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ARTS & EDUCATION NETWORK
CENTRAL SOUTH

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Skills not Frills: Dance #2

A resource from the A2: Connect
Arts Champions

Dance #2: Finding Inspiration for Movement

Movement is to dance what words are to a story.

Allow your young learners to explore ways to express their ideas through improvised dance, experimenting with creating dance movements and motifs.

Anything can be an inspiration for dance:- themes, stories, historical characters, emotions, scientific processes or materials, paintings, patterns, shapes, objects, or fabrics can all be an inspiration to start your creative journey.

Develop this improvisation by asking the learners to adapt the style of movement.

ACTIVITY 1: Treasure Box

1. Create a treasure box as stimuli to begin to explore ideas for dance. This could include a range of objects from your theme, objects with different patterns, shapes and textures. Alternatively pictures of historical characters or words from your theme. A set of different textured fabrics can provide a wealth of inspiration to explore movement.
2. Either as a whole class or in pairs, choose an item and improvise a movement which represents this item. For example, use the smooth texture of a fabric to inspire a smooth dance movement. Curved or straight patterns could inspire whole-body movements or directions of travel across the floor.

This is a series of 15 'Skills not Frills' resource sheets, each accompanying a short video.

This is no #2 of 3 dance resource sheets and accompanying film.

A2 Connect Arts Champions are teachers who work with us to share their practice and expertise with other schools/teachers in the region.

ACTIVITY 2: Follow the Leader

1. Find a piece of music that suits you and your learners. The best results for devising dance often come from orchestral or film music, as they leave a lot of scope for interpretation.
2. In small groups or partners, one learner at a time takes a turn to be the 'leader' of the group, with the others in the group following. This allows each 'leader' to devise and try out new ideas, (hopefully encouraging some healthy competition!), whilst also allowing a chance to rest from this role whilst focussing as a 'follower'.
3. Ask the 'leaders' to improvise in response to the music. You can add challenge by reading aloud from this list of **dance qualities**:-
moving slow, fast, changing levels, changing the size of the movement, or using different body parts to make contact with the floor, changing direction or pathway of the movement, or the relationship with other people and objects.

ACTIVITY 3: Create a Dance Story

1. Sitting in a circle with your learners, read a story and discuss the characters, plot or setting/ atmosphere.
2. Divide the story into sections, and give each group of learners a different section to devise some movement connected to their section. Ask the learners to consider how can we convey stories or ideas without words?
3. Return to the circle, with the groups sitting in order of the story. Re-read the story and invite each group in turn to stand and perform their dance moves as you read their section, enjoying the creative ideas they have come up with.

What next and where to find more help

LINKS: Watch dance performances with your pupils

<https://jasminvardimon.com/>

<http://www.matthewbourne.com/>

<https://ndcwales.co.uk/>

<https://www.wmc.org.uk/>