



## National Dance Week Projects

**Objectives** To use the dance movement of turning to explore different academic skills.

To encourage each student to express him / herself through movement, both structured and creative.

To look at dance as an art form and begin developing an appreciation for different dance forms.

The goal is to help the students experience how fun and easy dance can be encouraging them to continue in their personal development and appreciation.

**Physical Education** (approx activity length 30 – 45 minutes)

A simple warm up can be done easily using stretches, isolations, and cardio moves done to upbeat music. This will motivate the student to want to do more and once their attention is captured they are more open to participate. The class is designed to provide awareness of different body parts, cardio, and coordination exercises incorporating both the body and the mind. All this as they are having fun dancing. The class is designed to be easy to teach using all aspects or sections that would work best in your situation.

**Suggested music** -“Kids Dance Party” by Party Cats or Radio Disney “Move It”(both can be found on Amazon.com)

**Song:** “Pump of Jam” – Kids Dance Party or “Move It Like This” – Radio Disney

- **Start** with basic reaches overhead and side
- **Isolations:**
  1. **Head** – Have them say yes, no and look side to side. Do each direction eight times.

2. **Shoulders** – Simply lift one shoulder eight times and then the other. After have them alternate each shoulder – many will try to do it as fast as possible which is ok because we want it to be fun.
  3. **Rib Cage** – Stretch arms straight out to side and pretend feet are glued to floor and someone is pulling you to each side. That will make it fun while educating them to where the rib cage is. Next put hands on hips (goal is to move rib cage forward and back) – tell them to pretend an ice cube went down their back. They will immediately stretch it forward and then have them pull it back. Repeat both side to side and front and back eight times.
  4. **Hips** – Swing hips side to side. Then to achieve full motion of the hips ask them to put their hands on hips and make the “biggest circle in world” do clockwise then counter clockwise. Next make “smallest circle in world” also clockwise and then counter clockwise. This gives them a chance to be creative in how much or how little they will move.
- **Kicks** – Have them kick as high as they can. Challenge them to bring their knee to their nose and not their nose to their knee.
  - **End** – Always end warm up with basic step and clap to beat of music to get in rhythm of dancing.

**Song:** “Move It” Kids Dance Party or “Get Ready for This” – Radio Disney

If space and time allow bring class to one end of room and divide into 3 lines. Allow them to run and leap across floor. This allows them to experience the athleticism of dance. If need be tape or small objects can be placed on floor for them to leap over.

**Routines** – This section is designed to help the student to have fun dancing while learning coordination and cognitive skills. Some are routines/dances they already know which we encourage the use of – such as:

- Cha Cha Slide
- Macarena
- YMCA

**Combinations** – These basic combinations can be uses to a variety of music from both CDs. The goal is to learn moving in different directions, count to beat of music and creative freedom.

**Suggested Songs** – Cotton Eye Joe, U Can’t Touch This, Kung Foo Fighting or any fun upbeat song.

- **Basic** – Line class in two lines. Grapevine or just walks, or a skipping can be used. Its 3 steps and the on 4 clap. Once this is mastered change direction first face front, then right – face back – face other side – back to front. They will have created a square.

- **Intermediate** – All do grapevine with clap and then change lines. Have them use 8 counts/walks to change lines. It is fun learning which window to go thru. Variation would be to walk 4 to meet partner, clap hands w/ partner or walk around each other or whatever fun interaction they want for 4 counts – continue to change lines for 4 more walks. Do the grapevine side to side for 4 times and repeat changing lines so end where they started. Have them count out loud at first if needed.
- **Advanced** – Have front line face right – back line face left. Both grapevine into center and clap hands of person facing. Then move back to beginning place and clap own hands. Variation – after in center facing partner move to opposite directions (front line moves to back and back moves to front), clap and repeat back to center and clap, move back to beginning spot.

### **For those who already incorporate many of these concept in their gym class –**

Explain that a movement can begin with one part of the body initiating it. As you talk the students through the following exercise, the students must first learn how to isolate the body part in question and then how to use the same body part to initiate a full body movement. Explain to the students that there are different levels in space – low (movements that take place on the floor; medium (movements that happen in a range from a low kneeling to low standing position) and high (movements that are done in a range from standing to airborne).

