



Move up a level

PSSI Homepage

### Curriculum Objectives

### Venue

### Equipment

### Reference

### Strand Unit: Exploration, creation and performance of dance

- Explore the movements of different parts of the body.
- Explore different body shapes.
- Explore levels and directions in space.
- Copy a partner's movements.
- Create and perform a partner 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

- Continue to develop an awareness of the need for focus and concentration in dance.
- Hall or quiet outdoor space.
- CD player, music, jointed cardboard skeleton and mirror.
- Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education, page 18-19.



## ACTIVITY

**1 Introduction****Switching on for dance**

Sit with the children, cross-legged, in a circle. Remind them to **switch on** for dance:

**Switch on**

- your ears
- your eyes
- your concentration
- your body.

**Warm up and stretching: Visit your warm up bank.**

**2 Lesson theme: Dancing with a partner****Stage 1: Meeting Sammy Skeleton**

Ask the children to sit down and close their eyes while you call a special visitor into the hall. While they do this, take a cardboard skeleton from a hiding place and present it to the children as a **dancing skeleton** called Sammy.

Talk briefly to the children about Sammy Skeleton and invite them to dance with him.

**Stage 2: Dancing with Sammy Skeleton**

The children go and stand in a space facing you.

Now stand behind the skeleton and use one hand to hold the skeleton and the other hand to move different parts of his **body** to the music.

Encourage the children to copy the movements of the skeleton. In this way the children are now doing a **mirror movement** of the skeleton's actions.

**3 Conclusion****(a) The mirror dance**

The children work with a partner to create a mirror dance together.

## TEACHING POINTS

- Ensure that the circle is big enough to accommodate all of the children so that you can see each one.
- Check the children's posture to ensure correct alignment of the spine.
  
- Choose from Music Selection 1.
  
  
- Tell the children a simple story of how you met this lonely skeleton in a shop one day. His dream was to be able to dance with children so you took him home and helped him to dance by holding him up and moving his bones. Now he's here today to dance with all of the children ...
  
- Ensure that the children are well spaced apart and don't all crowd up to the skeleton.
- It would be useful if you could stand on something such as a bench or a stage so that you and your dancing skeleton are clearly visible to all of the children.
- Try and move as many different parts of the skeleton as possible. (You will need to practice this before the lesson in order to be familiar with what you can do.)
- Try and manipulate the skeleton so that it can drop down, jump up, turn around, lean from one side to the other, shake, go onto the knees, sit and lie down.

## ACTIVITY

**Stage 1: Demonstrating the dance**

Using a mirror (or glass door/window), introduce the concept of a reflection to the children and tell them that when they were dancing with Sammy Skeleton they were his reflections, because they copied everything he did. This is a mirror dance. Arrange the children in pairs and number them 1 and 2. Ask the children to watch while you demonstrate a short mirror dance with one child, drawing attention to the following rules:

- **Don't go too fast** or else your reflection won't be able to keep up with you.
- **Don't turn your back** on your partner or else your reflection won't be able to see you.
- **Don't talk to your reflection** because your reflection can only copy your movements, not your voice.
- **Stay inside your space bubble** and don't move around the room

**Stage 2: Creating the dance**

The children go into a space with their partner and begin the mirror dance. Guide the activity, calling out the child who is to lead, i.e. Number 1 or Number 2. Give suggestions where necessary: *Number 1 you could*

- *move the magic dust on different parts of your body;*
- *try making different shapes with the body;*
- *move side to side or up and down.*

*No. 2 make sure you*

- *watch closely;*
- *don't take your eyes off your partner.*

*When I say freeze I want all dancers to freeze and I'm going to have a quick look to see if the mirrors are all working.*

**Stage 3: Performing the dance to music**

Introduce music while the children continue to dance.

**(b) Cool down activity**

The children leave their partner and stand in their own space, facing you. Lead them through some slow movements with emphasis on gentle stretching of arms, legs and torso. Wave **bye-bye** to your **reflections**. The children wave back and quietly leave their space to line up.

## TEACHING POINTS

- As the children become more familiar with the activity, you will be able to talk less and allow them to find their own ways of moving. You will, however, need to continue calling No. 1 or No. 2 to ensure that each child gets a fair amount of leading and copying.
- Try to move about the periphery of the hall so that you can observe all of the children, and encourage those who may need a little more assistance in the initial stages of this activity.
- Emphasise the link between good concentration and good copying.
- If you have an uneven number of children you will have to have one group of three, one leader and two reflections (one beside the other). Choose this group carefully as it can be very challenging for some children to lead two others.
- Choose from Music Selection 2.
- Choose from Music Selection 2.
- Visit your stretching bank.
- 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:**

Repeat the mirror dance and now ask the children to change partners and dance with a new partner.