

## ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

### Dance and Writing Infused Lesson

#### Lesson One: *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs*

Author: Debbie Gilbert      Grade Level: Third

#### Enduring Understanding

Specific movements and vivid verbs communicate precise action.

#### Lesson Description (Use for family communication and displaying student art)

*Students explore the dance concepts of self-space, general space, and shape. They analyze what makes a verb vivid. Next, they generate ideas by brainstorming lists of vivid self-space verbs and vivid general space verbs. In a small group, students choreograph a Three Vivid Verbs Dance by selecting three verbs, including both self and general space verbs, and adding a beginning and an ending shape. They notate and perform their dances, then describe the dances using vivid verbs.*

### Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

**Target:** Moves in self-space and general space.

**Criteria:** Performs non-locomotor actions in one spot, locomotor actions through the room.

**Target:** Makes shapes.

**Criteria:** Freezes in a statue-like form.

**Target:** Choreographs, performs and notates a vivid verb dance.

**Criteria:** Selects and dances three specific action words from the list. Selects one or two verbs from each column, so both self and general space are represented. Puts the verbs in order. Freezes in a shape at the beginning and end of the dance. Draws or describes in writing the movements and shapes of dance.

#### Vocabulary

Arts Infused:

Action words  
Vivid verbs

Reading/Writing:

Verbs  
Writer

Arts:

Choreographer  
General space  
Self-space  
Shape

#### Materials

##### Museum Artworks or Performance

**Seattle, WA**

Pacific Northwest Ballet  
UW World Series of Dance

**Tacoma, WA**

Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

##### Materials

*Writing Dances* CD by Debbie Gilbert;  
CD player; Two percussion instruments  
(e.g. shaker and drum); White board or  
chart paper & markers; Lesson  
worksheet; Pencils

*continued*

#### Learning Standards

##### WA Arts State Grade Level Expectations

*For the full description of each WA State Arts Grade Level Expectation, see:*

<http://www.k12.wa.us/Arts/Standards>

- 1.1.1 Elements: Shape, Place
- 1.1.4 Principles of Choreography: Theme
- 1.2.1 Skills and Techniques: Control and Balance, Focus
- 1.4.1 Audience Skills
- 2.1.1 Creative Process
- 2.2.1 Performance Process
- 2.3.1 Responding Process
- 4.2.1 Connection between Dance and Writing

##### Early Learning Guidelines (Pre-K – Grade 3)

(Age 4-5) 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around: Using the large muscles (gross motor skills): move with purpose from one place to another using the whole body.

(Age 4-5) 5. Communicating (literacy): Speaking and listening: use words to describe actions; remember and follow directions involving two or three steps. Writing: use letter-like symbols to make lists.

*continued*

Pacific Northwest Ballet images:  
Stanko Milov in George Balanchine's  
*Apollo*



Noelani Pantastico in Jean-Christophe  
Maillot's *Roméo et Juliette* (2 photos of  
Noelani)



©Angela Sterling

(Age 4-5) 6. Learning about my world: Arts: show creativity and imagination.

**Common Core State Standards in ELA**

For a full description of CCSS ELA Standards by grade level see:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/CoreStandards/ELAstandards/>

W.3.8. Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources.


L.3.1. Explain the function of verbs.

L.3.3a. Choose words for effect.

L.3.5a. Identify real-life connections between words and their use.

### ICON KEY:

 = Notes specific *Writers Workshop* Curriculum strategies addressed

 = Indicates note or reminder for teacher

 = Embedded assessment points in the lesson

### COLOR CODING for ARTS AND LITERACY INFUSED PROCESSES:

GENERATE IDEAS	CONSTRUCT MEANING	SELF-REFLECT
<p>Gather Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From WHAT you know</li><li>• From WHO you know</li><li>• Brainstorm</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create drafts</li><li>• Organize ideas</li><li>• Make a choice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check in with self</li><li>• Check in with others</li><li>• Refine work</li></ul>

### Pre-Teach

This lesson is the first lesson in a series of three writing infused lessons.

