

# DK presents...The Dance Show

**Program Description:** An interactive lecture/demonstration that is designed to introduce students of all ages to the basic elements of dance. The Dance Show explores shapes, space, patterns and rhythm through short dances, designed and choreographed to focus on each specific element. Dancers, with the help of audience members demonstrate the various elements and perform examples to a wide range of music.

Focusing on dance as a form of communication children observe how emotion can affect movement and how the spoken word can be used as 'music', drawing a parallel between poetic language and dramatic movement...adding a clear example of the story-telling nature of dance.

## Activities:

Pre-performance:

#1 As a class...

- Find shapes in your classroom
- Ask for volunteers to make the shapes with their bodies
- Work in small groups to make different shapes. Have the groups move around the classroom. Using each member as part of the shape.
- Look for patterns in the classroom. Try to show them using the groups moving around the room.
- Explore different ways to use movement to demonstrate the patterns.

#2 As a class...

- Listen to different types of music
- Listen for the beat. Discuss rhythm.
- Listen to hear what instruments create the rhythm
- Create sounds to replicate the rhythm (clapping, stomping, vocal sounds, etc.)
- Find common rhythms in your classroom (clock ticking, hearts beating, etc.)  
Try to show rhythm in movement

Other Preparation Ideas:

- As a group list how many different dance styles your students are aware of and have them talk about and demonstrate the differences.
- Play around with the use of space (alternate groups of movers and watchers) – try to move using as little space as possible and then again using as much space as possible – share ideas on how different they looked and felt.

Post-Performance:

#1 Have students...

- Create a short movement piece that contains all the elements (shapes, space, patterns & rhythm)
- List different emotions
- Pick an emotion and interpret the emotion through your movement piece
- Describe the changes in the movements
- Discuss if all the dance elements were present
- Perform piece for another class. What did they see?

#2 Have students...

- Select a poem or short story
- Add movements while you read the narrative. Listen for the rhythm in the words
- Perform the piece again omitting the words while the teacher claps the rhythm
- Present the piece without narrative to another class. See if they can interpret the poem. Have the audience clap out the rhythm

#### Other Follow-up Ideas:

- Have your students reflect of how the DK activity affected them through discussion and then have them communicate their feelings and responses in their own creative 'voice' (music, poetry, sculpture, dance, visual, etc.)
- Revisit any or all of the pre-performance activities and see how more involved and enlightened your students' participation is.

### Vocabulary:

BEAT – accent of stress in the rhythm of verse or music

CHOREOGRAPHER – an artist who invents the movement and patterns and decides what music to use

COOPERATION – the act of working together with another or others for a common purpose

CIRCLE - a closed plane curve consisting of all points at a given distance from a point within it called the center

COSTUME - a style of dress, including accessories and hairdos, esp. that peculiar to a nation, region, group, or historical period.

DANCE- to move one's feet or body, or both, rhythmically in a pattern of steps, esp. to the accompaniment of music

DANCER – an artist who moves usually to music, using prescribed or improvised steps and gestures

GENERAL SPACE – community of shared space

JUMP- to spring clear of the ground or other support by a sudden muscular effort; leap

LEAP- a spring, jump, or bound

MODERN DANCE – art form developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century by individuals who preferred a more natural, spontaneous and uninhibited movement vocabulary over the stylized and restricted movements of ballet

MOVE- to pass from one place or position to another

MUSIC- an art of sound in time that expresses ideas and emotions in significant forms through the elements of rhythm, melody, and harmony

PATTERN – a thing to be copied; a predictable way of doing something

PERSONAL SPACE – the space that one occupies; it includes all levels, planes and directions both near and far from the body's center

RHYTHM – measured motion; basically the regular recurrence of grouped strong & weak beats in alternation

SHAPE- the quality of a distinct object or body in having an external surface or outline of specific form or figure

SKIP- to move in a light, springy manner by bounding forward with alternate hops on each foot

SLIDE- to glide or pass smoothly

SQUARE- a closed plane figure having all four sides of equal length and four angles

STAGE- a raised platform or floor, as for speakers, performers

STEP- a movement made by lifting the foot and setting it down again in a new position, accompanied by a shifting of the weight of the body in the direction of the new position

TRIANGLE- a closed plane figure having three sides and three angles.

### Summary – Get your Class Moving!

Consider all the things that movement can do for you and your class:

- A fun alternative form of learning
- It can help enrich other material
- Learn more about yourself and others in a special way
- It can help students feel good about themselves and others
- Use it to better engage, involve and focus a student
- It can help reach certain learners due to multiple intelligences

### Resources:

Websites: [www.dancekal.org](http://www.dancekal.org)      [www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)      [www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/marthagraham](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/marthagraham)

Books: *Dancing* by Ellen Jacob, New York: Variety Arts, 1993

*The Life & Work of Martha Graham* by Agnes DeMille, New York: Random House/Vintage, 1991

*Prime Movers: The Makers of Modern Dance in America* by Joseph Mazo, New York: Morrow & Co. 1977

**ALSO** see section 793.3 at your school or public library