

## LESSON 1: WALTZ BOX STEP

### Grade-Level Outcomes

#### Primary Outcomes

**Dance & rhythms:** Demonstrates correct rhythm and pattern for one of the following dance forms: folk, social, creative, line or world dance. (S1.M1.6)

**Personal responsibility:** Exhibits personal responsibility by using appropriate etiquette, demonstrating respect for facilities and exhibiting safe behaviors. (S4.M1.6)

**Self-expression & enjoyment:** Explains the relationship between self-expression and lifelong enjoyment through physical activity. (S5.M5.7)

#### Embedded Outcome

**Accepting feedback:** Demonstrates self-responsibility by implementing specific corrective feedback to improve performance. (S4.M3.6)

### Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- perform the box step.
- perform the box step with a partner in practice position.
- demonstrate proper social dance etiquette by requesting and accepting invitations to dance.
- perform the box step with a partner in closed dance position.
- be able to explain the relationship between self-expression and lifelong enjoyment through physical activity.

### Equipment and Materials

- Waltz music
- Music-playing device

### Introduction

*Today, we start our Social Dance Module. Dances are found in cultures all over the world as people celebrate, share traditions, and communicate. We begin with the waltz, first learning the box step, then progressing to different dance positions, turns, and additional waltz steps. After the waltz, we'll learn basic swing dance.*

Show a video of several social dances to pique students' interest.

## Instructional Task: Why We Dance

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Discuss with students why people dance.

#### Guiding questions for students:

- What is self-expression?
- In what ways can people use dance for self-expression?
- What physical activities can people do throughout their lifetimes?
- Can dance be one of those?

#### Extension

In partners or small groups, have students come up with different dances or dance activities that they could enjoy throughout their lifetimes.

## Student Choices/Differentiation

- Participate in teacher- or student-led discussions.
- Students choose partner.
- Watch a teacher-created PowerPoint, if needed.

## What to Look For

Students can explain the relationship between self-expression and lifelong enjoyment through physical activity.

## Instructional Task: Basic Waltz Box Step

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Students perform the box step.

Students are either in a line side by side or a scattered formation facing the teacher.

Demonstrate without music, first facing students, then with back to students:

1. Left foot steps forward.
2. Sidestep to the right with the right foot.
3. Bring left foot to rest next to the right foot.
4. Step back with the right foot.
5. Sidestep to the left with the left foot.
6. Bring right foot to rest next to the left foot.

*The box step is the same for both partners.*

*Imagine a box taped on the floor; your feet step on each corner of the box and glide over the sides of the box. The box is completed with two counts of three: Lead with the left foot, forward three counts; then, lead with the right foot, backward three counts to complete the box.*

Count slowly while demonstrating a full box step, your back to the class. Then, prompt students to follow: Ready? And, forward-2-3, back-2-3.

### Extensions

- After students repeat four to six times, turn to face students and repeat counts without demonstration. Students practice as long as necessary.
- Students repeat dance steps with music.
- Post dance and movement vocabulary in the classroom or gymnasium as reinforcement and a learning aid for visual learners.

### Refinements

- Students may include the rise and fall. On count one, the step is normal step with the heel; counts two and three are taken with a slight lift on the toes.
- Students might need prompting for left-right steps. You can do that from behind students by tapping the appropriate shoulder or back of leg to initiate correct movement.

## Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may review a video clip to help visualize the box step.

## What to Look For

- The waltz is a smooth dance. Steps are evenly paced and not rushed.
- Students demonstrate steps with rhythmic acuity.
- Students perform correct steps in order.

## Instructional Task: Dance Etiquette

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Working in partners, students practice dance etiquette.

Throughout the module, we have leaders and followers for the two dancers in partner dances. In the case of mixed-sex couples, the male traditionally takes the lead and the female follows. To avoid the stress and embarrassment caused when trying to create mixed-sex couples when members of one sex outnumber the other, we recommend pairing students as leaders and followers rather than as girls and boys. The leader is responsible for guiding the couple and initiating transitions to different dance steps and, in improvised dances, for choosing the dance steps to perform.

Leaders stand in a line with their backs toward the wall. Followers stand in front of the leaders, facing the wall. Any student without a partner practices independently.

*We practice appropriate dance etiquette each time we dance. We alternate “leader’s request” and “follower’s request.” Today, we’ll start with follower’s request. Followers look their partners in the eye and ask, “Would you like to dance?” “May I have this dance?” or another appropriate request. Leaders should maintain eye contact and respond, “Yes,” “Yes, thank you,” or another appropriate acceptance. In class, your response to the request must always be appropriate and affirmative.*

At the end of each dance, partners again make eye contact and say, “Thank you,” “Thanks for the dance,” or another appropriate response.

Have partners practice requesting and accepting.

### Extensions

- Rotate partners; have one group stay in place while the other rotates down the line.
- On a small sheet of paper, partners write at least one thing they liked about how their partners requested or accepted.

