Lifting the Barre in Arts Education: Connecting Dance with Common Core in English Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science K-6

Developed by Humboldt County Office of Education and North Coast Dance

Section: 2

Section Title: Dance Elements

A Professional Learning Module Designed for: K-6 Classroom teachers

CONTENT OUTLINE

Purpose:
To help teachers understand the Elements of Dance and learn techniques to teach dance.

Time: 4 hours

Grouping: Grade levels

Standards:
See Standards

Slides: 10-62

Handouts:
1

Materials:

Media Resources:
Use vimeo videos and mp3's found on home page. These correspond with PowerPoint.

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PROCESS/ACTIVITY

How to Talk About Dance

Intro
- Before we all start moving, we're going to quickly go through some vocabulary that will help us talk about dance for the rest of this training.
- There will be demonstrations as we go, and we'll look at some activities that you could use in your classroom to teach these terms. Feel free to ask questions and make your own notes on Handout 1 (the glossary). We'll be looking at Handout 2, as well.
- As we go, here are some applications to think about:
  - Why is it important to break concepts down to their smallest part?
  - How can the structure of dance be used to reinforce or teach structures in other subjects?

Movement and Shape
- Read Movement Definition
- Read Shape Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Movements and Shapes= Smallest building block of dance
- Language Link: Movements/ Shapes= letters
- Have one volunteer complete Step 1 of Activity 1 "Name Game" (Handout #2)

Phrase
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Phrase= Short, self contained "sentence" of dance made up of movements and shapes
- Language Link: Phrases= sentences
- Have same volunteer complete Step 2 of Name Game (Handout #2), following suggestions of other participants if they need help.

Work
- Read Definition
- Examples: Swan Lake, Waltz of the Flowers from Nutcracker, etc.
- Language Link: Work= essay, poem, short story, etc.
- Explain Step 3 of Name Game (Handout #2)
- Quick Brainstorm: variations for step 3 of Name Game

Dance Sequence
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Language Link: Sequence= plot, sentence structure
- Quick Discussion: How can the Name Game teach sequence? How could you modify the Name Game to focus on sequence?

Movement Pattern
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Activity 2 "Patterns" (Handout #2)
- Quick Discussion: How could a pattern from another subject be shown/ explored through dance?

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PROCESS/ACTIVITY

Study
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Response: What was that a study of? How do you know?
- Short Discussion: What kind of words or ideas could be a movement study prompt?

Movement Problem
- Read Definition
- Introduce Handout #3: Movement Problems
- Quick Discussion: How could you use a movement problem in your classroom?

Dance Elements
- Intro: Every bit of dancing has 4 elements: The movement, its space, its time, and its force. Each of those things can be manipulated to make the dance more interesting, and either more or less challenging. We're going to break each of those elements down, starting with Movement.

DE #1: Movement
- Intro: We already talked about movement being the basic building block of dance, so it makes sense that it would be the first element to explore. And there is a lot to explore-- there are almost endless types of movements. Being able to categorize different types of movements is vital to being able to teach them or use them in your classroom.

Axial
- Read Definition
- Dance Instruction/ Video Clip
- Kinesthetic Brainstorm: What other axial movements can we do?

Locomotor
- Read Definition
- Dance Instruction/ Video Clip
- Kinesthetic Brainstorm: What other locomotor movements can we do?

Isolation
- Read Definition
- Dance Instruction/ Video Clip
- Kinesthetic Brainstorm: What other isolations can we do?

Gesture
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Kinesthetic Brainstorm: What other gestures can we do?
- Activity 3 (Handout #2)

Shape
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Kinesthetic Brainstorm: What other shapes can we make?

PROCESS/ACTIVITY

Skill
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Note: skills are things that can be achieved and assessed, and are things to build up to. Skills get built on to achieve harder skills, ie: turning
- Explain Activity 4 (Handout #2)
- Quick Discussion: Why is it important to build on skills already taught? How does this connect to other subjects?

Technique
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Quick Discussion: Why is technique important? (safety, assessment). What is common between different dance techniques?

Group/Partner Skills
- Read Definition
- Dance Instruction (teach Virginia Reel)/ Video Clip
- Quick Discussion: What other concepts does the Virginia Reel teach?

Abstraction
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Movement Problem 1 (Handout #3)
- Quick Discussion: How does abstraction in dance relate to art or literature? How does it connect to teaching communication?

Improvisation
- Read Definition
- Explain or Do Activity 5 (Handout #2)
- Quick Discussion: Why is improvisation important? When is it appropriate?

DE #2: Space
Intro:
- So now we can come up with movements. Now those movements can be played with. Every movement has an element of space, of time, and of force. Let's start with space.
- Read Definition

Pathways
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Movement Problems 2 and 3 (Handout #3)

Locomotor vs. axial/ stationary
- Review Definition
- Think: Can a given movement travel? Can it stay stationary?
- Movement Problem 4 (Handout #3)

PROCESS/ACTIVITY

Level
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Think: high, low, in the air, on the ground
- Activity 6 (Handout #2)

Facing
- Read Definition
- Dance Instruction (teach Electric Slide)/ Video Clip
- Quick Brainstorm: How could you modify the Electric Slide or another basic line dance for specific grade level standards?

Focus
- Read Definition
- Activity 7 (Handout #2)
- Discuss: Why is it important to dance with our face and eyes/ dance with focus? How does this connect to other forms of communication?

Shape
- Review Definition
- Note: Any shape takes up specific space, making it an element of Space
- Quick Discussion: Connect to geometry. How can shapes in dance be used to teach concepts like 2D vs 3D, volume, and area?

DE #3: Time
Intro
- Read Definition
- To explore time as an element of dance, we are going to demonstrate the same phrase several times, each with a difference in the timing. We'll also be doing the wave as a group, so get ready!

Canon
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Everyone has done movement in cannon: the wave!
- Activity 8.1 (Handout #2)

Unison
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Activity 8.2 (Handout #2)

Repetition
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Activity 8.3 (Handout #2)

PROCESS/ACTIVITY

Retrograde
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Activity 8.4 (Handout #2)

Tempo
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Activity 8.5 (Handout #2)

Musicality
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Activity 8.6 (Handout #2)

Process/Discuss: Why is teaching different timing elements important?

DE #4: Force (Energy)
Intro:
- Of the elements of dance, force is the hardest to describe and understand.
- Read Definition
- Note: A keyword to think about is the "quality" of the energy exerted

Dynamics
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Think: varying

Accent
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Language Link: how accents in other written languages work

Counter-balance
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- Kinesthetic Brainstorm: In partners, come up with at least one shape/ movement using counter-balance with both bodies, and at least one using just one body. Share with the group!

Projection
- Read Definition
- Demonstration/ Video Clip
- One volunteer improvises a couple seconds of movement prompted by a word or feeling, projecting to the group (have group stand across the room).
- Quick Discussion: How does projection in dance support/ connect to other forms of communication?

PROCESS/ACTIVITY

Going Forward

Process
- Group by age/ grade that participants teach
- How can you apply these Dance Elements to your specific standards?

Practice
- In same small groups, take turns leading an Activity or Movement Problem that you could use in your classroom.