



Blueprint **Dance**

For Teaching and Learning in



Grades PreK - 12

Dance Education for Diverse Learners

**A Special Education Supplement to the
Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance**

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Arthur Elgort

Letter from the Chancellor

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to provide you with *Dance Education for Diverse Learners: A Special Education Supplement to the Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance*. This manual contains important guidance and tested strategies for teaching dance to students with disabilities in our schools. It is a practical resource for all dance teachers and other educators who use movement in the classroom.

Dance educators can play an important part in educating our students who have been identified as having special needs. Addressing the various capacities of their students through movement activities, dance educators have a unique entry point by which they can support students' growth as learners and as productive members of their school communities. All teachers need strategies for differentiating instruction and for reaching a diverse student population. This volume presents these strategies specifically in the dance instructional context.

The usefulness of this supplement is not limited to dance educators. School leaders will gain insight into the instructional resources that the dance teacher can bring to their special education students. Special education teachers, classroom teachers, and partnering cultural organizations will also find illuminating information in this supplement that can inform their work.

The Office of Arts and Special Projects has worked closely with our Office of Special Education Initiatives so that this volume reflects current NYCDOE policies and practice. We hope that you find it helpful as we strive to provide comprehensive, high-quality *Blueprint*-based arts education to all of our New York City public school students.

With regards,



Joel I. Klein
Chancellor



Marcia V. Lyles
Deputy Chancellor for Teaching and Learning

Dance Education for Diverse Learners

A Special Education Supplement to the Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance

Introduction

The *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance, PreK-12* is an outline of content and strategies for sequential, standards-based dance education, expressed as desired student outcomes for grades 2, 5, 8, and 12. The *Blueprint* is inclusive in its scope, providing dance teachers with a resource to create holistic curriculum designs, focus their instructional goals for student achievement, and determine appropriate assessments based on these goals. It is based on five strands of learning:

- **Dance Making** (learning, improvising, creating, and performing dances)
- **Developing Dance Literacy** (dance expression and communication, vocabulary and terminology, analysis and critique, major artists and works)
- **Making Connections** (social/cultural/historical contexts, common principles between dance and other disciplines, dance and technology, dance and health)
- **Working with Community and Cultural Resources** (teaching artists, in-school and off-site professional performances, library and Web resources for dance learning)
- **Exploring Careers and Lifelong Learning** (dance and dance-related careers, setting personal dance goals, dance for lifelong enrichment)

The New York City public schools serve over 1.1 million students in over 1,460 schools. Our students are diverse in many ways—geographically, economically, in their national and ethnic origin, and in the individual strengths and learning challenges they bring to the school building every day. Approximately 14% of our public school students are identified as having special needs. Based on individual needs, these students have specific goals to support their academic progress, outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). Some of these children are studying in District 75 schools particularly adapted to serve our more severely challenged students. Many others are studying in our general education school buildings. Students with disabilities receive special education services according to their individual needs. For example, some students may attend separate, “self-contained” classes, others may participate alongside their general education peers in an Integrated Co-Teaching (CTT) class, while still some others may receive services such as Special Education Speech Support Services (SETSS) or speech therapy to support their academic progress.

Youngsters with disabilities may show a variety of distinctive movement characteristics. Some students may be excessively fidgety or uncoordinated or may have difficulty sitting up straight in their seats. Others may engage in repetitive or unusual movements. These movement characteristics can impair students’ ability to focus and function academically, and may restrict their opportunities to socialize with peers.

Some students are not classified as disabled but may lack the nonverbal academic readiness skills needed to productively engage in learning activities, including self-regulating strategies for calming down and sharing space. Students who lack these skills may have challenges in concentration and self-control that may result in behaviors such as jostling and disturbing others when lining up or receiving instruction on the rug. Whether students are classified as disabled or not, challenges in movement control and underdeveloped nonverbal social skills may annoy peers and teachers and might result in frequent reprimands, stigmatization, and even exclusion from the group. For these children, dance activities can offer a productive entry point for addressing their growth as learners, and an opportunity for them to experience success in school. Dance educators have a unique opportunity to directly address movement behaviors and challenges by providing organized, enjoyable dance and movement activities in a supportive environment, helping students gain better body control and develop nonverbal academic readiness and social skills.

The dance educator may also encounter students who face behavioral, cognitive, and/or physical challenges, but who are also kinesthetically gifted, physically responsive to rhythm and music, naturally well-coordinated, imaginative and expressive in their movement. Dance educators may thus have insights into these students' abilities and effective instructional entry points that are not as apparent to other teachers. The strategies outlined in this manual will provide ways for the dance teacher to assist students who are already inclined toward rhythm and movement to reach their full potential for creative expression and representation through dance.

A distinction should be made here between dance therapists and dance educators. Dance therapists are specially trained dance professionals who use dance and movement activities to directly address the emotional, cognitive, physical, and social needs of people with disabilities. They differ from dance educators in that they employ a process orientation, focusing on movement behavior as it emerges and tailoring their interventions to the ongoing responses of the group or individual. Dance educators are also responsive to their students' needs, but design their activities in the context of implementing a dance curriculum.

This document is addressed first and foremost to dance educators, both those working in a general education setting and those working in a special education setting. It aims to provide them with perspectives and strategies to implement effective *Blueprint*-aligned dance instruction that meets the learning needs of all their students. Additional audiences who may find this volume useful are dance teaching artists, cultural organization education directors, classroom and special education teachers who include dance/movement in their instruction, and school leaders. Occupational and physical therapists and paraprofessionals working with teachers in the classroom may also find it illuminating.

The principles outlined herein, which are especially useful in creating positive learning experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities, will benefit every child in the dance class. Participation in dance experiences can have a beneficial effect on children on multiple levels:

- Neurophysiological
- Emotional
- Motor
- Cognitive
- Perceptual
- Social
- Aesthetic
- Metacognitive
- Integrative

An effective dance teacher is an invaluable resource to all faculty and staff in the school. Through differentiated instruction in the dance classroom, the dance teacher can not only enable student achievement in dance, but also reinforce positive behaviors that students will carry with them into every classroom. This document illuminates the following:

- The intrinsic benefits of dance education for all students, including those with special needs
- Relationships between *Blueprint*-based dance education goals and IEP goals, and collaborative goal-setting

- The major categories of student need and the particular challenges they pose in the dance classroom
- The core principles of dance classroom management with strategies addressing diverse student needs
- Appropriate ways to adapt *Blueprint* goals and benchmarks for students with disabilities
- Best practices for engaging paraprofessionals and classroom teachers productively in the dance class
- Crisis intervention techniques

We have structured this document in three major sections based on the principles of Positive Behavior Support (PBS), expanding on this approach to address not only behavioral challenges but cognitive and physical challenges as well. PBS outlines supports and strategies that help students participate successfully in educational experiences. It is structured in a three-tiered model that we have adapted as follows:

- **Universal Supports** for Dance Education
- **Targeted Supports** for Dance Education
- **Intensive Supports** for Dance Education

Thus we have adhered to current scholarship and theory in Special Education and Positive Behavior Support (PBS), but have adapted these principles to the particular environment of the dance classroom, the conventions and routines commonly used by the dance educator, and the learning modes and behavioral responses inherent in dance instruction. Appendices include lesson plans, illuminating anecdotes, and a list of resources.



Sandra Stratton-Gonzalez



Acknowledgments

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We hope you find this supplement useful as we move forward together for excellence in dance education.



Arthur Elgort

*Chapter 1:
Definitions and
Background Information*

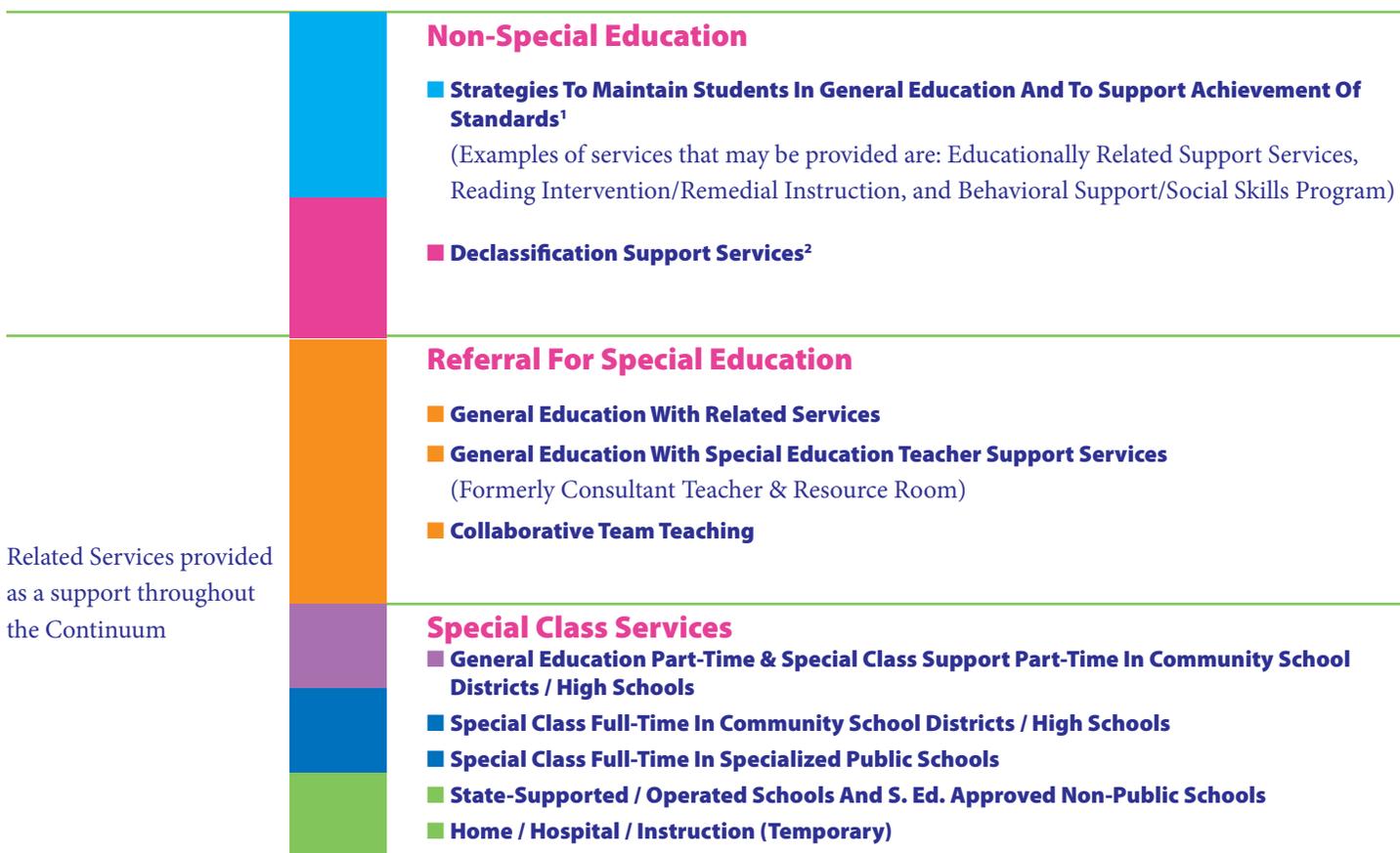


Chapter 1: Definitions and Background Information

Delivery of Special Education Services: A Continuum

Education services for students with disabilities are delivered through a continuum that strives to maintain students in general education to the maximum extent appropriate and support achievement of standards. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) mandates improved outcomes for students with disabilities, and, further, that these students be educated with their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible and appropriate. Special education services provide supports designed for students who require specialized intervention.

The Continuum of Special Education Services*



¹ **Strategies to Maintain Students in General Education and to Support Achievement of Standards** refers to intervention and support provided to a student prior to a referral for special education services.

² **Declassification Support Services** are direct or indirect services intended to support the decertified student while he or she makes the transition from a special program to a general education program with no other special education services.

* Source: *Special Education Services as Part of a Unified Service Delivery Model (The Continuum of Services for Students with Disabilities)*, New York City Department of Education

Class Size Ratios in Self-Contained Special Education Classes

Students are grouped according to functional levels of performance in order to facilitate delivery of appropriate level of instruction.

Reading the Ratios

The first number denotes the number of students. The second number refers to the teacher. The third number refers to the paraprofessional. For example, 12:1:1 denotes 12 students with one teacher and one paraprofessional.

SPECIAL CLASS MAXIMUM SIZES AND STAFFING RATIOS*

Special Class Staffing Ratio 12:1 (elementary and junior/middle levels) 15:1 (high school)

- no more than twelve (12) or fifteen (15) students per class depending on level
- one full-time special education teacher

Serves students whose academic and/or behavioral needs require specialized/specially designed instruction that can best be accomplished in a self-contained setting.

Special Class Staffing Ratio 12:1:1

- no more than twelve (12) students per class
- one full-time special education teacher
- one full-time paraprofessional

Serves students whose academic and/or behavioral management needs interfere with the instructional process, to the extent that additional adult support is needed to engage in learning and who require specialized/specially designed instruction that can best be accomplished in a self-contained setting.

Special Class Staffing Ratio 8:1:1

- no more than eight (8) students per class
- one full-time special education teacher
- one full-time paraprofessional

Serves students whose management needs are severe and chronic requiring intensive constant supervision, a significant degree of individualized attention, intervention, and intensive behavior management as well as additional adult support.

Special Class Staffing Ratio 6:1:1

- no more than six (6) students per class
- one full-time special education teacher
- one full-time paraprofessional

Serves students with very high needs in most or all need areas, including academic, social, and/or interpersonal development, physical development, and management. Student's behavior is characterized as aggressive, self-abusive, or extremely withdrawn, and with severe difficulties in the acquisition and generalization of language and social skill development. These students require very intense individual programming, continual adult supervision, and (usually) a specific behavior management program to engage in all tasks and a program of speech/language therapy (which may include augmentative/alternative communication).

Special Class Staffing Ratio 12:1:4

- no more than twelve (12) students per class
- one full-time special education teacher
- one additional staff person (paraprofessional) for every three students

Serves students with severe and multiple disabilities with limited language, academic and independent functioning. These students require a program primarily of habilitation and treatment, including training in daily living skills and the development of communication skills, sensory stimulation, and therapeutic interventions.

CTT Staffing Ratio

CTT (Integrated Co-Teaching, more commonly called Collaborative Team Teaching) classes have two certified teachers in the room: one general education teacher and one special education teacher and may be provided full-time, part-time, or on a subject-by-subject basis. The class size follows the guidelines for general education classes. The class may not have more than 40% of students with IEPs and a maximum of 12 students with IEPs, and must not exceed the class size limit for a general education class, with the exception of kindergarten classes where CTT classes have 25 students—15 general education students and 10 students with IEPs. A more detailed description of the CTT instructional setting is on page 32.

Some students may also require a paraprofessional to address specific health and/or management needs. In these cases, the student's IEP will recommend the additional support of a paraprofessional and designate the frequency and group size for the provision of this support. Support from a paraprofessional may be recommended for a student in any of the above instructional settings.

* Source: *Special Education Services as Part of a Unified Service Delivery Model (The Continuum of Services for Students with Disabilities)*, New York City Department of Education

Categories of Student Disability

To be eligible for the provision of special education services students must meet the criteria for one of the 13 handicapping conditions as defined in the New York State Education Department's Commissioner's Regulations, Part 200, "Students with Disabilities." Part 200.1. (zz) lists the following types of disabilities: autism; deafness; deaf-blindness; emotional disturbance; hearing impairment; learning disability; mental retardation; multiple disabilities; orthopedic impairment; other health impairment, including attention deficit disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and visual impairment, including blindness. You can read the official definitions of these conditions at: <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/lawsandregs/sect2001.htm>. While any child, with or without a disability, may have behavior problems that can affect teaching and learning, the following disabling conditions are more likely to give rise to behavioral challenges:

Autism

Autism is one of the most rapidly expanding categories of disability. It profoundly affects four areas of development: language, socialization, sensory, and motor skills. The term **Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)** is used to indicate that there are different types and degrees of symptoms associated with this disorder. Students with ASD often have problems with attention and eye contact and have significant problems interacting with others. They may show stereotyped and restricted movement patterns, such as rocking and hand flapping and may perseverate, or continue repeating verbalizations or activities. Students with autism have a strong preference for routines and may have problems with transitions. Behavior difficulties such as tantrums can result from confusion or anxiety. You can minimize these by providing clearly structured dance activities with concrete instructions and giving advance notice of transitions. It is also helpful to have a schedule posted so students know when dance activities are being scheduled.

Youngsters with ASD are often visual learners, and it is important to support verbal instructions with pictures and modeling. Talk with classroom teachers and speech therapists about visual communication systems and behavior plans so you can utilize these in dance activities. Some youngsters with Autistic Spectrum Disorders do not use verbal language, while others who have **Asperger's Syndrome (AS)** may have no significant language problems. Despite their proficiency with language, youngsters with AS may have difficulty in using and interpreting nonverbal behaviors, such as facial expressions and body language, as well as conventions such as turn-taking. You can design dance activities to help students develop their understanding of nonverbal communication.

ADHD

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a common type of disabling condition that adversely affects learning. This disorder is characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention, hyperactivity, and/or impulsivity. Youngsters may have difficulty with organization and following directions. They may be easily distracted and often make careless errors. Students with ADHD may have difficulty waiting and often blurt out answers or interrupt, causing interpersonal problems with peers and adults. Well-designed, consistently implemented positive behavioral supports can help children with ADHD to function adaptively and to get along with others. Dance activities that emphasize body control, such as stop and go, fast and slow, and balance can help these youngsters to develop self-control.

Emotional Disturbance

Emotional Disturbance (ED) is a common disability affecting students' ability to learn. It is defined in the Commissioner's Regulations as:

A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a student's educational performance:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances
- A generally pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems

This definition encompasses many distinct types of mental disorders, ranging from anxiety disorders to schizophrenia. Thus, students classified as having an emotional disturbance may present a wide range of behaviors in dance class. Below are several types of mental disorders that can affect children and adolescents.

Depression: This condition is distinguished from ordinary sadness by the intensity and duration of symptoms. Somatic complaints such as frequent headaches and stomachaches, irritability, and restlessness are particularly common in children who are depressed, while adolescents may be lethargic and may have delusions, which are odd ideas that have no basis in reality. Youngsters who are depressed may sleep or eat too little or too much. They are often withdrawn. Suicide is a significant risk. **Take any mention of suicide seriously.** Tell the counselor or administrator right away, even if you think the child is "just doing it for attention."

Anxiety Disorders: Students with anxiety disorders experience worry or fear more intensely and more readily than their peers and may restrict their activities because of their fears. Their fears may be specific, such as being in closed places, social interaction, or coming to school. Other youngsters may have generalized anxiety and worry about many things, even when there is really no problem. Students who are anxious may have difficulty concentrating and may show physical symptoms of distress or be withdrawn in class. Body awareness and self-calming strategies, such as those included in this supplement, can help these students to recognize and alleviate some of the physiological symptoms of their anxiety.

Major Psychotic Disorders Including Schizophrenia: These are serious, lifelong challenges that are characterized by difficulty controlling thinking and behavior. Psychotic disorders affect emotions, thoughts, social interactions, language skills, and the capacity to meet the ordinary demands of life. Students with psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia may have delusions or hallucinations, such as hearing voices, and may have difficulty telling the difference between fantasy and reality. In class they may be withdrawn and unpredictable, and they may say things that don't make sense. For some, medication can help to decrease these symptoms and enable the youngster to function. The expressive aspect of dance can be important in helping these youngsters to understand and manage their emotions. Socialization can be fostered through the use of simple group dancing, such as folk dance.

Conduct Disorder: The behavior of students with conduct disorder may be characterized by repeated rule violations (though this behavior not limited to students with this diagnosis). Students may be verbally or physically aggressive or may cause property damage. They can also be deceitful or steal and show little compassion for others. Students with conduct disorder exhibit oppositional behaviors that may evoke strong feelings of disapproval and anger in adults. It is vital for educators to respond to these youngsters with

clear, objective limit-setting for inappropriate behavior, combined with caring and respect for their person. Maintain consistent structure, clear rules, and firm, fair, and respectful interactions to help youngsters with conduct disorder to make better behavioral choices. These practices help cultivate trust. Dance is intrinsically motivating for many youngsters, and this can help to improve compliance. Use classroom management strategies, prevention strategies, putting responsibility on the students, and giving them space and time to respond so they can “save face.” Do not engage in power struggles (see Conflict Cycle on page 75). Youngsters with conduct disorder have higher rates of depression, anxiety, substance abuse, ADHD, and learning disabilities than the general population.

Source: The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-IV)*, currently in its 4th major revision, details specific symptoms of mental disorders.

The dance teacher with a diverse population of students, many of whom are dealing with one or more of the above challenges, asks the following question on a daily basis:

“What are the core principles and strategies available to me that can help my students with emotional, cognitive, physical, and behavioral challenges to function more effectively in the classroom, to grow as dancers and as learners, and to become more productive members of our school community?”

It is this question that this volume seeks to address.

Arthur Elgort



5 Core Principles Guiding Our Work

The authors' work as dance educators working with diverse student populations is informed and guided by the following five principles:

Core Principle #1: Maintain High Expectations for Achievement for All Students

As educators, we have the opportunity and duty to meet every student at his or her current level of learning, and to move all students toward achievement. Differentiated dance instruction allows us to help each student make progress. When we are considering the *Blueprint* benchmarks and how they can serve individual students, we may choose to modify an indicator so that aspiring toward it marks realistic progress for a particular student. This does not mean that we sacrifice our commitment to student achievement—on the contrary. Assessing achievement for a middle school student with cognitive delays, for instance, may be guided by the 5th grade indicators for memorizing a sequence of movements but by the 8th grade indicators for cooperative collaboration in choreography. A 2nd grade student who uses a wheelchair may be as successful as his/her nondisabled peers in reaching the 2nd grade indicator for distinguishing between straight and curved pathways, by traveling these pathways in the wheelchair with or without assistance from a para. Our students with disabilities deserve our highest expectations for their own appropriate levels of achievement.

Core Principle #2: Create A Caring Teacher-Student Relationship in a Highly Structured Setting

As dance teachers, we affect our students in myriad ways. In addition to fostering skills and understandings in our art form, there is a therapeutic aspect to our work in that we have the opportunity to reinforce positive behaviors, social interactions, and learning outcomes. We also have the opportunity to intervene constructively to help our students improve their self-image; understand expectations, limits, and consequences; set higher standards for their own behavior and achievement; and take control of their own learning so that they can reach their full potential.

