

WHY ARE THE ARTS IMPORTANT?

1. They are languages that all people speak that cut across racial, cultural, social, educational, and economic barriers and enhance cultural appreciation and awareness.
2. They are symbol systems as important as letters and numbers.
3. They integrate mind, body, and spirit.
4. They provide opportunities for self-expression, bringing the inner world into the outer world of concrete reality.
5. They are an opportunity to experience processes from beginning to end.
6. They develop both independence and collaboration.
7. They provide immediate feedback and opportunities for reflection.
8. They make it possible to use personal strengths in meaningful ways and to bridge into understanding sometimes difficult abstractions through these strengths.
9. They improve academic achievement -- enhancing test scores, attitudes, social skills, and critical and creative thinking.
10. They provide the means for every student to learn.

DANCE ACTIVITY

Fill in the blank with a feeling or emotion. Draw a picture of what makes you feel that way when you are moving.

I feel _____ when I am dancing!

STEP UP TO THE LINE

Establish a line or area for students to walk up to if they answer 'Yes' to any of the following prompts. Additionally, you can mix and match the prompts, let students create their own prompts, or have them try different ways to reach the line (hopping, skipping, rolling, leaping, etc).

Step up to the line...if you wanted to go to school this morning.

Step up to the line...if you play a sport.

Step up to the line...if you like your hair.

Step up to the line...if you have danced at a school dance.

Step up to the line...if you have eaten vegetables today.

Step up to the line...if you would like change something about yourself.

Step up to the line...if you have ever been bullied.

Step up to the line...if you have seen _____ movie.

Step up to the line...if you have ever been made fun of.

Step up to the line...if you are an artist.

Step up to the line...if you have recycled.

Step up to the line...if you have ever felt you needed to buy something cool to fit in.

Step up to the line...if you have ever felt ugly.

Step up to the line...if you have ever been on stage.

Step up to the line...if you have ever been rejected by a friend or partner.

Step up to the line...if you are interested in politics.

Step up to the line...if you have made fun of someone else.

Step up to the line...if you have a job.

Step up to the line...if you have ever felt not good enough for your parents.

Step up to the line...if you have made your own bed.

DANCE QUESTIONS

What is your first memory of dance?

What is the difference between social, ceremonial and performative dance?

What about dance intimidates you?

What does a dancer look like? Discuss issues of body image as it relates to dances.

What do people in our culture think about dance? Discuss the stereotypes associated with dancing.

How is being a dancer different than being a visual artist, musician, actor, etc?

What is the difference between dance and movement?

Why do you go (or not go) to see live performances?

How can dancers make their art form more accessible?

What if dance happened everywhere? Where would you want to see it?

What would YOU like to see change in dance?

DANCE AT PLAY - MAD LIB

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Break students into small groups (3-6 students per group)
2. Have each group fill in the 16 blanks on the worksheet. Make sure students don't get a chance to read the Mad Lib first!
3. Pass out the 'Best Day Ever' Mad Lib and ask students to fill in the corresponding blanks using the worksheet.
4. Have each group read their Mad Lib aloud and ask them to create a theatrical performance using their Mad Lib as a script.
5. Each group should perform their Mad Lib for the rest of the class.

PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

- Instruct students to create a dance move, shape, or action for each of the parts of speech they created.
- Read each group's script for them during the performance so that all the students can participate in the movements.
- Encourage them to get creative in their presentation by including an entrance and exit, a formation or multiple formations to stand in, solos, duets, trios, different levels, props found in the classroom, different dance styles, etc.

DANCE AT PLAY- MAD LIB WORKSHEET

1. Adjective _____
2. Noun _____
3. Person _____
4. Adjective _____
5. Famous Person _____
6. Verb ending in "ed" _____
7. Place _____
8. Adjective _____
9. Transportation _____
10. Animal (plural) _____
11. Person _____
12. Geographical location _____
13. Adjective _____
14. Food (plural) _____
15. Sport _____
16. Movie _____

DANCE AT PLAY- MAD LIB

“THE BEST DAY EVER”

One _____ (adjective) day all the kids in _____ (noun) ville were surprised early in the morning by a phone call from _____ (person). They had called to announce, in a _____ (adjective) voice that school had been cancelled in honor of _____ (famous person) Day!

