

BALANCE

Ages: Parent-child and 3 to 6

When the lesson plan states, “Exploring the Concept 2: Spot Balancing,” locate that activity in chapter 20 for a full explanation.

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

Warming Up

Quick Warm-Up (optional for a 30-minute lesson): While they manipulate small scarves, you direct dancers to alternate balancing on different body parts with dancing through general space. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #21.

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

Introducing the Concept: *Balance—on-balance, off-balance.* Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept of *balance*.

Exploring the Concept

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

Exploring the Concept 2: Spot Balancing (Variation)

Dancers are small sailboats. On one side of the room they balance in different shapes on the spots, moored to their buoys (spots). On the other side of the room is the ocean. On the teacher’s signal, the boats sail to the other side and tip and sway through the ocean (off-balance). Have dancers alternate moving between the ocean and buoys several times. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 4, #1.

Shaping 1: Yoga Shapes

Direct dancers to form and hold two or three different yoga shapes and then dance through general space on- and off-balance. Dancers continue to alternate directed yoga shapes with free dancing. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 3, #8.

Instruments 1: Pause

Dancers move while playing the instruments (cue changes in directions, level, and pathway), then form balancing shapes on the sustained notes. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #9.

Reflection

“Balance in your favorite shape.”

Relaxation and Alignment

May be included in a 60-minute lesson. Refer to *Cooling Down* (chapter 4). *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #8.

Developing Skills

Choose one of the activities for a 30-minute lesson.

Developing Skills 1: Move and Stop (Variation)

Repeat the following rhyme several times. Encourage the dancers to say the rhyme with you as they dance.

Slide, slide, slide, slide, tip, tip

Jump, jump, jump, jump, drip, drip

Turn, turn, turn, turn, circle your hip

Balance, balance, balance, balance, slip! (*Dancers fall to the ground carefully.*)

Leaping 1: Spots, 2: Beam

Create an obstacle course for your students using whatever objects are available to you: spots to leap over and balance on, a bench to use as a balance beam, cones to leap over, hoops to balance in, and so on. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #11.

Creating

Exploring the Concept 6: Shadow Balances

Leader 1 moves through general space as leader 2 shadows the movements. When the music pauses, partners form a connected shape, balancing together. Leaders take turns until the music ends. Cue dancers as necessary. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 4, #4.

Cooling Down

Reflection: Partners tell each other which they preferred: shadow dancing or balancing in shapes. Everyone takes three deep breaths to end class.