A Caring Relationship is based on:

- **Positive regard for the student:** Even when we set limits on a student's unacceptable behavior, we still accept that student as a person.

“Children must get plenty of love and affection whether they deserve it or not. ...gratifying life situations cannot be made the bargaining tools of educational or even therapeutic motivation, but must be kept tax-free as minimal parts of the youngsters' diet, irrespective of the problems of deservedness.” Fritz Redl

- **Appropriate boundaries:** As teachers, we naturally have warm and caring relationships with our students. However, over-involvement and ambiguous relationships are not helpful to our students' growth. It is important to maintain professionalism and objectivity, especially when responding to challenging behavior. Do not take students' misbehavior personally. Appropriate boundaries enable dance educators to be firm, fair, and respectful to students, and to maintain a physically and emotionally safe dance classroom where students are responsible for their work and all members of the learning community treat each other with kindness and respect. Managing our students' behavior starts with managing ourselves.

Remember: The only behavior we can control is our own.

A Highly Structured Environment can be created in the K-12 dance classroom through:

- **Routines**, such as the barre and warm-up, and the purposeful organization of space, time, interaction patterns, and student formations
- **Rules and Procedures** for entering, taking places, interacting verbally and physically, and leaving the dance studio

Dance education can be an important element in providing support to youngsters with disabilities through activities that directly facilitate the development of social skills and increase self-awareness, self-control and self-esteem. We can enhance our effectiveness by infusing best practices of Positive Behavior Supports into the dance education curriculum. You will find many suggestions and examples in this supplement to guide you in creating an environment in your dance education classroom that promotes positive behavior and the optimal functioning of all your students.

Core Principle #3: Be Positive!

Frame your statements regarding students' behavior and their progress in dance in a positive rather than a negative way. Instead of "Stop that! I'm going to tell you the rule just one more time!" try "Remember our class procedure? Let's read it out loud all together so we can all remember. What do we need to do in order to follow our rule?" Instead of "You're doing it on the wrong leg—pay attention!" try "Good effort! Now try it on the other leg." Instead of threats like "If you don't stop that I'll have to give you a demerit!" try "Please take a quiet moment here next to me. When you are ready to focus, you may join us again for the next part of this activity." Students need to have a path by which to succeed. By staying positive and describing another choice, you give the misbehaving student a graceful way to change his/her behavior without losing face. Positive language is a de-escalating strategy that creates a "teachable moment".

"Adult praise, focused attention that communicates approval and positive regard ... is an abundantly available natural resource that is (all too often) greatly underutilized." Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham

Core Principle #4: Be Fair, Firm and Friendly (the 3 F's of Rule Enforcement)

Students feel safer, more relaxed, and more open to learning when they know the teacher's expectations, class routines, rules and procedures, how the limits are defined, and the consequences of transgressing these limits. These latter should be carried out fairly and in a friendly but firm manner in all cases without exception, to create an atmosphere of trust and respect. When a student says, "You can't make me!" the 3 F's suggest applying the appropriate consequence, not with anger or a harsh tone—don't "take the bait"—but rather with a friendly reminder of what is expected and a suggestion to the child that you know she/he will be able to behave appropriately the next time.

Say what you mean, mean what you say, but don't say it mean!

Core Principle #5: Be Everywhere! (Movement, Interaction, and Scanning)

■ Movement

The dance teacher has the opportunity to travel through the dance room in a manner unpredictable in direction and timing, so that rather than staying in one spot at the front of the class for the entire period, the teacher can quietly command attention from any and all parts of the room. This creates a sense of inclusion for every student, since the teacher may be in close physical proximity at any time.

■ Interaction

Interact with your students as individuals and in small groups as well as with the whole class. A class modality that includes personal interchange creates a relationship between teacher and students that promotes the desire to work and a feeling of recognition and self-worth in each and every student. Provide specific positive feedback and constructive correction as you are moving through the room. Connect with your students and support them in staying on task.

■ Scanning

Peripheral vision and the ability to scan the room are a teacher's best aids to help intervene before a situation has the chance to develop. Be aware of anything unusual. Actions and strategies described later in this volume can be initiated most effectively when you know what is happening in all parts of your dance studio at all times. Vary the groupings so that no student is left at the edges through the entire class.



Sandra Stratton-Gonzalez

Framework of this Document

The organization of this document is based on the **Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)** model, also known as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). This term refers to the strategies used by educators to promote successful learning and social development of students. PBS was mandated for students whose behaviors impede learning by the 1997 re-authorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). We have expanded upon this model to address not only students' behavioral challenges, but also cognitive delays and physical disabilities. These latter conditions may affect behavior in some students, but other students with these disabilities may not present any behavioral challenges. Students with diverse types of disabilities require specifically targeted strategies for learning support.

The PBS model is a continuum of supports implemented on three levels: Universal, Targeted, and Intensive. Our adaptation of the PBS model for dance education is as follows:

Universal Supports for Dance Education

Universal supports and interventions are utilized with all students. They include dance classroom rules and procedures. When these are explicitly taught to students and reinforced, they help the majority of students to behave appropriately and maximize dance-learning opportunities for all students.

Targeted Supports for Dance Education

Targeted supports and interventions are utilized with students who require additional support to be successful. These include explicit instruction in social skills, such as learning how to share space with others and keep appropriate distances in various school settings. They also include adaptations for various physical and cognitive challenges that enable diverse students to engage in appropriate and progressive dance learning.

Intensive, Individual Supports for Dance Education

Intensive, individual supports and interventions are used for the few students for whom Universal and Targeted supports have not proven successful and who continue to exhibit severely challenging behaviors. These interventions and supports are tailored to a specific student's strengths, interests, and needs. Intensive, individual interventions require a highly systematic approach, collaboration with other educators, and consistent implementation. They may include de-escalation strategies used by school staff to help calm a student, or behavioral contracting. Once strategies are identified, everyone who interacts with the student must consistently implement them.

Apply Universal Supports First

When working with students with disabilities in your classroom, the universal supports outlined in the next section of this supplement represent generally accepted best educational practices. These should be in place before you move on to more targeted or intensive supports for the class or for a particular child. Applied consistently and fairly, these practices lead naturally to better classroom management and happier, more engaged students. The diagram on the next page is a graphic representation of the relationship between Universal, Targeted, and Intensive Supports for Dance Education.

Continuum of Effective Interventions and Supports for the Dance Classroom

For Students with Severe Disabilities:

Strategies to address severe challenges that have not responded to universal or targeted supports. May be applied with individual students or may affect curriculum design for an entire class. May include assistive devices, nonverbal social skills instruction, adult assistance, management for disruptive students, crisis intervention, de-escalation strategies, Behavior Intervention Plan.

For Students Who Need Additional Support:

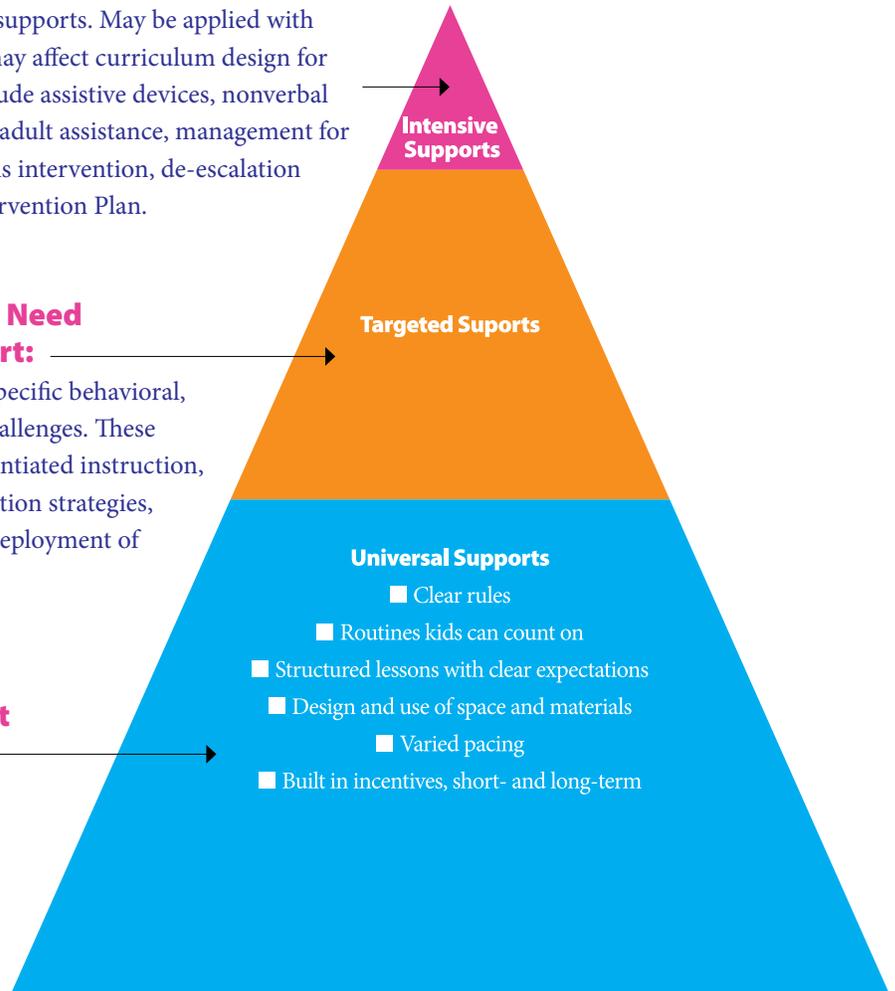
Strategies that address specific behavioral, cognitive, or physical challenges. These strategies include differentiated instruction, universal design, prevention strategies, incentive systems, and deployment of paraprofessionals.

For All Students at All Times:

General principles of classroom management: rules, incentives, and routines that support learning for all students.

Blueprint-based

education; instructional best practices; clearly and positively stated rules; routines that are explicitly taught; Movement, Interaction & Scanning.



Source: This diagram is based on *Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports* or PBIS



Chapter 2: Universal Supports for Dance Education

Universal Supports are strategies that organize and structure the dance classroom and the dance lesson for the benefit of all learners. Putting these strategies in place supports a positive learning environment, student growth and achievement, classroom management, and organization of effort.



Chapter 2: Universal Supports for Dance Education

Inherent Characteristics of Dance Education that Support Diverse Learners

Dance is a form of expressive activity accessible to everyone regardless of ability. Dance education has the potential to support every learner in a variety of ways:

Skill Building

When students build physical skills, they feel empowered and more confident. The dance educator can scaffold lessons so that students are able to succeed incrementally and measure their success, fostering a sense of accomplishment. This makes learning intrinsically motivating.

Process

Dance is a temporal art—it happens in real time. Keeping the focus on process will result in a greater depth of learning and a more satisfying final product. Start where students are and organize them for directed effort.

Engagement

Every dance class should include ample opportunities for full-out enjoyable movement, appropriate to the ability of the students as determined by the dance teacher and/or team of teachers. When children are moving fully in dance activities with clear parameters, they are most likely to remain engaged.

Integration of Self

The body and mind are necessarily connected in dance, leading to a greater sense of wholeness in the child. This sense of an integrated “self” fostered in dance class is beneficial to all students as they move through the rest of their school day.

Integration with Others

Parallel participation in the same activity is inherent in many activities of the dance class, and is comfortable for most children. The dance educator should be aware of the power of unison group dancing to connect students without the stress, distractions and temptations of direct interaction with peers. Cooperative activities, in which students are required to work directly with others, need careful preparation so that all students understand the acceptable and appropriate modes of interaction, as well as the goals of their group work.



Patricia Dye

Social/Affective Goals of the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance*

The *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance, PreK-12* includes both dance content learning goals and outcomes, and life-skills learning goals and outcomes that speak to children's general health and well-being. The following broad *Blueprint* goals are important for all children, and especially vital for children with special needs:

- Developing Self-Awareness: Body, Feelings, Impact on Others
- Increasing Movement Repertoire
- Improving Self-Control
- Increasing Awareness of the Environment
- Improving Socialization and Cooperation Skills
- Developing Strategies for Relaxation and Energizing
- Enhancing Self-Esteem

Educating the whole child is an intrinsic value of dance education and a core value of the *Blueprint*. Social-emotional education should be infused in dance education philosophy, practices and curriculum. To that end, there are some basic **universal strategies** that are effective in the dance classroom for all children, creating a productive atmosphere for learning:

- **Rules** are positively stated, clear, and consistently enforced.
- Dance classroom daily conventions and **Routines** are clearly established and explicitly taught.
- **Incentives** are used as appropriate to motivate and inspire students.

The Baseline

Universal Strategies That Support Classroom Management with All Learners

Learn your students' names as quickly as possible. Greet students by name as they enter the room. This reinforces the fact that you know they are there, and re-establishes the individual teacher-student relationship.

Establish studio/classroom routines at the very beginning of the school year, teach them to students, and give booster lessons as necessary.

Differentiate instruction according to students' levels. This allows all students to make progress and experience success.

Ask, don't tell. When students violate a rule, ask them what the rule is, rather than telling them (see CORE PRINCIPLE #3, p. 18). For example, when a student talks out of turn, ask, "What do you have to do when you want to say something?" rather than saying, "Raise your hand if you want to say something." Students with disabilities may need prompts or cues for this. Don't assume they are being non-responsive or oppositional.

Utilize principles of Universal Design so that lessons are presented in **multiple modalities (auditory, visual, and kinesthetic)** to reach students with different learning styles. For example, demonstrate a step, clap the beat of a step, verbally describe the step, and practice it together.

Structure the environment. Students with learning and behavioral challenges need warm, caring, respectful relationships with staff and a highly structured environment that provides clear, sensible rules, incentives for good behavior, and reasonable, fairly administered consequences for significant infractions.

Begin your studio routine as soon as students enter the room (e.g. take off shoes and put on dance slippers). Some students need a tight spatial structure to focus. Exercises at the barre can help to anchor them in space.

Use proximity control (e.g., move closer to students who are having difficulty) **and signals** (e.g., raised hand) to gain attention.

Keep the momentum of the class going. If you have to respond to an interruption, ask a student to take over as leader. Support that student by glances, nods, and verbal prompts, as needed.

Respond to student questions and requests with directness and respect, even if they are challenging. If students speak rudely, remind them of the rule for respect. Don't take student misbehavior personally. Correct misbehavior in a calm, professional manner. Keep comments objective and concrete so that the student understands your expectations (see CORE PRINCIPLE #4, p. 18).

Give difficult students time and space to comply. Hovering over them and waiting can provoke a power struggle. Tell them you will get back to them and check in with other students before returning. This helps them to “save face” and avoids a power struggle.

Acknowledge students who are doing the right thing before correcting students who are not. Your students crave your attention. Acknowledge good behavior and achievement with specific language that refers to the content and rules of the class. Rather than “Good, José,” say, “I see that José has made an interesting low-level shape.” Remember that achievement is relative to the student, measured by individual, group, and developmental standards.

Reprimand in private. This also “saves face” for the student and allows him/her to rejoin the class when ready.

Acknowledge your own mistakes right away. It is a teachable moment, especially for students who have learning difficulties or are fearful of mistakes. Verbalize the steps that you yourself take to correct your mistake, in order to model problem solving and self-speech to students.

The Best Classroom Management Is Good Instruction

Universal Strategies of Good Dance Instruction

Use highly structured activities with clear expectations. Plan and implement age-appropriate, content-rich, multi-faceted lessons.

Communicate instructions in short sentences using clear, direct, age-appropriate vocabulary. This strategy most effectively addresses students with diverse attention spans, degrees of focus, and physical abilities.

Teach dance vocabulary progressively and incrementally so that all students have time to absorb a common set of terms and understandings. Teaching dance literacy also enables students to make connections with other arts disciplines via common vocabulary such as:

- sharp/smooth energy in movement aligning with staccato/legato in music
- negative space in dance shapes with negative space in sculpture
- freeze and stop in dance with tableaux and stage picture in theater

Pace instruction so that children are neither left behind nor bored. This holds true for students of all ages, not only the younger ones. If a skill or activity is taking much longer than expected, don't feel compelled to finish it at the expense of keeping the students engaged. It may be better to leave the completion to the following lesson and move onto something else.

Provide immediate feedback and positive reinforcement for accomplishments. All students, regardless of disability, respond to praise when they know they have earned it. Recognize progress in dance learning and appropriate behavior by providing immediate, specific praise.

Provide constructive suggestions to correct inappropriate behavior. Negative comments are not useful in eliciting a desire to improve. Be positive! (See CORE PRINCIPLE #3, p.18.) A specific suggestion about possible alternative behaviors can help a student feel more comfortable and secure about moving toward a better classroom attitude.

Establish rules and consequences for inappropriate behaviors. Clearly understood rules and consequences are perceived to be fair when applied as stated. If students do not understand the consequences for breaking a rule, they feel unfairly singled out and will protest.

Model positive attitudes—be that which you want your students to become. Behave according to your own rules and principles. Maintain a positive, respectful demeanor and convey your excitement about dance learning. Demonstrate hard work, content knowledge and curiosity, punctuality, focus, good organization, generosity of spirit, and openness to others' points of view if these are qualities you wish your students to emulate.

Know yourself. Develop an understanding of what your “triggers” are—what behaviors “push your buttons.” Knowing this, and planning in advance for how to monitor and handle your own responses, is very helpful in ensuring positive outcomes during a difficult episode.

Be open to learning from your students. Modeling an attitude of openness to learning from others creates an atmosphere of respect in your dance room.

Rely on your educator colleagues. Don't be afraid to ask a colleague for help. Sometimes another perspective and a shift in dynamics will resolve a challenging classroom situation.

Classroom management is proactive rather than reactive.

Rules, Routines and Incentives in the Dance Studio

Rules in the Dance Studio

Dance studio rules should reflect standards of behavior supported by the entire school community. Share these rules with your principal and the parents. Here are some simple strategies to support your dance studio rules:

Three Essential Expectations:

- **Safety:** Ensuring physical and emotional safety for everyone in the dance classroom is essential before you can do any teaching. Take into account the dimensions and structural characteristics of your room, the fragility of equipment, and the traction of the floor. For example, if the floor is slippery, then make a rule that students must dance barefoot or in rubber-soled shoes or sneakers. If there is a protruding pipe or electrical box, make a rule that this corner of the room is out of bounds. If you have a computer or boom box sitting out on a table, make a rule that the table and equipment are to be touched only when you instruct a student to do so. If you have window ledges that are deep and could attract climbers, make a rule that students may sit and stand on the floor of the studio and nowhere else.
- **Responsibility:** What are students supposed to do? Students need to know what is expected of them in the dance class. Consider the question “What does a model dance student in my class look like?” when defining rules. Make your rules based on your expectations of how a model student would behave, so that all students know that they can reach that standard. These expectations need to be developmentally appropriate and reflect consideration of diversity of abilities. Make your rules in answer to the question “What is really important in my dance classroom?” The rules place the responsibility for behavior on the students themselves. Involving students in the rule-setting process is also a good strategy. They’re likely to feel more invested in rules that they have had a voice in establishing.
- **Respect:** How should students and staff treat each other? Make rules that govern both physical and verbal interactions. Discuss the rules with your students, so that they understand **why** the rules must be enforced. You may have the students re-state the rules in their own words, speculate on why people make rules and laws, and what can happen when people don’t follow them.

State rules positively and clearly.

Always use positive rather than negative language to state your rules (e.g., “Bare feet and dance slippers only on the dance floor,” rather than “No street shoes on the dance floor”). Positively stated rules allow the students to take constructive action, whereas negatively stated rules create resentment and invite infractions. Sometimes students misbehave because they don’t know what to do or how to do it.

Keep rules to a minimum.

Having too many rules creates an atmosphere that feels stifling to the students and the teacher. Make your rules to support the behaviors that are absolutely necessary to the smooth functioning of your dance room.

State the consequences of breaking rules clearly and objectively.

Consequences should be simple, clear, and tied to the behavior itself (i.e., “natural consequence”). The consequences should be understandable to the students and they should be able to quote them back to you. Punitive consequences are not as effective as a consequence that has a learning outcome. It is best to choose consequences that reinforce expectations.

Provide reminders when needed.

Children tend to forget about rules when they are excited and in the midst of working in the dance room. Periodic class and individual reminders about the rules can help students to keep them in mind. Teachers need to decide how many reminders will be provided before intervention. Over-reminding can give a student the message that the teacher isn't serious about a directive until the fourth time s/he asks.

Be consistent in enforcing rules.

Remember CORE PRINCIPLE #4: Always be fair, firm, and friendly. Be respectful to the students when you enforce the rules. The rules are there for everyone's benefit, and if the entire class is invested in them, everyone will understand when a rule is enforced. Rules should be enforced in the same way for all students.

Routines in the Dance Studio

Class routines and conventions are perhaps the most important universal support for your work as a dance educator. Routines should be established at the beginning of the semester, and shared with your principal. The following are areas for which routines are especially crucial:

Entering the studio

It is important for a dance teacher to meet the students at the door to the studio. The dance studio should be defined in students' minds as a materially different place from the rest of school. Examples of protocols and routines for entering the dance room might be: slowing down to a walk, entering in complete silence, entering one by one, removing jackets and jewelry before entering, etc.

Greeting protocols

You may establish a protocol for the way your students greet you and each other. For example, students say "Good morning, Ms. Catherine!" and then wait for your response in kind as you say hello to each by name before they move into the room. Another approach might be to have the students come up with their own "secret dance shape password" which they would perform each time they enter the dance room. This can be fun and a great motivator.

Taking off street shoes, dressing for dance, putting on dance shoes

Younger students should have a set place in the studio to take off and store their street shoes and socks. Your routines can lead them to expect to do this at the same time at the beginning of class, and to put them back on at the end of class. You may have them do this one by one or two by two, or have all students wearing blue followed by all students wearing red. You may create a song or game for this activity. Your routines allow you to control the potential for chaotic activity. Special names may be given to parts of the studio—something especially useful in elementary: "Please place your street shoes so their toes kiss the magic wall."

Secondary school students, especially if you have a wood or Marley dance floor surface, should remove street shoes before stepping on the dance floor. Create routines for this, as well as for dressing, that stress the responsibility that all dancers have to be prompt and to respect their space. In general dance classes, your routines can support taking off outerwear, going to the locker room or dressing room, and putting on dance shoes when appropriate, all through positively stated protocols that are followed every day in the same way.

