



EVER ACTIVE SCHOOLS

Lesson Plan

DANCE: MOVEMENT QUALITY DIV 1/2 (GRADES K-6) LESSON 1 of 4

Cross Curricular Outcomes
Science Physical Education

Comprehensive School Health Priority Areas	
Physical Activity	X
Healthy Eating	
Positive Social Environments	X

Key 21 st Century Competencies	
B	Think critically
E	Innovate
J	Identify and apply career and life skills through personal growth and well-being

MATERIALS

- Scarf or feather
- Bean bag or hockey stick.

RELATED RESOURCES

- *Creative Dance For all Ages*- Anne Green Gilbert (2nd Edition)
- “Introduction to Laban's Space Harmony” - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-B_E3loAto
- “Shake it Off” by Taylor Swift - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfWlot6h_JM.

INTRODUCTION

Everyday moves and using them to dance

All actions—walking, running, waving, shovelling snow, skipping, or kicking a ball—can be used to create dance. It depends on the amount of energy and effort you put into each action that can change it from looking like an everyday action to a dance move.

According to Rudolf Laban, all movement occurs in time, space and weight. Laban created a way to speak about movement, all movement (not specifically dance) to offer the opportunity to anyone to create and perform dances.

Each movement is muscular or non-muscular, fast or slow, is specific in the path it takes or moves randomly in the space. These can be taught in any order. The order below is placed so that each effort is followed by its opposite.

The Eight Movement Efforts are:

- Thrust – muscular, fast, specific path
- Float – non-muscular, slow, random path
- Slash – muscular, fast, random path
- Glide – non-muscular, slow, specific path
- Wring – muscular, slow, random path
- Dab – non-muscular, fast, specific path
- Press – muscular, slow, specific path
- Flick – non-muscular, fast, random path

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

Warm up

Using the short width of the space, cross once with a walk, once with a skip, once with a gallop, once with a crawl, once with rolls and once running.

Movement efforts

1. Learn the Eight Movement Efforts of Rudolf Laban – watch “Introduction to Laban’s Space Harmony” starting at 30 min. 45 sec
 - Use a scarf/feather to show light movement (float, glide, wring), a bean bag to show weight (thrust) and a hockey stick to quick, long movements (slash, dab) to perform the movements below:
 - **Thrust:** like piercing the air, a punch, sudden
 - *Example:* jump in a puddle, stomp, punch, head butt
 - *Music or sound:* drums, music with a very steady/strong beat
 - **Float:** be gentle, like being in the clouds, light and dreamy
 - *Example:* wavving slowing, slow motion flying, being an “airhead” pretending your head is a hot air balloon.
 - *Music:* soft, slow classical music
 - **Slash:** swiping, swinging, ripping, cutting space
 - *Example:* throwing a ball, karate chop, slicing cucumbers in the air
 - *Music:* heavy metal, percussive strings (orchestral covers of pop songs)
 - **Glide:** light, smooth, straight
 - *Example:* moving along straight lines with different body parts, brushing hand on a flat surface
 - *Music:* sounds of the ocean, a continuous sound
 - **Wring:** curvy, wrapping, knotted
 - *Example:* twisting the spine, wrapping body or body parts around a pole, roots of a tree
 - *Music:* hymns, or folk music
 - **Dab:** quick, make a dot, tap
 - *Example:* pretending to make tiny dot with toes on the floors, quick should lifts to ears – alternating left and right
 - *Music:* fast and percussive, or quick-tempo classical
 - **Press:** slow, powerful, strong
 - *Example:* pushing the walls away, lifting a boulder, walking into a strong wind, movign through mud
 - *Music:* gong or tibetan bow, rumbling drums
 - **Flick:** sparkle, twitch, sudden
 - *Example:* like stars in the sky, shaking water droplets off, kicking water with toes, little jumps
 - *Music:* pop songs from all decades.

CLOSURE

Finding our own dance

Using the Laban moves and muscular movement versus non-muscular movement, invite the students to free dance. Play a popular song, or music that involves lots of drums and/or bass, using a few different songs to change tempo or pace. Ask the students to dance to the music using the movements they have just learned. Can the movements evolve into new dance moves? For example, using Taylor Swift’s song “Shake it Off” to demonstrate how the flick can turn into the “shake it off move” (see link above). Ask the students to be aware of how much they are using their muscles to make each movement happen. If the students are still shy, you can shout the Laban moves or fast, slow, muscular or let loose!

“How do the Laban moves relate to everyday actions?” “What everyday movements use muscles? Don’t use too many muscles?”

MODIFICATIONS OR EXTENSIONS FOR GRADE LEVELS

(Grades 3-6): Split students into small groups and ask each group to create a short phrase that uses all Eight Movement Efforts. Alternatively, each group can be given one of the efforts and they must all choose a movement that demonstrates that effort. They put the movements together and show it to the rest of the students to music. The rest of the students guess which effort they are demonstrating.

