

DANCE – DRAWING TELLING PORTFOLIO

Learning story

Date: 17/07/09

Context: Small Group Dance – Reuben Leads

Children: Reuben, Harry and Alex

Skill explored in class: Exploration of dynamic variations – very strong with very light, interpreting the music through hand and arm movements, leaders.



Narrative

When offered the opportunity to perform a solo, Reuben accepts in the first instance, but then looks at the members of the group and says, 'I want someone else.'

Jan says, 'Who would you like Reuben?' and he points to Harry and Alex.

Both boys immediately stand up and move into the dance space. Jan says, 'Great!'

She bends over and clusters the boys together and says, 'You understand that when this person is the leader of the dance you need to be keeping your eye on the leader and that person is going to be setting the movements for you.'

Harry and Alex listen and make eye contact.

Jan says, 'You are going to follow in some way and together you are going to create the dance.'

Jan turns to Rueben and says, 'Do you want hum drum or music[meaning taped music]?'

Rueben says he wants 'Harry Potter music' and Jan says, 'Wow! And you want Harry Potter music too.'

Jan affirms Harry by saying, 'This is great, Harry,' and she nods her head and smiles. Harry keeps eye contact with her.

Rueben moves to the back of the room and Jan says, 'Starting shape boys.'

Rueben moves into a strong martial-arts style of pose. Harry copies him and Alex wanders towards both of the boys and stands in a slouched position next to Harry. The three boys are facing the audience and are waiting for the music. When the music begins, Alex responds to the short, sharp tempo by performing a half-turn jump. Rueben and Harry make strong forwards and backwards gestures with their arms. They then swing their arms around their bodies while Alex make a strong sideways jump towards the back of the room, separating himself from the other two. Rueben and Alex continue to make strong in-place gestures, with their arms responding to the strong dynamic in the music. Alex makes an energised jump to a position behind Rueben and Harry, who stand united, challenging the audience with their arm gestures. All boys are smiling.

As the tempo and intensity of the music changes, the three boys stand in stillness, waiting for a cue to move. Rueben takes a step to the left while staying within the phrasing of the music. Harry follows. Alex, who is still standing behind the other two boys, responds with a turning jump in response to the crescendo of the music. Rueben is smiling and aware of Alex's movement, but he continues to lead the movement material with his strong-arm gestures. Harry follows him and Alex picks up the strong arm gestures as well. The boys are standing in a tight cluster at the back of the room. The attention of the audience is held. Alex performs two short, sharp jumps and Rueben plants his feet firmly apart and turns his body towards Alex. Harry follows Rueben, who is smiling.

Unexpectedly, Rueben spins to the left and Harry turns to the back of the room to face Alex. The tight formation is held. The arm gestures are returned and the boys stand in place. Rueben is concentrating hard. His fists are tightly clenched and the energy is powerful. Harry is modelling Rueben's body posture and energy, although his bound tension is not as pronounced. Rueben jumps out from the group and lands on the floor. Harry follows, as does Alex. Body shapes are asymmetrical with balance being held by an adventurous use of weight and force. The three boys experiment with a number of asymmetrical body shapes and then respond to the music by scrambling around on all fours across the space. They stay together as a tight-knit group. Alex performs an athletic low-level jump turn. Rueben sits on the floor and makes his arm gestures in time to the music, then Rueben and Harry make the same body shapes with hand and feet supporting their weight. They face each other. Alex continues to perform jump turns and Rueben and Harry start locomoting their body shapes. Harry loses balance but recovers quickly and he and Rueben start moving backwards. Alex joins in.

The music is setting the scene for the energy of the dance. As the dynamic of the music changes, Rueben responds with Harry close behind him. Rueben stands and Harry follows. Alex moves outside of the group and throws his body into a cartwheel while Rueben and Harry continue to work closely together with moving and stopping, tentative running and moving into a finale where they make quick turns followed by the strong arm gesture again. Alex keeps tumbling and turning. The dance concludes.

Jan and audience clap and cheer enthusiastically. Alex smiles and Rueben collapses backwards onto the floor, immediately followed by Harry. Rueben stands and falls down again.

Jan says, 'It's all a bit much isn't it?' The excitement is evident.

