



Move up a level

PSSI Homepage

Curriculum Objectives

Strand Unit: Exploration, creation and performance of dance

- Explore strong and light movement.
- Explore sudden and sustained movement.
- Move with an awareness of the body and the space it moves in.
- Show sensitivity to rhythm changes and phrasing in music.
- Respond with increasing sensitivity and imagination to the use of a story as a stimulus for dance
- Create and perform a class dance with a clear beginning, middle and end.
- Move in space safely with others.
- 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.

Venue

- Hall or quiet outdoor space.

Equipment

- CD player, a balloon, the story of **Noah's Ark** and music.

Reference

- Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education, page 40-41.

ACTIVITY

Introduction

Switching on for dance

Stand 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: Sudden and sustained movement**Stage 1: Recall and practise the building the Ark dance**

Ask the children to recall and practise the solo dance created at the end of last week's lesson.

Stage 2: Exploring sudden and sustained movement

Just as we use different weight qualities when we move, i.e. strong and light, we also use different time qualities when we move. Sometimes we move in a very sustained, continuous and flowing way while at other times we use sudden, almost jerky bursts of movement. Both of these dynamics, i.e. weight and time, operate along a continuum and in our everyday life we move from one end of the continuum to the other at different times.

Last week's lesson focused on moving along the continuum of weight, i.e. strong-light movement. This week's lesson looks at the continuum of time, i.e. sudden-sustained movement, by use of a balloon.

Ask the children to sit in a space facing you. Explain to the children that you are going to blow air into a balloon and when they hear the air going in and out of the balloon they must move. They can stay in one spot and/or they can move about the room as they wish. When the noise of the air stops they must freeze and hold still in a shape.

Begin blowing into the balloon using different timing – sometimes using sudden short breaths or with one long continuous breath. Likewise, try to release the air from the balloon in the same way – sometimes letting the air out in short, unexpected gushes and then letting the air out in one smooth, continuous action.

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.

- This activity should only take five minutes as it involves repeating what was learned last week.
- The children can refer to the list of words used last week to help their recall.
- Try and make the sound of the air going in and out of the balloon as loud as possible. Encourage complete silence so that the sounds can be heard.
- Be prepared for some giggling if some of the noises sound a little peculiar – focus the children on the task at hand by challenging their movement response: *Who can find a way to move their arms to the same time as the sound? Can you stay completely still when the sound stops? Can you move any other body parts? Can you find a body action that travels around the general space while keeping time to the sound? What level/direction are you moving in/at? What pathway do you take? Can you move sudden and strong, now sudden and light?*

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Stage 3: Exploring the sudden and sustained movements of animals

Show the children four posters with pictures of the following groups of animals:

Poster 1 – Animals from the forest.

Poster 2 – Animals from the jungle.

Poster 3 – Animals from the farm.

Poster 4 – Animals from the sea.

Discuss with them examples of animals that move in a sudden and/or sustained way, e.g.

- the lion smoothly stalking his prey and then suddenly pouncing
- the horse galloping smoothly and then suddenly jumping over a fence
- the dolphin gliding smoothly in and out of the rocks and then suddenly breaking the surface of the water.

Place one poster on each wall in the hall and divide the children into four **Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4**. Each group has to go to a poster and each dancer in the group has to choose one animal from that poster. Encourage the children to explore the sudden and/or sustained actions of their animal.

Let's see if your animal can move in a very smooth and controlled way. What body actions does it use to move suddenly? Can you find another smooth, calm action your animal might do? What about another sudden, unexpected burst of movement?

Now ask them to create and practise a short animal dance showing the animal moving in a sustained and/or sudden way.

3 Conclusion

(a) The animal parade dance

In this dance the children create a partner dance by putting their two animal dances together.

Stage 1: Demonstrating the dance

Arrange the children in pairs, ensuring that the children work with a partner from another poster group to them. Ask them to observe while you demonstrate with one pair how the dance works:

Number the dancers – **Number 1** and **Number 2**. The dancers begin one behind the other, **Number 1** in front and **Number 2** behind. **Number 1** dances his/her animal dance while **Number 2** copies him/her in a follow-the-leader style. When **Number 1** is finished s/he goes behind **Number 2** and now **Number 2** dances his/her animal dance and **Number 1** copies him/her. Once the pairs have learned each other's dance, they then perform the two animal dances side by side.

TEACHING POINTS

- Remind the children that they have already been introduced to dancing about animals in the First/Second Class Dance Programme. The focus then was on the weight qualities (i.e. strong/light) of the animals. Now the focus has shifted to the time qualities of animal actions.
- Emphasise that in a dance about animals it is the action not the sound that we are interested in!
- Encourage the children to keep the dance very short and simple, consisting of no more than two or three actions, but emphasising the sudden and sustained time qualities of the animal.
- Encourage the children to watch the demonstration closely.

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Stage 2: Creating the partner dance

The children practise their partner dance as outlined above.

Stage 3: Performing the dance

Remind the children that in the story of Noah's Ark the animals went into the Ark two by two. Ask the children to line up in their pairs at one side of the hall and tell them that they are going to practise being an animal parade by performing their partner dance to show the animals going into the Ark. The first two children lead the parade around the hall, while the remainder follow in pairs, performing their partner dance as they move.

Stage 4: The finale: the Noah's Ark dance

The children perform the two dances that were created using the story of Noah's Ark as one longer dance.

- 1 Building the Ark (the solo created in last week's class).
- 2 The animal parade (the partner dance created today).
- 3 Play music in the background and guide the dance using the following narration:

Noah was called by God and told to gather his family together and build a big boat called an Ark.

The children begin in a space in the starting shape of the solo dance.

Noah and his family worked very hard indeed.

They begin the solo dance, performing it a few times through until the next cue is read. (This will allow for some solo dances that are longer than others.) *Finally the Ark was built.*

The children freeze their building actions. *Noah gathered two of every kind of animal in the world.*

The children run quietly to meet their partner in the line at the side of the hall. They begin their partner animal dance side by side. *Two by two the animals moved along and entered the Ark.*

The children perform their partner dance, changing leaders and animal movements while moving along in the parade. *When the animals got inside they found a place to rest and Noah closed the door.*

Each child leaves his/her partner and goes to a space to show how their animal would rest their body for the journey ahead. *Now all the animals were safe.*

All the animals go to sleep and fade out the music.

TEACHING POINTS

- As with humans, some animals naturally veer towards one end of the continuum in their preferred movement pattern. The challenge for the children is to find one moment where the animal moves away from his preferred pattern of timing. For example, while the elephant may move about at a smooth or leisurely pace, he may suddenly flick his trunk up to spray water over his body on a hot day, or he may suddenly charge at an intruder...
- Encourage the children to dance without talking, moving together by watching each other closely rather than using spoken instructions.
- Choose from Music Selection 2.
- Watch the children carefully as you narrate the story. You may want to add or take from the outline suggested, depending on how they move.

ACTIVITY

(b) **Cool down activity**

Gather the children in a circle. Ask them to **shake off** the animal from their bodies.

Lead them through stretches for the arms, legs and torso.

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?

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.
- 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, or through some written assignment.

DEVELOPMENT

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

The children practise the Noah's Ark dance again and this time they show their work to an outside audience, such as the school secretary or principal, or another group of children.