Chapter 20

Developmental Dance

# Summary

Dance is an expressive movement form, and a well-balanced program for elementary physical education offers children varied opportunities to express themselves through dance. In both creative dance and structured dance (i.e., existing dances, including folk, square, and social forms), children use their bodies as instruments of communication and self-expression. In developmental dance, children not only learn the content of dance—that is, elements of the movement framework (body, space, effort, and relationship awareness)—but also the process of dance.

Along the way, students increase the difficulty of skills performed, vary the skills using the movement concepts, combine skills in sequences, and perform skills and sequences with partners and in small groups. The combination skill progressions challenge students to apply rhythmic fundamentals to step sequences, use movement concepts to modify locomotor and stability skills, learn simple dance formations, and begin to create dances with teacher guidance. In the application skill progressions, students refine rhythm by adding accent and focus, begin to isolate their use of body parts, engage in more complex dance formations, expand on their ability to create dances, and participate in partner dances.

This chapter provides activities for four types of dance: lyric directed, in which the words of a song designate the type and sequence of movements for a specific dance; cultural, in which a dance form represents the values, beliefs, traditions, and ways of living of a culture as expressed through the movements, rhythms, and formations of the dances; social, which emphasizes using dance as a way to experience the joy of moving with others; and creative, in which movements are generated, varied, and manipulated using the elements of dance to express and communicate an idea, concept, or feeling. The chapter also reviews instructional design for dance activities, including the relationship of the national dance standards (<http://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/dance/k4standards.cfm>; <http://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/dance/dancestandards5-8.cfm>) to the national content standards and grade-level outcomes in K-12 physical education (<http://www.shapeamerica.org/standards/pe/index.cfm>) as well as the application of both the reproduction and production teaching styles.

# Key Objectives

* Defining developmental dance and justifying its role in the elementary physical education program
* Describing the outcomes of educational dance
* Describing the main genres of dance and the content of dance as an expressive movement form
* Defining the fundamentals of rhythm
* Describing how reproduction and production teaching styles are used to teach dance
* Teaching standards-based learning experiences with aligned assessments in dance

# Big Ideas

* Developmental dance is based on children’s level of movement skill learning, motor development, and cognitive and social characteristics.
* The four main forms of dance are lyric-directed, cultural, social, and creative.
* The outcomes of including dance in physical education include, but are not limited to, the following: developing social skills; gaining the ability to express an idea through movement; learning about diverse cultures; learning to use the elements of body, space, effort, and relationship to vary movement; and learning to coordinate and sequence steps.
* Rhythmic fundamentals include accent, tempo, intensity, rhythmic pattern, and underlying beat.
* Effective dance instruction uses the reproduction and the production teaching styles (from the Spectrum of Teaching Styles).
* Designing instruction involves identifying the learning outcome, choreographic theme, and teaching style; describing the task and environment; and choosing the type of practice, feedback, and assessment.
* Assessments for standards 1 through 5 can be conducted in dance learning experiences.

# Part 1: The Role and Outcomes of Dance in Elementary Physical Education

Read each of the following scenarios, then answer the questions presented about them.

## Scenario A

Children engage in a 3v3 keep-away game in a grid measuring 20 feet (6 m) square. The focus is on moving to open space in order to receive the game object.

## Scenario B

Children are organized into groups of three or four and asked to explore creating movements that represent each of the eight effort actions created by Rudolf Laban (originally created by Rudolf Laban (see <http://www.theatrefolk.com/blog/the-eight-efforts-laban-movement/>). The effort actions could be displayed on the gymnasium wall by means of a projector. The physical educator should verbally guide children through their exploration of the effort actions. Subsequently, the children are asked to work in their groups to sequence four of the effort actions in order to create a movement sequence. To ensure that each group member contributes, the physical educator provides each student with one playing card. Each group member must play his or her card and share a movement suggestion for the selected effort action. Group members then discuss ideas and come to agreement on a final movement sequence. The groups then share their movement sequences; music could be layered onto this activity.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Laban’s eight effort actions | | | |
| Effort action | Spatial aspect | Weight aspect | Time aspect |
| Float | Indirect | Light | Slow |
| Wring | Indirect | Strong | Slow |
| Press | Direct | Strong | Slow |
| Glide | Direct | Light | Slow |
| Dab | Direct | Light | Quick |
| Slash | Indirect | Strong | Quick |
| Flick | Indirect | Light | Quick |
| Punch | Direct | Strong | Quick |