### Lesson Steps Outline

1. Prepare students for exploring the language of dance and literacy. Display lesson criteria.
2. Ready students for dancing by creating agreements/rules for dance behavior. Chart student responses for classroom dance behavioral expectations.
3. Lead students in *BrainDance* warm-up.  
Music: "Language of Dance BrainDance 2/3" #8, *Writing Dances* by Debbie Gilbert.
4. Introduce the dance concepts of self-space, general space, and shape. Use verbs to describe the movements. Demonstrate the concepts. Display the dance word signs for the concepts. Direct Move and Freeze with the concepts.  
 Criteria-based teacher checklist: Performs non-locomotor actions in one spot, locomotor actions through the room, and freezes in a statue-like form.
5. Brainstorm a list of vivid verbs to dance in self-space and in general space. Lead a discussion of what makes a verb vivid. Display photos of professional dancers. Chart student response, with a column for self-space words and a column for general space words.
6. Demonstrate creating and notating the *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs* dance with two student assistants.

Music: "The Three Vivid Verbs Dance" #10, *Writing Dances* by Debbie Gilbert.

**7.** Guide students through choreography and rehearsal of the dance. Divide class into small groups of about four students. Give each dancer a *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs* Choreography Worksheet and a pencil.

Criteria-based teacher checklist, self-assessment: Selects and dances three specific action words from the list. Selects one or two verbs from each column, so both self and general space are represented. Puts the verbs in order. Freezes in a shape at the beginning and end of the dance. Notates the dance.

**8.** Lead students through a performance of the dance followed by a responding process. Discuss performer and audience behavior. Invite one or two groups to perform at a time.

Criteria-based teacher checklist, peer assessment: Selects and dances three specific action words from the list. Selects one or two verbs from each column, so both self and general space are represented. Puts the verbs in order. Freezes in a shape at the beginning and end of the dance.

## LESSON STEPS

---

### 1. Prepare students for exploring the language of dance and literacy. Display lesson criteria.

- *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 them into dances, and then talk and write about what we have created.*
  - *In this lesson, we'll learn the dance words: self-space, general space and shape. We'll make a list of verbs and use them to create a dance.*
- 

### 2. Ready students for dancing by creating agreements/rules for dance behavior. Chart student responses for classroom dance behavioral expectations.

- *Before we begin dancing, I have a question for you. How can you be creative and safe at the same time?*
- 

### 3. Lead students in **BrainDance warm-up**. (BrainDance originally developed by Anne Green Gilbert, [www.creativedance.org](http://www.creativedance.org), reference: *Brain-Compatible Dance Education*, video: *BrainDance, Variations for Infants through Seniors*.)

Music: "Language of Dance BrainDance 2/3" #8, *Writing Dances* by Debbie Gilbert.

- *BrainDance is designed to warm up your body and make your brain work better simultaneously.*
- *Shape is an important dance word. Notice where we make shapes in the BrainDance.*

#### **Breath**

- *Your muscles and your brain need oxygen, so slowly inhale through your nose and slowly exhale through your mouth.*

#### **Tactile**

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

#### **Core-Distal**

- *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**

- *Smoothly curl forwards and backwards and forwards and backwards.*
- *Smoothly curve from side to side.*

### **Upper Half and Lower Half**

- *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.*
- *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**

- *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**

- *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**

- *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**

- *Glue your arms to your sides. Slow turn. High shape. Slow turn. Low shape. Fast turn. High shape. Fast turn. Low shape.*

### **Breath**

- *Inhale. Exhale.*
- *What shapes did you do in the BrainDance?*

---

## **4. Introduce the dance concepts of self-space, general space, and shape. Use verbs to describe the movements. Demonstrate the concepts. Display the dance word signs for the concepts. Direct Move and Freeze with the concepts.**

### Mini-lesson

■ When assessing the criteria in this lesson, any students who are not meeting criteria will be very clear to you, so you may want to use a reverse checklist, putting a "0" where students have not met criteria, rather than trying to notate every single one who has met criteria. You can go back later and give those who have met criteria a "1." This information will let you know who needs more practice to guide your future instruction.

