

MIX AND MATCH WARM-UP

Use these ideas to create a warm-up suitable for the ages of the children and that prepares them for the dance lesson.

Ages

Any.

Accompaniment

Select music appropriate to the task. Upbeat music with a steady pace is the most suitable.

Formation

Either spaced out and facing you (the teacher) or standing in a circle—whichever is more appropriate for the ages and stages of the children and the type of action.

Description

1. Select a mobility exercise from the list below and create a phrase that can be repeated (e.g., circle shoulders, wrists, hips, each leg [from the hips] and each ankle [balance on the other foot]).
2. Select a pulse-raising exercise from the list below that complements the mobility exercise (e.g., walk in and out of the spaces along winding pathways—explore loops, curves, spirals and circular designs on the floor); develop to include jogging and skipping.
3. Repeat the mobility and travelling phrases until the children are warm. (This will also develop strength.) Then add a simple stretch from the list below (e.g., standing still, use both hands to reach and trace large circles in the space around the body forwards and from side to side).
4. Older children could devise their own group warm-ups using these suggestions in mix and match.

Mobility

- Circle shoulders, arms, wrists, hips, legs, ankles.
- Shake hands, arms, shoulders, head, hips, knees, ankles.
- Swing arms forwards and backwards or side to side; swing legs forwards and backwards.
- Isolate joints by moving them up and down.
- Do small bends and stretches (e.g., tap heads, shoulders, knees, toes).
- Lead with different body parts (e.g., move elbow in the space around the body)
- Roll down and unroll through the spine.
- Do steps and taps, articulating heels and toes.
- Prepare for jumps: bend and straighten knees, articulate the feet (toes, balls and heels), do little bounces.

Pulse Raising

- Walk, march, jog, skip, gallop or jump on spot and travel.
- With arms above heart, wave, clap, shake, punch or reach.
- Do repeated arm swings, using the rest of the body to bend and stretch.
- Do repetitions and speeding up of phrases.

(continued)

MIX AND MATCH WARM-UP *(continued)*

Strength

- Do repeated steps and jumps.
- Do repeated combinations and patterns.
- Perform controlled rolling.
- Perform controlled falling and recovery.
- Walk hands out into plank position (weight on hands and feet).
- Do sit-ups and core stability work.
- Do lunges and pliés (legs bend and stretch) with feet wide apart.
- Begin on hands and knees and make an inverted V with weight on hands and feet, buttocks towards the ceiling, kneel and repeat.

Stretching

- Do whole-body stretches standing or lying (on front, back or sides).
- Make letter shapes using whole body (e.g., T, Y, I, O, L, X, Z, V).
- Curl and stretch while lying, sitting, kneeling, standing.
- Reach high, low, to each side and diagonally in front of the body.
- Lunge.
- Trace large circles on different planes around the body.