Watch this video and have the students recognize when something is really muscular or non-muscular, or when they see some of the Eight Movement Efforts. No answer is wrong, but it is positive if the students recognize the difference. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Te_nAxs5-go



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Lesson Plan

DANCE: LEVELS & PARTNERS DIV 1/2 (GRADES K-6) LESSON 2 of 4

Cross Curricular Outcomes
Math
Physical Education

Comprehensive School Health Priority Areas	
Physical Activity	X
Healthy Eating	
Positive Social Environments	

Key 21 st Century Competencies	
C	Identify and solve complex problems
H	Demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others
J	Identify and apply career and life skills through personal growth and well being

MATERIALS

- Large, elastic fabric, or material that connects end-to-end to make a complete circle.

RELATED RESOURCES

- *Teaching Children Dance, Cone and Cone, 2005*
- *Creative Dance For all Ages* by Anne Green Gilbert (2nd Edition).

INTRODUCTION

Dance takes place with our bodies in space and in the actions we do with our bodies. The body can move in different levels to create dynamics and different meanings with the same movement. Levels in dance refers to high, medium and low:

- Low levels are close to the ground or with the majority of the body touching the ground
- Medium levels are created between the knees and shoulders
- High levels are created above the shoulders and head.

All three levels can be explored in small or large shapes and movements.

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

Warm up

Review Laban's Eight Movement Efforts, trying them at different levels (ie. close to the ground, standing with bent knees or on knees, standing straight).

Making shapes

1. This activity involves the students making choices about their shapes as the instructor guides them through levels and tempo. Start by making a high level shape and freeze. The students can mimic you, but encourage them to make their own. Make another high level shape. Do the same with a medium level, changing the shape once and a low level. Continue with changing the level of the shape, but use counts in the music to shift levels, or tempo (fast or slow). Laban qualities can be used to describe – float from a low level shape

into a high level shape; make a high level shape then slash your body into a medium level shape and freeze. Give the students freedom to choose their own level and tempo. Ask:

- “Are you moving fast or slow into the shape?”
 - “How often are you changing your level?”
 - “Are you doing the same shape each time? If so, change it up, or see what happens if you move into that shape fast or slow.”
2. This activity moves the levels through space. Go to one side of the room so the group can travel across the floor. Shorter distances for K-2 works better. Ask the students to walk from the one side to the other and freeze. Next, ask them to take one step and freeze into a shape at any level. Then ask them to take another step and freeze in a different shape at a different level. The students continue across the floor making a shape with every step they take. Remind them it’s not a race. Instructor can do this to the beat of a popular song or percussive music if that helps to slow the students down. Lastly, see if the students can make all their levels connect so all movements are smooth, like gliding or pressing through the space, changing levels. Encourage rolling, knee sliding, spinning, floating or moving through thick grasses and mud.
3. Positive/Negative Puzzles - Have the students find a partner and stand in a circle next to their partner with the whole class. Explain positive and negative space:
- Positive space is the body or anything solid, like chairs, walls and floors
 - Negative space is the air that surrounds the positive space (objects)
 - Have each student make a shape at any level, making their positive space (bodies) take up lots of stretchy room so that there is lots of negative space around them, under their arms, legs, and body (if he/she is in a low shape).

Partners will be labeled A or B. Reminder: Our bodies will not touch each others. Partner A will make a shape. Partner B will make a shape around Partner A in their negative space, like a puzzle piece fitting together. Switch. Variations:

- Use scarves to make stretchy shapes and to avoid hands touching other bodies
- Slowly, partners make a shape at the same time and freeze. This can shift on counts with the music or at their own pace
- Make one large connected shape with the whole class
 - This often looks like a 3-D snowflake or sea creature when finished.

For Grades 3-6:

- In partners, travel across the space, moving through levels and trying to fill your partner’s negative space.
- Split into groups and use the large elastic to form and move through different formations as a group at different levels. Ask: “How does the elastic/material react if one person changes levels, or if everyone does at the same time/different times? What choices do you have to make with your group while moving continuously and changing levels? These choices should happen through movement and not verbal communication. How do you problem solve using levels and tempo changes?”

CLOSURE

Give the students time to free dance but ask them to change levels often, as well as tempo. The older students could continue to move with the large piece of fabric or elastic. Look for momentum, flow, varied tempo in body, choice of movements and shapes.



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Lesson Plan

DANCE: LINES AND CURVES DIV 1/2 (GRADES K-6) LESSON 3 of 4

Cross Curricular Outcomes
Physical Education Language Arts

Comprehensive School Health Priority Areas	
Physical Activity	X
Healthy Eating	
Positive Social Environments	X

Key 21 st Century Competencies	
A	Know how to learn
B	Think critically
J	Identify and apply career and life skills through personal growth and well-being

MATERIALS

- The Avicii Levels Dance, MrRanhagen, 2011 - www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRJTaqgnNOU
- A visual representation of the alphabet.

INTRODUCTION

This lesson explores how the body makes lines and curves space using straight lines or curves lines. “What does a straight line look like with your body?” Ask the students to demonstrate it. Use the Eight Movement Efforts that have specific space direction such as press, glide, thrust and dab to make straight lines. Now use random space efforts (flick, float, wring and slash) to show curves. Free dance lines and curves to music. Change the music up and see what kind of music elicits more curves or more straight lines. REMINDER: Levels are integral in creating dynamic lines and curves.

