

SPEED

Ages: 7 to adult

Music suggestions are from *Music for Creative Dance (MCD)* Volumes 1, 2, 3, and 4 and *BrainDance Music* by Eric Chappelle.

Length

30 to 60 minutes. You may extend this class to 75 to 90 minutes by adding sections of dance technique.

Warming Up

BrainDance: Dancers alternate slow and fast movement patterns—breath (slow), tactile (fast), core–distal (slow), head–tail (fast), upper–lower (slow), body–side (fast), cross–lateral (slow), vestibular (fast), eye tracking (slow). *Suggested music:* *BrainDance Music*, #7.

Introducing the Concept: *Speed—slow, medium, fast.* Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept of *speed*.

Exploring the Concept

For a 30-minute lesson, choose one of these activities.

Exploring the Concept 2: Slow/Fast

Dancers explore moving very slowly to slow music and very quickly to fast music. Then they try moving quickly to slow music and slowly to fast music. Encourage a change of levels, direction, and movement with one body part and the whole body. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #9.

Shaping 8: Group Sculptor and Clay (Variation)

Partners take turns as puppeteer and puppet. The puppeteer quickly dabs or slowly brushes the puppet's arms, legs, back, knees, elbows, wrists, and so on. The puppet responds with quick or slow movements. When the music changes, roles are reversed. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 4, #8.

Reflection

"Discuss with a fellow dancer whether you preferred moving slowly or quickly. Did you choose your normal speed or a speed that feels like recuperation from your normal speed of movement?"

Developing Skills

For a 30-minute lesson, choose one of these activities. For a 60-minute lesson, do both these activities

or choose one and replace the other with dance technique such as pliés, tendus, swings, and jumps.

Developing Skills 6: Body Half

Dancers practice moving arms slowly and legs quickly, then try the reverse. For example: floating/run, stretching/jump, flicking/lunge, shaking/slither. Explore moving the right side slowly and left side quickly and vice versa. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #5.

Combining Movements 3: Accelerating

Dancers take a familiar combination and accelerate the movements. Then they decelerate. Then they mix up the speeds of the steps, choosing which steps to do quickly and which to do slowly.

Creating

Choreographing 4: Trios (Variation)

For a 30-minute lesson: Dancers, spaced on the perimeter of the room, enter the space and exit the space at will with a phase of their own choosing, demonstrating movements in a particular order that are slow, fast, medium, and include a freeze or stillness. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #3.

For a 60- to 90-minute lesson: Trios create a dance in which they enter the space with one speed, dance in the space at a second speed, and exit the space at a third speed. Encourage the dancers to exaggerate the fast and slow speeds (very fast and very slow) so that the observers can differentiate the speeds. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1; ask the performers to choose a number between 1 and 16, and play that numbered piece (chance music).

Cooling Down

Sharing and Evaluating Choreography:

This cool-down is for a 60- to 90-minute lesson. Observers guess the order of speeds chosen by the choreographers and comment on other concepts that were emphasized in the dance (levels, relationships, energy, etc.). Choreographers discuss how they felt dancing to their chance piece of music.

Closure Circle: Dancers form a circle and review *speed* concept vocabulary verbally and physically.