

WEIGHT

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: Perform every other pattern with strong movements, alternating patterns with light movements. For example: breath/strong breaths, tactile/light touch, core–distal/strong flexion and extension, head–tail/light spinal movements. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #21.

Introducing the Concept: *Weight—strong, light, passive, active.* Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept of *weight*.

Exploring the Concept

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

Exploring the Concept 12: Magic Hands (ABABABAB Variation)

A—Partners hold two chopsticks vertically between their right palms. They dance together with light movements, keeping the chopsticks balanced between their palms.

B—When the music changes, they place the chopsticks on the floor (or desk in a classroom) and explore strong weight-sharing shapes such as pressing palms together, pulling apart, pressing backs together, pulling apart on different levels, pressing or pulling only right or left hands, and pressing sides together.

Suggested music: MCD Vol. 1, #1.

Shaping 8: Shape Chain

One at a time, dancers connect light-touch shapes together to form a chain or fence. The dancer left at the beginning of the chain dances to the end of the chain to reconnect so the chain keeps evolving. When directed, dancers switch to strong pressing or pulling shapes. This activity takes cooperation and teamwork. You may divide large classes into three or four chains. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 1, #12.

Reflection

“Discuss with your partner or group which connection was most challenging, light or strong, and why.”

Developing Skills

For a 30-minute lesson, choose one of these activities. For a 60-minute lesson do both of these activities, or choose one and replace the other with dance technique such as pliés, tendus, swings, and jumps.

Developing Skills 2: Nonlocomotor Movement

Dancers explore and practice Rudolf Laban’s effort actions: slash, punch, press, wring (strong); float, glide, dab, flick (light).

Combining Movements 4: Sounds

Alternate strong and light effort actions (see previous activity) to form a new combination, or add a strong and a light action to a familiar combination. *Suggested music:* Add vocal and body sounds for accompaniment.

Creating

Choreographing 2: ABA

For a 30-minute lesson: Dancers improvise light movements for the first section of nonmetered music, dance to a partner on the 3/4 metered music and improvise weight-sharing movements and shapes, then dance away and improvise light movements. Encourage a change in level, size, and tempo. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #1.

For a 60- to 90-minute lesson: Dancers in small groups create an ABA study: A—light movements; B—strong, connected weight-sharing movements; A—a repeat of the light section. Encourage the use of levels, relationships, and changes in tempo and energy. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #12.

Cooling Down

Sharing and Evaluating Choreography: For a 30-minute lesson, dancers discuss with their partners whether they preferred the light section or the strong section and why. For a 60- to 90-minute lesson, groups share ABA studies. Observers comment on emotions evoked by the studies.

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