

DANCE – LESSON 1

Aim

For the children to develop bodily and spatial awareness through the use of a range of body activities.

For the children to explore a range of movements specifically associated with the life cycle of the butterfly.

Objectives

For the children to explore a range of bodily awareness-raising activities, including:

- body part warm-up
- closed whole body floor shapes
- whole of body floor movements – 'ooching mooching caterpillars'
- arm gestures – lifting and lowering
- loco motor movements through space – light butterfly flying, landing, stillness.

Rationale

This lesson responds to a child's interest in butterflies that was quickly taken up by the whole group. The lesson also gives children the opportunity to explore learning using their natural movement vocabularies.

Materials

- Butterfly in a jar
- Heavy material mat
- Tambour
- Hum drum
- Glockenspiel

- CD player
- Selected recorded music – Bach's *Harmony of the Seasons*
- Light pieces of fabric (enough for each child)
- Drawing boards, A4 white paper, and black fine liner pens

Welcome/ Introduction

(Teacher's script in italics)

The children are invited to take their shoes and socks off and leave them in a designated area of the room.

Come and join me on the mat, but before you do you can leave your shoes and socks in the shoe shop.

The children are asked to gather on the mat and the teacher provides a number of 'advance organisers' to prepare them for the content of the lesson.

Remember that in our dance class we begin with a welcome on this mat and talk about what we will learn in our class. We listen carefully to the teacher and find a space in the room when we are invited, then we warm up our bodies. Today we will be exploring the movements of the butterfly.

The teacher presents the butterfly in the jar. The children's attention is focused on the characteristics of the butterfly: shape, colour, wing patterns, etc. The teacher leads a discussion asking open-ended questions, such as the following.

Where have you seen this creature?

How does it move?

Where does it rest?

Entering the space

Using a tambour with a regular moderate beat, the teacher names the children one by one to enter the space and to make a body shape.

When you hear your name called you can move into the space to make a still body shape.

When all the children are in the space, the teacher joins the children to lead the warm up.

Warm Up

With the children remaining in their spaces, the teacher models warming up different parts of the body.

Find a space and now let's warm up different parts of our bodies.

Hands – rubbing, opening/closing, clapping, squeezing

Arms – shaking, lifting/lowering, swinging

Legs – stamping, shaking, swinging backwards and forwards, tiptoe steps on the spot

Feet – wiggling and curling toes

Has anyone got any other ideas of how we can warm up our bodies?

The teacher leads this child-initiated movement content, colouring it with dynamic variations such as fast/slow and spatial variations such as high /low, etc.

Whole group movement exploration and practice of skills

Let's skip around the space. When you hear the loud sound on the drum, be still.

The teacher uses the tambour to create a skipping rhythm, and repeats the skipping and stillness sequence several times.

Skip and be still, skip and be still, skip and be still.

Now let's find a space in the room where we can make our bodies into a tiny, closed egg shape. Imagine that you are a tiny egg on a leaf and you are waiting for the sun to warm you up.

The teacher can place pieces of light fabric over each child to heighten the experience of feeling enclosed.

Now feel yourself inside your tiny egg begin to grow and change. Wiggle your body gently and slowly. Feel how hard it is to move around inside the egg. My goodness: I think I can see some hatching eggs.

Here come some very hungry caterpillars 'ooching and mooching' their way out of their eggs.

See if you can travel around the space 'ooching and mooching', stretching and contracting just like you have seen a caterpillar move. I can see 'ooching mooching' caterpillars.

The teacher supports the children's movement explorations with the hum drum.

The hum drum provides an easily accessible percussion accompaniment, which can be played lightly, strongly, with pauses, and so on to create an exciting ambience.

At this point in the class, the teacher can direct half the class to sit on the mat and half the class to perform their 'egg to "ooching mooching" caterpillar dance'. The directions provided earlier are repeated for the half group and the teacher gauges the end of the performance by saying:

Find an ending. I want all the 'ooching mooching' caterpillars to be still.

The performers at the end of their dance are acknowledged with an enthusiastic clap from the audience. The teacher asks the audience members the following questions.

What did you see when you watched this dance?

What did you think about this dance?

What did you wonder about this dance?

The group that has been the audience is invited to dance and the group that has danced becomes the audience.

The next part of the class is designed to practise light flying in space. The children are all invited back into the space.

Find a space and make a shape.

Let's try lifting and lowering our arms and feeling like we have butterfly wings.

Let's fly through the space lifting and lowering our wings.

Let's fly from leaf to leaf lifting and lowering our arms feeling like they are light butterfly wings. When we reach our leaf, let's be still.

This sequence can be repeated several times over with the teacher using the glockenspiel or music that has a light quality and is of moderate tempo. Bach's 'Harmony of the Seasons' works for this. Depending on the children's enjoyment and focus, the teacher can repeat the audience/performer strategy described above.

Solo and small group 'free dance'

The whole group is invited to return to the mat. The teacher selects small groups, individuals, or pairs to perform *any dance they like* to the sound of the hum drum (or taped music). The children are asked to make starting shapes in the space and to begin to dance when the music begins. Respectful audience behaviours are encouraged by the teacher. The teacher affirms children's contributions in a positive way.

I like that leap.

I can see some interesting floor movements.

I like the way you are running.

The teacher helps the children to vary their movement explorations.

If you have been running, try moving on the floor.

After several minutes, the teacher helps the children to conclude their dance in stillness and in an interesting body shape.

Find an ending. Make your body into an interesting shape.

Performers are invited to talk about their dances with the 'I see, I think, I wonder' thinking routine structuring the oral feedback. Audience members are encouraged to describe what they have observed.

All children are given an opportunity to enjoy 'free dance'.

Relaxation

The children are asked to find a space in the room in which to lie down and listen to quiet, relaxing music. The teacher moves about the room using long, light, sustained stroking movements from top of head through to feet, making contact with each child.

Reflective drawing/telling

The children are provided with drawing boards, A4 white paper and black fine liner pens.

Can you draw something that you remember from the class today?

When the drawings are complete, the children present their work to the teacher.

The teacher asks each child to *tell me about your drawing.*

The children's words are then transcribed onto their individual drawings to be included in the dance portfolio.

When the children have completed their drawing, they are asked to put on their shoes and socks. When all children are ready, a farewell gesture is initiated by the teacher to conclude the lesson. This farewell gesture is modelled by the children.

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