

Title: Freeform Dance

Grade Level: K-5

Objective: Students will learn to experiment and take risks with improvised movement and will explore movement at the 3 levels of dance.



Lesson Plan

Materials: Speaker or amplifier, musical selections appropriate for each age group.

Preparation: Select a variety of different music that might communicate different messages- slow, sad, happy, fast, etc (ensure there are no inappropriate lyrics in any songs). Have between 5-7 different songs ready and available to play in a playlist in any random order.

Opening Activity: What's Your MOOD and What's Your MOVE? Youth form a circle and think of a small movement or pose that communicates their personality OR MOOD in the moment. They will go one by one: they will say their name and perform their movement or pose, and then FREEZE. This will continue until every participant has shared their move.

Core Activity:

- When you make up your own movement on the spot- that's called improvisation!
- Dancers move on three levels:
 - Low level: on the floor or bending down (roll, bend, drop)
 - Middle level: standing, running, walking (walk, turn, run)
 - High level: jumping, arms high (Jump, reach hands up, high kick)
- Have members try a series of low level, middle level and high level movements, ONE level at a time.
- Divide the class into 2 groups, and have each group take 1 song at a time. Prep the group with a sense of the speed and feel of the song.
- For the performing group, let them know you will be giving them a level throughout the music to use in their movements. For the non-performing group- have them be an active audience, and invite them to collect interpretations: what are the performers communicating with their movements?
- When the groups FLIP, remind them of their tasks before beginning the exercise. During each song, periodically shout a level to the performers- at the END of each improvisation, give the students an opportunity to collect feedback from YOU and the audience group.

Reflection: Is improvisation more challenging than learning choreography? Why or why not? What would you change the next time you do this exercise?