

ENERGY

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 perform each pattern with smooth and sharp movements. Ask dancers for ideas during the last four patterns. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #13-19. Do breath pattern without music, then start tactile with #13. Change patterns with each new piece of music.

Introducing the Concept: *Energy—smooth (sustained), sharp (percussive).* Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept of *energy*.

Exploring the Concept

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

Exploring the Concept 12: Verbs

Direct dancers to “shake the space . . . now the space will shake you. Press the space away from you . . . now the space will press you forward, backward, sideways, up, and down.” Continue calling out many expressive smooth and sharp verbs such as chop, tickle, caress, paint, swat, mold, shatter, squeeze, and so on.

Shaping 7: Shape Museum (Variation)

Half the class are statues, half are dancers. These roles are constantly shifting. A dancer moves smoothly to a statue. Then the dancer taps three body parts, and the statue moves these parts sharply into shapes. The dancer copies the shape, and the statue becomes a dancer and moves smoothly to another statue. The dance game continues until the music ends. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #5.

Reflection

“Discuss with a fellow dancer what you learned about yourself from this experience.” With younger dancers, say, “Make a new shape or do a new movement that you discovered in your self-space.”

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 3: Body Half

Dancers practice smooth or sharp upper-body movements while doing sharp or smooth lower-body movements. It is fun for the dancers to name the new movements. For example: float and skip (*float*), slash and skate (*slate*), glide and jump (*glump*), punch and roll (*proll*), swing and leap (*swip*). Choose four new words, and create a dance combination using those words. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #10.

Leaping 5: Traveling

Dancers perform sharp bursting leaps from one corner to the opposite corner, smooth chaîné turns to the adjacent corner, smooth floating leaps to the opposite corner, and shaky or swingly movements of their own choosing to the corner from which they started. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #11.

Creating

Choreographing 5: Environments (Variation for a 30-Minute Lesson)

Call out various environments as the dancers improvise movement illustrating the environments. For example, say, “Briar patch, skating pond, mud flats, the moon, flowing river, desert, volcano, glacier.”

Choreographing 4: Images (Variation for a 60- to 90-Minute Lesson)

Provide dancers with three textures. For example, toothpick, silk, sponge; leaf, twig, stone; bubble wrap, bristle block, fake fur. Small groups of dancers create a texture suite illustrating the three textures. The dancers use vocal and body sounds as accompaniment.

Cooling Down

Sharing and Evaluating Choreography: For a 30-minute lesson, dancers discuss with a partner which environment they found most challenging to illustrate and why. For a 60- to 90-minute lesson, groups share texture suites. Observers identify the order of the textures and comment on memorable moments.

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