



Move up a level

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Curriculum Objectives

Strand Unit: Exploration, creation and performance of dance

- Infants:
 - to perform simple singing games and folk dances;
 - to develop poise, balance and co-ordination while moving and stopping.
- First and second classes:
 - to perform a variety of selected Irish dances and folk dances.
- Third – sixth classes:
 - to perform a variety of selected Irish dances and folk dances that use frequent changes of formation.

Strand Unit: Understanding and appreciation of dance

- Observe, describe and discuss simple dances.
- Identify the sections of a dance.

Venue

Hall or quiet outdoor area.

Equipment

CD player and music.

Reference

Primary School Curriculum (1999) Physical Education pgs. 18,19/28,29/40.41/52,53.
Teacher Guidelines pgs. 61-65.



ACTIVITY

Examples of folk dances suitable for primary pupils are described in the Teacher guidelines.

The following are some further samples for you to try.

1 La vinca

Suitable for Infants 1st/2nd classes

Ask the children to choose a partner, then place everyone in a circle holding hands.

Steps

- (i) The children take 16 walking steps in one direction. On the 15th step each child turns to face his/her partner.
- (ii) The children then stamp one foot three times, clap hands three times, shake their finger three times, walk around the partner quickly.
Repeat this sequence: stamp, clap, shake, walk.
- (iii) The circle joins hands again and takes 16 walking steps again.
- (iv) Continue the dance as above No. (ii)

2 Circle dance (Damhsa mór)

Suitable for 1st/2nd

Dance to reel music.

Ask the children to choose a partner, then place everyone in a circle holding hands.

Steps

- (i) The circles moves to the right leading with the right foot. **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**, – **1 2 3/1 2 3** on the spot.
- (ii) The children bring the right foot behind and leading with the left foot dance to the left **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**, – **1 2 3/1 2 3** on the spot.
- (iii) The circle dances in **1 2 3**, **1 2 3** and out **1 2 3**, **1 2 3**. Repeat.
- (iv) On the second **1 2 3** each child turns to face his/her partner.

The children clap hands on the thighs twice, clap hands together twice. Repeat

Third time: clap hands on thighs twice, clap hands together, clap your partner's hands.

Fourth time: the children claps hands on thighs twice and turn to go back into the circle joining hands.

The dance is now repeated in full.

If children have difficulty with the **1 2 3** step ask them to skip in and out and side skip when moving left and right.

This is also a suitable dance for older children.

TEACHING POINTS

- To make it a little more difficult, change section (iv) to:
 - The children claps hands on thighs, (once) claps hands together, clap your partners right hand.
 - The children clap hands on thighs, (once) clap hands together, clap your partners left hand.
 - The children clap hands on thighs, (once) clap hands together, clap your partners right then left hand.
 - The children clap hands on thighs, (once) clap hands together, then turn to go back into the circle and join hands.

ACTIVITY

TEACHING POINTS

4 Bavarian peasant dance**Simple Version suitable for Juniors**

Ask the children to choose a partner. Place the children in two lines facing each other making sure that each child is facing his/her partner. The lines should be holding hands approximately one metre apart. (Depending on the size of the class you could make four lines.)

Steps

- (i) Each line makes eight walking steps to the left. On the seventh step turn and make eight walking steps back to the right.
- (ii) The pairs are now facing each other again. The pairs take three walking steps in to meet each other. They clap hands and retreat for four steps. Repeat.
- (iii) The children in both lines now stand with hands on hips. They:
Bounce bounce, kick right foot forward.
Bounce bounce, kick left foot forward.
Bounce, bounce kick right foot back.
Bounce, bounce, stop.
The dance is now repeated in full.

More difficult version suitable for 3rd/4th

Ask the children to choose a partner, then place everyone in two lines holding hands approximately one metre apart. If all boys or girls number them **1** and **2**.

Steps

- (i) Each line makes eight walking steps to the left. On the seventh step turn and make eight walking steps back to the right .
- (ii) **Number 1** with four steps i.e. **1 2 3/1 2 3** moves to face his/her partner.
- (iii) They clap right hands, left hands, right hands, left hands,
- (iv) The children now place their hands on their hips. Using the **1 2 3** step they move towards each other so that right shoulders meet and then move back **1 2 3**.
- (v) Now they move forwards **1 2 3** so that left shoulders meet and move back **1 2 3**.
- (vi) Now **Number 1**, using **1 2 3** steps four times, moves around his/her partner and back into own line. **Number 1s** keep their hands on their hips. While the **Number 1s** are moving, **Number 2s** stand and slap his/her right knee/left knee, right knee/left knee

Everyone is now back in line.

- (vii) The children stand with hands on their hips. They:
Bounce bounce, kick right foot forward.
Bounce bounce, kick left foot forward.
Bounce, bounce kick right foot back
Bounce, bounce, stop.

The dance is now repeated in full.

ACTIVITY

5 Little sissors dance

The children line up in a circle with hands joined and held low – arms relaxed.

Section 1

For a count of six, the children move to:

- Step with the right foot to the right;
- Bring the left foot behind the right foot (like the side step in Irish dancing).

On the seventh and eight count:

- the children bring the left foot to the front and hop on the right.

This step is now repeated moving back to the left.

Repeat section 1 once

Section 2

- Beat 1 Step forward towards the centre of the circle. Bring the feet together.
- Beat 2 Pause.
- Beat 3 Cross the left foot over the right foot so that the outside of the feet are touching.
- Beat 3 Pause.
- Beat 4 Take a small jump backwards with the feet still crossed.
- Beat 5 Jump feet apart.
- Beat 6 Jump feet together.
- Beat 7 Pause.

Repeat Section 2.

Repeat the whole dance.

6 Marching two step – Dance to jig music

Ask the children to pick a partner. Place each pair in a circle pair behind pair or in lines. If all boys or girls number them **1** and **2**. Pairs hold hands.

Steps

- (i) With the outside foot, each child places the heel on the ground then the toe.
- (ii) Walk forward four steps. On the fourth step turn 180°. With the outside foot, each child places the heel on the ground then the toe and takes four steps forward to where they began.
- (iii) Repeat (i) and (ii). On the fourth step, pairs turn to face each other still holding hands.
- (iv) The boy (or **Number 1**) steps sideways for one step. Now the girl (**Number 2**) twirls once. This is repeated for three more steps.
- (v) Now the boy and the girl join hands and dance for eight steps. On the eight step the pairs turn back into the circle/line.

The dance is now repeated in full.

TEACHING POINTS

- On each pause encourage the children to make a small bouncing movement to keep the rhythm going i.e. bend the knees