

RHYTHM

Ages: Parent-child and 3 to 6

When the lesson plan states, “Exploring the Concept 18: Heart and Lungs,” locate that activity in chapter 13 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 respond to the various rhythms of the music. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #17-19.

BrainDance: Seated or standing with rhymes emphasizing changes in speed or rhythm. *Suggested music:* *BrainDance Music*, #17-26, spoken rhymes, or simple songs or cues.

Introducing the Concept: *Rhythm—pulse, pattern, grouping, breath.* Dancers read and say the words as they physically demonstrate the concept of *rhythm*. With young children, focus on *pulse*.

Exploring the Concept

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

Exploring the Concept 18: Heart and Lungs (ABABAB Variation)

A—Dancers flow freely through space, emphasizing breath rhythms. Encourage dancers to breathe smoothly and sharply, slowly and quickly.

B—Dancers clap hands, slap legs, pat abdomens, stomp feet, march, jump, and so on to the pulse of the music.

Add a prop for visual and tactile stimulation. Foam sticks with small scarves stuck in one end work well. The flowing scarves illustrate *breath* in section A. Dancers can tap the end without scarves on body parts and the floor for *pulse* in section B. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 3, #15.

Shaping 9: Stillness

Dancers move around the room in various ways on the metered music. On the *shush* sounds, the dancers freeze in shapes. The *shushing* varies in length. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 2, #9.

Instruments 3: Circle (ABABABAB Variation)

A—Dancers are seated in a circle. They copy your pulse with their rhythm instruments in self-space.

B—Dancers move to their own rhythm, playing instruments and moving through general space.

Reflection

“Clap, tap, or stamp a pulse for 10 counts.”

Relaxation and Alignment

May be included in a 60-minute lesson. Refer to *Cooling Down* (chapter 4). *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 3, #7.

Developing Skills

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

Developing Skills 6: Threes and Fours

Dancers practice marching, jumping, leaping, tiptoe steps, and so on in various directions to the 4/4 meter music. They practice tipping, turning, swinging, floating, and so on to the 3/4 meter music. *Suggested music:* MCD Vol. 3, #4.

Combining Movements 7: Poetry

You, the dancers, or both chant the following rhyme while performing the suggested combination (or create a new one).

Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold,
pease porridge in the pot nine days old.
(Clap rhythm or pulse with a partner:
clap 3 times and hold, clap 3 times and hold,
clap 7 times and hold.)

Some like it hot, some like it cold.
(Gently bump hips together—one side 3 times,
then other side 3 times.)

Some like it in the pot nine days old.
(Gallop or skip to a new partner, or spin around.)

Creating

Structured Improvisation—Exploring the Concept 22: Activity Songs

Dancers move to the various rhythms in the music with or without a prop. *Suggested music:* *Feel of Music*: “Do a Little Dance” (Hap Palmer; see appendix D), or *MCD* Vol. 2, #13-16 or #20.

Cooling Down

Mirroring: Dancers mirror your movements that demonstrate breath, pattern, and pulse. No music is necessary. This activity may be extended or abbreviated to fill the time that is left in class.