

PATHWAY FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL

Ages: 12 to 18

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

Length

Five 45- to 60-minute related classes over the course of a week or several weeks

Day 1

Warming Up

For more information, see Warming Up in chapter 4.

BrainDance: Traveling through general space: Breath in straight pathway, tactile in a curved path, core–distal in a zigzag path, head–tail in a straight path, upper–lower in a curved path, body-side (with horizontal eye tracking) in a zigzag path, cross-lateral (with vertical eye tracking) in a straight path, and vestibular in a curved path. *Suggested music: BrainDance Music, #4.*

Introducing the Concept: *Pathway*—straight, curved, zigzag. Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept of *pathway*.

Exploring the Concept

Names

Using the elbow as a pen, have dancers write their names through general space in block letters. Repeat the activity using the head as a pen, this time writing in cursive letters. Repeat using the foot, knee, or leg with block letters. Repeat with cursive writing using the whole body. *Suggested music: MCD Vol. 1, #15.*

Reflection

“Find a partner and discuss the pathways that were most prevalent in your name. Did block letters move you in pathways that differed from cursive writing?”

Developing Skills

Choose one of the following activities.

Dance Technique

Work on technical skills in the particular genre or style you are teaching. Focus on the concept of *pathways*. For example, for ballet use curved paths for *rond de*

jambe, straight paths for *tendu*, and zigzag paths for *chassé*. Another idea is for dancers to improvise 32 counts of movement in a directed pathway between each dance exercise.

Movement Combination

Teach a simple movement phrase combining familiar movements with pathways. For example, have dancers perform this phrase for 12 measures in 3/4 meter: *4 waltz runs in a straight path; 4 chaînés in a curved path; 2 step-hop-hops, run, and spring in a zigzag path.*

Creating

Phrase Manipulation

Dancers in pairs or trios add their own pathways and arm movements to a familiar movement phrase (or the previous phrase).

Cooling Down

For more information, refer to Cooling Down in chapter 4.

Sharing and Evaluating Choreography:

Half the students perform their phrase for the other half. Roles are then reversed. After the sharing, each observer forms a shape or movement they remember seeing.

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

Day 2

Warming Up

For more information, see Warming Up in chapter 4.

BrainDance: Dancers are seated and focus on spatial pathways in self-space as they move through the eight BrainDance patterns. *Suggested music: BrainDance Music, #2.*

Reviewing the Concept: *Pathway*—straight, curved, zigzag. Dancers discuss synonyms for the word *pathway* as they travel in directed paths through space (e.g., straight *road*, curved *trail*, zigzag *footpath*, straight *conduit*, curved *passageway*, zigzag *lane*, straight *alleyway*, curved *corridor*, zigzag *track*).

Exploring the Concept

Blind Mirror

Partners press palms firmly together. Leader 1 has eyes open; leader 2 has eyes closed. Leader 1 moves leader 2 through space slowly while writing his or her first name (leader 2 is the pen). Change roles. Leaders may choose to write print or cursive letters. *Suggested music: MCD Vol. 3, #7.*

Reflection

“Discuss with your partner whether you preferred being the writer or the pen and why. Could you discern what type of writing you described when your eyes were closed—cursive or print?”

Developing Skills

Choose one of the following activities.

Dance Technique

Work on technical skills in the particular genre or style you are teaching. Focus on the concept of *pathways*. For example, ask students to perform pliés with straight, curved, and bent arms; spinal work with curved and flat backs; and steps across the floor in varying pathways and formations. Add 16- to 32-count pathway improvisations between exercises.

Movement Combination

Dancers continue to work on the movement phrase introduced in the previous class. Add more movements such as a smooth, curvy run and jazzy, zigzag jumps, or spiral down to the floor and up followed by slashing movements.

Creating

Line Designs

Dancers work in pairs, trios, or small groups to create simple line designs on paper with colored pens (or you provide copies of famous works of art or postcards from a museum store). Dancers begin to create a study motivated by their design or artwork.

Cooling Down

For more information, refer to Cooling Down in chapter 4.

