# ARTS IMPACT—ARTS-INFUSED INSTITUTE LESSON PLAN (YR1-TTAL)

SECOND GRADE—LESSON ONE: Two Vivid Verbs Dance

Artist-Mentor – Debbie Gilbert Grade Level: 2nd grade

Examples:

Enduring Understanding

Specific movements and vivid verbs communicate precise action.

Target: Moves in self-space and general space and makes shapes.

Criteria: Performs non-locomotor actions on one spot, locomotor actions through the room,

and freezes in a statue-like form.

Target: Choreographs and performs a vivid verb dance.

Criteria: Selects and dances two specific action words from a list. Selects one verb from the

self-space column, and one verb from the general space column. Freezes in a shape

at the beginning and end of the dance. Notates the dance.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

1. Prepares students for exploring the language of dance and literacy.

Displays lesson criteria. Prompts: We are going to learn the language of dance and

also explore how writers use language. So we’ll be dancers and writers at the same

time. Every time we dance, you’ll learn new dance concepts that dancers use to

create their dances, and also words to expand your vocabulary so you will become

better writers. We’ll generate ideas, organize ideas into dances, and then talk and

write about what we have created. In this lesson, we’ll learn the dance words: selfspace,

general space and shape. We’ll make a list of verbs and use them to create a

dance.

Student: Considers the dance and writing exploration to come.

2. Readies students for dancing by creating agreements/rules for dance

behavior. Prompts: Before we begin dancing, I have a question for you. How can

you be creative and safe at the same time? Charts student responses for classroom

dance behavioral expectations.

Student: Contributes to group agreements.

3. Leads students in BrainDance warm-up. (Originally developed by Anne Green

Gilbert, reference: Brain-Compatible Dance Education, video: BrainDance, Variations

for Infants through Seniors).

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Music: “Language of Dance BrainDance 2/3” #8, Writing Dances. Prompts: The BrainDance is designed

to warm up your body and make your brain work better at the same time. Shape is an important dance

word. Notice where we make shapes in the BrainDance. Leads the dance using the following

sequence of movement patterns:

Breath: Inhales and exhales. Repeats. Prompts: Your muscles and your brain need oxygen, so

slowly inhale through your nose and slowly exhale through your mouth.

Tactile: Brushes arms and legs. Taps body lightly from head to toe. Prompts: Slowly brush

your arms. Slowly brush your legs. Quickly tap from the top of your head all the way to your

toes.

Core-Distal: Gradually increases the size of the body, growing from the center of the body into a

big shape and then shrinking back into a small shape. Repeats. Prompts: Smoothly grow into a

big shape. Smoothly shrink into a small shape. Smoothly grow into a big shape. Smoothly

shrink into a small shape. Sharp, big shape. Sharp, small shape. Sharp, big shape. Sharp,

small shape.

Head-Tail: Curls the body forward from head to tailbone. Curls it backwards. Repeats. Curves

from side-to-side several times. Prompts: Smoothly curl forwards and backwards and forwards

and backwards. Smoothly curve from side to side.

Upper Half and Lower Half: Stabilizes the lower half of the body and only the top half dances.

Prompts: The top half of your body is in motion, while the lower half is frozen. Move big. Move

small. Move high. Move low. Move fast. Move slowly. Stabilizes the upper half of the body.

Only the lower half dances, staying in one spot. Prompts: The lower half of your body is in

motion, while the upper half is frozen. Move big. Move small. Move high. Move low. Move

fast. Move slowly.

Body-Half Right and Left: Stabilizes the left side of the body and only the right side dances.

Repeats on the opposite side. Prompts: Your left side is frozen and only the right side dances.

Move big. Move small. Move high. Move low. Move fast. Move slowly. Now the right side is

frozen and the left half dances. Move big. Move small. Move high. Move low. Move fast.

Move slowly.

Eye-Tracking: Follows the thumb with the eyes from side to side and up and down. Prompts:

Keep your eyes on your right thumb. Smoothly move it from one side to the other. Watch your

left thumb as you smoothly move it from side to side. Watch your right thumb as you

smoothly move it up and down. Watch your left thumb as you smoothly move it up and

down.

Cross-Lateral: Reaches across the body with one hand and then the other, on high and low

levels. Prompts: Use your hands to draw lines crossing in front of your body. Reach across up

high, up high, down low, down low. Up high, up high, down low, down low. Up high, up

high, down low, down low. Up high, up high, down low, down low.

