

Flint School of Performing Arts

Creative Dance Class Outline

It is very important and a key goal for this class to encourage the love of moving and dance in all students.

1. Circle Time

This is a time to acclimate the students into the dance class. The students sit in a circle for a meet and greet time. Students are welcomed and reminded of the classroom guidelines. The lesson of the day is introduced.

2. Warm-up

The warm up is a group activity that is teacher lead. The warm up should develop skills, relate to the lesson of the day, and engage all the students.

3. Locomotor Skills

This is a time for students to develop locomotor skills. Dancers go two at a time across the floor. Locomotor skills should be done separately and in one direction and pathway at a time. A preparation foot may be introduced and refined by the end of the year. Classroom discipline should be maintained in line. Walks and runs should be introduced first to students. This helps students understand the formality of this portion of the class, while also practice skills they are familiar with. Hands should be placed on the hips with elbows to the sides. The locomotor skills should progress in a logical fashion and new ones not introduced until the teacher sees the students are ready. The eight locomotor skills are walk, run, jump, hop, gallop, slide, skip, and leap.

**Detailed information regarding locomotor skills can be found in Round the Circle.*

5. Creative Time

During creative time the concept of the day is introduced and then explored. This is a time for many creative and technique building activities. There will be time for two to four activities. It is important to balance between teacher-directed and student-directed activities and to alternate between large moving activities and small fine motor skill or concentrated activities. Use of the student's input can really enhance this portion of class and give them a sense of ownership and control. Having these activities follow a theme or concept is encouraged. Use of props, literature, division of space, and great amounts of imagination are encouraged.

**Resources with helpful ideas include Round the Circle, First Steps in Teaching Creative Dance to Children, and Creative Dance for All Ages.*

6. Goodbye Dance

This is an opportunity for the students to really express themselves and allow the teacher to give them some one on one feedback. It is important to use different music each time and alternate the beginning dancer. Students dance one at a time to the teacher waiting by the door. Asking the students to express an opinion before they leave can be a good way to get feedback on how your lesson plan was received.

**A good description of the Goodbye Dance can be found in First Steps in Teaching Creative Dance to Children.*

Dance Concepts

Head Start and GSRP preschool dance classes are designed for students to explore fundamental movement concepts through creative improvisation, play, and guided discovery. Self-expression, imagination, confidence, physical, cognitive, and social development skills are encouraged through age appropriate child-centered and teacher-directed activities. Students will gain strength, coordination, and balance while exploring concepts of space, time, force, movement, and form.

During the five-week residency at the Flint Institute of Performing Arts students will explore five different dance concepts.

Week 1 - Levels (Low, Middle, High)

Week 2 - Directions (Front, Back, Right Side, Left Side, Up, Down)

Pathways (Straight line, Curved line, Zigzag)

Week 3 - Speed (Slow, Medium, Fast)

Week 4 - Inside, Outside, Over, Under, Around, Through

Week 5 - Balance

Explore the Elements of Dance

Preschool teachers are encouraged to build on the lessons from the Flint School of Performing Arts. Listed below are dance concepts and ideas preschool teachers can explore in their own classrooms.

Space

1. **Space:** Self Space, Other's Space, Room Space, Shared Space
2. **Level:** Low, Middle, High
3. **Size:** Little, Medium, Big
4. **Distance:** Near, Medium, Far
5. **Direction:** Forwards, Backwards, Right Side, Left Side, Up, Down
6. **Pathways:** Straight, Curved, Zigzag
7. **Focus:** Single Focus, Multi Focus
8. **Inside, Outside, Over, Under, Around, Through**

Time

1. **Speed:** Fast, Medium, Slow
2. **Rhythm:** Pulse, Breath, Pattern, Accent

Force

1. **Energy:** Smooth, Sharp
2. **Weight:** Heavy, Light
3. **Flow:** Free, Bound

Form

1. **Body Parts:** Body Part Recognition
2. **Body Shapes:** Curved, Straight, Angular, Twisted
3. **Body Shapes:** Symmetrical, Asymmetrical
4. **Back Shapes:** Dog Back, Cat Back, Horse Back
5. **Balance:** On-Balance, Off-Balance

Movement

1. **Locomotor Movement:** Walk, Run, Jump, Hop, Slide, Gallop, Skip, Leap
2. **Non-locomotor Movement:** Stretch, Bend, Twist, Swing, Push, Pull, Melt, Grow, Fall, Rock, Sway, Shake, Lunge, Contract, Curl, Turn, Float, Glide, Flick, Dab, Slash, Punch, Wring, Press, Wiggle, etc.

