

Philippa Donnellan  
CoisCéim Broadreach

## DANCE WORKSHOP

The dance workshop looks at ways to develop themes and ideas through dance activity that enable embodied learning, and engagement with different curriculum subjects.

The dance workshop is based on the theme of social change/movement of population - from rural to industrial life/society.

Aims: To use images, music and words through which to stimulate movement invention and exploration of themes outlined. To encourage group co-operation and negotiation/social skills.

### Warm-up and ice-breaker

Introduce images of working rural life – discuss form & space / shape/ actions / qualities of images – and descriptive words.

Standing in a circle  
*To up-beat, lively music*

- Head to toe - tapping rhythm on body &- isolation of body parts - circle head, shoulders, arms etc
- Stretch exercises: use of *word* opposites to stretch: tall/short, wide/thin, twisted/straight, high/low etc. Include simple trust/support stretches in partners, explore different ways to support each other.
- Walking & ‘freeze’ exercise: Focus on different speeds/directions/patterns. Reference how space and patterns of movement are different in rural/urban communities. Freeze in word opposite ie. tall/short etc. Repeat exercise in partners and small groups.
- In circle to up-beat/lively music: practice a simple step pattern forward and back, turn around, move round in a circle. Reference *Set Dance* terms ‘dancing at home’ and ‘round the houses’
- Explore action words that describe ‘rural working life’ such as cut, lift, pull, gather. Use gesture and whole body movement at different levels. Encourage individuals to demonstrate gesture/movements and all copy. Discuss which movements work well.

### Creative Task 1.

Review images

Divide in groups of 3-4 people; working in the circle formation each group combine step pattern & add on 2 work actions at the end of sequence.

*\*Encourage participants to be imaginative and confident through constructive feedback and advice.*

## **Creative Task 2.**

Introduce images of people being separated/packing up/pulled apart/evicted from homes.

Discuss what happened to the communities – in relation to area of study- Historical period/social change - issues of dispossession of homes, eviction/emigration.

Discuss form & space / shape/ actions / qualities of images – and descriptive words.

*Introduce a different style of music: strong beat, heavier, more mechanical*

- Step 2.  
Return to same groups  
Create 1 or 2 'freeze photo' which describes the change in your group/community.  
Focus on ideas about eviction/separation/departure etc.
  
- Step 3.  
Develop a travelling pattern moving in group. Refer to the social/community change in your situation & apply to physical shape/direction/speed. Encourage participants to think about quality of movement in relation to conveying/expressing dramatic idea.

*(This section may be development in another workshop)*

Introduce images of Industrial working life (UK/USA). Discuss as with previous images.

- Step 4.  
Bring all groups together – repeat step pattern, standing together in lines /close formation  
Reference images of industrial/urban society.  
Together - explore action words to describe mechanical/industrialised work. Add on gesture/actions in the same procedure as in Creative Task 1.

*\*Encourage participants to be imaginative and confident through constructive feedback and advice.*

## **Task 3.**

- Groups practice Steps 1. 2. 3. (4) link all elements together.
- Present 'piece' to rest of class.

Audience: Encourage discussion and positive feedback – re. choreography/ idea expressed /dramatic interpretation.

## **Cool Down**

End dance workshop with class group in circle.

- Repeat 2-3 simple stretches to cool down. Workshop leader positive feedback & thanks.

## **Potential learning outcomes and development of:**

- understanding of choreography and dance which communicate themes/ideas
- technical/negotiation skills: partner/group work
- physical/cognitive confidence
- appreciation of aesthetic/artistic qualities in dance
- descriptive vocabulary and dance literacy

## Links with curriculum subjects

### History

Social change: Rural Irish v industrial England (18<sup>th</sup> / 19<sup>th</sup> Century)

Effects of changes in people's lives & communities (e.g. living conditions and types of work, migration, emigration etc.)

### PE/Dance

- Introduction of principles of dance composition and basic technical skills.
- Dance as form of physical expression to convey themes, ideas and stories
- Awareness of the body and appropriate exercise to increase fitness

### Geography

Social geography: enquiry based learning regarding changes in community structures and movement of population