Spin/Vestibular: Turns clockwise. Stops and freezes in a shape. Turns counterclockwise. Stops

and freezes in a shape. Repeats. Prompts: Glue your arms to your sides. Slow turn. High

shape. Slow turn. Low shape. Fast turn. High shape. Fast turn. Low shape. Inhale. Exhale.

Prompts: What shapes did you do in the BrainDance?

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

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan

4. Introduces the dance concepts of self-space, general space, and shape. Uses verbs to

describe the movements.

a. Demonstrates the concepts. Displays the dance word signs for the concepts. Prompts: When

dancers dance in self-space, they stay in one spot. When you did the BrainDance you stayed

in one spot, so you did the BrainDance in self-space. Wiggling and stretching are movements

you can do in your self-space. Those are verbs or action words. Dancers use verbs to tell you

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the actions they do in their dances. When dancers dance in general space, they travel. They

dance in the empty space so they don’t touch anyone or anything. Leaping and stomping are

movements we can do in the general space. Those are more great action words. When you are

frozen, like a statue, you are in a shape.

b. Directs Move and Freeze with self-space, general space, and shapes. Plays the two

percussion instruments, one for each type of space (e.g. self-space–shaker, general space–

drum) and cues the students. Prompts: When you hear the music, move and when it stops,

freeze in a shape. Do a self-space movement, stretch, to move in one spot. Plays drum for a

few seconds then stops playing. Freeze in a shape. Do a general space movement, leap, to

travel through the empty space in the room. Plays drum for a few seconds then stops playing.

Freeze in a shape. Repeats with other movements in self-space (e.g. shake, twist), and

movements in general space (e.g. jump, tiptoe). Refers to locomotor and non-locomotor

movement chart for additional suggestions.

Student: Analyzes and explores the concepts as cued by teacher.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan

5. Brainstorms a list of vivid verbs to dance in self-space and in general space.

a. Leads a discussion of what makes a verb vivid. Prompts: We are going to make a list of verbs

or action words. Writers like their verbs to be vivid. What does vivid mean? What makes a verb

a vivid verb? Would “walk” be a vivid verb? What verbs could be more specific, descriptive, or

interesting than “walk” (e.g. stroll, strut)? Vivid verbs can inspire more interesting movement

for dancers and ideas for writers.

b. Displays photos of professional dancers. (Pacific Northwest Ballet: Kaori Nakamura in Peter

Martins’ Fearful Symmetries, PNB Dancers in Nacho Duato’s Rassemblement, Jonathan Porretta

and Jordan Pacitti in Twyla Tharp’s In the Upper Room. UW World Series postcard: MOMIX.)

Prompts: Here are some photos of dancers from Pacific Northwest Ballet, and a postcard from a

dance company that performed in the University of Washington’s World Series. Can you think

of some vivid verbs to describe the actions the dancers are doing?

c. Charts student response, with a column for self-space words and a column for general space

words. Prompts: Let’s make a list of verbs or action words. We are GENERATING IDEAS for

our dance. In one column, we’ll list verbs we can dance in self-space and in the other column,

we’ll list verbs we can dance in general space. I’ll write down the verbs that you used to

describe the dancers’ actions. What other vivid verbs could we use in our dances?

Student: Adds suggestions to verb lists.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist

6. Demonstrates the Two Vivid Verbs Dance. With a couple of student assistants, selects two

verbs from the list, one from each column. The first verb will be danced in self-space and the second

verb will be danced in general space. Puts the verbs in order. Adds a beginning and ending shape.

Notates dance. Demonstrates the dance with music. (Hint: you will have eight counts to do each verb

in the music.)

Music: “The Two Vivid Verbs Dance” #9, Writing Dances. Prompts: We are going to create a Two Vivid

Verbs Dance. We’ll be organizing our ideas and making decisions. By doing so we are

CREATING MEANING as artists. First, we’ll choose two verbs. We’ll pick one from each column, so

we’ll have both self and general space verbs. We will put them in order. We will write down our dance:

verb one (self-space), verb two (general space). Our dance will also need a shape at the beginning and

the end. Now, we’ll show you our dance with music.

Student: Assists or observes demonstration of choreography of the verb dance.

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7. Guides students through choreography and rehearsal of the Two Vivid Verbs Dance.

Describes the process. Divides class into small groups of about four students. Gives each student a Two

Vivid Verbs Dance choreography worksheet and a pencil. Prompts: Now it’s your turn to CREATE

MEANING as an artist. You are going to be a choreographer, a dance maker. First, choose two

verbs. Pick one from each column, so you’ll have both a self and a general space verb. Put them in

order, with the self-space verb first and the general space verb second. Write them down on the

worksheet. Add a shape at the beginning and the end. Draw or describe the shapes on your worksheet.