Taking one's place at the barre or on the floor

Younger students may be given their own special floor spots. Assigning spaces may be particularly helpful for some students with disabilities. Special routines involving songs and movement games can serve your instructional goals for the students. A floor seating chart comes in handy for the teacher to remember where students belong in case the students forget their spot. Older students also enjoy having an assigned place at the barre or on the floor. You may establish a routine of rotating these spots periodically so that no student feels they have been assigned an inferior spot in the room. This also allows you to see every student in a new light, and to separate students who have become too chatty with each other without singling them out.

Warming-up

Students enjoy the familiarity of a set warm-up sequence. You can take the first few classes to establish the basic sequence of exercises, and then continue to add to it or vary it. In ballet classes this expected sequence is built into the technique: even if the exact tendu combination is different each day, the tendus may always come after the grand pliés, for example. Class structures can be repeated from lesson to lesson so that students become familiar and comfortable with them.

Selecting and playing music

Most K-12 dance teachers work with a hand-held drum, taped music, or CDs. Establish routines for who chooses the music (e.g., the teacher? a student? the class?), when they get to do so (e.g., for technique? for choreography?), who controls the boom box, which activities are done in silence, and what types of music are acceptable in dance class. You may choose to appeal to your students' musical tastes at times, but you also have the opportunity and responsibility to expand their horizons by playing types of music with which they may be unfamiliar. You may want to ask your students to bring in music from their own family or national traditions. Setting up a routine for sharing this on a set periodic basis can be extremely self-affirming for students.

Transitioning between activities

Students often find transitions between activities difficult. Either they don't want to stop doing what they are doing, or the transition becomes a stimulus for loss of self-control or loss of focus. A clapping rhythm, chant, song, drumbeat, or any other type of sound that requires a response may be useful to signal and coordinate transitions. The signal you choose to build into your routine should have a clear meaning, such as "Attention!" or "Time to move to the next activity!" Wait for the students to respond with the appropriate behavior before moving on, or the signal will lose its power. Movement phrases can also signal the beginning or ending of an activity or a class period (e.g., the "reverence" in a ballet class, or the final slow pliés and relevé balance in a modern class).

Passing out props and costumes

Develop a routine that details who is responsible for passing out props and costumes. Students love to take on this responsibility, and if done on a rotating basis this can be a positive incentive for students to take a helpful attitude in the dance class in general.

Sharing and constructive feedback

Peer sharing must be shaped and framed by routines and protocols for "accountable talk" and "constructive feedback." Students should be given opportunities to practice how to frame their responses. Your routine for this activity should include sentence starters, (e.g., "I noticed that ..." or "What I found interesting was ..."). You may frame this with a protocol in which students first give positive feedback (e.g., "I really liked the way they did ... because..."). You might invite the student(s) whose work is being shown to pose some questions

about their work to their peers if they wish to. Students in the class may ask a question (e.g., “I wondered why you made the choice to do that movement at that time in your dance?”), and then offer a suggestion (e.g., “Have you thought about doing it this way?”). These discussion protocols can be posted for all students to refer to as they respond to their peers’ work. After a while this mode of speech will become internalized.

Cooling down

Your class routines should include a brief cool-down for students to gather their bodies and thoughts before moving on with their school day. Even if it only takes two minutes, this routine of closure for the dance class can help students think about what they learned in dance that day, and your fellow teachers will be grateful that the students are calm and collected before coming into their classrooms. The same cool-down routines may be helpful for resolving difficult behavioral episodes.

Parting

A parting routine similar to the greeting routine you have developed also helps give closure to the class. For older students, it may be as simple as applauding the teacher and musician or guest artist if present at the end of class. For younger students, it may involve an entire procedure for getting their shoes and socks back on, getting their backpacks, lining up on one wall, singing a goodbye song, and saying goodbye to you one by one as they leave the room with their teacher. Whatever the routine, creating a procedure for parting is the bookend to your procedure for entering, and helps you maintain the dance space as a special place in terms of both learning activities and expected behaviors.

Incentives in the Dance Studio

Incentives can be a wonderful motivator for individual students and for the class as a whole. These incentives can range from small moments that fortuitously emerge in class to big events such as field trips and performances that are carefully planned. A dance educator who practices **careful listening—staying open to the suggestions and ideas of students**—may take an immediate diversion from the planned activity to incorporate the ideas of students, providing them with direct and immediate affirmation and increasing their engagement and commitment to the activity. Bear in mind that for some students, waiting for an incentive or reinforcement of any kind can be very difficult, so make sure that the rate of reinforcement matches the needs of the population.

Small, planned incentives that also can serve to deepen students’ dance learning might include:

- The provision of ‘choice time’ on a monthly basis
- The repetition of favorite activities, during a class or from class to class
- Viewing dance video tapes of professional or students’ own work
- Scheduling “freeze dance” or other favorite dance activity for the last five minutes of class
- Playing music chosen by students, within parameters that have been previously discussed

A variety of informal sharing and performance events also act as motivators. Students can be provided time to share small-group work with peers in the same class, or the dance educators' next scheduled class may be invited to arrive a few minutes early to view a "work in progress." Open classes can be scheduled for family members or classmates, wherein students share their dance experience with others. More formal performance events, requiring extensive preparation, are also excellent motivators. Performances can take place at school for family and community members, and in community spaces such as local parks and senior citizen centers. Finally, rewards might include attending a dance concert, or a trip to a local dance studio to take class.

When considering what sorts of incentives to use, and how to apply them, use the guidelines below:

■ **Apply incentives with the optimum frequency to retain their effectiveness.**

As with most activities, when incentives are overused they become less attractive to students, and the standard for the good behavior necessary to receive the incentive is thus lowered.

■ **Connect the incentives to your dance learning and life-skills goals.**

All the incentive activities explored above address the **Exploring Careers and Lifelong Learning** *Blueprint* strand, as children grow to enjoy dancing and make it an integral part of their lives. Performance and outreach-based incentives also address the **Working with Community and Cultural Resources** strand. And any incentive, when thoughtfully presented, can address the **Dance Making, Dance Literacy, or Making Connections** strand. Craft your incentives to support your curriculum goals.

■ **Make them meaningful and appropriate to the developmental level of your students.**

An incentive that is exciting to elementary students will not necessarily be attractive to older students. Pre-assessing your students—what they know, how they learn, who they are, and what they like—will help you devise appropriate incentives for each class.

■ **Define privileges as entrusted responsibilities.**

All students, regardless of age, enjoy being given responsibilities. Conferring a responsibility on a child implies to the student that the teacher trusts that he/she is capable of carrying it out. It is important that students know that this privilege must be earned. When students understand this, the motivation to do well is seeded.

■ **Judiciously and fairly confer social praise in an atmosphere of clearly stated criteria.**

Social praise—stating publicly what a student has done well that day—can be a great motivator if done fairly, consistently, and according to previously discussed criteria. This not only provides these students with support for good behavior, but provides a model for other students. **Private acknowledgement**—such as a nod in a student's direction—can also be highly effective. It's important to acknowledge students who are doing the right thing.

Dance in the Inclusive School

An inclusive school is a diverse community of learners where all feel welcomed, teach and learn from each other, and actively engage in a supportive environment where all students are expected to achieve. In this environment each student's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs are addressed through collaboration with students, teachers, administrators, and families. Focus on planning and adapting dance sessions and rehearsal plans for students with disabilities in K-12th grades strengthens the teacher/student and student/student relationships through respect and understanding. Goals for students in a class that includes students with disabilities are the same as for a general education class.* Dance teachers working with diverse learning groups will foster active, inquisitive, collaborative creators, capable of self-expression and awareness through movement. A strong focus on problem solving skills will enhance students' abilities to create, perform, and respond to dance in a meaningful and inspiring way. There are some basic rules of thumb when planning dance instruction in an inclusion setting.

Dance educators deal with basic elements of dance in every aspect of their instruction, including the **Body** (parts, shapes, actions), **Dynamics** (energy or effort), **Space** (levels, directions, pathways), and **Relationships** (between dancers, with music). When these elements are thoughtfully shaped, all types of learners benefit. The strategies below are based on the judicious use of **time, rhythm, space, energy, and groupings**.

Time

As an element of movement instruction, time can be very effective. As in comedy, "timing is everything." A skilled instructor varies the pace of instruction, sometimes moving quickly through classroom rituals and routines, at other times slowing down and repeating activities for emphasis and reinforcement. As well as the overall pace of the class, the instructor can also vary her vocal timing. Quick repetitive instruction (5, 6, 7, and go!) and slower speech with an intentional pause of several beats (Take a deep breath ... exhale ...) elicit different responses in students. One effective use of time is the freeze dance. Students practice the skill of moving to varying tempi and stopping on a cue, thus learning to modulate their energy and control their bodies. Slow motion movement also builds control.

Rhythm

Human beings are innately rhythmic. In addition to a host of internal rhythms, our bodies naturally tend to respond to external rhythms, whether by dancing or simply keeping the beat. Dance educators can foster socialization and group cohesion by using music with a clear, steady rhythm. Students who have difficulty interacting may be helped to feel a connection to others through the beat. (Some students with more significant disabilities and/or motor impairment may need hand over hand assistance with this.) Think of rhythmic patterns as another way to use time. Call and response clapping and vocal patterns, as well as movement rhythm games, are useful as focusing rituals and/or cues for quiet and attention. Drums and other instruments used by the teacher to accompany the class are helpful in cueing students to begin dances, change the tempo or energy of their dance, remember the sequence of the dance, and end a dance. Finally, the design of lesson units, where instruction in a particular concept or theme extends over time, is a useful device to both deepen instruction and to engage students' interest. Like the "to be continued" message at the end of a TV episode, a good dance "cliffhanger" will keep students' attention. Culminating activities at the end of a unit can include formal or informal performances, open classes, viewing a class video tape, taking photographs, etc., and constitute an intrinsic reward for students' efforts over time.

* Short term objectives should be included for students with severe disabilities. Attaining the goals may look different for students with severe disabilities. OT and PT goals must be considered for students who have multiple disabilities. Some students may need communication devices.

Space

Clear references to space are given to the whole class as verbal directions. These include taping a pathway on the floor to be used for arriving at opening placement (seated, standing, circle, assigned “spots”), or as an alternate use space for gathering close together for group discussion and directions (like a classroom “meeting area”). Assigned spots in the room for each child are set up from the beginning of the school year. This saves time and energy and allows choice making to be reserved for dance making and improvisation. Sit children who need constant monitoring close to the teacher, especially those who may benefit from touch cues. Assign an on-task student to be a “steady partner” for a child who needs constant feedback about behavior. A designated “quiet” or “calm” area is also useful. In all considerations of how to use space to benefit all students, it is important to determine the needs of nonambulatory students. They may need mats or other accommodations. The OT and PT should be consulted as to whether students can be removed from their chairs.

Personal Space: Personal space is an important concept in all social interactions and can be taught to the very youngest dancers. Pre-K students can explore personal space by blowing up a magic bubble, stepping inside, exploring the bubble, and then taking the bubble “out for a walk.” Establish with the students why their “space bubble” should be kept intact, and how this promotes safety in the dance room. Once this concept of the “kinesphere” is understood, children can be directed to use it during warm up, improvisation and set dances. Many group games can be developed that utilize the bubble while reinforcing spatial skills.

Shared Space: Learning to negotiate space with a group can be instrumental in helping children make routine transitions (e.g., walking down the hall, creating a circle, waiting in line, sitting on the rug) and find success in dance class. The exploration of direction and position words helps children to regulate their bodies in movement, and young children enjoy practicing dancing over, under, around, through, next to, on top of, and behind various objects and their friends. Other dance activities, including the exploration of level, direction and pathway, help children understand the relationship of their bodies to general space. Finally, the exploration of spatial relationships—including mirror games, follow the leader, copying and linking—help children to work successfully together, while giving them basic choreography skills.

Spatial Formations: Dance educators can use spatial formations to provide a structure within which student behaviors are more manageable. Circles, lines, open formations, and closed formations tend to affect student interactions in different ways. For instance, circles focus the students on each other in such a way that nobody is left out and all are visible. This may be useful when students are distracted or unfocused, but may make some children self-conscious or shy. In contrast, lines promote parallel work and may provide a greater sense of privacy, but the teacher should change the lines often so that the students at the back of the room do not feel disengaged. Also, when using lines, the teacher should move around the room once a skill has been taught (see CORE PRINCIPLE #5, p. 19) and/or change which side of the room is “front.” An astute dance educator “reads the room” and chooses spatial groupings that will best promote a positive work environment at that moment. (Note: This is also an excellent opportunity to collaborate with math teachers to create thematic lessons.)

Predetermined Groupings

If the class is ready to attempt collaborative work in partners or small groups, these may already be predetermined by the classroom teachers. Alternately, they can be set by the dance teacher and shared with the classroom teachers. They may be based on classroom work groups, line partners, or other existing groupings. This allows predictability and consistency between classroom practice and specialist teaching experience. Keep the “dance order” line up and “bubble spots” even in performance.

Energy

A quick assessment of the overall energy of the group is important. The group may need to start in a different way than was planned. They may need to stop and talk about their day so far, or they may need to immediately go to their places and spin and freeze a number of times before they can proceed to focus on the lesson. Have a few key musical choices ready. This in combination with imagery can help to shift the energy in the room during transitions and throughout the lesson.

Clear Posting of Lesson Sequence for Preview and /or Reference

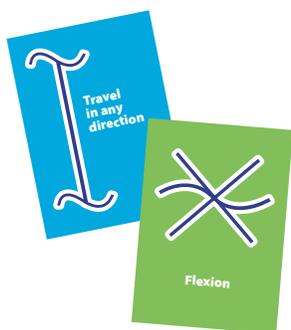
Post a brief outline of the lesson sequence on chart paper (on an easel or taped to wall), or write it on a large white board or bulletin board. Include bullet points of a few key words to describe the theme, guiding questions, activities, transitions, and goals. Depending on the needs of the group, pictures, and/or Motif symbols* could also be used in addition to the words/phrases or as a guide themselves. If time allows classroom teachers could copy this for individual students as appropriate to be used as a checklist of class participation. In many cases a verbal review is helpful.

Connection with Parents

Parents can be powerful partners if they are able to recognize the importance of their child as a member of the group. General communication between the dance educator and parents should begin at the start of the school year and remain ongoing through periodic backpacked updates on class learning activities, events and parents conferences, as well as individual student successes.

Continuous disruptive behavior may suggest alerting the parent. After first attempts at behavior modification in school with classroom teachers, administrators, school aides, and paras, a standard form note (developed by the dance teacher and approved by the principal) goes home detailing the expectations of the dance experience and how parents can assist. A returned tear off from the note requests the parent signature. This may be followed up with e-mail or phone calls to clarify. Often parents need to witness the behaviors in order to identify how they can help their child to be a more productive member of the dance session each week. Concerned parents may wish to observe or participate in a session to gain a deeper understanding of class structure and goals.

Parental contact in this regard should be done in consultation with or through the appropriate school administrator/designee to ensure that school policy regarding parent communication, as well as other factors that may be involved in individual cases, is considered. For example, a dance teacher may not be aware of sensitive family situations or procedures in place based upon a behavior intervention plan. Consulting the appropriate school personnel will help to ensure the most productive parent relationships.



* Source: Motif Notation is a form of dance notation that uses graphic symbols to represent movement elements. Motif cards picture one symbol per card. These are used in dance instruction to initiate and describe movements, and as tools for creating movement sequences.

CTT: Integrated Co-Teaching (Collaborative Team Teaching)

Creating Successful Collaborative Teams: Dance Educators, Teaching Partners, and Paraprofessionals

Integrated Co-Teaching, currently more commonly referred to as Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT), can offer children a rich educational environment. In this model, two certified teachers, one of whom must be a certified special educator, partner to provide the instruction. In the dance classroom, a CTT team might comprise a dance specialist and a special education teacher, a dance specialist and another arts educator (one should be certified in special education), or either of these teams plus a paraprofessional. When these adults work well together, teaching strategies are developed that maximize learning for all children. Collaborative teams require respect, time, and space to work to their potential. Some practical guidelines follow below.

Sufficient Planning Time

Partnering teachers need time to plan units of instruction. In those cases where the dance curriculum integrates with grade level academic curriculum or themes, a special educator's expertise can enhance the dance instruction. Knowledge of social studies, ELA, and math curriculum at grade level; access to books and other resources; and expertise in identifying and implementing individualized, appropriate modifications, accommodations, and supports are some of the skills the special educator may provide. If two arts educators are partnered, both bring deep knowledge of the creative process. Once common ground is identified, lessons can be enhanced by this knowledge. For example, during a unit in Colonial dance, a partnering music educator can teach songs from the period. An art teacher might extend a dance unit on positive and negative space by sharing the way these principals are utilized by painters and sculptors. When certified teachers meet to plan, paraprofessionals may be included if appropriate. These professionals bring first-hand knowledge of peer relationships, individual children's strengths and challenges, and behavior plans and other interventions that utilized in the classroom.

Using the Individualized Education Program (IEP) to Drive Instruction

Planning time devoted to reading and understanding the Individualized Education Program of each student with a disability can guide the development of activities that support IEP goals. Partners can help deconstruct the document. The special education partner will have knowledge of the document's language and intent; the paraprofessional may have valuable insight regarding a student's challenges within the learning environment; and the student's other teachers will can share how they address the IEP goals in their teaching domains. For example, Joan S. is a 4th grade student having difficulty recalling detail when she hears a story, and including detail when writing. The paraprofessional, under the direction of the classroom teacher, has worked successfully with Joan on illustrating stories to help her to recall sequence and detail. The dance educator develops dance activities that utilize the child's kinesthetic and visual/perceptual strengths to support recall. The special education partner can help the dance teacher modify the curriculum so that the child can show her knowledge by drawing as well as moving.

Understanding Arts Processes

The dance specialist must provide partners with guidance as to the distinct protocols and differences between the dance room and the classroom. Dance educators generally tolerate more movement, more noise, and a greater range of expression than exist in the academic setting, particularly in upper grades. Class rules and routines must be made explicit to adult partners as well as to the children. When setting guidelines for art making, ensure that your partners understand what range of responses are welcome. For example, if you are improvising, do you expect when "floating" the children all move lightly and slowly, or do you embrace the child who chooses to move quickly? Make sure your partners understand that in the arts there may be multiple answers to every problem.

Techniques of Differentiation

The dance educator must make help partners understand various ways to differentiate instruction. The special educator and the children need to understand that there are many “correct” ways of responding to a creative task: rolling can be done standing AND on the floor; a growing flower can both open and close; a child learning a turn can do the turn on either right OR left side; a child who is not comfortable touching can “partner” another child by mirroring instead of touch. All of the elements of dance may be used to differentiate. The use of the body, dynamics, space, and relationships can be varied according to individual and group needs. Movements can change level, direction, and pathway. The amount of personal space a dancer uses might be larger or smaller. Activities can be designed for ensembles, cooperative groups, peer partners, adult/child partners, and for individual exploration. Time on task can be increased or frequent breaks can be built into a lesson. In addition, some students can be chosen to give the other students directions, helping to keep them focused as well as allowing them more visual input.

Use of Collaborative Dance Making

Lesson units that incorporate collaborative dance making provide an opportunity for the special educator or other partners to assist in the creation of working groups, and to oversee particular groups to support team work. The partnering teacher(s) can also work with a particular child or facilitate the sharing of work between groups. The dance educator can provide guidelines for successful group work by clearly articulating the dance making process and creating templates for the children to use that make the process explicit.

Various Ways to ‘Join the Dance’

In addition to the strategies discussed above, there are several other ways partnering teachers can assist in dance class that do not involve dancing. A teacher can walk around the room, quietly supporting students who are having difficulty with the step or with paying attention. Quiet comments to a child can help them to stay on task (“John—try this move slower—try just the arms—remember to stay in your spot”). Other strategies include sitting with a child and engaging in a parallel activity when the class work is overwhelming; accompanying the class musically by playing a drum or shaker; helping to label, distribute, and collect materials; completing observational check lists targeting either specific skills or behavior (skipping, balancing, time on task, etc); reading a poem or story to the class that supports the lesson; taking photographs or videotaping.

Working with Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals are most commonly assigned to the more restrictive self-contained classes (e.g., 12:1:1) unless a student in a CTT class has a 1:1 para as per their IEP. In a CTT community, the dance educator might work with a different paraprofessional in every class. It is uncommon to have planning time with paraprofessionals, and the development of a successful collaboration often happens “on the fly.” It is important that the dance educator approach paraprofessionals with respect and acknowledge her/his expertise. Whether they are a “class para” or a “one to one,” they have helpful knowledge about the students. They not only work with the students in the classroom, but may also accompany them to lunch and recess. They may have insight into the dynamics between children and have knowledge of the overall class dynamics. This information is critical to creating a successful experience in dance. If at all possible, short pre- or post-class “conferences” can take place with partnering paraprofessionals to discuss individual children and the class as a whole.

Classroom management can be a challenging topic to negotiate with paraprofessionals. If you are working with someone whose style is to call across the room to reprimand a child, and you feel that this approach is calling attention to negative behavior, you will need to discuss management strategies. You might begin by observing that the noise level in class is really high, and you are trying to find ways to quiet everyone down. You can discuss various approaches to noise control (What cues do you use with the whole class? When is it OK to be loud?) and ask the paraprofessional to walk over to the child and quietly speak to him. You can also ask the paraprofessional what specific behavior plan or management ideas the child has in place in the classroom. Paraprofessionals are working hard to facilitate your lesson, and will be happy to share their perspective and to work with you to find the best way to engage students.

Michael O'Neill



Stating Expectations Positively

State what you want the students to do rather than what you don't want them to do. You can also use non-verbal signals whose meaning has been established in your classroom, other focusing routines, or a combination of these with positive statements. Rephrase the following statements in a positive way, and describe any other actions you would take to address these common situations.

1. (Class is noisy.) "Shut up!"

2. (Students are teasing each other in class.) "Stop fooling around!"

3. (Student is running around the room.) "Stop running!"

4. (Student is complaining about the work.) "I don't want to hear your complaints."

5. (Students are arguing with each other.) "Stop arguing!"

Source: Mary Beth Hewitt

Discovering the Rainbow in the Rain

When students misbehave, we are anxious to stop the behavior without realizing that the underlying motive may be appropriate. Our students sometimes have the right intentions but lack the correct prosocial skills. It is important to separate the motivation from the behavior. If the student has a good intent, acknowledge it. This can be an optimal time to teach the appropriate prosocial skill, as the student is motivated.

Example:

Felicia is an impulsive 9-year-old, who usually does not participate in dance class. Lately, she has been trying to respond to the teacher's questions. Today she raises her hand, and the teacher calls on another student, Joanna. Felicia yells, "Shut up!" at Joanna and attempts to push her aside.