### Refinement

Do not allow students to be sarcastic during this activity.

### Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students may use cue cards, if needed.
- If possible, the line of students should allow enough room between students to prevent physical contact during the practice session and enable students to focus on verbal interaction with their partners.

### What to Look For

- Students demonstrate respectful and appropriate behaviors.
- Students speak with a strong and confident voice.
- Students use appropriate facial expressions.

## Instructional Task: Box Step in Practice Position

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Working in partners, students practice the box step in practice position.

Demonstration: Have two students demonstrate as you coach them.

Leaders stand with their backs to the wall; followers stand in front of them, facing the wall. Students without partners stand in the appropriate line and practice footwork independently.

Determine who (leader or follower) makes the dance request.

Practice position: Leaders extend the arms slightly at waist level with palms facing upward. Followers place their hands palm down in their partners' hands.

In the waltz, the dance usually starts with the leader stepping forward and the follower stepping back.

On your count, the leaders initiate the box step by stepping forward on the left foot at the same time the followers step back on their right, and they continue to complete the box step. *Ready? And 1-2-3, 1-2-3.*

Partners repeat the box step four to six times.

## Extension

After thanking their partners, followers rotate to new partners and repeat the practice sequence.

## Refinement

Encourage students to talk to one another to problem-solve length of steps, rhythm, and footwork.

## Student Choices/Differentiation

Students working alone can either work independently or stand behind another student to shadow the movements.

## What to Look For

- Students mirror each other's steps.
- Steps are smooth and slow.
- Students use the dance request process each time they change partners.

# Instructional Task: Box Step in Closed Dance Position

## ■ PRACTICE TASK

Working in partners, students practice the box step in closed dance position.

Demonstration: Have two students demonstrate as you coach them.

Partners request and accept the dance.

Partners should face each other with shoulders parallel. Leaders extend their left arms to the side, palms facing up; followers rest their right hands in leaders' palms between the thumb and forefinger, and leaders close their hands lightly around followers' hands. These hands should be at eye level of the shorter partner. Leaders then place their right hands on their partners' backs, fingers together on the shoulder blade. Leaders' arms should be away from their bodies, with elbows pointing to the side. Followers rest their left arms on the leaders' arms, with palms on leaders' right shoulders. Partners should be slightly offset to the left to avoid stepping on each other. This is the closed dance position.

With you counting, partners initiate box step together in closed position. Repeat four to six times before rotating partners.

## Refinement

If students are looking at their feet as they dance, encourage them to look over their partners' right shoulders.

## Student Choices/Differentiation

Students can continue in the practice position and slowly progress to the closed position.

## What to Look For

At this point, it's okay for students to look at their feet as they dance. However, as they become more skilled, encourage them to look over their partners' right shoulder.

## Instructional Task: Box Step, Closed Dance Position With Music

### ■ PRACTICE TASK

Students practice with partners to music.

Waltz music is in 3/4 time. Choose a slow waltz to begin when practicing, usually less than 90 beats per minute.

#### Music suggestions:

- “Rainbow Connection” by the Carpenters
- “Moon River” by Henry Mancini
- “Could I Have This Dance” by Anne Murray
- “Wallflower Waltz” by k.d. lang

With music playing, students rotate, request the dance, and assume the closed dance position. To ensure students are accurately hearing the rhythm pattern, count aloud: *1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3. Ready? And 1-2-3, 1-2-3 . . .*

Repeat six to eight times; partners thank each other.

#### Extension

Repeat, students rotating to new partners.

#### Refinement

Stop activity and review steps, dance requests, body position, and so on, as needed.

**EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S4.M3.6.** Encourage students to talk to each other to problem-solve footwork, dance positioning, and cooperation during dance pattern, and to accept each other’s feedback.

#### Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may practice the sequence by themselves if needed.

#### What to Look For

- Students use the correct footwork.
- Students work together.
- Students maintain a smooth flow of dance.

### Formal and Informal Assessments

Informal and partner feedback

#### Closure

- How many counts of three make a full box step?
- Who steps forward first to start the box step?
- When performing the box step, both the leaders and the followers always step forward on which foot?
- Where should you be looking while you dance the waltz?

#### Reflection

- Did students have enough time in practice position?
- Were all students treated respectfully?
- Did students rotate and participate with a large portion of their classmates?

## Homework

*Practice your dance etiquette by asking a parent or guardian to dance. It can be to any song, but I would love it if you taught someone the dance that you learned today.*

## Resources

Harris, J., Pittman, A., Waller, M., & Dark, C. (2008). *Dance a while: Handbook for folk, square, contra, and social dance*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Kassing, G. (2014). *Discovering dance*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Wright, J. (2013). *Social dance: Steps to success*. 3rd ed. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Internet keyword search: "waltz box step," "learning to waltz," "closed dance position," "waltz dance music"