Now practice the dance with music.

Student: Choreographs, notates, and rehearses verb dance.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist

8. Leads students through a performance of the Two Vivid Verbs Dance followed by a

responding process. Invites one or two groups to perform at a time. Discusses performer and

audience behavior. Prompts: Performers, what do you want from your audience? Audience, what do

you want from your performers? After the dance is performed, guides student reflections. Prompts:

Part of the artistic process is SELF-REFLECTION. Dancers check in with each other and

then refine their work. Turn and talk with a partner. Describe the verbs that you saw. How could

you tell which movements were in self-space and which were in general space? Describe the shapes

that you observed.

Student: Performs and describes dances.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist; self and peer assessment

Note: You could teach this entire lesson in one session, or you could choose to do strategies 1-7 on the

first day, and continue to rehearse and perform on Day Two.

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Vocabulary Materials and Community Resource WA Essential Learnings & Frameworks

Arts Infused:

Action words

Vivid verbs

Reading/Writing:

Verbs

Writer

Arts:

Choreographer

General space

Self-space

Shape

Performance:

Pacific Northwest Ballet; Seattle, WA

Art Materials or Performance Materials:

Lesson criteria chart

CD player

Writing Dances music CD

Dance word signs: self-space, general space, shape

Two percussion instruments (e.g. shaker and drum)

Locomotor and non-locomotor movement chart

Big papers or whiteboard and markers for charts

Two Vivid Verbs Dance choreography worksheets for

each student

Pencils

Assessment checklist

Dance Photographs:

Pacific Northwest Ballet:

Kaori Nakamura in Peter Martins’ Fearful Symmetries

PNB Dancers in Nacho Duato’s Rassemblement

Jonathan Porretta and Jordan Pacitti in Twyla Tharp’s

In the Upper Room.

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(see CD for images)

UW World Series postcard: MOMIX

Arts State Grade Level Expectations

AEL 1.1.1 concepts: self and general space, shape

AEL 1.1.2 principles of organization: creates and

performs structured improvisations

AEL 1.2 skills and techniques: creates and performs

simple combinations of locomotor and nonlocomotor

movements

AEL 1.4 audience skills: responding

AEL 2.1 creative process: gathers information,

organizes ideas, reflects

AEL 4.2: connection between dance and writing

Writing State Grade Level Expectations

3.2.2 Uses a variety of words

Builds a rich vocabulary through talking, listening,

writing and language activities: rich vocabulary,

descriptive words

Uses words from classroom resources (e.g. word

walls, charts)

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Two Vivid Verbs Dance Choreography Worksheet

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Name: Date:

Beginning shape

First vivid verb

(self-space)

Second vivid verb

(general space)

Ending shape

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ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Disciplines ARTS WRITING ARTS and WRITING

Concept Selfspace

General

space

Shape Lists Dancing and Notation

Students Performs

nonlocomotor

actions on

one spot

Performs

locomotor

actions

through

the room

Freezes in

a statuelike

form

Selects two

specific action

words,

representing

self and

general space

movement

Dances two

specific

action words,

representing

self and

general

space

movement

Freezes in

a shape at

the

beginning

and the

end of the

dance

Notates the

dance

Total

Points

7

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.

Total

Percentage

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

Generating Ideas:

Constructing Meaning:

Self-Reflection:

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:

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ARTS IMPACT—ARTS-INFUSED LEARNING FAMILY LETTER

ARTS AND LITERACY

SECOND GRADE—LESSON ONE: Two Vivid Verbs Dance

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an Arts and Literacy lesson. We talked about learning the language

of dance and also exploring how writers use language. We discovered how vivid verbs describe the

actions that dancers do.

• We did the BrainDance to warm-up our brains and our bodies.

• We learned and explored these dance concepts: self-space (dancing in one spot), general

space (traveling), and shape (freezing like a statue).

• We generated ideas by brainstorming a list of vivid verbs.

• We organized our ideas and made choices to create dances from two vivid verbs.

• We reflected upon our process of making a vivid verb dance and what we learned about

dance and about words.

You could use vivid verbs to describe some of the actions you do at the park or while playing games.

Ask you child to show you how you could dance a vivid verb.

Enduring Understanding

Specific movements and vivid verbs communicate precise action.