**Questions About the Scenarios**

1. Which scenario describes a functional movement form? Which activity involves an expressive movement form? How so?
2. Cone and Cone (2012, p. 9) highlight three mains reasons for including dance in physical education. These reasons are listed in the following table. Put check marks in the appropriate boxes to indicate which of the reasons are addressed by scenario A (keep-away) and scenario B (effort actions). Use the “why” column to support your answers.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reasons for including dance in elementary physical education | 3v3 keep-away | Effort action sequence | Why? |
| Develop social skills (ability to appropriately express and communicate ideas, feelings, and understandings). |  |  |  |
| Know and understand oneself and the world. |  |  |  |
| Develop movement abilities. |  |  |  |

1. Which of the following outcomes of dance are addressed in scenario B?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Developmental dance outcomes | Yes | No |
| Increasing children's ability to listen and follow verbal directions |  |  |
| Helping children learn new movement sequences |  |  |
| Teaching children to perform dances independently by following directions voiced in a song |  |  |
| Developing children’s collaborative skills as they learn and perform a dance |  |  |

# Part 2: Rhythmic Fundamentals

Match each of the following rhythmic fundamentals with the dance activity that emphasizes it.

**Rhythmic Fundamentals**

1. Tempo
2. Rhythmic pattern
3. Underlying beat
4. Accent
5. Intensity

**Dance Activities**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Children are asked to perform very percussive and then very soft movements.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Children perform a sequence to a slow drumbeat and then to a fast drumbeat.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Children perform a grapevine step and then a forceful jump to end the step.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Children perform a step-together-step sequence to the right and then to the left four times.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. A dance has a time signature of 4/4.

# Part 3: Using the “Add-On” Strategy of Teaching Dance

Read the following steps for the Bavarian dance *D’Hammerschmiedsgselln*. Then use the add-on method to break the dance into six learnable chunks for a physical education class in grades 4 and 5.

**Formation:** Two couples form a small square. The 1s act as partners and face each other across the circle; in the same way, the 2s act partners and face each other.

**Clapping pattern:**

* Measure 1 (three counts): With both hands, slap own thighs, own chest, and own hands together.
* Measure 2 (three counts): With partner, clap right hands together, then left hands together, then both hands together.
* Do the clapping pattern eight times (i.e., for measures 1 through 16, or 48 counts). Here is the key: "Me, me, me; you, you, you."

**Circle:** For measures 17 through 24, join hands to form a circle and skip clockwise for eight counts. Repeat to the left.

**Add-on strategy:**

* Teaching progression 1:
* Teaching progression 2:
* Teaching progression 3:
* Teaching progression 4:
* Teaching progression 5:
* Teaching progression 6:

**Self-check for progressions 1 through 6:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you begin with the formation of four and partners or do you break this formation down into learning individually?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you teach the clapping individually or with a partner first?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you teach the clapping pattern with the music first or without music?

\_\_\_\_\_ When do you put students into a formation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you teach the clockwise skipping segment alone or immediately after the clapping segment?

# Part 4: Understanding the Content and Process of Dance

**Activity:** Describe the instructional task using one or more of the eight effort actions for a creative dance experience on level I or level II.

**National physical education standard 1**

**Level:** combination

**Essential content:** effort actions

**Teaching styles:** reproduction (command, practice), production (divergent)

**Genre:** creative (levels I and II)

**Level I (teacher dependent) instructional task:**

**Level II (teacher–student interdependent) instructional task:**

# Review Questions

1. Define the following dance genres: lyric directed, cultural, social, and creative.
2. Identify one unique educational outcome of each dance genre.
3. Which of the dance genres has the most potential to help children understand the following differences between people: geographical, political, religious, dietary?
4. Which of the dance genres may particularly contribute to enhancing children’s collaborative skills?
5. Which cluster of teaching styles—reproduction (R) or production (P)—is described by each of the following scenarios? (Check one for each scenario.)
   1. Children replicate a step sequence. \_\_\_R \_\_\_P
   2. Children perform a cultural dance. \_\_\_R \_\_\_P
   3. Children create three cloud shapes \_\_\_R \_\_\_P
6. What are the five rhythmic fundamentals? Define each.
7. For each of the following feedback statements, indicate the appropriate category: KPd (knowledge of performance—descriptive) or KPp (knowledge of performance—prescriptive).
   1. “You are using countertension during your rock step and keeping your arms firm—good job!” \_\_\_\_\_
   2. “When you perform the rock step, you are not transferring weight onto your forward foot. Actually step onto your forward foot.” \_\_\_\_\_
   3. “You are making your signal last for the entire two sets of eight counts—great job”! \_\_\_\_\_
   4. “How can you make your referee signal go in slow motion and last for 24 counts of music?” \_\_\_\_\_
8. What is the teacher’s role in each of the four progressive levels of teaching creative dance?
9. What can be assessed as a result of engaging in different dance forms? (One example is students’ ability to perform a step sequence at the tempo of the music.)