

DIRECTION

Ages: Parent-child and 3 to 6

When the lesson plan states, “Exploring the Concept 2: Magic Strings,” locate that activity in chapter 9 for a full explanation.

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

Length

30 to 60 minutes

Warming Up

Quick Warm-Up (optional for a 30-minute lesson): Manipulating small scarves, dancers move in different directions that you cue. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #16.

BrainDance: Seated or standing with rhymes emphasizing *direction* concept vocabulary. *Suggested music:* BrainDance Music, #17-26, spoken rhymes, or simple songs or cues.

Introducing the Concept: *Direction*—forward, backward, right, left, up, down. Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept.

Exploring the Concept

Choose one of these activities for a 30-minute lesson; choose two or three for a 60-minute lesson.

Exploring the Concept 2: Magic Strings

Invisible strings attached to different body parts pull dancers through space in different directions. Cue the body part and direction. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 3, #20.

Shaping 4: Partners (Variation)

Partners make a forward shape, backward shape, up shape, down shape, and side shape. Then they dance away from each other in a sideways direction. Dancers return to partners, and you cue a new set of directed shapes. Dancers dance away from partners in the direction indicated by the last shape. Keep the same partner with ages 3 and 4; change partners with parent-child couples and ages 5 and 6. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #3.

Instruments 1: Leading

Dancers place the instrument in front of the body and move forward while playing. They place the instrument behind and move backward; place it up and jump up while playing; and so on. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #2.

Reflection

“Make a shape reaching as many body parts as you can in your favorite direction.”

Relaxation and Alignment

May be included in a 60-minute lesson. Refer to Cooling Down (chapter 4). *Suggested Music:* MCD Vol. 4, #17.

Developing Skills

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

Developing Skills 3: Sliding

Dancers practice sliding right and left alone and with a partner in a scattered formation. Dancers practice galloping forward. Experienced dancers can practice galloping backward. Also have them try galloping or sliding with a partner in different relationships—side by side, in front and behind, or around in a circle. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 4, #9.

Combining Movements 2: Looby Loo

Sing the song “Looby Loo,” but substitute a direction for “Here we go . . .” For example, “Backward go Looby Loo, backward go Looby Light, backward go Looby Loo, all on a Saturday night.” You could also substitute a direction for the first body movement. For example, “I put my right knee up, I put my right knee out, I give my knee a shake, shake, shake, and turn myself about. Sideways go Looby Loo,” and so on.

Creating

Exploring the Concept 12: Props

Dancers form a shape in self-space and move the prop in a stated direction. Then they dance through general space in that direction. Cue different directions (forward, backward, left, etc.). *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 4, #18.

Cooling Down

Good-Bye Dance: Dancers illustrate their favorite direction or movement from class as they move across the room in twos or threes.