The kids immediately _____ (verb ending in “ed”) to _____ (place) to start preparing for the _____ (adjective) celebration.

They all piled into the _____ (transportation) and started their long journey. Along the way, they saw _____ (animal plural), _____ (person), and passed by _____ (geographical location).

They arrived at their destination _____ (adjective) and were tired, but quickly livened up when they saw that all of their favorite things were awaiting them.

There were _____ (food plural) to eat, _____ (sport) to play, and _____ (movie) was playing on a gigantic big screen.

After a long day of excitement _____ (famous person from above) arrived and declared it “The Best Day Ever!” The kids were so happy, they decided to dance all the way home.

DANCE TERMINOLOGY

Accent – To emphasize a certain element of music or a dance step

Alignment – The position or posture the body is held in while dancing

Blocking – The act of a director or choreographer giving movement instructions

Choreographer – A person who creates or designs dance compositions and sequences

Choreography – The art of designing sequences of movement or dance

Combo or Phrase – A short series of dance steps or movement, similar to a sentence

Company or Ensemble – A group of performers who work or dance together

Composition – An exploratory method of creating, arranging, and staging dances

Counts – Numbers counted on rhythm or beat for keeping time, usually 1-8 for dancers

Director – A person who manages or directs a performance given by actors or dancers

Double-time – To perform movement twice as fast as the beat of the music

Downstage – The front part of a stage, closest to the audience

Duet – A dance or series of movements performed by two people

Enter – To come onstage

Exit – To leave the stage

Half-time – To perform movements half as fast as the beat of the music

Improvisation – Spontaneous or unplanned movements and actions by dancers or actors

Isolations – The act of moving only one part of the body at a time

Locomotor Movement – Movements that travel through space, from place to place

Non-Locomotor Movement – Movements that stay in one location and do not travel

Pathways – Routes dancers take to move through space, like a straight or a curved line

Purpose – The reasons why we dance, usually social, artistic, cultural, or ceremonial

Rehearsal – The period of time when dancers or actors practice their movements together

Rhythm – The pattern or flow of movement to a particular beat that repeats regularly

Solo – A dance or series of movement performed by one person

Stage Directions – Outline the areas of a stage and tell a person where to move to next

Tempo – The rate or speed of a piece of music or dance composition

Tools of Dance – Include space, time, shape, level, focus, direction, and energy

Upstage – The back part of the stage, farthest away from the audience

DANCE & MOVEMENT GAME BANK

Journey Through...(K-3) – Select a location (jungle, outer space, under the sea, etc.) and lead your students on a movement-based journey through that space. Have them swing across canyons on vines, tiptoe atop stepping-stones over a pool of lava, backstroke through the ocean, leap over boulders, limbo under tree branches, shiver in dark caves, float through the galaxy, or flee from a panther.

Animal Walks (K-3) – Invite your students to move, walk, eat, sleep, or play like different animals using their whole body. Challenge them to perform specific tasks or activities moving as the animal would, and instruct them to vary the pace from fast to slow or move as if feeling a particular emotion.

Mirrors (K-6) – In partner pairings, one student leads the exercise while the other follows until the teacher calls “switch.” The leader performs slow, steady, controlled motions and the follower, facing them, must reflect the leader’s movements exactly as a mirror would, watching closely to match speed and detail.

Family Photos (K-8) – Think of a list of groups of people – tourists at an amusement park, passengers on an airplane, football players, monkeys, robots, pumpkins in a patch, etc. Call out the group and count to 3. Within the 3 seconds, everyone in the group must pose for a group photo, moving as their character would. Encourage imaginative, full-body movement and facial expression with specific prompts that indicate a situation or emotion, such as “a group of hungry lions about to sneakily pounce on their prey.”

Sound & Motion Wheel (K-12) – Have the class stand in a circle. The first person to go will improvise a noise and do a large motion to accompany it. Everyone in the circle will repeat it all at once. Then the next student will improvise a different sound and motion for the rest of the group to mimic. Encourage students not to pause and think, but rather to just do the first thing that comes to mind, to be creative, and to make big gestures. Instruct participants to use their full range of motion by selecting movements, body parts, and sounds that are completely different from their neighbor’s.

Body Alphabet (3-8) – Instruct students that they must spell out certain words on the ground using only their bodies to form the shape of the letters needed. All students must participate in forming at least one letter of the word, and they cannot talk while doing this exercise. They must rely on teamwork, creativity, and body language.