Positive intention: Felicia is attempting to participate.

Prosocial skill needed: She needs to control herself so she is able to wait her turn.

Teacher's response: "I'm so glad that you have something you'd like to say, Felicia, and that you raised your hand. After we hear from Joanna, we would all love to hear your ideas."

Now you try it:

Tim is a 12-year-old student who has difficulty making friends and usually stays to himself. He has been a nonparticipant in small group activities, remaining quiet and apart from the rest of the group. Today, during a group dance making activity using motif cards, while Joe and Bob are arranging the cards in an order, Tim says, "I want to do it!" He grabs some of the cards and starts rearranging them. Joe and Bob are angry and start yelling at Tim.

Positive intention:

Prosocial skill needed:

Teacher's response:

Source: Mary Beth Hewitt



Chapter 3: Targeted Supports for Dance Education

Targeted supports are instructional strategies designed to address specific behavioral, cognitive and physical challenges in the classroom, extending beyond the universal supports that foster good classroom management and a productive environment for learning. In the inclusive general education dance classroom, these strategies inform a differentiated instructional style.



Chapter 3: Targeted Supports for Dance Education

Aligning Creative Dance Activities with IEP Goals

A natural alignment occurs between many of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals of the student with disabilities and creative dance experiences. This alignment is not limited to the physical domain, but extends into many IEP categories: cognitive and social/emotional, as well as speech and language and mathematics. Examples of this alignment, found in case study analysis, are organized by dance *Blueprint* benchmarks in the chart below.* The rationale is not that one dances to improve one’s social or cognitive skills, but that *social interaction and cognition are a part of the dance experience*.

For example, in dance students are often asked to describe the elements used within a dance study. This activity is similar to that of recalling key elements when retelling a story, and supports the goal of reading comprehension. Describing elements in dance can be as simple as asking kindergarten students what actions they used in a dance about winter (skating, throwing snowballs, building a snowman, etc.), or as complex as the 5th grade students’ response to the question “What spatial elements were used in this dance? Please describe the levels, directions, pathways and spatial relationships.” The table below illustrates example of this alignment**:

Dance Activity/ Blueprint Benchmark	Domain	IEP Goal	IEP Objective
Describe the movement elements used in a dance.	Cognitive	Improve reading comprehension.	Identify key elements. Retell story.
Execute dance steps that change level while shifting weight from one on leg to the other.	Physical	Improve postural control.	Demonstrate improved muscular balance
Dance with a partner, share weight with a partner.	Social/Emotional	Strengthen interpersonal skills.	Become aware of personal space – own and others.
Rehearse and perform with focus.	Cognitive	Improve ability to remain on task.	Stay focused on activity
Create an original dance study with a clear beginning, middle, and end.	Cognition	Reading Comprehension.	Sequence ideas
Learn, rehearse, and perform a dance.	Social/Emotional	Demonstrate work behaviors.	Persevere
Understand and express feelings through movement.	Social/Emotional	Identify and express emotions.	Appropriately express feelings of anger/upset.

* Chart: Sandra Stratton-Gonzalez.

** Note that not all students’ IEPs have objectives articulated for each goal. This is only required practice for students with alternate assessment designation.

The Dance Educator and the IEP Teams

Dance educators can be excellent collaborators with grade-level teachers, physical and occupational therapists, counselors, and family members in providing information to assist in developing children's IEP goals, and strategies to meet these goals. A dance educator who is familiar with the IEPs of their students with disabilities can support the development of skills in various IEP identified domains.

What is the IEP Team?*

When a student has been determined to be eligible for special education services, an IEP is developed by a team comprising school professional staff, the parent, and when appropriate, the student. The structure of an IEP team will vary depending upon the nature of the review (e.g., initial review, annual review). IEP teams may include any of the following participants:

- A special education teacher
- The general education teacher, if the student is, or will be participating in the general education environment
- The parent or guardian
- District Representative (represents the school district and acts as the chair of the meeting; is designated by the principal and may also fulfill another role on the team)
- The student (when appropriate or if the student is 14 or older when transition planning is part of the IEP)
- The school psychologist
- The school social worker
- Additional members, such as a physician or related service provider, may participate in the IEP team if they are involved in any aspect of the evaluation process

Although not a required member of an IEP Team, the dance teacher may be included in the IEP review process to offer his/her insights into the student's capabilities and behaviors. To that end, maintaining open communication with a student's classroom teacher regarding a student's progress in your classroom will serve to inform the IEP development process.

Getting Involved in the IEP Process

The dance educator's participation in the implementation of a child's IEP begins with access to IEP documents. Chapter 408 provides for all educators and related service providers directly involved with the implementation of an IEP to have a copy of the full IEP, which articulates the student's learning goals. Read through the documents and become familiar with its language and format. As you read, you note specific children whose IEP goals you already address in dance class. Conversely, are there children whose goals you have not yet addressed who will benefit from your support? It is advisable to become familiar with the key aspects of each IEP. The next step is to communicate with the student's teachers and/or providers to share your experiences with the child. Seek advice from your colleagues, and offer your own suggestions for addressing the child's goals. In addition, share any evidence you have that supports a student's progress toward meeting IEP goals. IEP goals are based solely upon providing a student with the targeted instruction needed to succeed academically. The instructional goals of the dance educator can support the student in building skills which promote academic progress and meeting IEP goals.

* Memorandum, NYCDOE Office of Special Education Initiatives, re: "Children First Reforms in Special Education effective July 1, 2007." Date issued: September 12, 2007.

Familiarity with a student’s IEP provides insights that can help you infuse appropriate goals and activities to support children’s growth, and to more fully integrate your dance program into the school community.

The table below provides sample instructional goals and activities.

Sample IEP-Aligned Dance Instructional Goals and Suggested Teaching Strategies*

IEP DANCE GOAL	Objective	Teaching Strategy
Improve dynamic balance.	Student will balance for 10 seconds on alternate legs in a variety of shapes: pointed, curved, leaning, twisted.	Incorporate several dynamic balances into the class warm up and set dance pieces, increasing the length of the stillness to 10 seconds.
Recall dance sequences with stylistic detail.	Student will learn and/or create dances comprised of a series of four 8-count phrases. Students will recall this dance, and perform it in sequence with considerable stylistic detail.	Teach a dance comprised of at least four 8-count phrases. Scaffold the dance making process as students create their own dances. Teach stylistic detail including use of weight, body position, time, and space.
Understand and use personal space.	Student will maintain personal space during warm up and when moving through the dance space at least 80% of the time.	Create freeze dances and improv games designed to help students move through general space, using a variety of pathways and locomotor movements, without bumping into each other.
Make smooth transitions between individual and ensemble work.	Student will consistently move from individual to ensemble work with minimal teacher support.	Build time for individual improvisation into ensemble dances. Provide explicit musical cues to support dancers’ transitions.

* Chart: Sandra Stratton-Gonzalez

Arthur Elgort



Dance Education Targeted Strategies for all Categories of Special Learners

Adapted from Fritz Redl*

The renowned psychologist Fritz Redl famously said: “Children must get plenty of love and affection whether they deserve it or not ... gratifying life situations cannot be made the bargaining tools of educational or even therapeutic motivation, but must be kept tax-free as minimal parts of the youngsters’ diet, irrespective of the problems of deservedness.” Redl identified 16 strategies that help educators to support productive learning behaviors in students with a variety of special needs:

1. Proximity Control

Move around the dance room to better observe and make corrections. Calmly stand near students who are having difficulties or who may be tempted to engage in misbehavior. Students on the periphery of the dance classroom or the back may tend to lose focus. It is good practice to have these students change places so that no one remains on the outskirts for an entire lesson.

2. Touch

Physical touch to correct alignment is a standard dance education strategy. Some students, especially those who have experienced physical or sexual abuse, may have strong reactions to being touched. Others may seek excessive closeness and touch inappropriately. Early in the semester, when you present dance class routines, explain that you may use touch to make corrections. Before you touch a student announce your intention. If the student asks you not to, honor his/her request and use another strategy.

3. Planful Ignoring

Sometimes it is best to ignore mildly challenging behavior, especially if it is being done for attention. Be sure it is safe to do this and that you can continue to ignore it, even if it escalates. Also be sure to pay attention when the student is on task. Praise the rest of the students for appropriate behavior as a way of modeling expectations for the student having difficulty, and to make it clear to the ignored student that he/she would be welcomed back as soon as they choose to rejoin. Use indirect, third person references to the student, such as “When Danny returns to the group, he can help us tap out the rhythm.”

4. Signal Interference

You can use nonverbal signals, such as gestures, facial expressions, sounds, and call and response clapping to call the class or individuals to attention or prompt appropriate behavior. This is most successful in the early stages of misconduct and can prevent incidents from escalating.

5. Emotional Drain Off

A child who is upset may need an opportunity to verbalize his or her frustration in order to prevent acting it out. This may need to be done in a corner of the dance room or outside the door to avoid distracting other students. You may need to delegate this responsibility to another adult in the room while you are conducting class for the rest of the students.

6. Humor

Kind, genial humor can reassure students and diffuse anxiety. Sarcasm and ridicule are abusive and have no place in teaching.

7. Hurdle Help

Sometimes students misbehave when they do not know how to cope with some aspect of the work. Provide individual assistance, such as pre-correcting an unfamiliar movement at the beginning of the assignment to prevent misconduct.

8. Diversion and Re-Direction

When there is over-excitement or the potential for challenging behavior, it can be helpful to change the nature of the activity or music, or to redirect students to a new focus or spatial formation. Routine procedures work particularly well for redirection.

9. Support from Routines

Consistent daily management and organization are the best tools to support positive behavior. Students with disabilities can feel secure when dance class begins with a familiar warm-up sequence. Certain procedures, such as having students take their assigned floor space or freeze in their current place, can be rehearsed and effectively used as necessary for re-direction.

10. Direct Appeal

Clearly state what you expect students to do, rather than what you don't want them to do. If students do not comply after two directives, use another approach.

11. Conflict Resolution outside the Dance Room

When a student is a danger to self or others or severely disrupts the ongoing program it may be necessary to remove the child from the dance studio with adult supervision, in alignment with the school's crisis intervention procedures. This is a time for the student to regain self-control and discuss the problem and alternative ways of coping. Students should be welcomed back to the dance class when they are ready to participate again. They may need re-direction to the current activity and a reminder of expectations.

12. Encouragement Rather Than Criticism

Catching a student being good is a more effective way to shape behavior than criticism. Praise should be concrete and specific and state what the student is doing well. Even when you give a correction, be sure to let the student know what you want them to do instead of what you do not want them to do. The supportive tone you set will help students learn to have supportive and constructive interactions with each other.

13. Anticipation Planning

A discussion of what a new situation may be like or what limitations may be anticipated may enable students to feel more relaxed in the face of a novel or challenging event, such as an observer in class, rehearsal in a new space, or performance.

14. Setting Limits

Do not be afraid to say "no" when the situation warrants. Be firm and calm. It can be very reassuring for students to have the adult set limits. Provide students with information regarding why their request is not appropriate so that there is a learning outcome. When appropriate, suggest an appropriate alternate choice that will also be agreeable to the student. This helps avoid power struggles with some students.

15. Reinforcement

Use reinforcement to recognize and promote appropriate behavior. One of the most powerful reinforcers is your attention. You might also use a point system, especially if it is used in the rest of the program. Another powerful reinforcer is to ask students who are on task or doing an assignment particularly well to demonstrate.

16. Consequences, Not Threats

When a student persists in misbehaving you can clearly and calmly state the consequences of their choices, acknowledging that they have the power to choose. Dance students may be required to maintain a reasonable, objectively measured standard of behavior in order to participate in a performance or go on a field trip. Give students the responsibility of earning these rewards, rather than threatening to take them away. Threats put the locus of control on the adult; consequences encourage responsible decision-making on the part of students.

* This version of Redl's Strategies was based on the original adaptation by Dr. Nicholas Long and Dr. Ruth Newman in *Conflict in the Classroom* (1965). **Fritz Redl** (1902-1988) was a pioneer in the field of education and treatment of youngsters with severely challenging behaviors. He combined psychodynamic insight with practical strategies to create humane and effective interventions for working with children and youth who have chronic disruptive behavior disorders. His insights and interventions remain the standard in the field today, more than 50 years after the publication of his most widely known book, *Controls From Within: Techniques for the Treatment of the Aggressive Child*.

Briana Blasko



The 4 B's, developed by dance therapist Rena Kornblum, are a child-friendly way to teach self-calming skills and spatial awareness, especially as they relate to the school environment. Dance educators can use these strategies in their own classes or share them with classroom teachers. The pre- and post-assessment forms on the following two pages are helpful in measuring progress in self-calming and sharing space.

The 4 B's of Self-Settling

Brakes

Catch the energy and squeeze it, pushing the heels of your hands together. You should feel it in your chest, arms, and shoulders. **Do not** intertwine fingers.



Breathing

Take three slow abdominal breaths, raising your arms up and out each time you inhale or breathe in.



Brain

Rest your hands on your head, close your eyes, take another breath, and as you exhale, tell yourself "I can calm down." Feel the weight of your hands as they rest on your head.



Body

Put your hands on your chest and feel your body get calm and quiet.



Disarming the Playground; Violence Prevention Through Movement & Pro-Social Skills
By Rena Kornblum for Hancock Center for Dance/Movement Therapy, Inc.
rena@hancockcenter.net www.hancockcenter.net

Spatial Awareness

Space Bubbles - Examples



LARGE SPACE:

Definition: Space as large as arms can reach in all directions.

Examples: can be used at recess and during gym



MEDIUM SPACE:

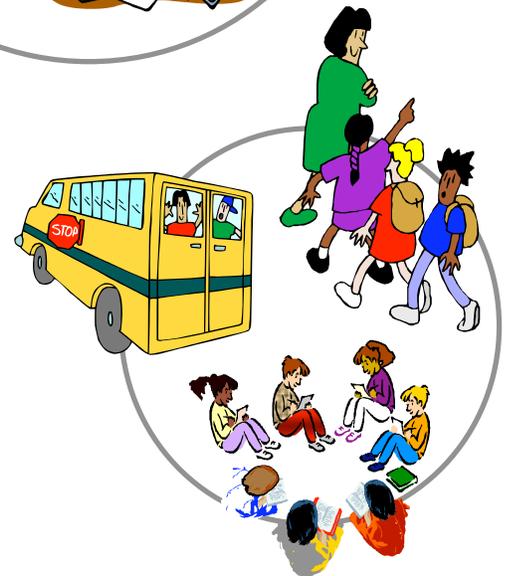
Definition: Space that extends to the size of your elbows when your hands are on your hips.

Examples: can be used during class time, walking around the classroom, eating lunch

SMALL SPACE:

Definition: Space right next to your body or one hand's length away from your body

Examples: needed during rug time, when walking down the hall, or in crowded places



Movement Activities for Self-Control and Spatial Awareness
Pre-Intervention Teacher Assessment Form

Instructions: Please use the following checklist to indicate behaviors you have observed for this child.
 Circle (1) for behaviors seen “Not at All.”
 Circle (2) for behaviors observed “Sometimes.”
 Circle (3) for behaviors that are seen “Frequently.”

Student: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ School: _____

	Not At All	Sometimes	Frequently
Has difficulty lining up	1	2	3
Has difficulty standing in line	1	2	3
Has difficulty walking in line	1	2	3
Stands or sits too close to others	1	2	3
Moves body parts into other people’s personal space	1	2	3
Leans on others	1	2	3
Pushes or shoves others	1	2	3
Fidgets with hands and feet	1	2	3
Squirms while sitting	1	2	3
Has difficulty calming down when requested	1	2	3
Has difficulty focusing on work	1	2	3
Is involved in verbal arguments with others	1	2	3
Is involved in physical fights with others	1	2	3

Movement Activities for Self-Control and Spatial Awareness

Post-Intervention Teacher Assessment Form

Instructions: Please use the following checklist to indicate behaviors you have observed for this child.

Circle (1) for behaviors seen “Not at All.”

Circle (2) for behaviors observed “Sometimes.”

Circle (3) for behaviors that are seen “Frequently.”

Student: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____ School: _____

	Not At All	Sometimes	Frequently
Has difficulty lining up	1	2	3
Has difficulty standing in line	1	2	3
Has difficulty walking in line	1	2	3
Stands or sits too close to others	1	2	3
Moves body parts into other people’s personal space	1	2	3
Leans on others	1	2	3
Pushes or shoves others	1	2	3
Fidgets with hands and feet	1	2	3
Squirms while sitting	1	2	3
Has difficulty calming down when requested	1	2	3
Has difficulty focusing on work	1	2	3
Is involved in verbal arguments with others	1	2	3
Is involved in physical fights with others	1	2	3

Targeted Dance Instructional Strategies for Specific Categories of Special Learners

Emotional and Behavioral Challenges

Avoid surprises. Maintain consistency in instructional and behavioral expectations. Provide prior notification of changes in routines, whenever possible. Acknowledge students' ability to adapt to a change with positive reinforcement.

Post dance studio rules written clearly in large print, where all students can see them for easy reference (see Rules, Routines and Incentives, p. 29).

Modify the environment to minimize distractions. Close the door to the hallway, and the windows if it is noisy outside the dance room. You may want to cover the mirrors at times to enable students to increase the focus on their physical movement experience.

Create a designated place for constructive breaks from dance class activities. Students with emotional and behavioral challenges need a highly structured environment (see CORE PRINCIPLE #2, p. 17). This greatly enhances their self-control. Unrestricted spatial movement in the studio may encourage inappropriate behavioral choices and disrupt the rest of your class period.

Plan the distribution, sharing, and collection of props and/or instruments you may use in the dance lesson. Discuss the parameters of how these are to be used beforehand.

Reinforce positive behaviors and responses with specific, immediate feedback. For example, you might say, "Excellent concentration, James" or "Good effort on your plié, Tamika. I see you are thinking about your turnout."

Acknowledge students' needs at all times. For instance, if you know that a student responds poorly to loud music or close proximity to other students, take this into account when you plan your activities so that the student has an alternative route to participation.

Vary movement energy to help create a focused environment with built in breaks and rest time. Pacing the energy use is one of the best classroom management tools at the dance teacher's disposal. Too much slow movement for too long or too much unremitting high-energy movement will cause some students to stop, lose interest, and behave inappropriately as a result.

Integrate student suggestions into dance activities whenever it is appropriate. Respect the student's contribution by incorporating the suggestion if it makes sense within the lesson. This may lead to a teachable moment (e.g., "Let's try it José's way—how is that different from what we were doing?"). Do not do this if the suggestion is out of bounds or dangerous, but ask the class why it might not be possible to try it. Alternately, let the class know that you are saving this interesting suggestion to explore in the next lesson. Make sure to follow through.

Plan time for exploration and improvisation whenever appropriate. Exploration can be used productively in technique class as well as in creative dance making activities. However, the freedom of improvisation can be anxiety provoking for some students. Provide the class with more structured dance activities to reduce anxiety if this is the case.

Cognitive or Developmental Challenges

Consider the *Blueprint* benchmarks in relation to students' abilities. For example, a 2nd grade benchmark for dance literacy may be appropriate for certain older students with severe developmental delays. Assess students' capacities against the benchmarks, plan instruction using the appropriate benchmarks (these may differ among strand and even within a strand) and assess progress accordingly. You can still teach through the five strands while moving between benchmarks to address students' abilities.

Ask students to rephrase, retell, and/or physically demonstrate to assess comprehension. Don't assume that students have understood you. Appropriate movement demonstration will show you that they have absorbed the concept. Their ability to rephrase (rather than repeat exactly) is also an indication that they have understood.

Break tasks into small steps, giving directions orally, visually, and in writing. Memory and sequencing of complex movement tasks may be a challenge for these students, provoking frustration and acting out. Give students smaller chunks of information, allow them to practice each bit, and then put the pieces together.

Describe and explain new concepts in several different ways, abbreviating and simplifying when needed. Images, words, and movement experiences are received by different students in different ways. What is clear to one student may not be clear to another, so find varied images, synonyms, and movement activities to impart the concept.

Elicit imitative and modeling responses through movement demonstration. Dance teachers do this authentically as part of the art form. Demonstrate several times and break the movement into smaller components if necessary. Students may demonstrate an approximate response based on their motoric/physical ability.

Elicit responses through the use of visual prompts. These may include using supporting images or gestures to accompany your questions or instructions.

Foster students' sense of personal security when assigning individual warm-up spots in the studio. For instance, some students may need to be placed near the teacher to feel secure.

Develop students' concept of "self" by praising accomplishments with specific feedback. This is important for all students, but especially so for cognitively or developmentally impaired students, who often may not receive praise. Take the student's developmental status and appropriate learning and behavioral goals into account when considering what outcomes merit praise for the student.

Provide extended time for the completion of class work, tests, or large projects, as needed. Students with cognitive challenges often need extra time to complete an assignment, whether a written or a movement task. Given this extra time, they may be capable of excellent work.

Document student accomplishments through photographs and videos. Students love to see evidence of their achievement. Post their work when possible at all stages (process and final product), in the dance classroom and the hallways. This is a general tenet of good instruction and it is affirming for all students, but especially so for this group, who often have low self-esteem.

Chapter 3: Targeted Supports for Dance Education *continued*

Allow students with listening comprehension challenges to borrow notes from a peer, in class or via e-mail, and/or provide students with an outline of the lesson. This gives slow writers and students who do not remember sequences easily a written reference for the lesson content.

Allow students with writing challenges to use a computer with specialized software to check spelling, grammar, and recognize speech. Ask your school whether these programs are available for use in your dance room. Student may need to utilize an alternate way of reporting, based on their individual challenges. Students at a pre-writing level will need a different way of reporting, such as through drawing

Use videotapes of prior class sessions to help illustrate lesson content. Many students are visual learners. Seeing themselves and their classmates on video is more effective for them than words in tying your unit lessons together.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Adhere to established classroom and behavioral structures so that students with attention deficits may increase their ability to demonstrate “first/then” sequences.

Repeat realistic expectations in each session. Gauge your expectations by the learning pace of the students. Small steps may denote major progress. It is far better for students to succeed often in small ways than to fail often because expectations are unrealistic.

Define and reinforce appropriate behaviors and expectations on an ongoing basis. Students with attention deficits are easily distracted and may have poor self-control. Reinforcing them often when they focus and are calm provides an incentive for them to increase self-control.