Drawing telling portfolio	
<p>Taking an interest Finding an interest here: a topic, an activity a role Recognising the familiar, enjoying the unfamiliar, coping with change</p>	<p>This dance was significant for all participants. For Rueben, leading the dance provided an opportunity to use his creative movement material and growing evidence of skill both in movement terms and in rhythmic sensitivity. For Harry, it was an opportunity to be recognised in front of his peers as a dancing companion and it was wonderful to witness his growing confidence and involvement in the dance program. The footage clearly indicates a commitment to staying on task and following the role assigned to him as observer of the lead dancer. Throughout the entire dance, Harry and Rueben worked closely together with Harry to mirror Rueben’s dynamic moves. Even at the end, he models Rueben’s excited collapse. For Alex, this dance provided an opportunity for creative self-expression within the boundaries of the required task. Alex performed with vigour and demonstrated self-regulation in a way that I had not witnessed in him before.</p>

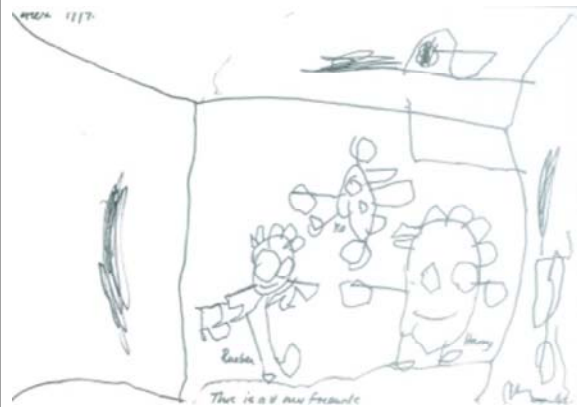
Drawing telling portfolio	
<p>Being involved Paying attention for a sustained period, feeling safe, trusting others Being playful with others and/or materials</p>	<p>The demands of working together as a trio were high, especially in relation to all participants staying on task and keeping the relationship going. There was a strong sense of unity evident, with Rueben and Harry providing the central focus and Alex adding an element of unpredictability with his dynamic jump turns and direction changes. All children played with the powerful rhythmic structure of the chosen musical score and created a theatrical sense of suspense.</p>
<p>Persisting with difficulty Setting and choosing difficult tasks Using a range of strategies to solve problems when stuck</p>	<p>All children stayed on task and it was especially evident that they were working hard to keep the form of the dance together, persisting with the challenge of staying in synch with each other. Alex moved a little outside of the central form established by Rueben, but did not stray too far. This indicates that he clearly understood the requirements of the dance.</p>

Drawing telling portfolio

Expressing an idea or feeling

In a range of ways e.g., oral language, gesture, music, art, writing, etc

From the start, it was evident that Rueben had a clear dynamic in mind. He selected the Harry Potter music, which set the scene for a demanding movement response. His intent became clear as strong arm gestures, clenched fists, strong jump turns and slow, deliberate stepping were integrated into a choreography that communicated suspense, fear and the desire to overcome evil.



Alex's drawing after dance shows significant development from previous weeks. He draws himself and his friends and names them. His drawing-telling reads, 'This is my friends...me, Harry and Alex.'



<p>Drawing telling portfolio</p>	
	<p>Rueben also verbally and visually expresses his dance: 'That's me punching two monsters and Harry and Alex punching the monsters who was trying to attack us and those are our strong arms. I need to try to move. Alex is little, he's four, he was hurt from the monster. I helped him. Harry came and helped to attack the monster and actually the monster was too big.'</p>
<p>Taking responsibility Responding to others, to stories and imagined events, ensuring that things are fair, self-evaluating, helping others, contributing to program</p>	<p>This dance demonstrated that all participants were willingly collaborating with each other to produce a well-formed dance choreography. Both Alex and Harry demonstrated high-level self-regulation: Harry with his careful observation of Rueben and modelling and Alex with the restraint shown to stay within the collaborative choreographic community.</p>
<p>Elements of dance</p>	<p>Body shapes in space Arm, hand and leg gestures – body part articulation Jumping, turning Slow stepping</p>

Drawing telling portfolio	
<p>Laban Movement Analysis Space, Force, Time, Flow</p>	<p>Effort elements apparent Sustained strong, direct thrusting and slashing 'Laban tells us that Rhythm is the lawless law which governs us all without exception' (Newlove & Dalby p.117). Bound flow also very evident. Strong body shapes and gestures High energy jump turns</p>

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