Encourage the students to explore each of these different levels whenever possible in this exercise.

Encourage the students to work in turning directions or circular pathways throughout the exercise.

The body parts to lead with are:

- Head
- Hands
- Elbow
- Shoulder
- Ribcage
- Bottom / Backside
- Knees
- Feet

After you have guided the students through these options and they have been able to explore the movements on their own. Move the students into 1 large circle. Have one student come into the middle of the circle and tell them the body part and level you want them to initiate the movement with. Allow the student to demonstrate his / her movement and then have the rest of the class join in and duplicate the movement. Continue around the circle until everyone has had a turn.

**Math Skills – Fractions and Time** (approximate activity length – 10-15 minutes)

**Equipment**

*A wall clock with a second hand or a pretend clock that has hands that can be moved*

### **Movement Exercise**

Have the students stand in an open area of the room with enough personal space to be able to turn in a small circle without bumping into another student. Begin with all of the students facing in the same direction.

Ask the students to pretend that they are the hands of a clock. If there is a wall clock in the room with a second hand, identify the second hand to the students and ask the students to observe the movement of the second hand. If you are using a pretend clock, ask the students to watch as you move one of the hands of the clock in a clockwise direction.

Tell the students to copy the movement of the second hand, by turning in place in the same direction. Encourage the students to watch the clock again if they are turning in the wrong direction until every student is turning clockwise (to their right).

Once all of the students are turning in the same direction, have them stop.

Explain that if you divide something into 4 pieces, each piece is  $\frac{1}{4}$ . On a clock, the 4 quarters are 3, 6, 9 and 12. If you are in a standard shaped room, each wall is  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

Have the students turn  $\frac{1}{4}$  to their right. If there is a distinguishing object associated with that wall, name that object as part of the movement direction (ie, turn  $\frac{1}{4}$  to the right and face the door). Repeat this idea 3 additional times so that the students end facing where they began.

Repeat the quarter turns, this time using the times from the clock (3,6,9,12) as the indications of direction.

Tell the students to turn from facing the front of the room, to facing the back of the room without stopping at the side. Ask them how much of a turn they made. The correct answer is  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Ask the students to make another  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn so that they end facing their starting position.

Ask the students what it was called when they turned from 1 wall to the next, without skipping any walls. The correct answer is  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn. Once a student provides that answer, ask the students how many quarter turns make up  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn. The correct answer is 2.

Have the students repeat 2 more  $\frac{1}{2}$  turns (front to back, and back to front). Repeat the  $\frac{1}{2}$  turns again this time using the clock references of 6 o'clock and 12 o'clock.

Tell the students to make  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn and then an additional  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn. Ask the students how far have they now turned? Correct answer –  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Ask the students how much farther they need to turn to return to their starting place. Correct answer –  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

Have the students use the clock reference (going  $\frac{1}{4}$  by  $\frac{1}{4}$ ) to determine what number on the clock they will be facing when they make  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a turn. Correct answer - 9.

Explain to the students that turning is one of the basic movements in dance. Ask the student to pretend that they are dancers and to try to make a complete turn in the following ways:

- Walking
- Spinning on 2 feet
- Spinning on 1 foot
- Many small jumps
- 1 high jump

Have the students to repeat the exercise turning to the left (counter or anti clockwise).

During this portion of the exercise, see how many of the clock references they can determine on their own.

**Language Arts – Stories and Interpretation** (approx activity length – 30 - 45 minutes)

## **Equipment**

*Paper and pencil for each student*

## **Writing Exercise**

Have the students name objects that turn or spin. Some suggestions:

- Pinwheel
- Wheel
- Merry Go Round – Carousel
- Ferris Wheel
- Top
- Dancer
- Ice Skater
- Knob or dial
- Ball
- Martial Artist

Have the students write a short story (3 or 4 sentences) that includes a turning / spinning object. If you have a large class or need to reduce the amount of time spent on this exercise, some suggestions are:

- Have the students work in pairs or groups of 3 (the story is a collaborative effort, with each student writing their portion on a single sheet of paper for the group)
- Discuss turning objects at the end of a previous class and have the students write their stories for homework

## **Language Arts - Movement Exercise**

If possible have the students sit in a large semi circle. The student performing moves to the front of the semi circle and faces the rest of the class.

