# ARTS IMPACT INSTITUTE LESSON PLAN Core Program Year 1 Arts Foundations

DANCE LESSON – Shape in Dance

Author: Eric Johnson Grade Levels: K – Fifth Grade

Examples:

Enduring Understanding

Holding and changing body shape is part of dance and everyday living.

Target: Recognizes, holds and makes a shape with the body.

Criteria: Uses the body’s form to create a statue-like shape with spine, head, arms, and legs.

Target: Uses all parts of the body while dancing.

Criteria: Changes the relationship of spine, head, arms, and legs while moving.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

1. Leads students in BrainDance warm-up. (Originally developed by Anne Green Gilbert,

video reference: BrainDance, Variations for Infants through Seniors). Music: Eric Chappelle, #20

“Potpourri” from Music for Creative Dance, Volume III. Demonstrates the dance using the

following sequence of movement patterns:

Tactile: Rub hands. Tap body lightly from head to toe. Stomp feet;

Breath and Core-Distal: Breathe in through the nose and out the mouth. Repeat. Gradually

increase the size of the breath, growing from the center of the body when you inhale, and

shrinking when you exhale;

Head-Tail: Curl the body forward from head to tailbone. Curl it backwards. Repeat forward and

back. Curve from side-to-side several times;

Upper Half: Stabilize the lower half of the body and only the top half dances;

Lower Half: Stabilize the upper half of the body. Only the bottom half dances, staying in one

spot;

Body-Half Right: Stabilize the left side of the body and only the right side dances;

Body-Half Left: Stabilize the right side of the body and only the left side dances;

Swing: Swing upper body up and down several times;

Cross-Lateral: Reach across the body with one hand and then the other. Repeat several times.

Explore other cross-lateral movements, e.g. elbow to opposite knee or hand to opposite foot;

Spin and Jump: Spin clockwise. Stop and jump in place. Spin counterclockwise. Stop and jump

in place for 4 counts.

Student: Participates in warm-up according to teacher prompts.

2. Introduces the concept of shape and displays the “shape” word card. Leads students in

exploring holding shapes alone and with others. Prompts: Do something fantastic with your

arms, your legs, your spine, your head. Cue students many times, emphasizing different parts

of their bodies. Sometimes I’ll want you to freeze and make a fantastic shape. When I give this

signal, please freeze.

Student: Holds a variety of shapes alone and with others.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist; student

self-assessment

Arts Impact Core 1 – Arts Foundations Summer Institute – Dance: Shape in Dance

4-2

3. Introduces and models the puzzle shape exercise with one or two student volunteers.

Makes a puzzle shape with volunteers. Prompts: Make a shape with open spaces, then each

student fills in the spaces to make a shape where the pieces (bodies) fit together without

touching—like a puzzle. Step out of the shape and fits self into the puzzle shape in a new place.

We’ll each take turns stepping out, and fitting into the shape in a new place. We can continue

taking turns stepping out of the shape and fitting back into the puzzle shape until the exercise is

over. Repeats the activity for the amount of time it takes to assess student performance of

tasks on the assessment worksheet.

Student: Participates in the puzzle shape exercise with one or two partners.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist; student

self-assessment

4. Demonstrates moving while using all parts of the body. Music: Bobby McFerrin,

“Medicine Man”; “Raggedy March”, “Tambourine”, Music for Creative Dance, Volume III, or a

drum. Prompts: I’ll be watching to see your entire body moving and changing. Use your head,

your spine, your arms, and your legs. Stay with your group from the puzzle exercise and dance

away from your partners and come back moving all parts of your body.

Student: Moves away from and toward partners while using and changing all parts of the body.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist

5. Models ABA choreography form using the skills of making and holding a shape and

moving using all parts of the body. Guides students through repeated practice. Prompts; Freeze

in your puzzle shape. While I count to 5, I want you to dance away from your partners using

your head, your spine, your arms and your legs: 1,2,3,4,5. While I count to 5 again, dance back

to you partners using your whole bodies and freeze in your fantastic puzzle shape: 1,2,3,4,5.

This time try moving in different directions with big and small movements, etc.

Student: Practices ABA form with partners.

6. Demonstrates the attributes of a successful performance and leads students

through further practice. Prompts: This time I’m counting to 7 while you and your partners

discuss and plan how to make your movement as fantastic as possible. Count: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7.

