



Curriculum Objectives

Strand Unit: Exploration, creation and performance of dance

- Explore the movements of different parts of the body.
- Create and perform a simple dance with teacher's guidance.
- Move in space safely with others.
- Develop poise, balance and coordination while moving and stopping.

Strand Unit: Understanding and appreciation of dance

- Develop an awareness of the need for focus and concentration in dance.

Venue

- Hall or quiet outdoor space.

Move up a level

Equipment

- CD player and music.

PSSI Homepage

Reference

- Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education, page 18-19.
- Teacher Guidelines, page 68.



ACTIVITY

1 Introduction

Switching on for dance

Sit with the children, cross-legged, in a circle and lead them through the following activity:

Switch on your ears (tweak the ears).

Switch on your eyes (rub the eyes).

Switch on your concentration (pat the head).

Switch on your body (place both hands on top of the head and move them down along the outline of the body, tracing the shoulders, sides, legs and feet. Bring the hands to rest on the floor in front of the feet).

Warm up and stretching (Visit your warm up bank.)

2 Lesson theme: Moving body parts

Stage 1: The space bubble: The children stand spaced apart facing you. Ask the children to move the arms in the space in front of, behind and at the sides of the body. They must keep the feet still but can allow the knees to bend and the torso to twist, as necessary. Tell the children that all of the space directly surrounding their bodies is called their **space bubble** and it protects their bodies when they dance. Now the children begin to move around the hall, exploring all the space available. They must:

- keep their space bubble around their bodies
- move without touching another dancer's bubble.
- Stop and keep still when you shout *freeze*.

Introduce some music as the children dance.

Stage 2: The magic dust

Using the image of **magic dust**, guide the children through an exploration of ways in which their body parts can move:

Magic dust is in the room. It is going to fall onto a part of your body and wake it up. Once your body part is awake it will start to move and won't be able to stop until the dust is blown away.

Give the children an example:

Watch my body. Some magic dust has just landed on my shoulder ...

See how my shoulder dances ... Now it's jumped onto my knee, look ...

Ask the children to join in now. They move each specific body part when the dust lands on it and they must freeze all movement when you blow the dust away:

Let's all try it now. I see the magic dust on your elbow. How does your elbow like to move?

Whoosh it's gone from your elbow. Good, all the elbows are absolutely still. Now it's on your foot ...

TEACHING POINTS

- Ensure that the circle is big enough to accommodate all of the children so that you can see each one.
- Encourage correct spine alignment by directing the children to sit **tall** with back stretched and lower back long, rather than curved.
- Use the activity to remind the children that when we dance, as well as moving our bodies, we need to look, listen and concentrate.
- Choose from Music Selection 1.

- The idea of the **space bubble** is to encourage the children to keep well spaced out when they move and so help them to avoid banging into another dancer.
- Use your voice to guide the activity. Useful commentary might include: *Protect your bubble, don't move too close to another dancer. Can you stop and keep completely still inside your bubble when I call freeze? Ready to go again?*
- Choose from Music Selection 1.

- The magic dust is a fun way of helping the children to explore the ways in which the body parts can bend, stretch, twist, shake, rotate, etc.
- Direct the children to use a wide range of body parts, e.g. head, shoulders, wrists, hips, back, tummy, heels, thumbs, etc.
- Initially the children will be very holistic in their approach, i.e. when moving the shoulder they may also jump or hop about. Encourage them to begin to refine body movement by challenging them to move the shoulder while keeping the rest of the body still.
- Begin by suggesting the parts of the body but then allow the children to choose themselves.
- Challenge them to move one body part at a time at first, then ask them to move two or three body parts at the same time!

ACTIVITY

3 Conclusion

(a) The magic dust dance

This dance encourages the children to move different parts of their body to the following rhyme:

Magic dust lands on your body. It jumps from...

(The children move each of the following parts in time to the teacher's voice.)

- *shoulder to shoulder*
- *elbow to elbow*
- *hand to hand*
- *and now you catch the magic dust!*

The children cup hands together, **holding** the magic dust.

Blow it in the air ...

The children blow into their cupped hands and **throw** the dust up into the air.

And it sprinkles everywhere...

The children use their fingers to **sprinkle** the dust inside their space bubble.

And you dance, dance, dance, dance your body ...

The children move freely about, either on the spot or moving about the hall.

Then whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, I blow the dust away ... You blow away the dust and the children freeze.

Repeat the dance a few more times with music. On the last time, the dance finishes when you **blow** the dust out the window/door and the children sink slowly to the floor.

(b) Cool down activity

Lead the children through a sequence of **blowing** any remaining dust from different parts of the body.

Then encourage the children to also **brush** the dust off the arms, legs and the front and back of the body with their hands.

Everyone stands still, inhaling and exhaling gently.

TEACHING POINTS

- Use your voice to direct the activity while also giving the children the time to develop their own individual responses.
- Encourage the children to move, showing awareness of their space bubbles and of the other dancers moving in the space.

- Choose from Music Selection 1.

- Use your voice to encourage the children to **blow** softly and brush lightly, in order to introduce a sense of calm and refocussing at the end of the lesson.
- Encourage the children to use this time to relax and to refocus as they get ready to return to the classroom.

DEVELOPMENT

Further development for Senior Infants, or if repeating this lesson with Junior Infants:

Ask the children to work with a partner and do the dance together, i.e. moving shoulders, elbows and arms at the same time and then freely dancing around the hall together. They may catch hands or simply follow one another.

- Emphasise the importance of watching your partner and keeping time with him/her.
- Encourage the children to share a big space bubble with their partner and to be aware of others as they move.