Other Concepts

1. **Brain-Body Connections:** Breath, Tactile, Core-Distal, Head-Tail, Upper-Lower, Body-Side, Cross-Lateral, Vestibular
2. **Relationships:** To Others, To Objects, To Group
3. **Social Interactions:** Pairs, Trios, Small Group, Large Group
4. **Connections:** To Self, To Others, To World
5. **Emotions:** Identifying different emotions, Expressing emotions through movement, Developing empathy towards others
6. **Choreography:** Sequence, Patterns, Phrases

Creative Dance Sample Lesson Plan

Dance Concept: Size (Small, Medium, Large)

1. Circle Time

- a. Remind students about classroom guidelines
- b. Go around the circle and ask students to make the biggest shape they can

2. Warm-up

Option 1- Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes

- a. Incorporate size, dance small, medium, and big

Option 2- Follow the teacher Brain-Body Connections dance

- a. Breath, Tactile, Core-Distal, Head-Tail, Upper-Lower, Body-Side, Cross-Lateral, Vestibular
- b. Emphasize Core-Distal as it pertains to size

2. Locomotor Skills

- a. Marches with high knees
- b. Jumps on two feet
- c. Dancers line up at one wall and travel across to the opposite wall. Use colorful tape for them to line up behind. Use music with a steady rhythm. Dancers go two at a time with hands on hips.

3. Creative Time

- a. Introduce the concept of size
- b. Read and dance a story related to size, follow up with recall, expand on concepts from the book
- c. Move and freeze in small, medium, large shapes
- d. Dance like animals

Students dance small like their favorite small animal and big like their favorite big animal. Emphasize that small and big animals live at both low and high levels.

- e. Dance like balloons

Students start in a small shape at any level and then blow up their shape like a balloon. Students keep blowing until they are a big shape. Dance big. Pop! Let all the air out and shrink back into a small shape.

Creative Time, continued

f. Growing shapes

Students start in a small shape. Students have 8 drum counts to grow into the biggest shape they can. Then students have 8 drum counts to shrink back into a small shape. Try this on different levels and in different directions. Try different numbers of drum counts.

g. Giants and elves

Students pretend they are in a magic forest. When the music is loud students dance big like giants. Use words such as leap, jump, skip, and stretch to encourage big movement. When the music is quiet students dance small like little elves. Use words such as tiptoe, spin, and crawl to encourage small movement.

h. Giant rubber band

In a large group student explore creating shapes, then stretching the shapes into bigger shapes.

i. Body parts

Name a body part and a size. Have students dance with just that body part small, medium, or big. For example: dancing with your finger (small), dancing with your arms (big), and dancing with your knees (big).

5. **Goodbye Dance**

a. Have students dance like their favorite big or small animal

Resources

Books for Teachers

Round the Circle by Phyllis Weikart

First Steps in Teaching Creative Dance to Children by Joy Martin

Creative Dance for All Ages by Anne Green Gilbert

Brain-Compatible Dance Education by Anne Green Gilbert

Books for Children

From Head to Toe by Eric Carl

Johnathon and His Mommy by Irene Smalls

I Got the Rhythm by Connie Schofield-Morrison

Rosie's Walk by Pat Hutchins

Dance! With Bill T. Jones by Bill T. Jones and Susan Kuklin

Video

BrainDance by Anne Green Gilbert

Teaching Creative Dance by Anne Green Gilbert

Music

Rhythmically Moving CD by Phyllis Weikart

Music for Creative Dance by Eric Chappelle

Kids In Motion CD by Gregg and Steve

Percussion for Dance Technique of Lester Horton by Victor Y. See Yuen and William Catanzaro

Putomayo Kids

Websites

<https://www.creativedance.org/>

Anne Green Gilbert founded the Creative Dance Center. The teaching philosophy at CDC is a nationally and internationally recognized teaching methodology called *Brain-Compatible Dance Education*.

<https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

The national core arts standards are a process that guides educators in providing a unified quality arts education for students in Pre-K through high school.

<https://www.ndeo.org/>

National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) advances dance education centered in the arts. NDEO provides the dance artist, educator and administrator a network of resources and support, a base for advocacy, and access to programs and projects that focus on the importance of dance in the human experience.