

LESSON 3: ALLEY CAT

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcomes

Dance & rhythms: Demonstrates competency in dance forms used in cultural and social occasions (e.g., weddings, parties), or demonstrates competency in 1 form of dance (e.g., ballet, modern, hip hop, tap). (S1.H2.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

Movement concepts, principles & knowledge: Identifies examples of social dance and technical dance forms. (S2.H4.L1)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- demonstrate the alley cat, a four-wall, 16-count American novelty dance with quarter turns.
- explain the four parts of the dance.
- work cooperatively with others while performing the Alley Cat.
- evaluate a partner using movement concepts while performing the Alley Cat.

Equipment and Materials

- Computer, MP3 player, or CD and CD player
- Recommended song: “Alley Cat” by Bent Fabric
- Video recording device
- Checklist for performance

Introduction

Today, you will learn a line dance called the Alley Cat. It is a four-wall dance that originated in 1962. The instrumental piano song was released originally under the Danish title “Omkring et flygel,” which means “Around a Piano.” The dance is similar to the soft-shoe dances of the past. You will learn four different parts, and at the end of class, you’ll perform the whole dance to music. Have fun!

Instructional Task: Warm-Up

■ PRACTICE TASK

Review the Zydeco Bounce as a warm-up for today’s dance.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may review a video clip of the dance to help remember the steps.

What to Look For

- Knee lifts are both medium and high.
- Students are staying with the rhythm.

Instructional Task: Side and Back Toe Touches

■ PRACTICE TASK

Step 1: Perform toe touches using the left and right foot to the side and back. Practice the sequence without music.

- Counts 1-2: Extend the right foot to the right side to touch the toe to the floor, then close the right foot to the left.
- Counts 3-4: Extend the right foot to the right side to touch the toe to the floor, then close the right foot to the left, making sure to shift weight to the right foot.
- Counts 5-6: Extend the left foot to the left side to touch the toe to the floor, then close the left foot to the right.
- Counts 7-8: Extend the left foot to the left side to touch the toe to the floor, then close the left foot to the right.

Repeat to the back.

- Counts 1-4: Repeat the first four counts, extending the right foot back.
- Counts 5-8: Repeat the second four counts, extending the left foot back.

Extension

Practice the sequence with music.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may make the moves smaller and slower.

What to Look For

- Students are using the right and left sides of the body successfully.
- Students are staying with the count of the music.

Instructional Task: Double Knee Lifts

■ PRACTICE TASK

Step 2: Perform knee lifts with the right and left legs. Practice the sequence without music.

- Count 1: Lift the right knee straight up; let the foot hang naturally, similar to marching in place.
- Count 2: Touch the right foot to the floor.
- Count 3: Bring the right knee straight up again.
- Count 4: Bring the right foot to the floor by closing it to the left; shift weight to the right foot.
- Counts 5-8: Repeat the actions of the first four counts with the left knee.

Extension

Practice the sequence with music.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may do lower knee lifts.

What to Look For

Students are alternating knee lifts with balance.

Instructional Task: Single Knee Lift, Clap, and Quarter Turn

■ PRACTICE TASK

Step 3: Repeat the same knee lifts, but lift only once on each side. Practice the sequence without music.

- Counts 1-2: Lift the right knee.
- Counts 3-4: Lift the left knee.

Clap and jump.

- Counts 5-6: Clap hands one time and hold until count 6.
- Counts 7-8: Jump on both feet to make a quarter turn to the right, holding count 8.

Extension

Practice the sequence with music until students are successful.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may omit the quarter turn.

What to Look For

- Students are maintaining balance during the single knee lift.
- Students are jumping with a quarter turn.

Instructional Task: Entire Dance With Music

■ PRACTICE TASK

Step 4: Practice the entire dance sequence without music.

- Counts 1-2: Extend the right foot to the right side (1) and close (2).
- Counts 3-4: Extend the left foot to the left side and close.
- Counts 5-6: Extend the right foot back and close.
- Counts 7-8: Extend the left foot back and close.
- Counts 1-2: Lift the right foot and close.
- Counts 3-4: Lift the left foot and close.
- Counts 5-6: Clap the hands and hold.
- Counts 7-8: Make a quarter turn and bow.

Extensions

- Repeat the entire dance eight times with music.
- Repeat with half the steps.
- Reverse the dance movements.

Refinements

- Review and emphasize cues: lift twice, lift once, clap, turn.
- Repeat, exaggerating the knee lift.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Slow the steps to half time.
- Students may review a video clip of the dance.

What to Look For

- Students are successfully combining the steps into a dance.
- Students are performing all steps with proficiency.

Instructional Task: Peer Evaluation

■ PRACTICE TASK

Students pair up. In each pair, one partner performs the dance, and the other partner records the performance. After the dance sequence, both partners review the video clip. The recording partner provides feedback using a checklist as a guide. The same partner performs the dance again, implementing the feedback. Partners then switch roles.

Guiding questions for students:

- After watching yourself perform, what do you think is the most important improvement you need to make?
- Does your assessment agree with your partner's?

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students choose their partners.

What to Look For

- Partners are providing feedback in a constructive manner.
- Partners are looking for the cues on the checklist.
- Performers are using the feedback to improve performance.

Formal and Informal Assessments

Peer evaluations

Closure

- Where did the Alley Cat originate?
- Name the basic steps for this dance.
- What kind of dance is the Alley Cat?
- Was it a fun dance to learn?

Reflection

- Were students successful at combining the steps of this dance?
- Could students perform the dance facing four walls?
- How well were students able to apply the checklist?

Homework

- Review the video clip of the Shortenin' Bread Shuffle on the school's physical education website.
- Research other forms of social dance. Make a list and bring it to our next class.

Resources

Bennett, J.P., & Riemer, P.C. (2006). *Rhythmic activities and dance*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
 Website searches for assessments: www.pecentral.org/assessments, www.supportrealteachers.org
 Internet keyword search: "physical education assessment for dance"