



Move up a level

PSSI Homepage

Curriculum Objectives

Venue

Equipment

Reference

Strand Unit: Exploration, creation and performance of dance

- Explore strong and light movement.
- Move with an awareness of the body and the space it moves in.
- Move imaginatively to the stimulus of animal pictures and an animal story.
- Show sensitivity to music when moving.
- Move in space safely with others.
- Create and perform a story dance with teacher's guidance showing a clear beginning, middle and ending.
- Develop increased poise and coordination when moving and stopping.

Strand Unit: Understanding and appreciation of dance

- Continue to be aware of the need for focus and concentration in dance.
- Identify the sections of the dance as the beginning, middle and ending.

- Hall or quiet outdoor space.

- CD player, music, animal pictures.

- Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education, page 28-29.



ACTIVITY

1 Introduction

Switching on for dance

Sit cross-legged, facing the children who are all spread out in their own spaces.

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: Strong and light dynamics

Stage 1: Moving to strong and light music

Repeat this activity, challenging the children to show greater variety in the body actions used for dancing to the strong and the light music.

Stage 2: Exploring animal movement

Show the children a poster of the following three animal groups:

- Farm animals.
- Forest animals.
- Jungle animals.

Briefly discuss the types of animals in each poster, with reference to the dynamic quality of each animal, e.g. the strong, slow elephant versus the light, quick mouse.

Guide the children through an exploration of the ways in which some of the animals might dance.

- Choose a few animals from each poster.
- Focus on the body actions, levels and directions used as well as the strong and/or light qualities of the animal.

TEACHING POINTS

- Ensure that each child has enough space to be able to move safely and to be able to see you.
- Remind the children to sit correctly to ensure correct alignment of the spine.
- Choose from Music Selection 1.
- See last week's lesson.
- Each poster should have four or five animals of different shapes and sizes. Try and get a good balance between strong and light in the animals you put in the posters.
- Use your voice to guide the activity with suggestions/tasks that help focus the children's movements, while allowing them freedom to choose their actions, e.g. *I'd like you to show me a way of moving which is slow and strong like the elephant moving through a big river of water. What about the mouse darting about and hiding behind the leg of the table? Show me your body moving like a big strong lion running in and out of the bushes. Now you're like a little monkey swinging from tree to tree ...*
- It is very important that you emphasise to the children that we are interested in the ways in which the animals move rather than the sounds they make.

ACTIVITY

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

In this dance the children are divided into three groups of animals and dance to a short story narrated by the teacher.

Stage 1: Demonstrating the dance

Divide the children into three groups, i.e. **Group 1**, **Group 2** and **Group 3**.

Ask all the **Number 1s** to choose an animal from the farm animal poster.

Ask the **Number 2s** to choose an animal from the forest animal poster.

Ask **Number 3s** to choose an animal from the jungle animal poster.

Ask each child to make a dance showing two different ways in which their animal moves. Give a brief demonstration of a few different animals, e.g.:

- A dog burying his bone and running through the garden.
- A squirrel gathering nuts and then scampering up a tree.
- An elephant walking through the river and rolling in the mud.

Stage 2: Creating the dance

Ask each child to practice his/her animal movements. Guide with suggestions where appropriate.

Gather the children in their groups:

- farm animals
- forest animals
- jungle animals.

Place the groups in three different corners of the hall.

Guide the children through a practice of the animal dance using the following narration.

Once upon a time there was a museum full of wonderful animal statues ...

All the children freeze in their animal shape.

On one big shelf there were statues of farm animals ...

Walk over and **admire** all the freeze shapes of the farm animals (**Group 1**).

On another shelf there were all the animals from the forest ...

Walk over and **admire** all freeze shapes of the forest animals (**Group 2**).

And on another shelf there was a big group of animals from the jungle.

Walk over and **admire** all the freeze shapes of the jungle animals (**Group 3**).

All day long the animals stayed very still while the visitors came to the museum to see them.

TEACHING POINTS

- Encourage the children to choose a different animal to the other children in the group.
- Challenge the children to bring out the dynamic qualities of strong and/or light as they might apply to the animals chosen.
- Encourage them to use a variety of body actions, levels, pathways and directions.
- With regard to the story that accompanies the animal dance, consider the following ideas:
 - You may have a planned story outline which you present to the children during the lesson and they then respond to your story.
 - You may allow the story to develop during the lesson from your observations of the children's movement responses, so that the children, in effect, guide the story.
 - You may have prepared a story in the classroom by discussing the three groups of animals with the children and getting ideas for a story from them.

ACTIVITY

Children remain in their freeze shapes. *But at night time, when all the visitors were gone home and the caretaker had locked the doors of the museum, the animals came to life. First the farm animals got down carefully from their shelves and began to move ...*

All of **Group 1** come to life, move away from their corner and dance about the hall showing the two movements of their animals. *Then the farm animals rested and the animals from the forest got down from their shelf and began to move ...*

Group 1 rests and **Group 2** begin to dance.

Then the forest animals rested and they invited the animals from the jungle to dance ...

Group 2 rests and now **Group 3** begin to dance. *Finally all the animals danced together.*

All the groups dance at the same time. *The animals had a wonderful night and were very happy. In the morning they carefully returned to their shelves.*

Each child dances back to his/her corner. *The caretaker opened the doors of the museum and looked inside. All the animals were once again back in their places and absolutely still once more ...*

All the children freeze. *“Everything looks just fine in here” he said to himself and walked away. And very, very quietly the animals winked!*

Each child winks while in his/her freeze shape.

Stage 3: Performing the dance to music

Repeat the dance again and use music as background accompaniment to the narration.

(b) Cool down activity

Gather the children in a circle and, one by one, each group (farm, forest, jungle) **shakes** the animals off their bodies. Lead the children through a sequence of stretches for the arms, legs and torso.

Good-bye to dance

Sit with the children in a circle and explain that this is the last dance lesson. Discuss briefly with the children the following two questions: What did you like about dance? What did you learn in this dance programme?

Guide the children through the **good-bye to dance** activity, as introduced in Lesson 6 of the infant dance programme.

Everyone joins hands and stretches the hands up to the ceiling while saying

Now the time has come to fly so stretch up high and say good-bye!

Everyone breaks hands and leaves the circle to line up.

TEACHING POINTS

- The most important consideration here is that the story does not take over the dance but rather enhances the children's dance, particularly their understanding and use of **strong** and **light** movement.
- 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.
- You may wish to leave this discussion for the classroom in order to give you more time to allow each child to contribute to the discussion. Perhaps the children might be asked to represent their feelings about dance in a drawing.

DEVELOPMENT

Further development for Second Class, or if repeating this lesson with First Class:

Repeat the animal dance and ask the children to **meet** with another animal to do a follow-the-leader dance together.