

THE SNOWBALL

This unit is inspired by a British folk dance called The Snowball. It is called this because each new figure is performed by an increasing number of dancers in the same way that a snowball increases in size as you roll it. The children learn to perform a simplified version of this dance (a relatively new dance for five couples devised by Anne Welch of Biggin Hill, Kent) in groups of 6. Each group creates their own new Snowball dance.

Specific Learning Outcomes

- Remember phrases and dances.
- Link actions to create a dance.
- Know a traditional British folk dance.

Stimulus

A traditional British folk dance.

Resources



Figures demonstrated in Video folder in this web resource.

Accompaniment

A 32-bar jig, reel or polka.

Content

- Right and left orientation
- Partner and group contact; meeting and parting
- Travelling and turning
- Light, bouncy quality and sense of pulse
- Directions and pathways
- Musical phrasing
- Traditional dance figures (sets of movements from social dance traditions)

Assessment

- Group-to-group evaluation of the traditional and new Snowballs.
- Self-evaluation against the learning outcomes.
- End-of-unit assessment of individual achievement.

Curriculum Links

- Music: Sequence, form, structure, style and purpose
- Maths: Pattern, shape, symmetry
- ICT: Record and notate the dance
- History and RE: Celebrations, social dances of the past

Options

Instead of creating a new version of The Snowball, the children could use the same figures to create a new dance that could be for 3 or 4 couples. They could make it longer to fit a 48-bar tune.

At the end of this unit, the children could learn a contrasting folk dance such as a progressive circle dance.

(continued)

THE SNOWBALL *(continued)*

Possible Unit Structure

- Lesson 1: Learn each figure of The Snowball with a partner then learn the complete dance in groups of 6. Practise and refine performance; evaluate.
- Lesson 2: Recap The Snowball and create new version (in same groups of 6).
- Lesson 3: Recap new version; practise and refine; group and self-evaluation.
- Lesson 4: Learn a contrasting traditional dance such as Buttered Peas (or research a local or regional dance).

Possible Dance Structure

- This unit comprises teaching a traditional folk dance (see tasks for structure). The children then use similar elements to create their own version.

Warm-up

Warm up the feet and practise simple steps such as walking and skipping to the beat with changes of direction. Children could meet up with different partners, clap hands and tap thighs and then swing each other or do-si-do before going off to meet another partner.



See Meet and Greet warm-up in Warm-ups folder in this web resource.

Tasks	Teaching Points
<p>Figures: With a partner, learn and practise each figure of the dance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right and left elbow swing (hook elbows and turn each other). • Right- and left-hand star (reach up diagonally and touch right palms, walk round clockwise; then touch left palms and walk anti-clockwise). • Hold both hands and circle clockwise (left) and anti-clockwise (right). • Right and left do-si-do (walk forwards passing each other's right shoulders, step to the right, then walk backwards passing left shoulders and step to the left; keep facing the same way and repeat to the left). 	<p>Each figure takes 8 dance counts (i.e., 8 steps). Practise each and perform one after the other to achieve fluid transitions.</p> <p>Listen to the phrasing of the music that cues each figure and change of direction.</p>
<p>The Snowball: In groups of six learn and practise The Snowball. This is a long-ways dance (i.e., couples face each other in 2 lines of 3). The first or top couple are the children nearest the music or the front.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figure 1: First couple performs right and left elbow swing. • Figure 2: First and second couples perform right- and left-hand stars. • Figure 3: All three couples perform a right and left shoulder do-si-do. • Figure 4: Third couple casts out (leads each line round from bottom to top and form an arch (linking both hands high), couples dance through and take up new positions). • Group evaluation. 	<p>Look for good timing and fluid transitions.</p> <p>Ask children why they think the dance is called The Snowball. Can they think of another suitable name for this dance?</p>

(continued)

THE SNOWBALL (continued)

Tasks	Teaching Points
New Snowballs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each group adapts the figures to create a new Snowball dance. The dance must accumulate in the same way (i.e., one pair dance the first figure; 2 pairs dance the next figure; all 3 pairs dance the third figure; the final figure involves a change of leaders and the dance begins again with new leaders). Group evaluation. 	<p>Children could include new figures that they have created. Allow time for pairs to explore different ways of meeting and parting, making contact, turning each other, clapping, patting each other's hands and so on.</p> <p>Compare with own version; evaluate effectiveness of each. How many ways of changing the top couple have the class discovered?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform the traditional or new Snowballs at a celebratory event. Assess individual achievement. 	<p>Use the specific learning outcomes.</p>