- *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.*
- *Swaying and bending are movements we can do in our self-space. Those are verbs or action words. Dancers use verbs to tell you 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.*
- *Skipping and walking 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. Notice when I make a shape, I am using my whole body – my arms, legs, head, and spine. My body is frozen; nothing is moving, except that I can breathe and blink.*

▣ Play two percussion instruments, one for each type of space (e.g. self-space–shaker, general space–drum) and cue the students.

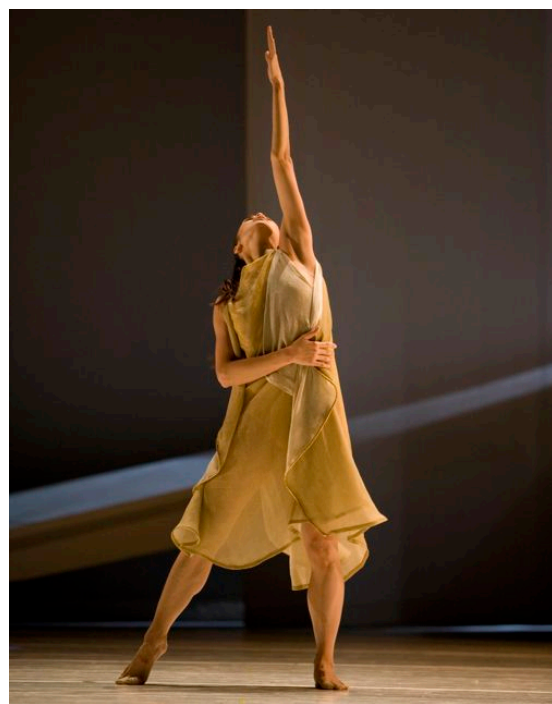
- *When you hear the music you move and when it stops, you freeze in a shape. Do a self-space movement, stretching, to move in one spot. Freeze in a shape.*
- *Do a general space movement, skipping, to travel through the empty space in the room. Freeze in a shape.*

▣ Repeat with other movements in self-space (e.g. melt, twist), and movements in general space (e.g. leap, tiptoe). Refer to locomotor and non-locomotor movement chart for additional suggestions.

☑ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Performs non-locomotor actions in one spot, locomotor actions through the room, and freezes in a statue-like form.

**5. Brainstorm a list of vivid verbs to dance in self-space and in general space. Lead a discussion of what makes a verb vivid. Display photos of professional dancers. Chart student response, with a column for self-space words and a column for general space words.**

📖 Sharing professional work, connecting with prior knowledge





☐ You may use these photos: Pacific Northwest Ballet: PaStanko Milov in George Balanchine's *Apollo*, Noelani Pantastico in Jean-Christophe Maillot's *Roméo et Juliette* (2 photos of Noelani). You could also choose to find your own photos that represent a variety of styles and cultures. You could review for example, The UW World Dance Series, <http://uwworldseries.org/world-dance>.

- *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 "jump" be a vivid verb? What verbs could be more specific, descriptive, or interesting than "jump" (e.g. spring, bound)?*
- *Vivid verbs can inspire more interesting movement for dancers and ideas for writers.*
- *Here are some photos from Pacific Northwest Ballet performances. Can you think of some vivid verbs to describe the actions of the dancers?*
- *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?*

---

## **6. Demonstrate creating and notating the Dancing Three Vivid Verbs dance with two student assistants.**

Music: "The Three Vivid Verbs Dance" #10, *Writing Dances* by Debbie Gilbert.


☐ You will have eight counts to do each verb in the music.