Post the plan for sequence, spacing, and content for rehearsals. Events that have numerous scheduled components are difficult to remember for all students, but especially for students with attention deficits. A visual posting aids these students in managing their expectations and focusing on the sequence of tasks.

Enumerate and articulate benefits of completing tasks. This addresses the pronounced tendency of ADHD students to live in the present without considering future results of their actions. Understanding what an activity leads to may help these students concentrate and stay on task.

Start with short tasks and gradually lengthen as students increase their ability to complete assignments. This allows students to experience success at completing a task. Success with recognition builds motivation.

Embed information into students’ short-term memory by providing **frequent repetition** of key content, verbally, visually, and through physical demonstration. **Clarify content by using text** posted on chart paper, bulletin board, white board, and/or SMART board to aid recall.

Teach and reinforce social skills through repertoire and group dance making. Group dance making encourages cooperation, turn-taking, fluid passing of leadership, sharing ideas, and working as a unit toward a goal. Rehearsal of repertoire involves ensemble skills, such as concentration, focus, respecting your own and others’ space, memorizing your part, being aware of yourself and others, dancing in unison, dancing with partners, using peripheral vision, and listening for musical cues. Discussing each skill as it comes up enhances these social skill sets in attention-challenged students.

Teach repertoire that enhances character development and self-esteem. Repertoire here refers in its broader sense not only to set choreography or traditional dances, but to creative dance structures and the daily selection of movement elements.

Discuss the relevance of the content to students' lives and experience. Craft targeted questions that lead the students to make these connections, such as: "When you feel restless, how do you move? How else could you perform this back-and-forth movement pattern to express restlessness? How could we make this into a set dance?" Such building from the inside out implies one's inner thoughts and perceptions are of value—to oneself and to others.

Embed assessments for student learning and understanding throughout the lesson. This principle of good instruction is especially important for the attention-challenged population, since an unfocused student can miss whole pieces of a lesson. Embedding opportunities to assess comprehension throughout will allow the dance teacher to catch these gaps before they accumulate.

Provide reinforcement, such as social praise, for completing assignments. Provide immediate specific feedback and praise for in-class achievement and desired behavior.

Be informed as to whether and when a student receives medication to increase his/her capacity to regulate impulsive responses, and in what ways the medication may affect behavior.

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Use clearly structured dance activities. Classroom routines such as entering, taking places, order of the class, and where information is posted should be explicitly taught and consistently employed. This provides a sense of security that can significantly reduce behavioral problems.

Give advance notice of transitions. Notify students prior to each transition: "Soon we will finish the barre exercises. Then we will put the barres away and take our center spots." Provide simple, clear instructions for each activity prior to engaging students in it: "We will take turns in the next activity. Tania will dance first, then Louis will dance."

Use concrete, explicit instructions. Use concrete language rather than abstract language: "Reach as high as your arms can stretch upward," rather than "Reach so high you can touch the sky." Use similes rather than metaphors: "Prowl like a cat does," rather than "Imagine you are a cat prowling." The child with an ASD is likely to be a concrete thinker: "I can't touch the sky," and "I'm not a cat, I'm a person."

Support verbal instructions with pictures and modeling, and post schedules in both words and pictures. Model your dance instruction physically (or have a student do so) so that the student with an ASD can see what the instruction looks like in action. Make use of graphic images such as motif symbols, drawings, diagrams, and photographs, so that visual learning supports kinesthetic learning.

Create simple songs to support dance warm-ups and instruction. A song can serve as a sort of mnemonic device, connecting a student with an ASD to a particular dance activity. Singing about what you are doing while you are doing it and labeling actions as they occur can support language development.

Design dance activities to help develop understanding of nonverbal communication and emotional literacy. Build the use of nonverbal cues into your dance activities to support development of this capacity. Follow the Leader movement games and Call and Response dances are examples of such activities. Ask students to notice and de-

scribe how different body shapes, movement dynamics, and formations communicate emotions or intentions. Folk and square dances that incorporate social interaction can help develop sensitivity to nonverbal social cues.

Provide opportunities for parallel interaction before attempting face to face interaction. Students with an ASD often have trouble with direct interaction and eye contact. Allow them to become comfortable working side by side with a partner and work over time toward facing their partner. Some students may not be prepared for partner activities that involve touch. Consult the student's IEP and the special education colleagues in your school to determine the degree of this sensitivity and how it should be addressed.

Provide extensive supports for group work. If a paraprofessional or co-teacher is present consult with them about how they can assist during group work. A student who is not ready to participate appropriately with other children in a group activity may be able to participate with the adult as their partner. Simple dances in unison to rhythmic music and props such as hoops and pieces of material can be used to connect students.

Orthopedic or Other Physical Challenges

Consult a physical or occupational therapist when planning use of classroom space. Ensure accessibility for entering and exiting classroom and performance spaces.

Adapt props and instruments with materials such as Velcro, elastic, foam padding, texturized rubber grips and handles in various sizes and shapes, etc. to enhance students' ability to participate.

Create dance-making opportunities that will strengthen motor skills and build students' reduced or limited strength. This may be done in consultation with assigned occupational and physical therapists who can inform you about students' designated IEP goals.

Use inclusive language in movement instructions. For instance, instead of "Please stand up," say "Please rise". The latter instruction can be interpreted in diverse ways by students with various physical/orthopedic disabilities.

Modify interpretation of the *Blueprint* indicators, taking the student's physical and developmental challenges into account. For instance, a student who uses a wheelchair and has motor and visual impairment may benefit from imagery and appropriate gentle, light touch to indicate direction of movement and increase mobility and strength in the head, neck, and torso. Music and rhythm can also elicit a wider range of motion. The indicators for strength, coordination, and flexibility should be assessed in relation to the student's motor limitations.

Create alternative modifications of dance exercises so that students with specific motor impairments can do alternative versions of movements that the rest of the class is doing. This can help students in both inclusion and self-contained classes to feel that they are included as equal participants. When creating these alternative modifications of movements, **use the core elements of dance analysis: Body, Dynamics, Space, Relationships.** Provide an alternative path for the student to participate in movements that address the same elements of dance as the movements you are doing with the rest of the class. Some examples of this approach are:

- A student who uses a wheelchair and has limited upper-body flexibility or limb extension can participate within his/her movement range in stretches (extension and flexion within student's range of motion), port de bras (head, arm, hand, or finger moving through curved or straight pathways in the air), pliés and brushes (do with the arms/hands), traveling movements (travel the pathway in the chair), turns (turn/spin in the chair). Some of these movements may need the assistance of a para. Movement intention can be expressed by this student in the way that all students would, by using the head and face or focusing the gaze near or far. This can be a very full dance experience that demonstrates understanding and can be assessed.



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- A student who has a missing or underdeveloped limb can participate fully if you make the intention of the movement clear. For instance, is this arm movement drawing a direct or indirect path through the air? If you articulate the intention clearly, the student with a shortened arm will be able to execute this movement within the range of his/her own body.
- A student who has motor coordination challenges can strive to achieve the dynamics of a movement if you explicitly articulate this element. It may be a distinct achievement for this student to move in a slow, sustained dynamic, for instance, or to connect movements in a smooth transition from one to the next. An explosive, sudden dynamic may give this particular student an avenue for immediate success. Simpler versions of complex steps may be appropriate to both challenge this student and extend his/her motor capabilities.

Note: Students with various physical challenges may be capable of movement that is uniquely beautiful because of the particular shape of their body, the concentration and focus necessary for them to produce the movement, or the individual quality of their movement. You have the wonderful opportunity to celebrate these achievements by sharing them with the rest of the class in a positive framework. Make sure that the physically challenged student is comfortable with sharing **first**. Handled sensitively, with accountable talk parameters established, and with positive reinforcement for all students in the class, this activity can model the kind of mutual respect, appreciation, admiration, and caring that we would like all of our students to exhibit toward others.

Speech and Language Challenges

Utilize visual, aural, and movement prompts to initiate verbal and movement responses. Get into the habit of using multiple modalities to present movements and movement concepts, and to elicit student performance.

Employ movement activities to build cognitive understanding of dance concepts while developing language capacity. Repeat names of movements or concepts while performing them, and have student do so as well. This enhances mind/body connections and serves as a physical mnemonic device.

Modify range of response choices to increase clarity and encourage participation. Give students clear options and parameters for how they may respond so that students feel comfortable and secure. **Model and provide examples** of the desired forms of response. For instance, when responding to a peer performance, first model the desired mode of starting a response with “I noticed that ...” Hearing other students state their response in this way makes it easier for students with speech challenges to venture an opinion. For students who do not feel ready to speak, they might write their response and hear another student read it aloud.

Use a microphone to encourage oral responses. Modeling a loud, clearly audible teacher’s voice can serve as a prompt for students to speak more clearly.

Hearing Challenges

Place students near the primary sound source. Hearing-impaired students can feel vibrations from the bass speaker even if they have no appreciation of sound per se. Change the groupings or facings to facilitate this.

Encourage students to use their peripheral vision and to take movement cues from their peers. This skill is central to dancing with others and especially to dancing in an ensemble. Some hearing-challenged students may have keenly developed visual acuity and memory, which can not only serve them well, but also benefit others in the class/ensemble. You have an opportunity to affirm these students by acknowledging their abilities in these areas.

Clearly demonstrate the rhythm of the movement and the underlying pulse, using gesture for emphasis. Hearing-challenged students can pick up the rhythm of a combination of movements from the relative speed and use of effort. Utilize a variety of effort qualities and movement sensation to enhance rhythmic vibrations.

Explore class activities that promote group interactions and responsiveness. These include **activities like** improvisations that require awareness of a partner or a group—such as group breathing, follow the leader, flocking, mirroring—and dancing in strict unison with consistent spacing, using visual cues.

Use an amplifier—such as a personal amplification system, FM system, or a hearing aid—for students with moderate hearing loss, as specified in the IEP.

Incorporate software to create visualizations of rhythmic/movement patterns, and an **overhead projector or video projection** to display movement content.

Visual Challenges

Monitor safety in the dance studio. Maintain the dance studio to allow easy movement throughout the room and keep it free of clutter. Ensure that the student is made familiar with the physical layout of the dance studio and its contents at the beginning of the semester. Alert the student if anything in the physical layout has changed.

Place the student toward the front of the dance room closer to the teacher.

Describe movements verbally while demonstrating them. Add audio enhancement for visual directions.

Use tactile props to enhance dance learning—curved, straight, soft, hard, heavy, light, etc.

Provide sequential dance learning opportunities to enhance memory.

Assign a buddy to be a resource to the student in each class. This is also instructive for the assigned student.

Use enlarged print where possible, and **highly contrasted colors** for paper and written text. Use a **Braille printer and Braille translation software** (so that you can read the student's written assignments) as specified in the IEP.

Twice-Exceptional Students

Twice-exceptional students are characterized as being **gifted and talented in conjunction with being cognitively, behaviorally, physically, or perceptively challenged**. Effective teaching practices engage students intellectually and embed targeted applications specific to their needs with constructive, discipline-based practices. Each learning strand in the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance* supports the other, and also provides stimulating, spiraled challenges for gifted and talented students. Consult the strategies listed above when developing adaptations and modifications for these students that can address their specific disability while simultaneously moving them forward toward their age-appropriate *Blueprint* benchmarks. For instance, Janice has cognitive delays but is flexible, well-coordinated, rhythmic, and kinetically imaginative. She comes alive when moving. You notice that she has trouble with right-left differentiation, sequencing and memory. Address her delays by using multiple modes of delivery, teaching in smaller chunks, partnering her with a buddy, and providing her with several acceptable ways to respond (physical demonstration,

oral, written, pictorial). Provide opportunities for Janice's gifts to shine in improvisations, in demonstration of individual movements, and as a leader in contributing original movement to a group piece.

Carlos has motor challenges and Tamika has behavioral challenges, but both are intellectually gifted. Enable both students to show their brilliance in class discussions and research presentations. Support Carlos by modifying dance movements to gently challenge his range of motion and coordination. Support Tamika in better dance class behavior choices by setting very clear parameters and individual behavioral goals, conferring individual specific praise when she has earned it, and fairly administering pre-agreed-upon consequences when she breaks classroom rules and etiquette.

Source: Pages 56-63 are based in part on pages 67-69 of the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Music*, PreK-12. New York City Department of Education, 2nd ed., 2008.



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Chapter 4: Intensive Supports for Dance Education

Intensive supports are crisis intervention strategies designed to address intractable behavioral challenges that have not responded to universal or targeted supports. Intensive interventions may be applied with individual students, or may affect a curriculum redesign for an entire class.





Chapter 4: Intensive Supports for Dance Education

RESPOND, REFLECT, REVISE! – Intensive Supports Applied to an Entire Class

Dance teachers are by the nature of their work great improvisers and flexible, creative thinkers. Revising the entry points that you use with a particular class, in response to an assessment of student engagement on the continuum of behaviors from constructive to disruptive, is a hallmark of good instruction. When a class as a whole is repeatedly not on task, engaging in unproductive behaviors, distracted, and out of control, despite the universal and targeted supports you have put into place, it helps to go back and reflect on the content you are presenting and the mode of presentation. For instance, a class that is not ready to handle collaborative work or detailed correction may respond well to repetitive rhythmic dancing. **Consult the *Blueprint benchmarks*** and reroute your pathway to the indicators.

When Nothing Seems to Work

There are times when full body movement of any kind is the trigger for generalized chaotic energy, creating an unsafe and nonproductive learning atmosphere. At this juncture it is important not to allow discouragement and disillusion to pervade the view of the group.

It becomes necessary to **backtrack through your dance curriculum goals/objectives**, choose one to focus on, and then break that single element into smaller increments. For example, if students in general space are constantly talking and touching each other with total disregard for the teacher's directions, then shift the expectation that children are able to move in the space together at the same time. We often assume, from prior experiences, a level of autonomy that may or may not exist. Begin by having only one or two students skip, run, and freeze in a shape. Choose students who are calm and quiet (even for a moment) to take a turn. In a class of 25 this can take a while, but it emphasizes the importance of respectful interactions and sends a clear message that complete chaos will not be tolerated.

Those waiting and watching may sing, clap, tap toes, play air piano, etc., but may not talk. When all students are able to wait for their turn and successfully take their turn add another element. This slow building to achieve a baseline working atmosphere is an important step toward self and group awareness. Throughout this process, make an attempt to use little or no verbal instruction. One part of the lesson flows continuously into the next through the varied pre-planned music, songs, chants, poetry, visual prompts, and touch signals. Complete ongoingness allows attention to stay more on track with fewer opportunities for disruption.

When students as individuals and as members of the group begin to sense a feeling of self-restraint and purposeful participation, teacher and students can build slowly on this positive accomplishment.

Alternative Activities for Students with Disabilities in the Dance Class

Although differentiated teaching/learning should not separate students from the main lesson, there are times when some students need less direct stimulation from full-bodied movement so they may gain a sense of control and self regulation in order to return to the group. Prepare **alternative activities** to engage learners who are not ready to participate in the lesson yet are able to remain in the room with guidance from a para or assistant teacher. Alternative activities are those that relate in some way to the lesson or to dance/movement in general yet have minimal impact for disrupting the class as a whole. Examples include:

- **Drawing dance images** on a very large piece of paper cut from a brown or white roll. Limit the number of crayons or markers so that these do not become distracting as play objects.
- **Picture books about dance, biographies, dance-based fiction.** Provide Post-its to bookmark favorite pages. Reserve a time for sharing with the rest of the class.
- **Motif symbols on small cards** which can be affixed to a surface (magnetic, tape, glue stick, Velcro). Prior knowledge of motif symbols is not as important for students as having related materials to manipulate and engage with. Motif “tic-tac-toe” is also helpful to have prepared.
- **Sorting pictures of dancers** in clear actions, such as jumping, running, stretching, partnering, turning, etc. Students then sort these into boxes or envelopes marked with each action using a word, symbols or picture. For students to sustain this activity there must be at least a total of 50 pictures.
- **Observation chart listing positive behaviors.** A student may be given the task to look for positive behaviors demonstrated in the class—such as how many times students looked at the teacher when directions were being given, and maintained personal space during the class—and check them off on the chart. This task gives the student a sense of helping, and even though some students may be incapable of exhibiting these behaviors, they are often able to observe them in others.
- **Students as photographers and videographers.** A student who may be completely incapable of listening and participating as part of group may respond to the responsibility of using a camera. This strategy must be used in a limited way so that it never seems that we are “rewarding” students who are using inappropriate means of finding attention.

If children wish to return or take a break from the alternative activity to participate appropriately in the dance session, they may transfer focus back and forth until a time when the need for the alternate activity is less or no longer needed. The goal is to slowly extend the time that a student is able to focus on the lesson and for all students to value the whole group experience.

Intensive Supports for Individual Students

The goal of an intensive intervention is to defuse conflict, provide clear avenues and supports for positive behavior patterns, and redirect challenging or disruptive behaviors for the safety and well-being of all students. When students' behavior disrupts learning for themselves and/or other students, or poses an immediate danger to themselves and/or their peers, immediate intervention is required. Below are examples of intensive, individualized supports, arranged from least to most intensive.

Dealing with Disruptive or Noncompliant Students in the Dance Classroom

- **Acknowledge** students who are behaving appropriately.
- **Direct on-task students to continue** with an ongoing activity, or begin an established routine procedure, such as sharing in small groups.
- **Take the noncompliant student aside** or send the other students elsewhere to decrease disruption and avoid possible contagion in the dance classroom.
- **Speaking to the student in private** reduces the stress on both the adult and the student in crisis. Use a quiet part of the classroom, or stand outside the door.
- **Actively listen** to what the student is saying with his/her words and actions
- **Ignore insults** and avoid arguments with the student.
- **Maintain respect and positive regard** for the student while setting **clear limits** on the inappropriate behavior.
- **Speak calmly** and assertively to the student.
- **Emphasize a positive outcome** for making the right choice rather than threatening or trying to force compliance.
- **Give the student space and time** to respond to your directives. Demanding that the student acquiesce immediately increases stress and decreases the chance the student will comply.

Calm the student using de-escalation strategies. These include:

- **Affirmation:** Acknowledge any positive action on the student's part, e.g., "Thank you for coming outside with me".
- **Validation:** If the student is upset recognize the reason for the student's distress, e.g., "I can understand how that could make you feel mad."
- **Decoding:** Connect the student's behavior to feelings, e.g., "So when you got angry at Joe, you started to swear out loud."

Intensive Crisis Intervention for Students who are Upset

Help the student understand and learn from what has happened:

- **Ask the student** to tell you what happened
- Use **active listening** techniques, such as reflecting, clarifying, and summarizing to get a clear picture of what happened
- **Help the student to organize** their perceptions, sequence events in time and clarify details
- Help the student, in a **supportive, nonjudgmental manner**, to see how his/her behavior contributed to the problem
- **Help the student to brainstorm** and decide on a better way to handle similar situations in the future

Intensive crisis intervention requires time and focus on the individual student. Dance educators, like all teachers, are responsible for the entire class. If you cannot take a student aside, delegate that responsibility to another educator in the classroom. If the crisis is beyond the scope of what the educators in the dance classroom can manage because it is too dangerous, unremitting or complex, you may need the assistance of a Crisis Intervention Teacher (CIT) or other trained staff. Find out what your school policy is for involving crisis intervention staff.

Functional Behavioral Assessment

All behavior has meaning. Students engage in misbehavior in order to meet a need. If we can discern the function of the misbehavior we can manage and ultimately change it. We need to ensure that the behavior does not achieve the identified function, and, equally importantly, we need to give the student a more socially acceptable way to meet the need. For example, if we have identified that a student who engages in disruptive behavior does so to get attention, the dance teacher should withhold attention in response to that behavior. Be sure to give ample attention when the student is on task. The process of identifying the function of a behavior is called **functional behavioral assessment**. Individual teachers engage in **informal functional behavioral assessment** all the time to inform how they address particular students and what alternative structures they might need to promote positive behaviors in their classroom.

Students who persistently engage in severely challenging behavior and who do not respond to Universal and Targeted strategies need **Intensive, Individualized Strategies** tailored to their unique strengths and needs. A **formal Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)** is the process used by a school to assess the student's behavior and develop an individualized **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)**. A **formal FBA** requires a **collaborative** team approach to problem solving. Please note that formal FBAs/BIPs are not arbitrarily conducted. Teachers must consult with the appropriate school administrator if they feel the need exists for this process.

No one educator can do it alone.

A formal FBA is a **systematic** investigation of a student's challenging behavior to determine **why** the student engages in the behavior and **what** triggers and maintains the behavior. This information is used to develop a three-part **Behavior Intervention Plan** to:

- Decrease the challenging behavior
- Teach a socially acceptable replacement behavior that achieves the function of the challenging behavior
- Develop a crisis plan to tell staff what to do when the challenging behavior occurs

A **Crisis Intervention** may be necessary before implementing a Behavior Intervention Plan when a student's behavior severely disrupts learning for themselves and/or other students, or poses an immediate danger to themselves and/or their peers. Immediate intervention is required, in two steps:

1. Calm the student, privately when possible.
2. Help the student understand what has happened.

Forms such as the **Frequency Chart** and the **ABC Chart** (see following pages) help the team to collect data on when and how often the behavior occurs and what happens immediately before and after the behavior. **ABC** is an acronym: **A = Antecedent** (What happened before?), **B = Behavior** (What does the child do?), **C = Consequences** (What happens after?). This information can help staff to figure out what triggers the behavior and why the student continues to behave in that way. The team also should consider **Long-Term Antecedents**: the student's social history and home situation, specific medical conditions, academic challenges, and strengths. The way the student thinks can also affect perceptions and influence behavior; the student may hold irrational beliefs. All these factors must be taken into account.

It is important when intervening to **Prioritize Behavior** and choose one behavior at a time to address:

1. List **all** behaviors of concern.
2. **Prioritize** according to:
 - Physical harm
 - Emotional harm
 - Property damage
 - Disruption of learning process
 - Stigmatization

The key to solving the problem the team has decided to address is to understand the **function** of the challenging behavior, i.e., what the student gains from it. Some common functions of challenging behavior are: attention, escape from unwanted demands and situations, sensory stimulation or stress reduction, and getting tangible items. The steps for implementing **Functional Behavior Assessment** are as follows:

1. Determine **why** the student engages in the behavior.
2. Determine **what** triggers and maintains the behavior.
3. Develop a behavior intervention plan.
4. Decrease the challenging behavior.
5. Teach a replacement behavior.
6. Respond to the challenging behavior.

