

LESSON 6: SWING STEP DANCE CREATION

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcome

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

Embedded Outcome

Working with others: Accepts differences among classmates in physical development, maturation and varying skill levels by providing encouragement and positive feedback. (S4.M4.6)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- perform a single turn.
- perform an underarm turn.
- demonstrate the open-facing two-hand-hold dance position.
- perform a basic swing step with a partner.
- review proper social dance etiquette by requesting and accepting invitations to dance.

Equipment and Materials

- Swing dance music
- Music-playing device
- Rhythm sticks
- Poly spots

Introduction

Today, we will begin with a review of the basic swing step. Then, we will expand our swing dance knowledge by learning some turns and practicing some combinations to create dance phrases. Did anyone interview someone who enjoys social dances?

Instructional Task: Review Basic Swing Step

■ PRACTICE TASK

Students perform the basic swing step.

Students extend and accept the invitation to dance. Students without partners find a space to practice independently.

Let's start with the basic swing step all together. We'll do two triple steps and one rock step and repeat that short phrase. Ready? One and two, one and two, rock step. One and two, one and two, rock step.

Repeat four to six times and rotate partners.

New partners extend and accept an invitation to dance.

As music begins, partners move together to an open space on the floor and begin the basic swing step independently.

Refinements

- Encourage students to learn both the leader's and follower's footwork to be more versatile.
- Encourage partners to stop and restart if they feel they are not rhythmically accurate with their footwork.
- Use rhythm sticks as necessary to help students with rhythmic pattern.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Watch a video of swing dance combinations.
- Choose partner.

What to Look For

- Students are able to create dance phrases independently.
- Students incorporate torso lean and knee-hand lift for style.
- Partners maintain their dance space and don't wander the dance floor.

Instructional Task:

Short Dance Phrase With Basic Step and Single Turn

■ PRACTICE TASK

Partners learn the single turn.

Note: Because this instructional task involves combining dance steps and movements, teacher instructions to students are numbered to make them easier to follow.

1. We will begin with the turn first and add the footwork later.

Choose two students to demonstrate as you coach partners through a follower's single turn.

Partners begin in open-facing two-hand-hold dance position.

To leaders: *After a rock step, instead of resuming dance position, initiate the follower's single turn. Still holding your partner's left hand, gently guide both of your hands across the midline in front of your bodies and then release hands. When your partner completes the turn, extend your right hand to hold your partner's left, and repeat the rock step.*

To followers: *After a rock step, instead of resuming dance position, follow your joined hands to the right and complete a full turn. After you turn 360 degrees, extend your left hand to your partner and perform a rock step.*

Allow partners to practice at their own pace.

Repeat as many times as necessary for students to gain skill in this single turn.

Refinement

Students should walk slowly through this practice.

2. Now, we will add the footwork. We are still keeping the rhythmic step pattern and will practice this first without partners.

To leaders: *As you complete the rock step with a forward step on your right, guide your partner into a turn while you do a triple step to the left, followed by a triple step to the right, finishing with a rock step.*

Stand with your back to the leaders and cue slowly for leaders to shadow: *Rock step, guide follower's hand (said at the cadence for the triple step), one and two, rock step; one and two, rock step.*

Repeat as many times as necessary.

To followers: *As you complete the rock step with a forward step on the left, begin the triple step to the right, turning as you step, followed by a triple step leading with your left and continuing your turn, finishing with a rock step.*

Stand with your back to the followers and cue slowly for followers to shadow: Rock step, one and turn (said at the cadence for the triple step), turn and two, rock step.

Repeat as many times as necessary.

EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S4.M4.6. While you work with one group, students in the other group can work on peer assessment and coaching, using a checklist or rubric. If practical, use a device to record performance. Students should focus on providing corrective feedback in a supportive manner.

3. *Single-turn with partners. Remember to extend your hand to your partner after the single turn to complete your final rock step.*

Cue slowly for students to practice: *Rock step. One and two, one and two, rock step.*

4. *Practice a short dance phrase with music. Remember, the basic step is two triple steps and a rock step. The pattern will be two basics and a single turn. Repeat that pattern until we rotate partners.*

Refinement

In learning a new task, practicing each component of the skill separately and then combining them and adding music last will minimize the number of variables students need to navigate.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Leaders can perform the single turn.
- Students can practice forward triple steps, alternating the right and left lead.
- Review video of basic step and turn.
- Choose partner.

What to Look For

- Followers turn in place.
- Leaders guide gently and don't push or force turns.
- Leaders maintain rhythm of triple steps and reach out for followers' hands after turns.
- Followers complete two triple steps forward to complete the turn.

Instructional Task: Underarm Turn

■ PRACTICE TASK

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

Partners assume the open-facing two-hand-hold dance position.

1. *We will walk through the underarm turn and then add the footwork.*

To leaders: *Drop your right hand and release the follower's left hand, at the same time raising your left hand, joined with the follower's right hand, above your heads. Keep these hands joined loosely as your partner turns under the raised hands.*

To followers: *As you drop your left hand down, raise your right hand, joined with the leader's left hand above your heads. Walk forward, turning under the raised hands.*

2. *Now, we add the footwork.*

To leaders: *As you drop your right hand, begin the basic step, triple step to the left, triple step to the right; as your partner completes the underarm turn, you simultaneously perform the rock step.*

To followers: *As your left hand is released, begin a forward triple step on your right, followed by a forward triple step on your left as you turn under the arch of raised hands. Your turn should be completed at the end of your second triple step, and you simultaneously perform your rock step with your partner.*

Practice this as many times as necessary to master footwork.

Add music.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Leaders can perform the underarm turn.
- Choose partner.
- Review video of underarm turn.

What to Look For

- Partners keep the same rhythmic pattern together.
- Each rock step can be accentuated with the free hand lifted into the air.
- At this point, students should not be looking at their feet the entire time they are dancing.

Instructional Task: Perform a Dance Phrase That Incorporates the Single Turn and the Underarm Turn

■ PRACTICE TASK

Students combine steps for a dance phrase.

Demonstration: Have two students demonstrate as you coach them.

Partners begin in open-facing two-hand-hold position.

Students dance two basic swing steps, one follower's single turn, two basic swing steps, and one follower's underarm turn. Partners continue to repeat this pattern.

Count aloud: *One and two, one and two, rock step. One and two, one and two, rock step.*

As students find the rhythmic pattern, stop verbal cues.

Refinements

- Rhythm sticks can be helpful for students to identify the rhythmic patterns.
- Rotate partners every 2 minutes.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Encourage students to stop and talk about rhythm and footwork, as necessary.
- Students who find the pattern challenging might need to review again at a walking pace.
- Choose partner.

What to Look For

- Students are rhythmically accurate with the music.
- The steps are smooth and are not marching steps.
- Students are able to sustain the rhythm and pattern.
- Leaders lead followers out of the turns by gently guiding them into the rock step.

Formal and Informal Assessments

- Peer assessment
- Homework assignment

Closure

- Swing dance is an energetic and free-flowing dance form. Did any of you begin to add some of your own flair? What would be examples of that, keeping with the steps and rhythm that we have learned?
- Swing has no specific etiquette or form that tells you where you should direct your line of sight. Where do you look when you are dancing?

Reflection

- Do students dance with the music and understand the rhythm of swing dance?
- Is my music selection appropriate?

- Are students without partners participating?
- Were all students treated respectfully?
- Did students get to rotate and participate with a large portion of their classmates?

Homework

Write a reflection about how dance can contribute to self-expression and enjoyment. Due next class.

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: “swing dance turns,” “swing dance combinations,” “swing dance underarm turn,” “history of swing dance”