



Move up a level

PSSI Homepage

Curriculum Objectives

Venue

Equipment

Reference

Strand Unit: Exploration, creation and performance of dance

- Explore more complex body actions.
- Create and perform a group dance showing canon movement.
- Move with an awareness of body shapes and levels and directions in space.
- 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.
- Hall or quiet outdoor space.
- CD player, body actions diagram and music.
- Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education, page 40-41.



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: Body actions

Stage 1: Discussion and diagram

Arrange the children in a group, sitting in front of a blackboard or chart poster on the wall. Ask them to help you to recall body actions experienced in their Infants and First/Second Class dance programmes in order to fill in a section of a diagram as follows:

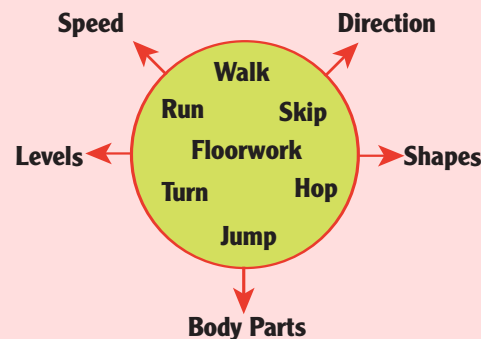


Using the diagram above, explain to the children that these body actions are the main movement **ingredients** of dance. Just like making a cake, we can add different flavourings to make the ingredients taste extra nice! Likewise, when we use the ingredients of body actions in dance we can add extra **flavourings** to make the dance look more interesting.

These dance **flavourings** include:

- changing **speed** as we move
- using different **levels** when we move
- moving in different **directions**
- changing the **shapes** we make with our bodies
- moving different **body parts** as we move (e.g. clapping the hands, nodding the head, shrugging the shoulders).

At the end of this discussion you should have a completed diagram on your chart page or blackboard as follows:



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.

- You may decide to do this discussion in the classroom before the dance lesson. If doing it as part of the dance lesson, it should not be longer than four or five minutes as the children have just warmed up and you don't want to keep them sitting too long. Remember that this material is not new to them since they have already explored body actions in the Infants and First/Second Class dance programmes.
- It is useful to include pictures or other illustrations of the actions written on the board/poster.

ACTIVITY

Stage 2: The diagram in action

Tell the children that they are going to put the diagram into practise. Each child begins in a space with a big **space bubble** around them. To begin with, you direct the activity by calling out a movement **ingredient** from the centre circle, i.e. the body actions. The children respond by doing the appropriate action, while adding their own choice of **flavourings** to that action. For example, you call **run** and the children may respond in the following ways:

- Running at a low level.
- Running sideways.
- Waving hands above the head while running.
- Running very slowly.

Now call out one of the **flavouring** words and ask the children to show this word by choosing an appropriate movement **ingredient** or body action. For example, you call **directions** and the children move by:

- Walking backwards.
- Skipping sideways.
- Rocking from side to side on the floor.
- Jumping to the right and then to the left.

Stage 3: Move for eight, freeze for eight

The children were introduced to this activity in their First/Second Class Dance Programme. Having had a chance to explore a range of different movement **ingredients** with a variety of different **flavours**, the children are now asked to move for eight counts and then freeze and hold a shape for eight counts. They are challenged to vary their actions each time they move, and to make a different shape each time they freeze. Introduce music and guide with your voice, e.g.:

Move 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. Freeze 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

TEACHING POINTS

- Initially, you may have to prompt the children as to the choice of **flavourings** they can use, e.g.: *I see some dancers using the flavouring of levels. I like the way that John is waving his hand above his head as he runs, can any other dancer move a part of their body, besides the feet, as you run? I see some dancers making very good use of directions as they run ...*
- Again you may have to prompt the children, to remind them of their choices and to challenge them to find a variety of answers to the tasks set for them. Useful comments may include: *I wonder how many directions you can skip in. Who can go backwards on the floor? I like the way Mary keeps changing direction every time she jumps ...*
- When the children are moving backwards always remind them to look over their shoulder.
- You may continue to prompt every now and then where appropriate.
- This activity should only last three to four minutes and should include some moments of **freeze** to allow the children a chance to catch their breaths and to avoid them getting over tired.
- Choose from Music Selection 1.

ACTIVITY

3 Conclusion

(a) Crossing the corridor dance

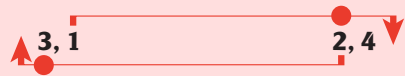
In this dance the children work in groups of four to dance over and back along an imaginary corridor or pathway, using different combinations of body actions.

Stage 1: Demonstrating the dance

Arrange the children in groups of four.

Ask them to observe while you demonstrate with one group how the dance is created:

One pair of dancers (**Number 1** and **Number 3**) stands at one side of the hall and the other pair (**Number 2**, and **Number 4**) stands directly across from them. The dancers at each side stand one behind the other, e.g.:



The space between the dancers is a corridor or passageway, and the aim is for each dancer to cross the corridor using a variety of body actions and flavourings. The dancers take turns to cross the corridor as indicated by the arrows above, moving in canon, i.e. one after the other. e.g.:

- **Number 1** uses his/her choice of body actions to cross the corridor to where **Number 2** is waiting with his/her hand held out to the side. **Number 1** taps **Number 2's** hand (like passing on a relay stick – call it passing on the dance energy) and **Number 1** goes to the back of the line.
- Now **Number 2** dances across the corridor to **Number 3**, passing on the dance energy by tapping **Number 3's** hand, and goes to the back of that line.
- **Number 3** goes to **Number 4**, and **Number 4** crosses back to **Number 1** ... and so it continues, with each dancer crossing the corridor in turn.

Stage 2: Creating the dance

Organise the children in a **corridor** as outlined above. They then practise crossing over the corridor and back again, using different movement combinations.

Stage 3: Performing the dance

The children now perform the corridor dance to music.

TEACHING POINTS

- Encourage the children to watch the demonstration closely.
- Depending on the number of children you may have to organise some groups of five or six, but the ideal number is four in a group. Avoid groups bigger than six as having larger groups leads to too much time waiting. Encourage the children to watch the other dancers in their group and find contrasting actions to what they see.
- This dance is an excellent way of helping the children to put into practise everything they have just learned about body actions (i.e. movement ingredients) and how to vary them (i.e. flavourings), giving them opportunities to learn by moving and by observing the movement of other dancers.
- This dance also enables you the teacher to clearly observe each child and to assess what learning has taken place by the way in which they cross the corridor.
- Choose from Music Selection 1 or 2.

ACTIVITY

(b) **Cool down activity**

Ask the children to leave the corridors and stand in their own space, facing you. Lead them through stretches for the arms, legs and torso. Conclude with everyone standing still, palms pressed together in a prayer gesture. Inhale and lift the arms up to open above the head, and exhale and let both arms fall gently to the side of the body. Repeat this exercise three times to finish.

TEACHING POINTS

- 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 Fourth Class or if repeating this lesson with Third Class:

Repeat the corridor dance with the children working in different groups and allow time for half of the children to sit down and watch the other half and vice versa.

- Encourage silence from the audience and focus and concentration from the performers.