- *We are going to create a Three 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 three verbs. We'll pick them from both columns so we'll have both self and general space verbs. We will put them in order.*




- *We'll write down our dance: verb one, verb two, and verb three.*
- *Our dance will also need a shape at the beginning and the end. We'll choose our shapes and write them down or draw them.*
- *Now we'll practice and show you our dance with music.*

**7. Guide students through choreography and rehearsal of the dance. Divide class into small groups of about four students. Give each dancer a *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs* Choreography Worksheet and a pencil.**

 Interpreting, group conferring, guided writing


 The music will call the cues for each section to make it easy for the dancers to remember the sequence.

 As the groups rehearse, travel through the classroom, observing, asking questions, and offering assistance as needed. Encourage students to use their whole bodies when they move, extending movements from the center of their bodies all the way to their fingers and toes.

- *Now it's your turn to create meaning as an artist. You are going to be a choreographer, a dance maker.*
- *First, choose three verbs. Pick them from both columns so we'll have both self and general space verbs.*
- *Put them in order. Write them down on your worksheet.*
- *Add a shape at the beginning and the end. Draw or describe the shape on your worksheet.*
- *Now practice the dance with music.*
- *Ask yourselves, do you have three verbs? Are you using self and general space? Are you holding your beginning and ending shapes very still?*

Criteria-based teacher checklist, self-assessment: Selects and dances three specific action words from the list. Selects one or two verbs from each column, so both self and general space are represented. Puts the verbs in order. Freezes in a shape at the beginning and end of the dance. Notates the dance.

**8. Lead students through a performance of the dance followed by a responding process. Discuss performer and audience behavior. Invite one or two groups to perform at a time.**

 Sharing, observing, turn and talk, responding

- *Performers, what do you want from your audience? Audience, what do you want from your performers?*

 After the dance is performed, lead reflection.

- *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.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist, peer assessment: Selects and dances three specific action words from the list. Selects one or two verbs from each column, so both self and general space are represented. Puts the verbs in order. Freezes in a shape at the beginning and end of the dance.

---

## *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs* Choreography Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your beginning shape?	
What is your first vivid verb?  _____	Is it in self-space or general space?  _____
What is your second vivid verb?  _____	Is it in self-space or general space?  _____
What is your third vivid verb?  _____	Is it in self-space or general space?  _____
What is your ending shape?	

**ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Dance and Writing Infusion**

Third Grade Lesson One: *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs*

**STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET**

Teachers may choose to use or adapt the following self-assessment tool.

Disciplines	DANCE			WRITING	DANCE and WRITING			Total 7
Concept	Self-space	General space	Shape	Verbs	Verbs, Space, Shape			
Criteria	Performs non-locomotor actions in one spot.	Performs locomotor actions through the room.	Freezes in a statue-like form.	Selects and orders three specific action words, representing both general and self-space movement.	Dances three specific action words, representing both general and self-space movement.	Freezes in a shape at the beginning and the end of the dance.	Draws or describes in writing the movements and shapes of dance	
Student Name								

**ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Dance and Writing Infusion**

Third Grade Lesson One: *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs*

**CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET**

Disciplines Concept	DANCE			WRITING	DANCE and WRITING			Total 7
	Self-space	General space	Shape	Verbs	Verbs, Space, Shape			
Criteria	Performs non-locomotor actions in one spot.	Performs locomotor actions through the room.	Freezes in a statue-like form.	Selects and orders three specific action words, representing both general and self-space movement.	Dances three specific action words, representing both general and self-space movement.	Freezes in a shape at the beginning and the end of the dance.	Draws or describes in writing the movements and shapes of dance	
Student Name								
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.								
30.								
Total								
Percentage								

*What was effective in the lesson? Why?*

*What do I want to consider for the next time I teach this lesson?*

*What were the strongest connections between dance and writing?*

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ARTS AND WRITING LESSON: *Dancing Three Vivid Verbs***

---

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an **Arts and Writing** 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 three 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 home or while playing sports. Ask your child to show you how you could dance a vivid verb.

**Enduring Understanding**

Specific movements and vivid verbs communicate precise action.