Once a replacement behavior is taught, it must be reinforced. **Reinforcement** is anything that increases or strengthens a behavior. Sometimes educators unwittingly reinforce challenging behavior by giving attention or permitting the student to leave the room when that is what they want. Reinforcement can be used effectively in several ways:

Decrease challenging behavior

- Figure out what the child is getting from the behavior (e.g., attention, escape, sensory stimulus, tangibles).
- Eliminate or reduce that factor, thereby eliminating the reinforcement
- Be aware that when someone is used to getting reinforcement and that reinforcement is suddenly withdrawn the challenging behavior often increases. This is called the “response burst” and it is temporary.

Increase appropriate behavior

- Determine what your student wants. Develop a menu of reinforcers based on the student's preferences.
- Let the student earn reinforcers for behaviors you are trying to teach.

Chapter 4: Intensive Supports for Dance Education *continued*

Practical Tools

Reinforcement is most effective when:

- Available only after the positive behavior is performed
- Given immediately after the positive behavior
- Provided every time the behavior occurs to establish a new behavior during the initial stages of plan implementation
- Provided intermittently to maintain the positive behavior
- Reinforcement is clearly connected to the positive behavior
- There is enough reinforcement to reward the student but not so much the student is satiated and does not want more.

Behavior Intervention Plans are collaborative. All staff members who work with the student may be involved in the development of the plan and must consistently carry out the plan. The team should monitor the effectiveness of the plan and together determine and implement modifications as necessary.

Sometimes an informal consultation with colleagues can solve a problem without requiring a full FBA.

Your school's psychologist, nurse, and special education teachers are valuable resources as you plan your crisis intervention strategies for individual students. Consult with them about the student, so that you can share your varied insights and perspectives and arrive at a series of strategies that are shared and reinforced by all staff members that interact with the student.

If you work with students who need intensive, individual supports, you may want to take professional development courses in crisis intervention, such as Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) or Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) and Functional Behavioral Assessment. Ask your administrator about the availability of these courses.

You can receive in-depth training in crisis intervention strategies in professional development courses in Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) and Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) offered by District 75. For information, go to the District 75 PD Website: www.district75pd.org



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Chapter 4: Intensive Supports for Dance Education *continued*

Practical Tools

A-B-C Chart

Student's name: _____ Age/School/Grade: _____

Observed from ___/___/___ to ___/___/___ Completed by: _____

Behavior of concern: (be specific and clear) _____

Date/Start & end time	A=Antecedent: Location, activity, people, etc.	B=Behavior What did the child do?	C=Consequence What happened after the behavior	Observer's Initials

Use this form at the beginning of an FBA to document what happens immediately before and after the behavior of concern. This can help discover what is triggering and reinforcing the behavior. Use for only one behavior (e.g., hitting).

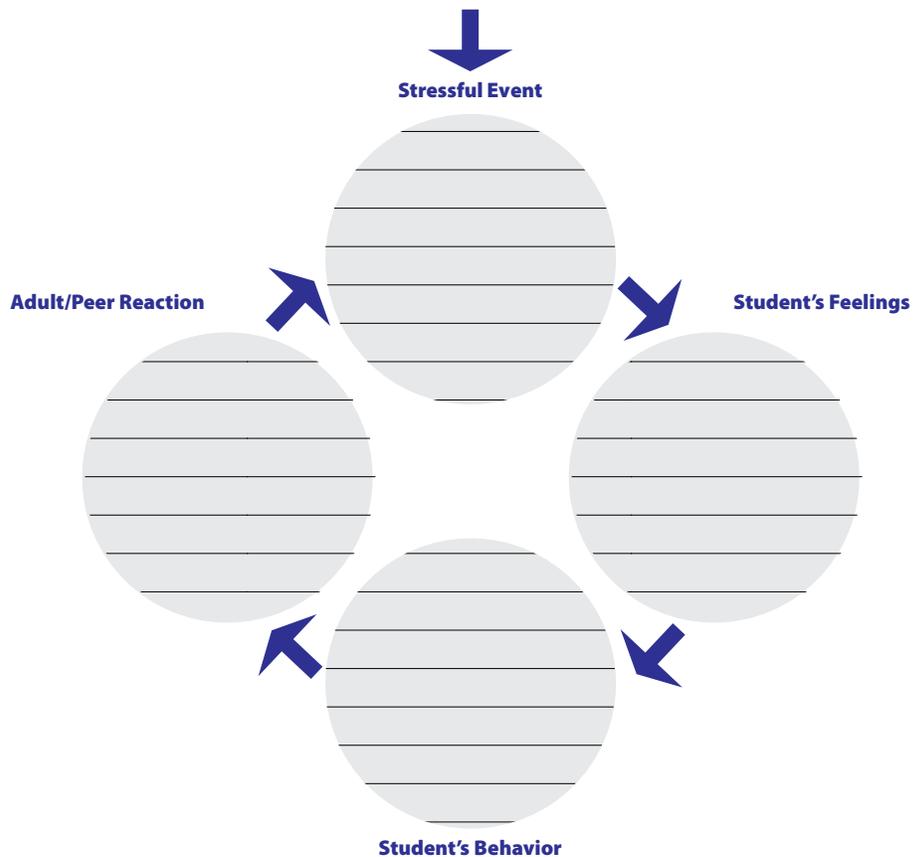
The Conflict Cycle

The diagram and accompanying reflective questions below form a useful tool for recording disruptive behaviors that lead to conflict. It can provide the record from which you can move ahead to plan your intensive support strategy.

- Write the elements of a conflict you have observed in the appropriate places in the diagram.
- What was the **stressful event**? (e.g., another student took the child's pencil.)
- What do you think the child was **feeling**? (For example, the student was angry or hurt.)
- What did the child **do**? (e.g., the child cursed at the other student and grabbed his arm.)
- What was the **adult/peer reaction**? (e.g., some children told him not to curse; the teacher reprimanded him.)
- What do you think the child was **thinking**? (e.g., I have to take care of myself; you can't trust teachers/adults to help you.)

Conflict Cycle Graphic Organizer*

Student's Self Concept and Irrational Beliefs



*Source: Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute

Dance Education Strategies For Students With Disabilities

Self-Reflection on Applying Strategies, Skills, and Understanding in the Classroom

What strategy did you use?

Did you adapt the strategy for your students?

If yes, how?

Describe how you utilized the strategy.

What was the outcome?

What did you learn?

Will you use this strategy again?

Why or why not?

Appendices

**APPENDIX A:
Lesson Plans
Lesson Analyses
Intervention Anecdotes**

**APPENDIX B:
Sample Scenarios
Resources**



Appendix A: Lesson Plans, Lesson Analyses, and Intervention Anecdotes

Elementary Lesson: K-1st Grade

UNIT Overview: The Spaghetti Dance (Four-Lesson Unit)

The Spaghetti Dance is a four-lesson unit which may lead to a performance that highlights the process of dance learning for K or 1st grade classes. The process, within the narrative structure, helps young children to sustain engagement and keeps them on task as the lesson progresses. The main focus is to experience the sensation of bound and free-flow of energy in the body. In kindergarten, descriptive language regarding these two feeling states is driven by input from the children such as “hard/soft” or “tight/loose.” In first grade, students learn to use the terms “bound” and “free” to describe the flow and movement quality. As a performance vehicle, it provides children with a repeatable “lived” experience through movement. Rehearsal of precise movements can become uninteresting for many students in kindergarten and first grade. Students will produce different material each time they revisit the story. This spontaneous creation is grounded by the narrative and shares a part of the process experience directly with the audience. The following lesson examples are framed as questions to guide the experience.

Grade 2 Dance Blueprint Benchmarks

Dance Making

- Articulate body parts shapes and actions.
- Control traveling and freezing, starting and stopping.
- Understand basic forms of relating to other dancers.
- Invent original body movements in response to music, images, words, ideas, or symbols.
- Use tools such as invented pictures and motif symbols to represent, manipulate, and remember dance experiences.

Dance Literacy

- Use descriptive language to distinguish between contrasting movements, both as performer and observer.
- Respond to action words and symbols.

Making Connections

- Apply dance concepts to the world outside the classroom.
- Understand personal space and its relation to safety and well-being.

Exploring Careers and Lifelong Learning

- Express pride in student dance performances.

Materials

- Drum and mallet, main action words written on chart paper, a variety of percussion instruments to complement the action of the story

Lesson 1: Sensation

Teacher asks: *Who likes to eat spaghetti? What does it feel like? Uncooked, cooked?*

Hold yours arms and legs tight and straight like uncooked spaghetti. How do your arms feel? Touch the muscles. What are they doing? Now let's try moving like cooked spaghetti. How can you describe the different feeling in your body? Try walking with uncooked spaghetti bodies. Now cooked. Repeat.

Preview Spaghetti Story, and choose individuals to be the characters (kids coming home from school and the box of spaghetti). Teacher directs activity and provides accompaniment with frame drum/mallet. This allows for maximum control of atmosphere and timing throughout the story.

Week 1 connection – Art teacher directs project in art room using pipe cleaners, yarn, and glue to create images using curved and straight lines.

Lesson 2: Narrative Components

(Characters, Setting, Action, Sequence)

Who are the characters in the story? What are the parts of the story? Who tells the story? If you could draw one part of the story, which part would it be?

After revisiting the Spaghetti narrative in movement, and identifying the parts and sequence of the story, students draw one part of the story using crayons and markers. In first grade, motif symbols are added to the movement sentence: ***Bend, wiggle, twist, flop, curve***

What does your spaghetti dance look like? Spaghetti freeze dance. Pause in relaxed shapes. Should be slightly “soft” to the touch. Have one student check using a gentle touch.

Week 2 connection – Classroom teacher reads *Strega Nona* by Tomie de Paola during a read-aloud session, or dance teacher reads at conclusion of class in studio.

Lesson 3: Flow

How does your energy flow from you to another? Let's see if a free flow dance can unlock the bound flow of a held shape. Two students demonstrate as they try it. One student is in a bound flow shape and another “unlocks” their movement until they are dancing with free flow together. Try with two large groups.

Week 3 connection – K/1 science teacher compares weight of cooked and uncooked spaghetti

Lesson 4: Sharing

How do we share our story with an audience?

This session becomes a rehearsal on stage or other performance/sharing space. Roles in the Spaghetti Dance are assigned. If there are some children who are still not able to sustain participation through the story, they may become musicians or cooks or other supporting roles that do not include movement of the whole body in space. Some students will also need an adult or older student to help them remain focused. Teacher continues to direct with the drum but other percussion (pitched or not) may be used.

Note: If time allows, in the dance studio or with the art teacher, drawings from each class are made into a published book of the Spaghetti Dance to be displayed in classrooms and library. These images may also be used as cover art for performance program, school newsletter or Website.

Spaghetti Dance Unit: Lesson 1, Expanded

Lesson 1: Sensation – Bound and Free Flow

Goals

- Experience the sensation of bound and free-flow of energy in the body through structured improvisation.
- Use descriptive language to identify sensation.
- Sustain participation throughout the narrative (focus and concentration).

These goals may be posted on chart paper as a class checklist to guide some students throughout the class and/or to reflect on the progress of our work that day.

The Spaghetti Dance

Action words (add these in class preview of activity and throughout activity)–Preview word: Listening

General or individual reminders about behavior: In general, the rule is two warnings; the third time the teacher has to speak to a student regarding inappropriate choices means sitting in “time out” (wall spot). After about five minutes students are invited to return. They are also offered an alternative activity in the lesson. With students who have exhibited very little self regulation, alternative roles in the lesson are offered first before “time out”. This may avoid setting up for failure, allowing students to feel valued yet not indulged.

Assigned places: Classroom teachers line up their classes in “dance order.” Students enter in this order and sit in assigned spots along the edges of the space. These places have been predetermined at the beginning of the school year (week one or two for 1st through 5th, and mid-year for K), and are designed to avoid distraction. This saves valuable time and provides a strong structure for children who view the once-per-week dance session as less important, or who become too over-stimulated by the open space to focus on the lesson. In these initial seats, most classes of children remove their shoes.

Demo before the warm-up: The demo clarifies directions for the whole group as one or two students model the activity. The sequence of the lesson is also previewed for those students who need to hear all of the information in a quieter, contained atmosphere before all are moving and reacting together.

Notice and compliment positive participation: Social appropriateness (“I really liked the way you moved over to give Tommy more personal space.”); on-task movement (“That ripple went through your whole body from head to toenail. Could you show that again?”), expected dance room behavior (“Compliments to Roman today. He is going to get a [check, sticker] if he keeps that focus and attention”).

Appendix A: Lesson Plans, Lesson Analyses, and Intervention Anecdotes *continued*

The Lesson: *Who likes to eat spaghetti? What does it feel like? Uncooked, cooked?*

Students respond with arms only, while seated.

Hold yours arms and legs tight and straight like uncooked spaghetti. How do your arms feel? Touch the muscles. What are they doing? Now let's try moving our arms like cooked spaghetti. How can you describe the different feeling in your body? Teacher captures responses on chart paper.

Try walking with uncooked spaghetti bodies. Now cooked. Repeat.

Preview **The Spaghetti Story** (by Catherine Gallant and students, 1999), and choose individuals to be the characters (kids coming home from school, the parent or caregiver, and the spaghetti). Teacher “reads” (must be memorized or posted so hands are free) the story activity and provides accompaniment with frame drum/mallet. This allows for maximum control of atmosphere, stopping/ starting, and timing throughout the story. Sometimes it is necessary to do the whole story twice in order to give all students a chance to explore different roles in the story.

The Spaghetti Story

*Once upon a time there was a box of spaghetti way up on the tallest shelf in the kitchen ... and it **dreamed** of one day being cooked so it could **bend and wiggle and twist and flop and curve** around the bubbles of the boiling water. But ... It was uncooked and some days it got so frustrated it **broke** itself into little pieces. But today was its lucky day.*

Taylor was coming home from school and she brought a few friends with her for a play date. She asked her (mother, father, babysitter) if they could have some spaghetti and (he, she) said sure. So they got a big pan and brought it over to the sink, and filled it up with water. They put it on the stove, turned on the heat and placed a cover on the pan to make it boil faster. Taylor and her friends went in the other room to do (homework, play games).

*The spaghetti in the box was getting so excited it **jumped** up and down. Their expiration date was almost up and they felt so happy that there were finally getting their chance to **bend, wiggle, twist, flop and curve**. The water began to boil.*

*Taylor and her friends saw the bubbles breaking in the pot. Taylor **climbed** up on a chair and reached way up to the highest shelf and **pulled** down that box of spaghetti. She **ripped** open the top and slowly **plunked** it into the pot. It was still hard and stiff and tight but slowly it began to cook. First the bottom part got mushy, then the middle became wiggly then the whole thing started **flopping** loosely as it curved and dived around the water bubbles. The spaghetti continued to cook, getting softer and more relaxed.*

*Taylor tested one of the pieces to see if it was done. It was still too hard. They turned up the heat and the spaghetti continued to cook as it **bent, wiggled, twisted, flopped** and **curved** all around the pan. This time when Taylor tested another piece of spaghetti it was soft and ready. They poured the water out of the pan and the spaghetti flopped into the strainer.*

*Taylor liked tomato sauce and her friends wanted butter so they put both on top. They were very hungry and couldn't wait to eat the spaghetti but just as they held their forks and were about to take a bite the strangest thing happened ... the spaghetti **jumped** off the plate and started dancing all around the kitchen.*

Culmination: Students do spaghetti dances to their shoes and relaxing shapes.

Keep track of behavior every session. Make students part of this assessment:

Each class has a chart in the class book in which we put “the checks,” as they are called. Putting the checks in the book is a coveted job which can also be used to motivate students so that they can get this reward. In fact, each week a different child records “the checks” until all have had a turn. This must also be tracked with a dot next to the name. Most students receive a check (on task behavior and best effort); a check-minus means that the teacher had to give one or two warnings during the class; no check (recorded as an X) means that the student was in “time out”. After a pattern of three weeks with an X, a student’s parents are notified. Written notes describing behaviors can be shared with classroom teachers, parents and administrators, and also highlight options for the next meeting time.

Lesson Analysis

The Spaghetti Dance is a dance experience which is guided by a narrative. The content of the story contains the movement concept and in this form retains a powerful hold over the sometimes fragile focus of children with disabilities in CTT kindergarten and first grade classes. The discreet details of the concept presented alone without the framework, characters and flow of the story would make the lesson less interactive at the exact moment when we want the concepts to be explored more deeply through repetition and experimentation. The story allows us to sustain the time spent considering a single concept such as, in this case, bound and free-flow.

Entering the story through movement creates a sense of freedom and fantasy that mirrors the way children engage in their own dramatic play at yard time or after school. Even though the teacher is “telling” the story, she is not telling the students exactly what to do. It’s the story itself which drives the instruction with a wide range of responses coming under the heading of “appropriate” or “on-task” behaviors. Setting up for this varied contribution from each member of the class is a form of differentiation and can be tracked as such, especially if a student teacher, paraprofessional, or other teaching partner is in the room.

Some students in the CTT class will be ready to add all the elements suggested through the story as it unfolds; levels, directions, pathways, effort qualities, relationships, balance, and shapes. Other children may take until Lesson 3 or 4 to add the amount of risk needed to find variety and innovation in their choice-making. Observing and noting these moments of progress is part of building to new concepts and new units of study, whether narrative-based or not.

On its purest dance level, the Spaghetti Dance is very satisfying. Changing the feeling of the muscles from hard to soft is very clear to the mover and the observer. It teaches a sense of shift and transition from one state to another. This ability to self-regulate is often missing for many children in both special education and general ed. We begin speaking about being “the boss of your body” in pre-K, but a reliable level of self-control and awareness may take a very long time to acquire for many children. This unit allows us to address this important facet of learning within a fun context.

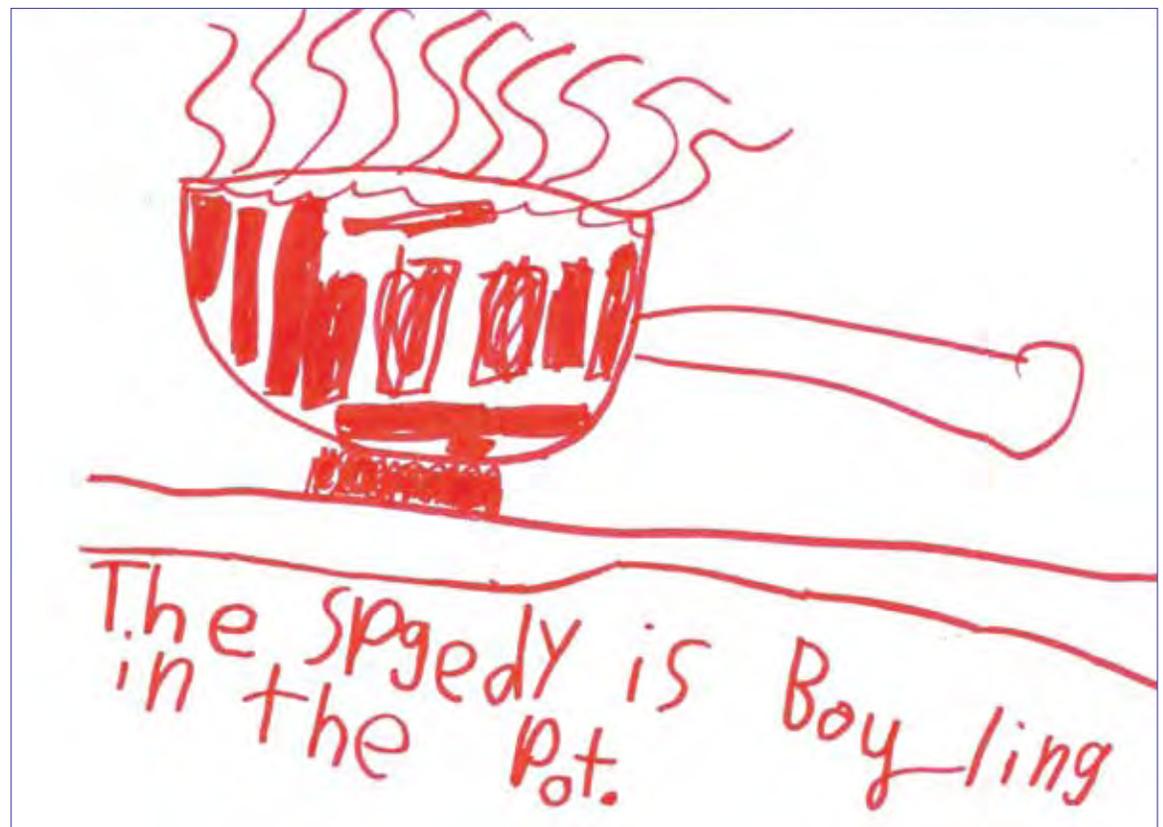
Common behaviors which interrupt or stop the learning in the class have many opportunities for redirection, reframing, and redefining within the existing structures of the Spaghetti Dance. As in any lesson, noticing and describing the appropriate behaviors in the room is a useful tool for reminding and demonstrating to all members of the class the best ways to participate and get the teacher’s positive attention.

Students who need extra attention from the teacher for any number of reasons may be chosen to be one of the “kids” in the story who come home to “cook” the spaghetti. These students stay closer to the teacher as she directs the lesson stepping in and out of the main action of the transforming bodies. They move much

less than the spaghetti dancers but they feel that they are in a separate and important role in the story. Using this as a motivator for any child who has interest in the story but cannot sustain focus inside the moving group is a positive direction. This may also contain and manage the impulsive child who is always touching others or who must always push the spatial boundaries by running. If one of these children is in the role of “cook” they will be required by the story to “test” the spaghetti practicing a gentle touch.

Children who need constant manipulatives to stay calmer and in one location may be the teacher’s assistant on the drum, playing at key points as sound effects in the story. This idea may be expanded with the addition of a small percussion group if there are extra adults in the room to help the “musicians.”

Students who love moving but become over stimulated and rowdy as they progress through the lesson can be redirected to a spaghetti partner who they follow with mirroring or shadowing and then become a leader themselves. This may allow them to see how their own actions affect others in the room increasing the capacity for turn taking and self regulation.



Elementary Lesson: Grade 2

UNIT: Dance and Poetry – Lesson One

Theme

Creating Action Patterns from Poetry

Classroom

Grade 2 inclusion classroom

Teaching Context

This is the first lesson in a six-week *Dance and Poetry* unit. The unit is written for implementation in a grade 2 inclusion classroom by a full-time dance specialist. Students take dance class weekly, and have prior knowledge of dance warm up and dance class structures. Students know basic dance vocabulary, and have already accomplished small group dance assignments. This unit assumes that the inclusion classroom contains up to 10 students with Individualized Education Plans, and that a teaching assistant is assigned to the class.

