

## DOT, SQUIGGLE, DASH

This unit of work is developed from an idea in the original TOP Dance resource pack (Gargrave and Trotman 2003). The children develop their body, dynamic and spatial awareness by exploring mark making individually, with partners and in groups to create a lively dance inspired by abstract paintings.

### Specific Learning Outcomes

- Perform short dances within a given structure.
- Choose appropriate actions, space, dynamics and relationships.
- Describe and interpret what they see, do and feel in dance.

### Stimulus

Abstract painting, children's mark making.

### Resources

Paintings by Mir'o or Kandinsky, flip chart or whiteboard, markers.

### Accompaniment

Jazzy background music.

### Content

- Remember and repeat phrases
- Different dynamics (see chapter 3)
- Changes of speed, level and direction
- Range of actions and body parts leading
- Partner and group work
- Air and floor patterns, body shapes (see chapter 3)

### Assessment

- Peer evaluation (half the class observe the other half).
- Pair-to-pair evaluation.
- Groups explain and demonstrate how they interpreted paintings.
- Videotape complete dance for self-evaluation.

### Curriculum Links

- Art: Visual design; abstract paintings; mark making.
- Music: Paintings as a stimulus for dance and music; children could compose the accompaniment for their dance using the dance or the paintings as stimuli.

### Options

Dance inspiring art; children could take it in turns to record the patterns and designs that they see the dancers making by using charcoal and oil pastels on large pieces of paper on the floor and work on these further back in the classroom. This dance idea could be adapted to paintings from other cultures, such as Aboriginal art.

### Possible Unit Structure

- Lesson 1: Introduce the idea; explore imaginary mark making; learn and perform class painting (set phrase); explore ideas with a partner.
- Lesson 2: Recap class painting (set phrase) and ideas for partner painting; complete and perform partner painting.
- Lesson 3: Create and refine group paintings and empty canvas ending.
- Lesson 4: Practise all sections with transitions; perform the complete dance and evaluate.

(continued)

**DOT, SQUIGGLE, DASH** *(continued)***Possible Dance Structure**

- Class painting: Children spread out, facing different ways. They perform the opening phrase three times, and the final dash takes them to meet partners.
- Partner painting: Several pairs at a time perform their partner phrases (others remain still).
- Group paintings: Squiggle to meet up in fours. Each group performs their painting dance.
- Empty canvas: Children perform the opening phrase 2 or 3 times to leave their groups and leave the space.

**Warm-up**

Explore circles by circling body parts, tracing circles in space and travelling along curved and circular pathways. Then contrast with linear and angular actions and shapes.

Tasks	Teaching Points
<b>Introduction:</b> Children imagine they are famous abstract painters by painting on a large imaginary canvas using fingers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore different types of mark making and texture (from little dots to thick layers of paint).</li> <li>• Focus on dots, squiggles and dashes.</li> <li>• Create an imaginary painting of dots, squiggles and dashes (sitting or standing).</li> </ul>	Invite individuals to draw these on the whiteboard.  Does everyone agree with the outcomes? What makes a mark a dash, squiggle or dot? Discuss different qualities.  Encourage large and clear gestures. Can they paint using either hand?
<b>Exploration:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread out and explore making dots, squiggles and dashes using different body parts (e.g., nose, elbows, hips, knees).</li> <li>• Use whole body to show a dot (shape or action), squiggle and dash.</li> <li>• Use feet and steps to explore these designs on the floor.</li> </ul>	Use the space in front, behind and above and to each side of the body.  Lying, sitting or standing.  Draw with the foot or feet, then use travelling steps.
<b>Class painting:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach a phrase (e.g., stand on the spot and draw 6 dots using fingers in the space around the body).</li> <li>• 2 squiggles with whole body.</li> <li>• Dash a short way to a different space and repeat the phrase).</li> <li>• Start by all facing different ways; repeat phrase 3 times and stand still to finish.</li> <li>• Half the class watch the other half and evaluate effectiveness. Swap.</li> </ul>	Dots: Encourage children to reach as far as they can in different directions so they bend, stretch and twist. Squiggle up and down; send a ripple along the arms. Dash: Be sensible and aware of others when running. Encourage independence (children will perform at different speeds), good focus and a clear ending. Do they achieve these tasks? How could their performance be even better?
<b>Partner painting:</b> Create a “dot, squiggle, dash!” phrase using different body parts for each and include travel. Perform in unison. Consider relationships in space. Develop phrase to include a different relationship (e.g., canon, action and reaction, counterpoint). Pair evaluation.	Actions can be in any order. For further challenge, include a change of level (e.g., facing, side by side, near and far, back to back, one behind the other; see chapter 3). Can they see the 3 different actions? Do they use different body parts? How do they relate to each other?

*(continued)*

**DOT, SQUIGGLE, DASH** *(continued)*

Tasks	Teaching Points
<p><b>Group painting:</b> Pairs combine to make groups of 4. Give each group a painting and ask them to look for ideas and images (e.g., <i>splodge, scribble, wave, star, spiral or circle</i>) that they could interpret in dance. They choose 3 images from the painting and explore them as a group. Link these together to create a short dance with beginning, middle and end.</p> <p>Each group explains and demonstrates how they interpreted their painting.</p> <p>Practise each section and work on transitions to create one dance.</p>	<p>Encourage movement as well as shape.</p> <p>Develop relationships so it is not all in unison.</p> <p>Older and more experienced children could consider moods and qualities suggested by different colours.</p>
<p><b>Empty canvas:</b> From their final group shape, children perform the opening phrase 3 times to take them away from the group and out of the dance space.</p> <p>Share with another class. Videotape and assess.</p>	<p>Use the specific learning outcomes.</p>

\*This material is adapted from the original TOP Dance (Gargrave and Trotman 2003), copyrighted work of the Youth Sport Trust, which was used with permission.