

More Creative follow up ideas

Further creative learning ideas linking to all areas of the Curriculum for Excellence

Dance

The following discussion points and activities may be useful if you are going to see or have been to a dance performance

Discussion about dance:

- What is dance? Moving shapes, patterns and repetitions. Expression of emotions. Rhythm and beat. Does it have to tell a story?
- Why do people dance? To show their feelings? For exercise? For fun?
- Where do people dance?
- What does a dancer look like?
- What should he or she wear?
- Do you have any favourite kinds/styles of dance?
- What kind of music do you like to dance to?

Dance moves

Before doing any warm-up activities with pupils:

- Ensure you have a large, open space to work in, preferably with gym mats.
- Have some sound equipment available and choose some CDs with contrasting moods and rhythms.
- Ask pupils to bring suitable clothes/shoes for dance and movement work: baggy trousers, loose tops, trainers or bare feet.
- It may be useful to work in partnership with a PE Specialist or Active Schools Co-ordinator.

Warm up

Always do some warm-ups before doing movement exercises. These could be stretching all parts of the body, shaking all the limbs, running on the spot, different kinds of jumps, a game of tig, etc.

Dancing your name

Either in small groups or individually, pupils shape the letters of their name using their bodies, arms and legs. Once they have had time to experiment and try out the shapes of the letters, they should put the movement between the shapes (letters) to a piece of music. Spotlight some of these for the whole group to watch. Ask the pupils if they feel that they have begun to create a 'dance'.

I Love to Dance

This exercise is a little like the Name Dance above. This time the teacher/leader stands in front of the class and creates the shapes that the pupils will copy. The shapes will follow the letters of the phrase 'I Love to Dance'. Repeat 2 or 3 times getting faster each time. Only once the pupils have enjoyed putting the shapes together will they be told that they have written and danced the words "I love to dance". (This exercise is clearly reminiscent of "Y.M.C.A"!).

Balancing

Balance is an important part of dancing, and this exercise helps to develop the skill, at the same time as exploring unusual ways of using the body. The object is to explore the body's relationship with the floor and see how little contact with the floor you can keep. Explore balancing on: the feet, fingertips, toes, elbows, knees, shoulders, bottoms and so on.

More Creative follow up ideas

Further creative learning ideas linking to all areas of the Curriculum for Excellence

Dance (continued)

Balancing game

Pupils start standing in a space. The teacher randomly shouts out numbers between 1 and ten and the children must balance / make contact with the floor using this number of body parts – e.g. 1 – bottom, 5 – 2 feet, 2 hands and a head and so on). Anyone who topples over is ‘out’ – the winner is the last one on the floor. Variation: Start by balancing on 10 body parts and do a countdown from 10 to 1.

Three level movement piece

Make shapes with your body, one at a time, for three levels: High, Middle and Low. Memorise each shape as they go. Find ways of moving from one level to the next. Call out levels randomly and pupils follow, add some rhythmic music to the exercise, and suddenly this is dance. You could extend the exercise by joining into pairs and then small groups, adding each pupils shapes and movements together.

Traversing the space

- Introduce pupils to the vocabulary of movement while they cross the space in various ways: diagonally, across, up & down, in a curve, in spirals, in wavy lines, zigzags etc.
- Each time they cross the space they do it to a different word, e.g. bouncing, leaping, bounding, crawling, sliding, creeping, hopping, slithering etc.
- It is easiest to do it one pupil at a time, depending on the space available. Then introduce movement in pairs and in groups with repetition and synchronisation.
- In “unison” – everyone facing the same way, side by side, in “line” – everyone facing the same way, one behind the other, in “opposition” or in “mirror image” – facing one another and mirroring the movements.
- Add music for some of the stages in this exercise.

Bridges and Tunnels

When dancers move through or over shapes made by others.

Half the class make shapes with their body (either individually, or in groups of 2 or 3) and freeze in their positions. The rest of the group explore interesting ways of climbing or moving over these “bridges” or under the ‘tunnels’. Swap over the groups so that each half of the class has a go at both creating shapes and crossing them. Help the class to be imaginative and adventurous in the pictures and shapes that they create. But above all, make sure that the shapes are solid and safe before they are used. Gym mats are useful for this exercise.

The Dance

From the exercise above create your own dance. Give it a title and put it to music.

Health and Wellbeing

All of the Dance work described above supports the physical aspects of Health and Wellbeing

More Creative follow up ideas

Further creative learning ideas linking to all areas of the Curriculum for Excellence

Expressive Arts

Storyboard/cartoon strip

Create your own version of the performance and present it as a cartoon, a short play or animation.

Make a model of the set

From what you saw in the performance produce a set model.

Make shadow puppets

Create your own using these simple guidelines.

You will need - stiff cardboard, paper, a stick, glue or tape, a pencil, a pair of scissors, a screen and a light.

- Draw your characters on the paper. Glue paper to cardboard. Cut round the shape. Glue stick to cardboard (a glue gun is good)
- Find a light source to make a shadow; the light must shine on the screen – the screen can be as simple as a plain wall, or you can make it using a sheet or a big piece of paper.
- Make the puppet story with words, sound effects and music.

Creative play corner

Collect items for the creative play corner that remind the pupils of the performance. Encourage them to tell their own version of the performance using the objects available.

Literacy and English

Creating Poetry

Write a poem or haiku about the performance.

Alternative endings

Write your own alternative ending to the story.

Characters diaries

Create a diary for one of the characters in the play.

Telling stories in a special place

Create an unusual environment to tell stories in the classroom or in the school hall or outside. e.g. tell stories under a parachute if the school has one, use poles to hold the parachute up, tell stories on a 'magic' carpet just big enough to hold the whole class, make a tepee of brown paper and bamboo or willow poles, tell stories outside - under a tree or in a tent.

Storytelling in a circle

The teacher begins a story and stops after a few sentences. The next child adds to it and so on round the circle until the story comes to an end.

More Creative follow up ideas

Further creative learning ideas linking to all areas of the Curriculum for Excellence

Literacy and English (continued)

Stories with sound effects

The teacher tells a story and invites the class to add the sound effects. The story should be simple and short. The sound effects are controlled by an arrow or a pointer which the teacher uses as volume control – when the arrow points downward there is no sound at all. As the arrow begins to turn upwards the sound effect starts and can go on growing in volume until the arrow is pointing straight upward and the sound is at full volume. The children must keep their eyes on the arrow at all times and work carefully with it.

Storytelling baskets

In this activity children contribute their ideas for stories into a 'storytelling basket'. In pairs or small groups they then make up stories using ideas from the basket.

Give each child a set of strips of different coloured paper. Pupils then write their ideas for the following categories on different coloured strips:

- Characters / heroes – each child writes the name of an interesting character or hero and uses 2 or 3 words to describe them
- Setting – each child writes an interesting setting for a story to take place
- Problem – each child writes a problem that the main character or hero needs to resolve

All contributions are then added to the basket and one of each (character, setting and problem) drawn out by pupils to create a new story. This can also be done in pairs or small groups.

Technologies

Research the company

Conduct research before attending a performance on the company, the country they are from and the performance.

Using Glow

Share your work and reviews on Glow

Moving Images and podcasts

If you have access to recording equipment why not record pupil responses to the performance and post them on Glow to let other pupils see or hear your reviews.

Creative Learning Scotland

A directory of performing companies and cultural organisations across Scotland that receive funding from Creative Scotland and offer a wide variety of opportunities for schools. [WEB LINK TO COME](#)