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

1. Alphabet Dance - Ask the students to imagine a giant chalk board or white wall in front of them. Then have them imagine that their finger or whole hand is a piece of chalk or a paint brush. Have them draw a very large letter A, the size of their whole body in front of them on the imaginary board. REMINDER: There is no “right” way to write a letter. Continue with other letters. Ask them to show you a letter that only had lines in it (A, K, Z) and one that only has curves (C, O, U). How about one with both lines and curves (B, J, R). Invite the students to try drawing letters with other body parts, not just their hand (elbow, hips, feet, head). Try other ways to make letters in the space – drawing them on the floor like one might draw in the sand or snow, or make the letter shape with their entire body.
 - (Grades 2-6) Have the students write their names in space. This can be done moving across the space, from one side to the other. Ask the students to write their name using just one method (hand, foot, in front of them, or on the floor) and then using many methods. Ask the students to make all letters in their name flow together, like cursive writing, and move from one end of the space to the other.
 - (Grades 4-6) Split class into groups and have them work together to make up short phrases. The parameters of the groups phrases are:
 - All members will write their own names
 - Every group will have a start to their dance (How does the dance start?)

- All members in the group, though writing their own names, will use the same method (ie. Everyone uses his/her elbow, or using the whole body)
 - The dance must have an end (pose or exit)
 - Each group shows at the end of class.
2. Learn the choreography in the The Avicii Levels dance (link above) and teach it to the students. Though this choreography is simple, it uses line and curves and uses many of the Laban Efforts as well. This connects to music curriculum due to the movement on the beat. *Please note that this choreography can be used in the next unit, so starting to learn it now is a good segway into Lesson 4.

CLOSURE

Split the students into two or three groups and have them draw their names in the space, or just letter of the alphabet to music. The other students in the groups will watch, then switch. Have the students comment on what body parts demonstrate prominent curves and lines, and what body parts have more difficulty making lines and curves. When one student offers an idea, have them all try it out. Encourage the students to notice lines and curves in movement outside of dance class as they leave.



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Lesson Plan

DANCE: MAKING PATTERNS DIV 1/2 (GRADES K-6) LESSON 3 of 4

Cross Curricular Outcomes
Math Physical Education

Comprehensive School Health Priority Areas	
Physical Activity	X
Healthy Eating	
Positive Social Environments	X

Key 21 st Century Competencies	
E	Identify and apply career and life skills through personal growth and well-being
H	Demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others
J	Innovate, create

MATERIALS

- The Avicii Levels dance!, MrRanhagen, 2011 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRJTaqgnNOU>
- Find another dance choreography that works for you or create your own at <http://www.pl3yinc.com/>.

INTRODUCTION

Building on moving through space using lines and curves, this lesson will work on body patterns and spatial patterns. Muscle memory and memory recall is important in dance, just like math equations or spelling words. Using a simple choreography (The Avicii Levels dance! Or another choreography, either sourced from somewhere or created by the instructor) the students will learn to recall pattern in their bodies, and where they will move in space.

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

Warm up

Revisit drawing the ABCs, reminding the students to use levels — that they can move forwards, backwards, sideways and they can use different methods and body parts.

Activity

1. Learn the first 32 counts of the dance. Start with the first eight counts and repeat until majority of students appear to understand. Repeat and dance to the music many times, adding on as needed and really emphasizing the counts and using lines or curves in the movement. Ask the students if they see any Laban Efforts in the choreography.
2. Practice locomotor movements anywhere in space (skipping, galloping, running, forwards and backwards, gliding, rolling and jumping (combine in one crossing so the students do not get too tired), criss-crossing feet).
3. Dance Maps (Option 1)
 - **Grade K-3** use crayons on large white pieces of paper to draw floor patterns or the choreography they learned that day. **Grade 4-6** use the choreography and across the floor to design a dance map of movement. Using the whole piece of paper as the floor surface they must pick a starting location, decide on the

choreography that happens in certain parts of the space, and then how they will move to get to each piece of choreography. For example:

- A student decides to start with the first 8 counts of choreography, then move to another location in the space while skipping, then he/she will do 16 counts of choreography, moving on to a new space while rolling; finishing up with the last 8 counts of choreography in a third spot in the room. Encourage the students to draw it out, then walk it, then dance it. With enough time you can have them pair up and combine their maps.
4. Group Choreographies (Option 2 – Gr. 4-6 only) - Using the choreography and across the floor locomotion, small groups of students work together to combine both to make their own dance. The students do not have to start from the beginning of the dance and it must move in space (ie, from one side to the other side) at least once. Give the students 5-10 minutes to work on this. Allow for choice by asking groups if they would like to perform, consider having more than one group perform at a time.

CONCLUSION

Put on the music for the choreography but give the students the chance to free dance as well. Observe who uses the choreography and who uses their own movements, as well as who dances alone and who dances with partners or in groups. Offer the students a chance to say what they enjoyed about working with other people and combining ideas. What was difficult and what was easy, because they were using a language with their bodies and not having to speak verbally?