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Beat of Life Dances

Students enjoy music and rhythms but many are afraid to dance in front of their peers for fear of looking foolish. The teacher can create a series of experiences for students to move through to gain confidence and in a variety of rhythm forms. The following sequence is an example of activities the teacher can lead that supports the development of rhythms and dance skills. The teacher must also support student development by creating a safe environment for students to move.



First, it is important for the teacher to introduce rhythm by starting with “baby steps.” Although some students will be very proficient in dance and movement, probably more than the instructor, the teacher must make elementary steps in helping students keep rhythm with the beat. To challenge all students and keep all students engaged in the activity, the teacher must keep the sequence interesting and fun.

Introduction to Beat

Rhythm Cups: Students are seated in a circle with two plastic cups. One for their right and one for their left hands. Students are instructed NOT to touch the cups until instructed to do so by the teacher. We are developing compliance and listening skills. Students are instructed to follow the teacher and do what the teacher is doing. Following is an example of possible sequence originated by the teacher when the music begins.

Students listen to the beat and the teacher nods head and hands to the beat of the music. In count with the music the teacher: The Following is for 4/4 counts. Best to start off with 60-80 beats per minutes, like the heart beat.

Lifts cups and beats floor with the beat

Bangs down for two beats and claps cups for two beats

Bangs down for three beats and claps one for one beat

Begin to use different configurations; place one cup on elbow, knee, chin, nose for each count. When students are confident and following closely, pass one cup to the right on the 3rd beat and use the 4th beat to recover and begin sequence again. This can be tricky since students need to understanding mirroring, doing the opposite with what they see when they are looking at you.

Introduction to Movement Steps

It is very important the teacher introduces movement steps all where students can experience success. The following “follow-the-leader” activity is fun for students when the teacher is having fun with it as well. The teacher must be the focus of the activity. That creates a isolation effect on the class. Meaning, if all students eyes are on the teacher, then students are not watching each other. Students experience safety when captivated by the teacher.

The Paper Dance: The teacher leads the students through a series of movements manipulating a piece of paper. The students’ focus is on the paper and not each other. Students eyes are trained on the instructor to mimic all movements and therefore students learn to focus on instruction and not on others attempting to accomplish a movement step, or dance. Music is played and the teacher uses the rhythm to cue movements. Here is a series of possible steps but the teacher can be creative in creating her own.

March in place while passing the paper from left to right palms

Paper is passed around the waist while marching in place

Paper is flapped up and down in front of the body

Paper is tossed in the air and caught with both hands

Paper is passed through the legs in a figure eight

Paper is crumbled in a ball while marching in place

Paper is bounced on the knee and caught with both hands

Paper is tossed over back and while spinning around caught with both hands

Paper is thrown high and we clap hands one time before catching it.

Paper is thrown high and we clap hands two times before catching it

Paper is thrown high and we clap hands three times before catching it

Paper is thrown high and we clap hands four times before catching it

Paper is straightened out and placed on chest

Dancer walks in circle with movement keeping paper on chest with no hands

Be Creative and Add more

Finally, the paper is crumpled again and tossed in the waste paper basket.

Boom Boom Pow

4 Delayed Grape Vine: R,L,R,L

- 1 & 1/2 beats: Right foot step to the right**
- On up beat of two: Left Foot together with right**
- 3: Right foot step to right**
- 4: Bring left foot together with right**

Repeat Left
Repeat Right
Repeat Left

4 Chest Pops

- 1-2: Punch fists into mid-air, right, left, right**
- 3-4: Two chest pops towards right**

Repeat Left
Repeat Right
Repeat Left

4 Undercuts

- 1: Step to the right**
- 2: Perform an undercut punch with right hand**
- 3: Step to the left**
- 4: Perform an undercut punch with left hand**

Repeat 3 times

8 Count Steps

- 1-4 Right Foot Heel, Heel, Toe, Toe,**
- 5-6 Right Foot Heel, Toe**
- 7 Right Foot out to side**
- 8 Right foot back to standing position**

Repeat Dance

Thriller

Monster Steps: Hands above head with claws

1-2 Step Right Foot

3-4 Step Forward Left Foot

1: Right foot

2: Left Foot

3: Right Foot

4: Left foot

Shimmy

1-3 Shimmy Right

4: Clap

1-3 Shimmy Left

4: Clap

Breast Stroke

1-4 Breast Stoke to the Right, Four steps to right

1-4 Repeat to left

Backwards Monster

1-2 Step backwards with right foot

3-4 Step backwards with left foot

1: Right foot back

2: Left foot Back

3: Right foot back

4: left foot back

Deal the Cards

1-4: pass out cards from hip right

Repeat left

Repeat Dance

Cupid Shuffle

Side Steps Right/Left

1-4: Four side steps to the right: right, left together, right, left together

1-4: Repeat to the left

Kick Right/Left Alternate

1-2 right heel touch, bring back

3-4 left heel touch, bring back

Walk it by yourself

Freestyle Walk for 4 counts 1/4 turn.

Repeat Dance

Peanut Butter Jelly Time

Everone sings Peanut Butter Jelly while they are spreading the peanut butter on their palm
Where you at = Place right hand up to right side of forehead, looking in that direction.
Repeat the same to the left side of face

There you go = When you hear this, alternate pointing thumbs otuward like hitch hiking

Peanut Butter Jelly = When you hear this, rub head and stomach at same time

PBJ with a baseball bat = hammer fist 2x switch, swing baseball bat

Where you at

There y'go

PBJ

PBJ with baseball bat

Break it down and Freeze = 4 jump turns

Where you at

There y'go

PBJ

PBJ with baseball bat

Tic Tac Toe = Out cross turn with feet

Free style = Do your own thing

Ice Cream and Cake

Ice Cream and Cake = wash the car up, wash the car down (4 each)

Hands out in front of chest, circle hands from right to left. Bend down and do the same motion

Fast Ice creamand cake – car wash jump turn (4)

Slip, slip, slip,and slide = Heel, toe, heel, slide (step together) (4)

Taxi = Drive with your boy

Ice Cream and cake

Who that is with the ice cream and cake = 4 wall jump turn

Ice cream and cake

Slip and slide

Taxi

5,6,7,8

Bounce in place = 5,6,7,8 (You hear it in the beginning of the song)

Grapevine right = 1-4

Grapevine left = 5 – 8

Step Together (rg-lf) = 1-8 (It looks like a zig-zag pattern)

Shoulder Shoulder (Touch right to shoulder to form a cross = 1-2 counts)

Behind Head (Touch right behind head and then left behind head, this uncrosses your arms. Now elbows are pointing out = 3-4

Sprinkler = 5-8 (left elbow bent, right arm extended. Move your right arm from right to left during the counts)

Walk back = 1-4

Hop = 5-8

Repeat dance

Aloha

Verse 1

People are you listening = hand to ear

To what we're about to say = hands to mouth and out

We're on a mission = walk in place

You and me = point to the audience and self

Guarantee = shake hands

To spread a little Aloha around the world = walk in a circle and sawy your hips in a circle

Chorus

A-L-O-H-A = sign language for Aloha

Aloha in your day = hands to mouth and out

Spread a little Aloha around the world = palms down, spread to right and left, walk in a circle and sawy yoru hips in a circle

Verse 2

Could you imagine all around the world = form world with hands

A little Aloha in every boy and girl = jump

A little Aloha = hands to mouth and out