

BODY SHAPES

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

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

Warming Up

BrainDance: Dancers perform the patterns standing or sitting, moving in symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes. *Suggested music:* *BrainDance Music*, #2 or #7.

Introducing the Concept: *Body shapes*—straight, curved, angular, twisted, symmetrical, asymmetrical. Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept of *body shapes*. Dancers might also explore each shape in a symmetrical form and then an asymmetrical form. Explore shapes on various levels and with changes in size.

Exploring the Concept

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

Exploring the Concept 13: Shapes Through Space

Dancers work in pairs. One forms a shape, and the other moves away and back to the partner with movements suggested by the shape. For example, an angular shape might inspire sharp movements in a zigzag pathway. Dancers take turns making shapes in self-space and dancing through general space with movements inspired by the shapes. *Suggested music:* *MCD* Vol. 1, #15.

Shaping 4: Mirroring

Working in pairs or trios, dancers mirror the slow-motion shape shifting of the leader when the music is slow. When the music is fast, the leader creates shapes quickly. Change leaders after one slow and one fast section. *Suggested music:* *MCD* Vol. 1, #9.

Reflection

“With your partner(s), discuss the challenge of creating and copying shapes quickly. Which challenge was harder, thinking of the shapes or copying the shapes?”

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.

Turning 5: Symmetry and Asymmetry

Dancers practice various turns in symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes. *Suggested music:* *MCD* Vol. 2, #6.

Combining Movements 4: Move and Stop

Dancers perform a familiar or new combination of movements, adding a shape between each movement. For example, *slide, curved shape, turn, angular shape, grapevine, twisted shape, run and leap, balancing asymmetrical shape*. Dancers practice the combination holding the shapes for 8 counts. Then they practice the combination, gliding through the shapes with smooth transitions or performing the movements while holding various shapes (e.g., slide in a curved shape, turn in an angular shape, and so on). *Suggested music:* *MCD* Vol. 2, #5 and *MCD* Vol. 2, #11.

Creating

Choreographing 4: Dance by Chance

Dancers pick cards or pieces of paper or roll dice to determine their score as follows: 1 (or Ace) = low-level symmetrical shape; 2 = run, 3 = high-level asymmetrical shape, 4 = traveling through general space on a low level. Note: If some dancers pick three or more of the same number, they may choose a different number. It is more interesting for the dancers if they have a little variety. *Suggested music:* *MCD* Vol. 2, #13-15. When the music changes, the dancers perform the next section of their scores.

Cooling Down

Sharing and Evaluating Choreography: For a 30-minute lesson, class is divided into thirds.

(continued)

Dancers share their scores as improvisations. For a 60- to 90-minute lesson, allow the dancers some time to create and memorize their scores as solos. Groups of four dancers share their dances. Remind the performers to be aware of each other and, when appropriate, remind them to create safe and non-

invasive relationships with their fellow performers. Observers discuss the magical moments that happen by chance as the groups perform together.

Closure Circle: Dancers form a circle and review the *body shapes* concept vocabulary verbally and physically.