Machine (3-8) – Students should stand in a line stretching across the classroom. The first student will make a sound and perform a large movement that touches the student next to them. When the next student feels the touch, they will make a different sound and movement, and so on down the line until the last person has given a sound and motion. Have students repeat the whole thing going faster and faster, using the same sounds and motions every time, until they resemble an assembly line machine. Let students give their machine a name and decide what it produces.

Freeze Dance (3-12) – This classic game is a fun way to explore different movements. Feel free to give students a theme such as “dance like a giraffe” or “dance like a race car” while playing the music. Student freeze in a pose when the music stops. Any students caught moving are out. Continue until there is 1 winner!

Movement Thief (3-12) – Select one student to leave the room - this person is the Movement Detective. All the other students will gather in a circle and choose a Movement Thief. The Thief will begin a motion for everyone else in the circle to copy and perform with them. The student sent outside the classroom (Detective) will stand in the middle of the circle. Periodically, the Thief will change the motion and everyone else should copy that change. The Detective has three chances to try to guess who the Thief is using their observation skills. Participants should be instructed not to look directly at the Thief, but rather to look to the person across from them. Motions that do not create sound work best for this exercise.

Join the Tableau (3-12) – Choose a situation or location, such as “a day at the zoo” or “the big game.” One by one, students will pick a character, raise their hand and be called upon to go up and pose as that character in the scene using movement and a facial expression. They will freeze in that position. Once everyone is involved, students will have produced a scene with a wide range of specific characters, emotions, and movements to tell a snapshot story of the situation.

Sit, Stand, Lie (6-12) – This is a three-person improvisational scene. At all times, one character must be sitting down, one character must be standing up, and the third character must be laying down. There should be a logical reason, revealed throughout the playing of the scene, as to why each character is sitting (typing at a keyboard), standing (running on a treadmill), or laying down (a baby practicing “tummy time”). If at any point one of the characters changes position (goes from sitting to standing), the other characters must move too (and make it work with their story line in the scene) so that one person is always sitting, standing, or laying down. Movement shifts are encouraged.

Evolve (6-12) – All students will start off moving around the room as amoeba. When the instructor calls “evolve” everyone finds a partner and plays a round of Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner of the round will evolve to become a fish. They will now move as a fish would. The person who loses the round of Rock, Paper, Scissors will stay an amoeba until the instructor calls “evolve” again and everyone finds a new partner to Rock, Paper, Scissors with. Each time a student wins they advance to the organism of the next level. Students must move as their organism and interact appropriately with other players (think of the food chain!). Levels are: amoeba, fish, frog, insect, small bird, large bird, small mammal, large mammal, and human.

The Story (6-12) – Ask students, in groups of four or five, to make up a simple plot that incorporates all the elements of a story (characters, setting, conflict, resolution, etc.) Much like a ballet, the group must tell the story they created using dance as their only method of communication. They can utilize any style of dance, any steps, or any dance movement, so long as they do not speak or simply walk or gesture through the scene. Students should focus on creating, improvising, and using as many dance movements as possible, as opposed to just regular movements, so that there is constant motion onstage, from all characters.

Go Stop Clap Jump (K-12)- A very energetic drama game which will quickly get you warmed up and listening to directions. For this game, you'll need a Leader who is good at remembering instructions. To start, all players (except the Leader) spread out so they have room to move. When the Leader says, "GO", all the players walk around, filling the space in the room. When the Leader says, "STOP", all the players must freeze. Add two more instructions: When the Leader says, "CLAP", all the players should clap. When the Leader says, "JUMP", all the players should jump. The Leader should mix up the instructions - GO, STOP, CLAP, JUMP - for a while until at least most of the players are doing it correctly. Now two more instructions can be added: When the Leader says, "SKY", all the players should reach up towards the sky. When the Leader says, "KNEES", all the players should bend down and touch their knees. Continue now with all six instructions until pretty much everyone get it right. Now, to make it tricky, the Leader announces that everything is now opposite: GO now means STOP, STOP now means GO, CLAP now means JUMP, JUMP now means CLAP, SKY now means KNEES, KNEES now means SKY. The Leaders mixes up all the instructions and does the opposite actions along with the players.

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