Lesson Goals

- To review level, direction and pathway
- To read and extract action words from a poem
- To improvise action patterns based on these words

Grade 2 Blueprint Benchmarks

Dance Making

- Combine levels, directions and pathways with body actions
- Create and perform a movement sequence of three actions

Dance Literacy

- Name and demonstration spatial elements level, direction and pathway
- Name and demonstration various actions

Making Connections

- Respond to poetry through dance movement

Exploring Careers and Lifelong Learning

- Express enjoyment in dancing

Materials

A spatial elements chart comprising individually laminated words that are backed with tape or Velcro so they can be moved and reordered. The poem is written on chart paper. Various instrumental music selections, a djembe, and a CD player. Cubbies for shoes. Floor tape.

Classroom Set Up and Rituals

Students enter the classroom space, take off their shoes and socks, put them in a cubby, and go to sit on assigned and marked floor spots. The educational assistant supervises the removal of shoes, while the dance educator greets each child and directs her/him to the tape-marked spots as needed. Students know in advance that they will be given permission to keep their socks on if they have a foot problem but will not be allowed to run with socks on.

The music is pre-cued, and once most children are in their spots the dance specialist begins the set warm up. The paraprofessional will then guide any late comers to their spots. The dance specialist and paraprofessional will move around the room during warm up as needed to help students stay in their spots and to assist them. Students with serious behavior/attention issues are, on a case-by-case basis, allowed to 'sit out' for short periods of time to help them to refocus. Students might also be invited to be the "DJ" or to assist the dance specialist by standing with her and helping to demonstrate.

All students have been introduced to personal space via the "bubble" game that they have played since pre K. In second grade, a quick reminder usually works to prevent collisions ("Remember your bubble," or "Sally, this is a bubble dance").

Warm up/Review:

15 minutes

Students participate in a modern/jazz warm-up. It begins with an aerobic sequence that incorporates elements of the "brain dance" and body part isolations. Once the group focus is established, the warm-up proceeds to traditional leg work and arm patterns executed using both smooth and sharp dynamics.

Next, the class reviews the spatial categories of level, direction, and path by referring to the spatial elements chart. Selected students will choose one element from each category by physically moving the words to form the combination. The whole class will then improvise using these elements. Three to six different combinations will be explored. For example:

	Level	Direction	Path
Combo #1	Low	Forward	Curved
Combo #2	High	Back	Zig Zag
Combo #3	Low	Straight	Side

During this phase of review, the dance specialist will play the djembe, choosing rhythmic patterns that elicit basic locomotor movements such as walking, skipping, and running.

Students are very enthusiastic about this part of warm-up. Students can be selected to choose the combination based on their overall focus and cooperation, and also as a way of engaging the reluctant or disruptive child.

Introduction and Exploration of the Theme:

10 minutes

The dance specialist will read the poem selected for the class (see two suggested poems, attached). After reading, the dance specialist will lead the class as they read the poem together aloud. Then, he/she will ask the students to find the movement or action words in the poem. As the children identify the words, they circle the words on the chart paper. Students who have difficulty reading can be prompted by the specialist, who rereads the line that includes the selected word.

Development/Sharing:

10 minutes

The dance specialist reads, with assistance from the students, the list of action words. Students are then asked to select three of the words to create an “action pattern.” For example:

R U M B L E + R A T T L E + S N A P

The class will be divided into two groups. One group at a time will improvise movement for the action pattern. The dance specialist can cue the change from one action to the other orally, with the drum, or by using recorded music. After each group performs the dance specialist asks students questions about the levels, directions and pathways. For example: “What directions were used when the dancers rattled?” “What levels were used to rumble?”

During this phase of class, the paraprofessional can play a variety of roles, based on her/his interest and the needs of the class. He/she can provide musical accompaniment, improvise with the children, sit with the observing group, or sit with an individual child who is in “break.” The assistant might also move throughout the room commenting on the children’s dancing (“Your snapping is so fast”) and trouble shooting (“Sarah, remember to stay in your bubble”).

Relaxation/Ending the Lesson:

5 minutes

The class will sit in a circle and recite their poem together. Two lines will be selected to both speak and then to clap the rhythmic pattern of the words. The class will practice the clapping and speaking as a call and response.

Learning Assessment**Evidence of learning includes:**

- Students use a variety of levels, directions and pathways during improvisation.
- Students volunteer to create combinations of spatial elements.
- Students exhibit focus and intention during warm up.
- After observing their peers improvising, students discuss what they have observed using correct dance vocabulary.

Follow-up Suggestions

1. Students work in groups of three to create action patterns.
2. Students create pathway maps for their patterns.
3. Students share their patterns with the class.
4. Students use body percussion to play rhythmic patterns in the poem.

Lesson Analysis

The dance and poetry unit is designed to build on prior knowledge and provide multiple opportunities for students to direct their own instruction, play leadership roles, and take ownership of their dancing. The opportunity for children to direct instruction begins during warm-up, when they are asked to create “combinations” of level, direction and pathway for whole class improvisation. Students enjoy the opportunity to select the movement, and like to challenge themselves and their classmates with difficult combinations: low/backward/zig-zag is often the first combination chosen! The activity is challenging and fun.

The relationship between movement and language is also explored in this lesson, as students become familiar with a poem. As reading ability varies in any class, the poem can be read by the teacher, and then repeated by students line by line. As students select action words from the poem, the words are orally repeated, then written in a new list. When it is time to ask students to choose actions, readers and nonreaders alike recall their favorite words. Again, asking students to create the action pattern provides them ownership of the lesson.

During the improvisation of the action patterns, as in the combinations of level, direction and pathway, the task provides multiple choices to individual dancers. There is no WRONG way to dance “rattle”; rather, there are many exciting movements and variations. The multiple variations give an opportunity for children to expand their personal movement choices as they take turns observing each other. To facilitate observation, the dance educator poses questions in advance of viewing. For example, he/she will tell the children who will be observing “After you see the dance, I will ask you what levels and directions your classmates used when they were dancing. Watch carefully!” After each group improvises, students then have a chance to share comments.

The dance educator can continue to engage students as leaders in the class, by asking follow up questions such as “You saw John do rattling at a low level. What pathway did he use? Can you show John’s movement using a different pathway?” As the kids become comfortable with the give and take, students can take turns calling on each other, the educator’s questions can become more explicit, and additional elements of dance can be discussed.

As the class ends, the connection to the poem, its words and meter, are explored again with the class. Here too, children can be given the lead. Ask them to clap the rhythm they hear when you recite a line of the poem, or ask three or four children to repeat their action pattern while other children recite a line. It is important to remember to both elicit and acknowledge participation.

Poems Used in this Unit

Riding The Subway Train

By Allan A. de Fina

Hurrying, hustling, hurtling past,
the subway train
approaches at last!

Whoosing, whizzing, whistling air,
blows in faces
and messes hair!

Rumble, rattle, screeching stop!
The train rolls in,
and on all hop.
Snap! Shut! Train doors close!
It jerks and lurches
as off it goes!

Whooshing, whizzing, whistling along!
The subway sings
its noisy song.

City Bus

By Allan A. de Fina

As the bus prowls along
it growls along
and fowls behind.
It scowls with glaring eyes
and strides
between those persons walking by.
It moves its torso
oh, so slow,
scooping strangers
as it goes.

Middle School Lesson: Grades 6-8

UNIT: Working With a Partner

Lesson Two: The Handshake Dance

Theme

Pedestrian gesture as raw material for dance making

Teaching Context

Grades 6-8 Dance “exploratory” students are randomly grouped for a general experience of dance (40 minutes twice per week) as part of an arts sequence that includes music appreciation, studio art, and dance in a rotating series so that each student will have had one or two arts courses each year. These “exploratory” classes include selected students with disabilities who attend self-contained classes, often with a 1:1 para. Since students did not elect the activity, there was often a large oppositional contingent within each group. This situation made it necessary to find just the right entry point to engage each individual enough to begin with a sense of common purpose and sustain the focus of the lesson.

Lesson Goals

- Engage in respectful and purposeful physical contact.
- Improvise upon a given structure.
- Experiment with elements of tempo, level, direction, and flow.
- Create a short dance that can be shared with or within the group.

Grade 8 Blueprint Benchmarks

Dance Making

- Employ various kinds of partnering techniques.
- Demonstrate initiative in improvisation.
- Vary movement phrases by changing rhythm, tempo, dynamics, and use of space.
- Make spontaneous choices in dance partnering with sensitivity to the partner.

Developing Dance Literacy

- Understand how parts of the body, dynamics, and direct/indirect motion create meaning.
- Use expressive language to describe emotional responses to performance.

Materials

Various photos from newspapers and magazines of politicians and/or celebrities engaged in a handshake. (These may be laminated for repeated handling and mounted on chart paper.)

Class Ritual/Routine

Students enter and go directly to assigned spots in the dance space facing toward the mirror. The curtain covering the mirror is open or closed depending on the over all preference of the group. Shoes are not removed.

Warm-up:

10 minutes

A high-energy Afro-Caribbean inspired warm-up emphasizing articulation of body parts and zones, stretching, and rhythmic complexity building to a short movement sequence.

Introduction:

5 minutes

On chart paper teacher has posted photos of politicians and/or celebrities in a traditional shaking of hands. Students notice details about the images including proximity, expression, and focus. What does the body language tell us? Are these people friends or enemies?

Directions are given for the handshake dance. These directions are also outlined on the next page of chart paper as well as on separate sheets as a handout so that (if needed) partners could work out in the hall or away from the group as appropriate.

Handshake Dance Demonstration:

5 minutes

Find two cooperative partners to demonstrate as teacher talks them through the directions. Another option here is to have the whole group (in partners) try it out as teacher directs adding variations in TEMPO, DIRECTION, LEVELS, and FLOW.

Face your partner and shake hands. Now try that same handshake in very s-l-o-w motion. Exaggerate the space it takes lifting higher and lower in the shake. Reaching the hand toward and taking the hand away should also be in slow motion. Can you smile in slow motion? Now try that handshake again repeating it three times very, very fast and then freeze. Try your handshake with your backs toward each other. How can you connect?

Development:

10 minutes

What if the president offered an elbow or a knee instead of a hand in greeting? Try another body part to connect and greet your partner. Try out different levels, facings, and timings. With your partner create your own “shake dance.” Begin moving toward each other, interact, and then move away. What kind of locomotion will you use? What is your attitude toward each other? Try changing the flow as in smooth and continuous or with popping and locking of the muscles like in breakdancing.

You have 10 minutes to work on a dance that you may be able to share with another group. One set of partners will observe the other and then switch. If anyone wants to share with the whole group after that they may.

As students begin to work teacher circulates and assists those that need it and compliments focused interactions and innovative attempts.

Sharing:

8 minutes

As students share their dances, teacher puts on contrasting musical accompaniment or plays percussion for each group. Have instruments ready to bring out for students to be accompanists if the focus is strong.

Ending the Lesson/Exit Slips:

2 minutes

All return to assigned spots. Lights are turned off. Four containers of Post-its and pencils are quickly placed at the front of the room. These are passed out by volunteers. Students write one or two words on a post-it describing their handshake dance. It could be the title or just how they felt about their work. These must be handed to the teacher as they leave the studio. Students are aware that their responses are anonymous but that the responses will be posted in the room so no inappropriate language will be tolerated.

Lesson Analysis

Generalized groups at this age move off task very easily. For those in the class who just “won’t dance,” shaking hands seemed to be OK for them to try since it’s not really “dancing.” The slow introduction and suggestion of variants like levels, tempo, and direction happen after the initial engagement with the lesson, so they again remained unnoticed as “dance.”

Depending on the group, students are allowed to self select their partners. Those groups that are not able to choose partners without insults or fighting proceed at a much slower pace. Many more demo partners try out the ideas before the whole group begins to work in the space.

Sometimes in order to diffuse the calling out and insulting of the partners showing their work, students who are observing can also be doing an action drawing of the handshake dance on paper rolled out across the space between audience and performers. This—along with the option to play a large djembe or other drums for the partners who were showing—gives students many choices (or the illusion of choices), which helps tremendously with students who are resistant to directions of any kind. Many students need to feel that they are completely in charge of the experience. It is the teacher’s challenge to set up the content, options, and structures for that to occur within as safe and positive an atmosphere as possible given the various levels of engagement and cooperation.



Diane Duggan

High School Lesson: Grades 9-12

Lesson Plan: First Steps in Group Dance Making

Context

This lesson plan is for students who show severely disruptive, oppositional, and aggressive behaviors. It is based on a dance therapy model, grounded in a process orientation. This means that the choices made by the dance therapist or dance educator are based on picking up student movement as it occurs, developing it, and integrating it into the ongoing session. This work depends on a therapeutic relationship with students that recognizes and acknowledges their positive characteristics and provides clear, consistent limits. The work takes place within a supportive structure based on consistent implementation of universal, targeted and individualized, intensive positive behavior supports and dance education best practices. The lesson plan provides choices in activities according to the amount of structure a particular group of students may require.

Theme

Dance Making Based on Musical Selection

Classroom

12:1:1 high school students with emotional and behavioral disorders

Materials

Written lyrics to song, CD of song, CD player, chart paper and markers. Song selection is based on curriculum (e.g., Women's History Month), field trip experience (e.g., the spiritual "Amazing Grace," after seeing portion of *Revelations* performed by Ailey II), or student request.

Goals

- To express concepts and feelings with dance movement
- To promote literacy by reading words while listening to them being sung
- To enhance self esteem by having students contribute movements and movement variations to project
- To increase students' ability to understand own feelings and feelings of others by generating expressive movements and performing their peers' expressive movements
- To increase ability to work cooperatively with others by collaborating with teacher and other students in dance making

Grade 12 Blueprint Dance Making Benchmarks

Develop Skills and Techniques

- Execute extended sequences in a variety of dance forms with dependable accuracy.

Improvise

- Extend gestures to create dance movement.
- Interpret a musical score in movement.

Choreograph

- Convey a dramatic through-line and an emotional subtext.

Entry Routine

Teacher greets students at the door and prompts them to put away backpacks and change shoes. Students find their dance slippers using name tags and change from street shoes to dance slippers. Only bare feet and dance slippers are allowed on the dance floor. The dance floor is separated from the changing area, where street shoes are permitted, by a row of portable ballet barres. Usually students who have put on their dance slippers are permitted to stand on dance floor and use mirror while waiting for peers to change. This lesson requires students to pay careful attention to music and words and to read the lyrics as they are sung. In order to focus their attention on this task the students are directed to sit around the large table in the changing area.

Presentation of Theme

The teacher passes out copies of the words of the song, then plays the song on the CD. Students read along as the words are sung. Teacher directs discussion of theme and meaning of specific words and phrases, writing these and student responses on easel. When everyone has changed shoes, ad hoc teams of two students carry each of the two portable barres to center floor and position them in front of the mirror. Other students will return barres after exercises.

Warm-up

The warm-up is a set, teacher-directed series of exercises at the barre, including pliés in first position and tendus. Students do a similar warm-up to begin every class. Strongly rhythmic music, such as “Heritage” is used to provide a clear beat. The teacher demonstrates the exercises and briefly explains the benefits in terms of balance, strength, and coordination, and relating these to other athletic pursuits, as needed. The teacher corrects placement, explaining basic concepts of injury prevention. The teacher uses verbal encouragement, humor, and challenge-arousal strategies to sustain students’ attention and teach proper form at the barre.

Theme Development

Below are two variations, based upon the needs of the group for structure. Students who have comfort and experience in movement and who can sustain focus on the task need relatively less structure. Those who are unsure and/or unfocused will need more structure. Working with youngsters who have emotional disabilities requires the dance educator to calibrate the degree and kind of structure to the needs of the group, as observed during the session. It is better to provide too much structure and to gradually give more freedom than to have to bring the group back to order once it has disintegrated.

High structure: If students are unsure or resistant to improvisation, the teacher will provide suggestions. Have students face mirror in lines, with the teacher in front. The teacher demonstrates simple movements or movement phrases based on the discussion of the musical selection. Students imitate the teacher’s movements. The teacher observes their renditions and mirrors their variations, being sure to attribute each movement to the student who created it. As students become more comfortable teacher may ask them to create their own original movements and demonstrate them to the group. The group members will mirror each other’s movements.

Moderate structure: Students stand in a large circle with the teacher. The teacher tells students they are going to dance together to the musical selection and incorporate the ideas that were generated in the discussion into their movements. One person will lead, and the others will follow. The job of the leader is to be clear so that others can follow, and the job of followers is to pick up movements as accurately as possible. The teacher will be the first leader. Once the students are dancing together, the teacher will pass the leadership to a student who will lead for at least a minute and then pass the leadership to another student. New leaders will pick up where the previous leader left off. The teacher puts on music and joins students in the

circle to begin the dance. The teacher can engage students by emphasizing a simple pattern of weight transfer to the rhythm of the music or a simple concept when beginning to dance. The teacher should pass the leadership first to a student who is fully engaged in the dancing.

All degrees of structure: The group practices the variations and discusses how they exemplify or accentuate the theme, lyrics, and music of the song. The teacher assists the group in selecting variations and helps students to put the movements together into a sequence. The group practices the sequence and the teacher gives mini-lessons as needed on technical aspects of the selected movements so that all students can perform the movements correctly. Students who are especially competent in executing the movements may be asked to come to the front and demonstrate. During this or subsequent sessions the teacher asks students to perform the combination moving through space. They will be asked to experiment with different pathways and spatial configurations, and the group will discuss the impact of these elements. The teacher will support students with suggestions as needed and will help the group to achieve consensus on the dance making.

Culmination

The teacher facilitates a group discussion of the dance sequence(s). If different pathways and spatial configurations were used, the group discusses their impact and how these elements affect the theme of the dance. Throughout the class the teacher models and maintains an atmosphere of respect and acceptance during dancing and discussions. The teacher also models and enforces rules such as “one person talks at a time.” For homework, students are asked to practice and to continue to “play” with the song and the theme to bring in new movement ideas for the next session.

Role of the Teacher

The primary role of the dance educator is to facilitate student engagement with the material. He/she uses prevention strategies such as proximity control (moving near students who are losing focus), signal interference (communicating via gestures to keep students on track), and oral directions. The dance educator uses his or her body to mirror the students’ movements, acknowledging them and communicating them to other group members.

Lesson Analysis

Many students with severe behavioral challenges and emotional disabilities are very afraid of making mistakes and looking foolish. They may mask their uncertainty with loud, disparaging remarks, and refusal to comply with instructions. Improvisation can be especially frightening for them, both for the fear of being put down and for the looser degree of structure often used. Creating a safe, supportive environment in which students treat each other with respect and are able to try new things is a key consideration for the teacher.

This lesson follows a field trip on which students have seen the Ailey II Company perform a portion of Ailey’s masterpiece, *Revelations*. Students immediately began talking about doing a similar dance. While seeing the performance is highly motivating, it is also potentially intimidating. The teacher begins this lesson with a seated discussion of the dance the students had seen. She brings in a song to focus attention and provide a structure for student improvisation, choosing the song “Amazing Grace” for its aesthetic qualities, its familiarity and its theme of redemption. Together the class talks about the song lyrics. They discuss the fact that while people may make mistakes they have the opportunity to rectify those mistakes and be forgiven. This is an especially important issue for students who have been put in a restrictive environment because of behavioral challenges. Some of the students related personal experiences about making a mistake and then correcting it. The teacher accepts their contributions but does not probe, keeping the focus on the group and the song.

Appendix A: Lesson Plans, Lesson Analyses, and Intervention Anecdotes *continued*

As the class discusses the song, the teacher makes sure that everyone who wants to make a comment is given a turn and listened to with respect. He/she does this by using a signal of pointing to her ears & to the person speaking, and reminds the students of the classroom rule that one person talks at a time during a group discussion. He/she is also cognizant of the impact of her own behavior on the group and makes sure to model good listening skills and to treat the students with kindness and respect, even when setting limits on misbehavior. Using the handout of the song lyrics helps to focus and sustain student attention.

Routines are very important in creating safety. After the discussion students perform their regular warm-up routine. Following that, the teacher has a number of different options to elicit movement ideas from the students. Dance therapists working with students with emotional disabilities direct group activities according to the needs of the students, as expressed in their movement and verbalizations. This lesson plan for dance educators borrows this strategy, providing options to respond to the degree of support needed by students. The teacher can structure the improvisation using one option for the entire class, or use different options to support different students during the same class session.

Throughout the class the teacher is alert to student behavior, both verbal and nonverbal. He/she uses prevention strategies to keep small problems from escalating and circulates around the room to keep in contact with all the students (see CORE PRINCIPLE #5, p.19). He/she is also alert to positive contributions by the students, even when they are unaware of these or minimize them. The teacher mirrors students' movement variations and gives them credit for their contributions. He/she keeps the group on track by remembering each student's movements and periodically "summarizing" by leading the students in dancing the group's work to that point. She acknowledges on-task behavior and cooperation among students as she has noticed it during the task. At the end of the class, He/she gives each student a comment about something positive they have done during the class.



Diane Duggan

Intervention Anecdotes

The strategies shared below worked in these particular situations with these particular students and teachers. Although they may not present a universally applicable method or solution, they illustrate how some of the strategies explored in this supplement have been used by the authors in their classrooms. We hope these stories bring this volume to life.

Anecdote: Catherine Gallant, Dance Teacher, General Education Setting

Working with a student who presents oppositional behaviors:

A first-grade boy in my CTT class, who I also knew in kindergarten, exhibits oppositional behaviors. He is extremely verbal with an impressively rich vocabulary but often uses it to berate other students and, most shockingly, teachers. He has yelled at me many times that he will fire me and that I am the worst dance teacher there could ever be. (He repeats this many, many times, each time gaining in volume.) Unfortunately this results in his having to be removed from dance class by his classroom teacher.

Of course, it never starts off like this, but rather builds to a climax slowly over the session. He is extremely oppositional, so if he remained the only child with his shoes on, I never asked him directly to remove his shoes. Instead, I reminded him that taking our shoes off is part of dance, and with shoes on we won't be able to feel the floor completely. He was always more responsive to lengthy explanations.

