

LESSON 6: WALL IMPROVISATION

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcomes

Dance & rhythms: Demonstrates competency in a form of dance by choreographing a dance or by giving a performance. (S1.H2.L2)

Working with others: Solves problems and thinks critically in physical activity and/or dance settings, both as an individual and in groups. (S4.H4.L1)

Working with others: Exhibits proper etiquette, respect for others and teamwork while engaging in physical activity and/or social dance. (S4.H2.L1)

Self-expression & enjoyment: Selects and participates in physical activities or dance that meet the need for self-expression and enjoyment. (S5.H3.L1)

Movement concepts, principles & knowledge: Uses movement concepts and principles (e.g., force, motion, rotation) to analyze and improve performance of self and/or others in a selected skill. (S2.H2.L1)

Embedded Outcome

Challenge: Chooses an appropriate level of challenge to experience success and desire to participate in a self-selected physical activity. (S5.H2.L2)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- work with two other students to create movement solutions to directions as they attach parts or all of their bodies to a wall.
- express the mood of the music while moving.
- evaluate a video recording of group movement using movement and dance concepts.

Equipment and Materials

- Gym, multi-purpose room, or field house (this activity can be done in a dance studio, but you need each dancer to have enough space on the wall—students cannot be too close together)
- Stereo
- Background music: you can use a long play for relaxation, or you can change the music often to see different types of movement and draw out the students' creativity
- Video recording device

Introduction

Hopefully, everyone was able to create a landing page for your e-portfolios. If you had any trouble, please see me after class so we can figure out how to get you on track before we start creating materials for it. Today, you are going to challenge your creativity and your bodies! Please get into groups of three and assign each person in your group one of these three cereals: Wheaties, Cheerios, Corn Flakes. If you are at odds on who should be which, use rock, paper, scissors to choose. Now sit with your trio and listen to the directions. [Feel free to divide your class in any way you choose, or don't divide them at all.] Today, you will need to solve problems without asking for help. You are in charge of your choices and how you will solve the challenges you may face.

Instructional Task: Wall Improvisation Task

■ PRACTICE TASK

We will be doing improvisation today. You will be moving the way the music makes you feel, you will be interacting with others in the class, and you will be attached to a wall. When I give the go-ahead, I want all the trios to spread out around the whole space—do not crowd together – but at least one person in the trio must have a contact point with a wall. Make sure you have space all to yourself and that the three of you can move side to side and up and down. You will listen to the music, and you will listen to the assignments given and react as you think you should. OK, spread out and have fun. No talking!

Let students know they should be in constant movement unless directed otherwise. There is no stillness in this exercise.

If students choose to travel, they must travel in a clockwise manner, unless directed otherwise. Specify whether trios can move throughout the whole space, or must stay in the space surrounding their original contact point with the wall.

Start the music, and give assignments or prompts as the students move.

Video record the students' performance.

Extensions

- All Wheaties must travel counterclockwise.
- All Cheerios must choose a very low level to move in.
- All cereal must use their elbows as their connection to the wall.
- All Wheaties become a piece of art on the wall.
- Other cereals admire the Wheaties' art.
- Corn Flakes interact with another cereal.
- All cereal freeze in an abstract pose for 20 seconds.
- Make the only point in contact with the wall your forehead.
- Change your level back and forth drastically.
- Flatten yourself against a wall while continuing to move.

Refinement

Ask students to exaggerate their movements (over the top) as they respond to the directions.

EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S5.H2.L2. Students will be challenged by obstacles they encounter. They will have to solve problems along the way but must do so without talking. Encourage them to persist in finding a solution.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students choose what movements to execute.
- Students choose their groups.

What to Look For

- Students who are not following directions and staying in one spot.
- Students might start off being safe, but will let loose as the class progresses. Challenge them.

Instructional Task: Peer Assessment

■ PRACTICE TASK

Play the video recording on a large screen. Students view their own group's performance and evaluate it using a rubric. Students use the critical discussion questions to reflect on how to improve performance.

Extension

Repeat with students evaluating a different group.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students choose the group they will evaluate.

What to Look For

- Students are critiquing their movement.
- Students are able to identify how to improve their performance.
- Students are communicating with sensitivity.

Instructional Task: Discussion

■ PRACTICE TASK

With 5 minutes left, pull the students in for a short discussion while stretching.

Guiding questions for students:

- Did you have to solve problems in this activity?
- What were they and how did you overcome them?
- How did it make you feel being attached to the wall? Give me some emotions or adjectives.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students can work in pairs.
- Students can write down their responses.
- Students can volunteer to share with the whole group.

What to Look For

All students are contributing to the discussion.

Formal and Informal Assessments

Peer assessments

Closure

- This was a wonderful exercise. What were some things you learned today?
- How might you use a wall or other structure in your own choreography?
- Next class, we're going to spend a lot of time discussing your final choreography project, which also ties into your electronic portfolio. I want to make sure you have plenty of time to do a good job on both.

Reflection

- How did the students behave? Did they all participate?
- As we delve further into the activity of improvisation, are they feeling safe and free to move their bodies without insecurity?
- How can I make sure they all get to this place of freedom?

Homework

Write a reflection based on your group's evaluation of the dance today. Include the elements your group did well and what you can improve on. Identify the choreographic tools you used. Turn it in next class.

Resources

Green, D. (2010). *Choreographing from within: Developing the habit of inquiry as an artist*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

McGreevy-Nichols, S., Scheff, H., & Sprague, M. (2004). *Building dances: A guide to putting movements together*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

National Dance Educators Organization: www.ndeo.org

CRITICAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Does the choreography solve the problem assigned?
2. Is the intent of the choreography clear?
3. Did you use the space well?
4. Are there contrasts in the choreography?
5. What was most interesting about your piece? Why?

From L.C. MacDonald, R.J. Doan, and S. Chepko, eds., 2018, *Lesson planning for high school physical education* (Reston, VA: SHAPE America; Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).