While you practice your material, this time I’m going to be in charge. You’ll need to use your

eyes to stay together with your group.

Student: Discusses and plans refinements of choreography, then practices it.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based self-assessment; reflection

7. Leads class through performance of choreography, half the class at a time. Prompts:

When each group is finished performing, I am going to ask you to describe some of the

fantastic shapes you saw. Can you also describe the different ways the students used their

whole bodies to dance away from and back to the puzzle shape?

Student: Performs choreography.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-peer critique.

8. Guides students in a reflection connecting the dance concepts of shape with

everyday life. Prompts: What shapes do you observe in the classroom, on the playground, at

home? When do you make different shapes in the classroom, on the playground, at home?

When are times that you change your shape at home, on the playground, or in the classroom?

Student: Reflects and responds.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based reflection

Arts Impact Core 1 – Arts Foundations Summer Institute – Dance: Shape in Dance

4-3

Vocabulary Materials and Resources WA Essential Learnings & Frameworks

Performing Arts:

changing shape,

fantastic shape,

shape (wide,

narrow, curved,

straight, bent,

twisted)

Performing Arts:

Tacoma, WA

Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

Seattle, WA

University of Washington World Series of Dance

Pacific Northwest Ballet

Music: Eric Chappelle, Music for Creative Dance: Contrast

and Continuum, Volume III; Bobby McFerrin, “Medicine

Man”, drum

Classroom: Dance Word Card: shape

BrainDance chart

AEL 1.1 concepts: shape

AEL 1.2 skills and techniques: movement and

stillness with whole body

AEL 2.2 artistic process: reflect for self-evaluation;

rehearses, perform

Arts Impact Core 1 – Arts Foundations Summer Institute – Dance: Shape in Dance

4-4

ARTS IMPACT INSTITUTE LESSON PLAN

DANCE LESSON – Shape in Dance

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Shape in Dance

Self-Reflection

Student

Name

What did I do to make a fantastic shape like a statue with my spine, head, arms and legs?

What parts of my body fit together with the other dancers without touching?

What parts of my whole body did I use when I danced away from and back to my partner(s)?

----------Cut Here------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Shape in Dance

Self-Reflection

Student

Name

What did I do to make a fantastic shape like a statue with my spine, head, arms and legs?

What parts of my body fit together with the other dancers without touching?

What parts of my whole body did I use when I danced away from and back to my partner(s)?

----------Cut Here------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Shape in Dance

Self-Reflection

Student

Name

What did I do to make a fantastic shape like a statue with my spine, head, arms and legs?

What parts of my body fit together with the other dancers without touching?

What parts of my whole body did I use when I danced away from and back to my partner(s)?

Arts Impact Core 1 – Arts Foundations Summer Institute – Dance: Shape in Dance

4-5

ARTS IMPACT INSTITUTE LESSON PLAN

DANCE LESSON – Shape in Dance

ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Shape

Students Creates a statue-like shape with spine, head,

arms, and legs

Changes the relationship of spine, head,

arms, and legs while moving

Total

2

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

16.

17.

18.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

25.

26.

27.

28.

29.

Total

Percentage

Criteria-based Reflection Questions: (Note examples of student reflections.)

Self-Reflection:

How do you use your whole body to move on the playground? When do you use your whole

body movement at home?

Peer to Peer: Describe the different ways the students used their whole bodies to dance away

from and back to the puzzle shape?

Thoughts about Learning:

Which prompts best communicated concepts? Which lesson dynamics helped or hindered learning?

Lesson Logistics:

Which classroom management techniques supported learning?

Teacher: Date:

Arts Impact Core 1 – Arts Foundations Summer Institute – Dance: Shape in Dance

4-6

ARTS IMPACT FAMILY LETTER

DANCE LESSON – Shape in Dance

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in a movement lesson. We worked with shape in dance.

• We made fantastic shapes (freezing in a shape that used head, spine, arms and legs).

• We danced with our whole bodies (changing the relationship of head, spine, arms, legs, while

we were moving.

At home you could look at the varied shapes of things. You could look for things which change their

shapes.

What kind of shape does this (refrigerator, door, tree, etc.) have? When are times that you change

your shape?

Enduring Understanding

Holding and changing body shape is part of dance and everyday living.