I initially ignored his constant running back and forth in the room, since it didn't seem that other children were inspired to follow him, and I was monitoring the safety of his actions. He does not have a 1:1 para, so I attempted to be close to him to see if putting my hands on him gently might calm him and allow him to enter our group focus. This often ended with my being pushed away. I noticed after about four weeks that whenever there was a story leading our improvisation or dance element study, he would seem compelled to join us. I also noticed that, unlike many other children, he did not respond to verbal compliments given over the roar of the class. I learned that I could only give praise in a whisper to him, since I believe he was steadfastly attached to his outward version of himself as belligerent and unyielding. He didn't want his classmates to see him complying with directives from a teacher.

At some point in the beginning of the school year, outside service providers took him during our dance time for a number of weeks, but he returned as I was introducing motif symbols (which I do in the first grade in or about the end of October). I was amazed (even though this has happened before with similar personalities) at his response. He loved building movement sentences with action words—which I remembered—but the symbols intrigued him so much that he wanted to participate in the lesson to get more of them. I knew then that any lesson with this class should include the symbols somehow. After this I created stickers with the symbols to give out at the end of a successful dance session. All students responded positively to this, and I have continued to make motif stickers. Using the stickers helps with the home-school connection, especially if a child's motif symbol is still stuck to the student when they meet their parents at the end of the day. In describing the meaning of the sticker to the parents, the child is sharing something that he/she has learned in dance class.

One day before the December break, the student presented me with a collage of his favorite symbols colorfully drawn with markers and assembled on small rectangles (which we often use in class to re-sequence and build our phrases) but sprinkled all over the page. He told me I must hang this collage up for everyone to see. I certainly did. I didn't want to be fired!

Anecdote: Sandra Stratton-Gonzalez, Dance Teacher, CTT Setting

Working with a student with autism: Samantha

Samantha is a 5th grade special education student. She is an autistic child who participates in alternative assessment; she does not take standardized tests due to overall development delays. Samantha seldom engages directly with peers in conversation or play, often withdrawing from an activity when she is frustrated.

Samantha joined the girls Dance Club in the fall of 4th grade. She enjoys dancing, learns dances quickly, and likes performing. The Dance Club meets every Tuesday and Friday during lunch/recess. After a 20-minute lunch break, club members learn, create, and rehearse dances. A performing group, the club danced in over 10 concert events, in five venues, during the two years Samantha was a member.

During club time Samantha ate lunch alone. She generally positioned herself at the fringes of the group. She would eat quickly and get up and dance while everyone else was still socializing. She would work on a particular movement, practice it, add to it, and refine it until she had created a dance phrase. In a form of parallel play, Samantha would sometimes copy the moves of another girl, modifying it to fit into the phrase she was working on.

Throughout the club term, Samantha was most focused when she was working alone, or when the entire group was learning material. She struggled with partnering and with cooperative work. On several occasions Samantha chose to sit out and refused to participate. Sometimes she dissolved into tears. Once choreography was complete, however, Samantha knew her role and was comfortable with her group.

As part of the dance making process, I used a number of strategies to both support and challenge Samantha. Ensemble building activities were incorporated throughout the club year, including warm-ups, partnering games, teaching and reviewing choreography, and performing. Other strategies included allowing Samantha to sit out and observe as needed; providing her with structured leadership opportunities when she could to teach a movement or phrase; and discerning when to protect her and when to push her. In addition, when specific movements or lifts were too challenging, I supported her in creating accessible variations by changing the level, tempo, direction or dynamic of the movement. Finally, by providing Samantha and her peers with multiple performance venues, the opportunity for all participants to identify with the group was nurtured and strengthened.

A word about ensemble:

It is my experience that, in the classrooms of my school, there is a great emphasis on small-group work, and that whole-group instruction is minimized. This is coupled with a lack of time for such “soft pursuits” as classroom meetings, conflict resolution, in-class arts activities, singing, and other whole group efforts. In addition, while the school provides many invaluable resources to the student with disabilities or special needs,



these resources (e.g., speech, occupational and physical therapy, academic study groups, and counseling) are generally delivered one-one or in small-group settings. The dance club provided a much-needed opportunity for students to experience working together, as a large ensemble, toward a common goal.

Diane Duggan

Anecdote: Dr. Diane Duggan, School Psychologist, Dance Therapist/Educator, District 75 Setting

Multiple strategies used in a 12:1:1 Salsa class:

This anecdote is of a typical class of adolescents in a standardized assessment 12:1:1 special education class in a special education school. These young people are classified as having emotional disabilities (ED) and may show oppositional, aggressive, and/or highly disruptive behavior. I use Targeted and Intensive Interventions as standard teaching methods in order to help the students control their behavior and participate appropriately in the dance groups. This anecdote contains many examples of these strategies, printed in **bold type** so you can reference them in other sections of this supplement. You will find many of the terms in the “Targeted Strategies for Dance Educators” and the “Continuum of Effective Educational and Behavior Support Interventions in Dance Education.”

I begin class by **greeting each student individually as they enter the room (Universal Support)**.

This helps to make a connection between us and promotes a positive relationship. As I say hello to each youngster, I assess his or her emotional state. I may add a **supportive** comment, such as, “I’m glad to see you today”. If they seem distressed, I may **acknowledge the feeling** and give **support (de-escalation strategies)** by saying something like, “You look like you’re having a rough day. I’m glad you are here with us.” I may discuss a problem with the group, especially if it is something that affects more than one student. However, I don’t usually engage students in extensive verbal discussions of individual problems in class because I have to attend to the entire group and because sometimes the behavior is attention-seeking and I do not want to reinforce it. I do work on issues of self-control, self-awareness, and getting along with others directly in movement, sometimes explicitly commenting on what we are doing, sometimes leaving it implicit.

One of the rules for my dance groups is that students must change into dance shoes in order to enter the dance floor (**dance education classroom rules**). If anyone walks on the floor with street shoes on, I gently but urgently remind them that street shoes are not allowed on the floor because they will damage it. I tell them they are welcome on the floor once they have put on their dance shoes. I use language that affirms that we are all responsible for protecting our precious resource: a sprung dance floor. My aim is to enlist cooperation by extending ownership of the floor to the students and to prevent a power struggle (**Conflict Cycle**) over the shoes. This approach works 99% of the time. When it does not work I use **proximity control** and calmly walk over to the student, taking care not to invade their personal space. I try to approach the student from the side opposite to the direction I want him/her to move in and use the slow inertia of my movement to walk the student to the area designated for street shoes, thanking him/her for his/her cooperation in preserving our floor. I might put my hand lightly on the student’s shoulder if I feel this will be perceived as a friendly gesture. When the floor was first built, I noticed that dance and nondance students attempted to walk on the dance floor with their shoes, going straight to the large wall mirrors in order to look at themselves. Once I understood the function of this behavior (**informal functional behavioral assessment**), I gave them a more appropriate way of meeting that need by putting a mirror in the area where street shoes are permitted (**replacement behavior**). I used a good quality plastic mirror purchased from an Occupational Therapy catalog, as a glass mirror would be unsafe.

I begin the class with a **consistent routine** warm-up. For most groups I do pliés and tendues. Holding the barre helps to orient the students in space and keep them in one place. I use rhythmic music with a clear beat and count the music to orient students in time and help them to organize their movements. Moving together in synchrony in the familiar warm-up routine creates a sense of connection among the participants and develops confidence as students become more skilled in executing the exercises.

Appendix A: Lesson Plans, Lesson Analyses, and Intervention Anecdotes *continued*

I use **verbal and gestural prompts** and **demonstration** to correct placement. I seldom use **physical prompts (touch)** to correct placement because so many of my students have histories of physical and sexual abuse.

It can be difficult for students to maintain their arm position, and I use **benign humor** and motivating task-based **challenges** as strategies to help them to learn to tolerate the minor discomfort needed to develop strength and stamina.

This particular incident took place in a salsa class. This is a high-interest dance genre that allows students to move in a rhythmic, pleasurable fashion and dance with partners of the other sex. However, the basic step can be very difficult to learn because it consists of three weight changes in a four-beat measure. The tendency is to change the weight on all four beats. Many of my students are Latin and are familiar with the dance and very eager to learn it. However, many of them find the salsa basic particularly hard because of their impulsivity and tendency to continue to change their weight. One of the positive things about teaching salsa to these students is that it helps them learn to hold back their impulse to move, a very important social and academic readiness skill.

I usually wait until the middle of the class, when students are more engaged, before I work on the basic step. As I was teaching the salsa basic I noticed that some of the students were becoming frustrated by their inability to master the step. My first response was to break the step down to a slow emphatic walk in order to clarify the foot pattern and timing. This worked for a few minutes, but soon some of students began to talk and lose focus. I held up my hand in our pre-arranged signal for attention (**signal interference**). When some students failed to notice the silent signal I approached them (**proximity control**) and got their eye contact. They stopped talking and I thanked the entire class for coming to attention, especially those who had complied first (**encouragement, not criticism**). I then **redirected** the group to follow me in doing the Suzi-Q, an “open step” that has a foot pattern that makes it easier to adhere to the rhythmic structure. I used a **challenge** strategy to engage them, saying, “This next step is a little hard, but it’s fun. I know you can get it”. This was helpful in engaging most of the students. Once they started dancing again, rather than simply stepping in a pattern, they began to regain their enthusiasm. I counted out the beats, pointing out that this was the same rhythmic structure as the basic step.

As we were doing the Suzi-Q, two of the students, Joey and Phil, began doing cartwheels at the back of the room. At first I used **direct appeal**, telling them to please stop doing cartwheels and rejoin the class. They did not listen, so I calmly walked toward them (**proximity control**). I made sure we had eye contact so we did not collide as I stood in their path, preventing them from continuing. I told them in a calm but firm voice to stop (**setting limits**). They stopped and said, “Okay,” then moved away from me to the other side of the room. I sensed that they were going to resume their cartwheels as soon as I stopped paying direct attention to them. I looked at the other students and praised them for their good work (**positive attention**). I then directed all the students to take their partners and practice the simple turn pattern we had worked on at the beginning of the class (**redirection** and **support from routines**).

As I said this I walked slowly over to the far side of the room where Joey and Phil were standing. Along the way I made eye contact with the other students, directing them on where to stand and matching up those who did not yet have a partner. I stood close to Joey and Phil, without invading their personal space (**proximity control**). Phil looked at me, and I told him to please take his partner and practice the turn. He walked to her and I thanked him for making a good choice (**acknowledge cooperation**). Joey did not move to a partner, and I told him that he could not do cartwheels now because it was dangerous. He protested that he was safe and could do them well, but I said that it was unsafe for him and the other students as well, and

we were working on salsa now. He protested again, and I told him in a calm, matter-of-fact voice that if he chose to continue doing cartwheels, he would have to sit out (**consequences, not threats**).

I turned slightly and stepped away from him to give him time to think about his choice (**give time to comply**). I complimented the rest of the class on their partner work (**positive attention**) and announced that we were going to have demonstrations of the turn pattern. Joey is a very good dancer and really likes to show what he can do. I knew this would appeal to him, but I did not want to use it to make a special deal with him. I thought that he was doing the cartwheels to show off (**informal functional behavioral assessment**) and I wanted to minimize the attention I was giving him (**response to maladaptive behavior should minimize reinforcement**). I wanted him to know that the opportunity to demonstrate skill was a part of the class that was available to all the students who were participating (**socially acceptable replacement behavior**). As I was talking to the class, Joey passed me on his way to take a partner. I thanked him for making the right choice (**affirmation, acknowledge cooperation**).

I then went from couple to couple giving feedback, continually **scanning (Universal intervention)** the entire group so that I could respond to any problems (**hurdle help**) or need for attention. I asked one couple to demonstrate the lead for the right turn, which they did. Another couple was having trouble with the behind-the-back hand switch. I asked the class who knew that move, knowing Joey does it well. Joey said he did, and I asked him to demonstrate. When Joey demonstrated the move, I could tell by his pleased expression that he felt very gratified in doing so. I then told everyone to practice the entire four-element turn pattern so they could do “demos.” All the students, including Joey and Phil, were very engaged in practicing. I ended the class with each of the five couples demonstrating the pattern. Joey was able to wait until last for his turn. We all clapped for each couple, and I **modeled** how to give constructive feedback by stating one or two things I liked about each couple and giving a tip to “take your performance to the next level.”

As the students were leaving, I took Joey aside (**speak with students about problems in private**) and told him how good his demo was and that I was glad he made the right choice (**statements of acceptance and understanding precede requests**). I told him that he could take his behavior in class to the next level and show the discipline he needed to perform in shows outside the school (**incentive** for appropriate behavior) by following instructions the first time they are given (**clear, positively stated dance classroom rules**). Using our point system (**school-wide behavior support system**), I rated his on-task behavior on a scale of 0-2 as a 1. I told him I knew he could do better. We said goodbye on a positive note, with Joey promising to do better in the next class. I know from experience that he and the other students will need abundant support in order to do their best.

Diane Duggan





Appendix B: Sample Scenarios and Resources

Sample Scenarios

Consider how you would respond to the sample scenarios below, using strategies explored in this supplement that would be appropriate for the particular situation.

Scenario #1

Grades 4-6 Partnering Unit

Sallie is a child with autism who thoroughly enjoys dancing, learns steps and phrases quickly, and can recall combinations from week to week. Her reading, writing, and math skills are at a Grade 2–Grade 3 level. She does not take standardized tests, but participates in alternate assessment. During lunch and recess Sallie is generally alone, and she is uncomfortable working with her peers on collaborative projects.

During the partnering unit, Sallie has been successful with the mirror exercise, and has enjoyed learning partner stretches. When the choreography demands that she hold a partner's hands or dance in unison with a partner, Sallie will participate but not make eye contact. Now that the class is working in groups of four to create short dances and Sallie is having a difficult time. She often sits out during work time. Sometimes she cries, sometimes she says, "I want to go home."

How can you modify the dance making activity to support Sallie? You are asking each child to keep a journal. Will you also ask Sallie to keep a journal? Will you modify your rubric for Sallie? In what way?

Scenario #2

Grade 3 Mexican Dance Unit

Joseph is a third-grade student with Anxiety Disorder. Joseph is very rigid. He is disturbed when routines change, has difficulty waiting his turn, and often calls out during class. You have been working with Joseph on turn taking and raising his hand to speak. You try to call on him soon after he raises his hand. When he persists in calling out, Joseph knows that he will be placed in a "time out," where he will sit with the class para.

During your new unit on Mexican Dance, Joseph has been very disruptive, and your strategies don't seem to be working. The day that you had a guest teacher come in to give a lesson in Mexican Dance, Joseph said, "I don't understand why we are studying Mexican Dance. Have you noticed that I am not Mexican?"

You will be spending at least four more weeks on this unit. What strategies can you use to make this experience more successful for both Joseph and your class?

Scenario #3 Kindergarten Dance

Josephina is a general education student who is constantly talking with her girlfriends during class. Several times in the last month, she has dissolved into tears. She cries if her friends don't sit next to her, or if you move her away from her friends because she is talking. When you try to redirect her and get her involved with the class activity, she will often cross her arms, turn her back, and pout for the rest of class. You are getting more and more frustrated with Josephina's behavior.

*What strategies will you use to help Josephina during dance class?
What are your short term goals for Josephina?*

Scenario #4 Grade 2 "Street Dances"

Edward is a child with unspecified learning disabilities. His parents are having a more thorough evaluation done, and are working with the teachers to try support him. Edward is having difficulty learning to read, to write and compute. He also has trouble participating in dance class.

Edward is an affectionate and kind child. About six months ago, you asked Edward to be your "helper." He has enjoyed this role, and will distribute and collect supplies, run the CD player, even stand with you and demonstrate during warm up. A month ago, you asked Edward to participate along with his classmates. You feel that it is time that Edward to work with his peers, and you are concerned that the other children are jealous of Edward's role as helper.

The class has been working on a dance-making project. In the first two lessons of the unit Edward was able to dance with the class. Now that the children are sharing the dances they are making, Edward is refusing to participate again. He says he is "shy" and "too nervous."

*How can you modify the activities to make it easier for Edward to be involved?
Will you change your assessment criteria for Edward? If so, in what way?*

Sandra Stratton-Gonzalez



Scenario #5

Grade 4 Jazz Dance

Jason is a boy with Asperger's Syndrome. He has difficulty understanding social cues, and often misinterprets what his peers say to him. He generally plays alone, and has difficulty in dance during partnering activities.

Jason is very knowledgeable about American History. Today in class you showed a video that traced the roots of Jazz Dance. Jason commented on the Charleston and Lindy Hop, mentioning that the dances were popular during the "segregation times." He noticed that whites and blacks danced together in New York at the Jazz Clubs. This comment led to a class discussion of the role social dance has played in supporting integration.

Next week you will begin to stage the Charleston for the annual dance concert. Last year Jason refused to perform with his class. How can you use Jason's interest in history to encourage him to participate in performance? How will you capitalize on the class discussion to deepen all the children's understanding of dance history?

Scenario #6

Grade 1 Dance Class

Several children with ADHD are in the same first grade class. It seems that the minute you get the class focused, one of the children calls out, slams into someone, or otherwise disrupts the lesson. Some days even the well-behaved children act up, as if they are looking for some attention too. You use several different strategies to focus the class. You conduct the warm up in a circle so that everyone can be easily seen, review class rules every day, have several cues for silence and attention, design activities that reinforce personal space, use "time outs" as a consequence for disruptive behavior, promise to play freeze dance when the class does a good job, and even occasionally call parents to request their support. You still feel that there are more bad days than good days. You have noticed that the children are the most focused when you read to them, when they draw, and when they each have a prop to use.

You have decided to construct a dance unit to address focus and behavior.

What activities will you incorporate into this unit?

What specific unit goals do you have?

What teaching strategies might you use to help ensure success?

Resource List

Books:

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Landalf, H. *Moving is Relating*. Lyme, NH: Smith and Kraus, 1998.

Long, N., Morse, W., Fecser, F. & Newman, R. *Conflict in the Classroom*. 6th ed. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed, 2007.

Pert, Candace. *Molecules of Emotion: Why You Feel the Way You Feel*. New York: Touchstone, 1999.

Tortora, Suzi. *The Dancing Dialogue: Using the Communicative Power of Movement with Young Children*. Baltimore: Brooks Publishing, 2006.

Video Resources:

Ballet Technique Transposed for Students Using Wheelchairs. Beginning and intermediate-level ballet video with accompanying piano music CD. Kitty Lunn and members of *Infinity Dance Theater* give step-by-step demonstrations of ballet technique transposed for the student using a wheelchair. This first-of-its-kind instructional video is a must for dance educators and students. Available at <http://www.infinitydance.com> or email info@infinitydance.com.

Dancing from the Inside Out. In Sight Productions. El Cerrito, CA: Dancing Video, 1993. 28 min. Dancers in wheelchairs who are members of the *AXIS Dance Company* discuss their disabilities and what dance means to them. For purchasing info contact: Fanlight Productions, 4196 Washington St, #2, Boston MA 02131 or visit <http://www.fanlight.com>.

Appendix B: Sample Scenarios and Resources *continued*

Phoenix Dance (2006) by Karina Epperlein. The film *Phoenix Dance* shows us the beauty and strength of one individual who defies our expectations of what it means to be “disabled.” In March 2001, Homer Avila—who had been dancing with Twyla Tharp, Bill T. Jones, and Mark Morris—discovered that the pain in his hip was cancer. One month later, his right leg and most of his hip were amputated. What unfolds is the story of the pas de deux called “Pas,” which the renowned Alonzo King choreographed for Homer, now missing one leg. To purchase visit www.karinafilms.us/phoenix.html.

Web Resources:

To access the *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in Dance, PreK-12*:
http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/teachlearn/arts/canda_dance.html

For the most updated NYCDOE information about Special Education:
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/EducatorResources/default.htm>

For links to special education issues and changes in special education law, see updates at www.nysed.gov/vesid (Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities).

For resources and materials regarding behavior and classroom management: www.behavioradvisor.com

For information about *AXIS Dance Company*, a California-based professional dance company that includes performers with disabilities: <http://www.axisdance.org>

For information about *Infinity Dance Theater*, a professional New York City-based dance company that includes performers with disabilities: <http://www.infinitydance.com>.

For information about *GIMP*, a project of New York City-based *Heidi Latsky Dance* that includes performers with a wide range of disabilities: <http://www.heidilatskydance.net>

Downloadable articles and other materials:

<http://www.nea.gov/pub/ArtinPeacemaking.pdf> – The National Center for Conflict Resolution Education (Brunson, Russell, Conte, Zephyrn and Masar Shelley). *The Art in Peacemaking: A Guide to Integrating Conflict Resolution into Youth Arts Programs; A Balanced Brain Equals a Balanced Person.*

<http://www.aacap.org> – American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Fact sheets on various disorders that affect children and adolescents.

<http://www.aboutourkids.org/> – NYU Child Study Center. Clearly presented information on disorders that affect children and adolescents and their treatment.

<http://www.pbis.org> – U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

<http://www.lsci.org> – Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute website. Information on training in this intensive intervention approach designed turn crisis situations as learning opportunities for children and youth with chronic patterns of self-defeating behaviors.

<http://www.nycenet.edu/aspdp/default.aspx> – New York City Department of Education After School Professional Development Program.

<http://www.behaviordoctor.org> – a site containing positive intervention strategies.

<http://www.cast.org/research/udl/index.html>

http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_diffinstruc.html

CAST (Center for Applied Special Technology) website – a good resource on Differentiated Instruction.

Heading off disruptive behavior: How early intervention can reduce defiant behavior-and win back teaching time. *American Educator*, Winter 2003-2004. Download at

http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/winter03-04/early_intervention.html - 73.7KB

Print Articles:

Bannon, Veronica. “Dance/Movement Therapy with Emotionally Disturbed Adolescents.” Safe School, Safe Students Conference. *ERIC, Academic Search Premier*, 1994. 18 February 2007. <<http://web.ebscohost.com.library.esc.edu/ehost/delivery.html>>

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Kowalski, Ellen, Lauren J. Lieberman and Sara Daggett. “Getting Involved in the IEP Process.” *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*. 77:7 (2006): 35-39).

Loman, S. (1995). “The case of Warren: A KMP approach to autism.” In Levy, F. (Ed.) *Dance and Other Expressive Arts Therapies*. New York: NY: Routledge Press.

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Appendix B: Sample Scenarios and Resources *continued*

Theses/Dissertations

Eddy, Martha CMA Ed.D; iThe Role of Physical Activity in Educational Violence Prevention Programs for Youthî (Dissertation #990 9416)

Stratton-Gonzalez, Sandra. “The Impact of Participation in the Creative Dance Clubs on the Social, Personal, and Cognitive Growth of 4th and 5th Grade Students at PS 722.” Empire State College, New York. 2008.

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