Stretching: Dancers stretch muscles while discussing ideas for choreography.

Day 3

Warming Up

For more information, see Warming Up in chapter 4.

BrainDance: Standing, dancers perform breath, tactile, and core–distal patterns moving in straight pathways; head–tail, upper–lower, and body-side patterns moving in curved pathways; and eye-tracking, cross-lateral, and vestibular patterns moving in zigzag pathways. *Suggested music: BrainDance Music, #7.*

Reviewing the Concept: *Pathway—straight, curved, zigzag.* Each dancer draws pathways on a partner’s back, and the partner names the pathways. Then they switch roles.

Exploring the Concept

Painters

Dancers work in pairs. Leader 1 “paints” a simple pathway design in space with an arm, elbow, knee, leg, or head. Leader 2 copies the design with whole body movements. Have dancers reverse roles and repeat the activity at least four more times. *Suggested music: MCD Vol. 1, #5.*

Reflection

Discuss with your partner the challenging aspects of this activity.

Developing Skills

Choose one of the following activities.

Dance Technique

Continue to develop technical skills, focusing on the concept of *pathways* as it relates to the particular genre or style you are teaching. Add 16- to 32-count pathway improvisations between exercises.

Movement Combination

Continue to work on the movement phrase introduced in the first class. Add more movements, such as moving to a partner in a straight pathway, creating a turn together in a curved pathway, and moving away in a zigzag pathway.

Creating

Line Designs

Have dancers work in pairs, trios, or small groups. Continue to develop the pathway study begun in the previous class.

(continued)

Cooling Down

For more information, refer to Cooling Down in chapter 4.

Notation: Groups notate their studies (to date) in any way they choose. They could use motif notation, drawings, written notes, video, or something else.

Day 4

Warming Up

For more information, refer to Warming Up in chapter 4.

BrainDance: Dancers stand in pairs. Partners alternate being leader as they mirror each other's movements through the eight BrainDance patterns. You designate when leaders change roles. *Suggested music: BrainDance Music, #1.*

Developing Skills

Choose one of the following activities.

Dance Technique

Continue to develop technical skills in the particular genre or style you are teaching. Focus on the concept of *pathways*. For example, have the class perform exercises while traveling in curved pathways around each other. Dancers add 16- to 32-count pathway improvisations between exercises.

Movement Combination

Add an entrance and exit to the combination dancers have been practicing the last three classes.

Creating

Line Designs

Dancers continue to develop their pathway studies.

Cooling Down

For more information, refer to Cooling Down in chapter 4.

Pair Share: Two pairs, trios, or groups share their pathway studies with each other. Choreographers explain what they think are the strengths of their piece (e.g., relationships, unique movements, level changes, clear form, etc.). Observers comment briefly on one area they think needs work (e.g., clearer focus, dynamic changes, clearer pathways, etc.).

Day 5

Warming Up

For more information, see Warming Up in chapter 4.

BrainDance: Dancers form trios. Dancers take turns being leader of the trio as they shadow each other's movements through general space while performing the eight BrainDance patterns. You designate when leaders change roles. You could also designate the pathway. *Suggested music: BrainDance Music, #4.*

Developing Skills

Choose one of the following activities.

Dance Technique

Continue to develop technical skills in the particular genre or style you are teaching. Focus on the concept of *pathways*. Dancers perform 16- to 32-count pathway improvisations between exercises.

Movement Combination

Dancers perform for each other the combination practiced over the last four classes. Half the class performs for the other half, and vice versa.

Creating

Line Designs

Choreographers refine their studies using the information gleaned from the previous lesson's sharing and reflecting.

Cooling Down

For more information, refer to Cooling Down in chapter 4.

Sharing: Dancers share their finished pathway studies. Depending on the size and length of your class, groups can pair share, or one or two groups at a time can share with the whole class. Choose an appropriate mode of reflection. For example, observers form a shape they remember, selected observers make a brief positive comment about what they saw, observers draw a design motivated by what they saw, or choreographers voice what they thought were strong points of the study.