Have the student read his / her story to the class and then demonstrate the spinning object with part or all of his / her body. Some possibilities are:

- Pinwheel – blow air out of the mouth while drawing a circle in space
- Wheel – drawing a vertical circle with one finger or hand, rolling the hands around each other
- Merry Go Round – walking in a circle, possibly changing the body height to go up and down

- Ferris Wheel – tracing a vertical circle with the hands or starting the body low and moving it forward as the student straightens up and then back as they lower back down
- Top – spinning in place either standing or sitting
- Dancer – stylized spinning or turning jumps
- Ice Skater – similar to dancer
- Knob – spinning a pretend knob with the fingers or hands
- Ball – rolling the body into a ball and then rolling from side to side or around in a circle (not a forward or backward roll)
- Martial Artist – kicking and spinning on one foot

After the reader demonstrates his / her spinning object, have the rest of the class copy the movement 1 or 2 times.

Encourage the students to applaud for each performer or group of performers.

Allow students room for interpretation in their demonstrations, but ask for clarification if something seems to be unrelated.

**Science – Magnetic Forces** (approximate activity length – 10-15 minutes)

### **Equipment**

*2 bar magnets for each group of 2-3 students*

*Optional – iron filings or small chips that designs can safely be created with*

*1 piece of string, yarn or ribbon about 8 – 10 inches long for every student*

Divide the students into groups of 2 or 3.

Give each group of students 2 magnets. If using iron filings or small metal chips are available, provide these to each group and explain any safety rules that you have for the use of the filings or chips.

Explain to the students that magnets generate magnetic fields. Explain to the students that the magnetic fields either pull another magnetic object towards them or push it away. Each magnet has a north pole and a south pole. When 2 magnets are pushed towards each other either north pole to north pole or south pole to south pole, the magnetic fields will push the magnets away from each other. If one of the two magnets is flipped so that the south side of one magnet is now going towards the north side of the second magnet, the fields will draw the two magnets together.

Have the students try to move their magnets closer to each and feel what happens when the direction of one of the poles is changed. Encourage the students to try moving one magnet in a circle around the second magnet. Make sure that all of the students have a chance to feel both the attraction and repulsion of the magnets.

Optional – if iron filings or chips are used, encourage the students to create shapes or patterns by “drawing” with the magnet and filings or chips.

Have the students loosely tie the piece of string, yarn or ribbon on their partners’ right wrists. Tell the students to imagine that the right sides of their bodies are the north pole of a magnet.

Ask them what pole the left would be. Correct answer – south.

Remind them that when the same poles come near each other, the objects move away from each other. When opposite poles come near each other, the two objects are brought together.

Tell the students to move towards their partners. As they get closer they need to determine if the same poles or opposite poles are coming towards each other, remind them that the sides that have the strings tied to them are the north poles. If the opposite poles get closer, the

### **Science – Magnetic Forces**

students need to create a movement that connects them to the other student. If the same poles get closer, the students' movements should push them away from each other.

Allow the students about 1 minute of any direction of movement while they assimilate the parameters and movements together. Next, encourage the students to travel in circular or turning pathways to increase and challenge their movement skills. After a minute to 90 seconds encourage the students of one group to merge with another group, so you now have small groups of 4 – 6 students.

Have the students continue to try different movements within their group, encouraging them to interact with all of the other members. If the students have been able to work with the filings or chips, have 1 person take turns pretending to draw with the rest of the group members movements to make patterns. Ask the students to think about what happened when he / she drew with the magnet in the filings or chips. Have the students continue working in the small groups for another 2 minutes and then have them return to their desks or work stations.

**Social Studies – Cultural Exploration**

(approximate activity length 30 – 45 minutes)

**Equipment**

*A computer with access to the internet*

*A monitor or projector to show the videos*

*A map or globe of the world*

*A sheet of paper for each student to make a fan out of*

*It would be helpful if the students could be seated in 1 area for viewing and discussion and have open space to try modeling the movements.*

Explain to the students that most cultures incorporate spinning or turning into their dances. Some dances incorporate more spinning than others.

The folk dance El Tanoura comes from Egypt. The dancers spin in one spot for the duration of the dance changing arm positions and body angles.

