



Move up a level

PSSI Homepage

## Curriculum Objectives

## Venue

## Equipment

## Reference

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

- Explore a greater range of body shapes.
- Begin to work in a small group.
- Create and perform a group dance showing unison movement.
- Move in space safely with others.
- Show sensitivity to music by keeping time to the beat when performing.
- Develop increased 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.
- Watch the dance of others with courtesy and respect.
- Comment on unity of group movement in a dance.
- Hall or quiet outdoor space.
- CD player and music.
- Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education, page 40-41.

## 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: Body shapes****Stage 1: Shape making revisited**

Help the children to recall the concept of body shapes introduced in their Infant and First/Second Class dance programmes by asking them to make different shapes inside their bubble:

*Can you make a shape using your arms? Using your head and elbows? A shape that's very close to the ground? A shape that's as close as possible to the ceiling? A crooked shape? A shape that faces to the back of the hall?*

Now introduce a count structure into the shape-making process. Ask the children to make a shape and hold still in this shape for eight counts, e.g. Shape 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Continue this process, changing shape after every eight counts, e.g.

Shape 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Change shape 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Low shape 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Elbow shape 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Head shape 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Face the back 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, etc.

## TEACHING POINTS

- Ensure that the circle is big enough to accommodate all of the children so that you can see each one.
- Remind the children to sit correctly to ensure correct alignment of the spine.
- Choose from Music Selection 1.
- Ensure that all of the children are in a good space so that they can make their shapes safely.
- Your observation and questioning skills are particularly important here in order to guide the children's exploration of the range of shapes they can make.
- As this is their third time exploring body shapes the children should now be able to:
  - use a wide range of body parts in making their shapes
  - demonstrate a good awareness of different levels and directions as they move from shape to shape
  - show a high level of control in keeping still in a shape. (It helps to remain still if you encourage them to stare at/focus on an object such as a window ledge, a line on the floor, a beam in the ceiling, a picture on the walls, etc.)

## ACTIVITY

### Stage 2: Partner sequence

Arrange the children in pairs. Ask them to watch while you guide two children through a demonstration of a partner shape sequence as follows:

- Each shape is performed at a different level (high, medium or low).
- Each shape is held for eight counts, i.e. a total of 24 counts, e.g.:
  - Shape 1 (high) eight counts
  - Shape 2 (low) eight counts
  - Shape 3 (medium) eight counts
- Partners can perform the sequence of shapes standing side by side and/or facing each other, e.g.:  
 Shape 1 (*side by side*)      Shape 2 (*face each other*)      Shape 3 (*side by side*)

Now ask the children to create and practise their own shape sequences.

## 3 Conclusion

### (a) Group shape dance

In this dance two pairs of dancers join their partner shape sequences together to make up a group dance.

### Stage 1: Demonstrating the dance

Arrange the children in groups of four. Ask them to observe while you demonstrate with one group how two partner sequences can be joined to make a group dance:

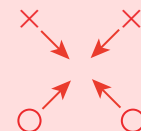
- The dance will last for last for 48 counts, e.g.:  
 Partner sequence 1 (*24 counts*) + Partner sequence 2 (*24 counts*).

- Dancers can stand in two different formations:

(i) a square where each dancer faces his/her partner, for example



(ii) a diamond where each dancer faces into the centre, for example



## TEACHING POINTS

- Encourage the children to watch the demonstration closely.
- The children have already had the chance to work on a partner shape sequence in the First/Second Class, Lesson 2, when they had to teach two shapes to a partner. In this instance they are being asked, as a pair, to create the sequence together from the start.
- Some pairs may wish to use body contact in some of the shapes. This can be allowed as long as it is safe and responsible.
- Challenge the children to show a varied use of the body, levels and directions in their shape sequence.
- Encourage accuracy in movement, and good timing with partner.
- Encourage the children to watch the demonstration closely.

## ACTIVITY

(iii) a combination of both.

Each pair demonstrates their shape sequences to the other. Now each pair teaches the other pair their three shapes, adjusting movements if necessary for the other pair to learn. The group decide the order in which they will perform the two sequences and they practise this a few times through.

### Stage 2: Creating the dance

The children now create their own group dance, using the structure above. Depending on the numbers of children, you may need to make a group of six. If this is the case, choose your group of six carefully as the children working in this group will need to be good at cooperating in order to complete a group dance with six dancers. You may need to give them extra guidance. In addition, each pair of dancers can only contribute two out of their three shapes to the group dance in order to keep the total number of shapes at six.

### Stage 3: Performing the dance

One half of the children sits down and views the other half as they perform their group dances. Then reverse roles.

### (b) Cool down activity

Gather the children in a circle and lead them through three or four final shapes that stretch out the arms, legs and torso. Stand still for a few moments, inhaling and exhaling gently.

## TEACHING POINTS

- Encourage the children to watch each other closely and to take the role of **teaching** another pair seriously. Remind them that they may have to adjust some shapes if the other pair finds it difficult to do them.
- Emphasise that the most important aspect is that this is a **group** dance involving four dancers as a unit.
- Some pairs may wish to change a contact shape involving two dancers to a contact shape that accommodates all four dancers. This can be encouraged as long as it is safe for all four children to do.
- Encourage the children to take responsibility for keeping time together initially by counting aloud, i.e. Shape 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and by watching each other.
- Eventually the children should be able to keep time without relying on counting aloud.
- Choose from Music Selection 1.
- Encourage silence from the audience and focus and concentration from the performers.
- Ask the audience to take note of the accuracy and timing of movement when the groups change from one shape to the next.
- Choose from Music Selection 2.
- Visit your stretching bank.

## DEVELOPMENT

### Further development for Fourth Class, or if repeating this lesson with Third Class:

The children practise their partner sequences again and then they are placed with a new pair of dancers to work on a new group dance.

- Encourage the children to use this time to relax and to refocus as they get ready to return to the classroom.