me (Concept of Direction): Show me a reach up. A reach down. Show me a backwards step. A forwards step.*

*Choosing between two options (Concept of Direction): Which did you like better, going forwards and backwards, or staying in place to have aches and pains?*

*Critical Thinking (Concept of Place): What can we look for when we move through general space so we don’t get hurt? (Answer: empty space, other people...)*

#### Recommended Resources:

- *AlphaBeat, Step On the Beat & Brain Bop* by Kate Kuper
- *Creative Dance for All Ages* by Anne Green Gilbert
- *Brain Compatible Dance Education* by Anne Green Gilbert
- *Contrast & Continuum Vol I – IV* by Eric Chappelle

➤ CDs by Jim Gill

### III. Self Evaluation Questions

- What basic **skills** did the students need to know in order to proceed with the activity?
  - *Understanding Self and General Space*
  - *Understanding spatial transition*
  - *Understanding sound signals and cues*
  - *Specific Essential Skills*
  
- What types of **spatial transitions** were used?
  - *Find a perfect spot*
  - *Sit in “ready” position*
  - *Stand tall one and all*
  - *Form a large standing circle*
  - *Sit in a “talking circle”*
  - *Other*
  
- How were the **transitions cued**?
  - *Drum beat*
  - *Verbal cues*
  - *Visual cues*
  - *Other*
  
- How was the instruction time balanced between the **lengths of time spent** with verbal instruction only versus the time spent **with the students moving**?
  
- How was student comprehension **evaluated** during or after the activity?
  - *“Show me” techniques*
  - *Individual and group modeling*
  - *Reflection*
  
- Did you include student ideas into the lesson? How?
  
- Did you use creative problem solving? How?
  
- How were sequences reviewed?
  
- How were **transitions** made **into** the room? **Out** of the room? Was the lesson objective **reinforced** during transition time? How?
  
- In what ways did you work with disengaged students?
  
- Did you develop leadership within the group? How?
  
- Did you cultivate a supportive atmosphere? How?