Show the following clip from the internet - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JRBMqMsSTSY>

When the clip is finished, ask the students questions about it. Some suggestions are:

- What did they think about the dance overall?
- Did the movement work with the music?
- What did the costume remind them of?

Help the students find Egypt on the map or globe. Talk about the location of Egypt. Ask what continent it is on. Encourage the students to figure out what the climate would be like, famous cities and special places / attractions that can be found there.

Have the students move to the open space and try spinning for 15 seconds. When they stop ask them how they feel or what they are experiencing. Ask them how they think they would feel if they continued to spin for another minute, like the dancer in the video.

Have the students return to the viewing area..

The Mexican Hat Dance is a traditional piece of music in the Mariachi style. The video you are going to see is one interpretation of that piece of music.

Show the following clip from the internet -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qRQrNm8PTs&feature=related>

**Social Studies – Cultural Exploration – continued**

When the clip is finished, ask the students questions about it and comparing it to the first dance. Some suggestions are:

- Where were there things in the Mexican Hat Dance that were the same or similar to the Egyptian spinning dance?
- What was different between the two pieces?
- Did the movements and music work together?
- What did you think about the costumes?
- Did one dance seem faster than the other? If yes, which one?
- What different kinds of turning did you see in the Mexican Hat Dance? (some correct answers are spinning, turning the skirts, turning as a circle, turning around their partners, etc).

Have the students move to the open space and try some of the movements that they remember seeing in the video clip. Encourage them to try turning around another student, in small groups as a circle and then making 1 large group and trying to turn in unison. Allow 3-5 minutes for the movement exploration.

Have the students return to the viewing area. Ask them where they think the Mexican Hat Dance comes from (correct answer – Mexico).

Help the students find Mexico on the map or globe. Talk about where Mexico is located. Ask what continent it is on. Name some of the major cities. Ask the students what they think the climate is like, what language is spoken there and similar questions.

Show the following clip of Viennese Waltz. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1tESCP-cNKM&feature=related>

Ask the students questions about the piece they just watched. Some suggestions are:

- Do they recognize the song that the dancers performed to? (correct answer – Chim Chim Chimney).
- What was similar between this dance and the other dances they have seen?
- What was different?
- Did the dancers look like they were having fun?
- What did the costumes make you think of?

Ask if anyone knows where the Viennese Waltz comes from? (correct answer – Vienna, Austria). Help the students find Austria on the map or globe. What continent is Austria a part of? Talk about language and climate.

**Social Studies – Cultural Exploration – continued**

Show the students the Korean Fan Dance.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GWdwizX9LDg&feature=related>

Ask the students questions about the dance, refer to previous dances if you need ideas.

Help the students find Korea on the map or globe. Talk a little bit about the fact that there are two countries with Korea in their name, North and South.

Give each student a piece of paper and show them how to fold it into a fan.

Have the students move to the open area and create a dance using his / her fan and movements that remind them of the video clip that they watched. Allow this activity to go on for 3-4 minutes and then have the students return to the viewing area.

Wrap up the class with a summary of the dances that they watched and allow students to share their thoughts on what they saw.

**Art / Music – Picture Interpretation**

(approximate activity length 30 – 45 minutes)

**Equipment***A mp3, cd, tape or record player to play the music**A piece of instrumental music 3-5 minutes in length that has a distinctive feel to it**Paper to draw on**Crayons or other utensils to draw with**It would be helpful if the students could be seated in 1 area for the reflection and drawing and have open space to create movement in.*

Play a piece of instrumental music that has a distinct character or feeling to it. Have the students sit with their eyes closed and imagine moving to the music. The one type of music to require is turning.

If there is space in the room, play the music again, this time encouraging the students to move to the music.

If there is not enough space for the students to move, have them continue to sit and visualize how they would want to move.

Distribute the paper and drawing tools to the students and ask them to draw something that reflects the music and movement. It can be them in a costume that fits their movement and music, pictures of them dancing or a picture interpreting the movement. Allow approximately 15 minutes for this part of the activity.

Leave enough time so that the students can share either their drawing or about 30 seconds of their movement. If they are sharing their drawing, encourage them to give a one or two sentence description of their work.