

Name/Title: The Snowflake Dance

Purpose of Event: To explore the movement concepts of slow and smooth, sudden and quick changing body shape, and moving through personal and general space. The emphasis of this dance is to provide contrast in movement while focusing on the movement themes of body, weight and time, space and flow.

Prerequisites: Prior to performing the "Snowflake Dance," students in kindergarten, first and second grade will have previously explored the movement concepts of slow and smooth, sudden and quick, various body shapes that change, and movement through general and personal space. These movements were performed to tambourine, triangle and drum instruments.

Suggested Grade Level: K-2

Materials Needed: The use of a tambourine works well in providing the class with a percussion sound in practicing the dance movements. Practice first without the music. Then use the tambourine to assist when students are performing to the music before they become completely independent to the music. Using wind and breezy sounds from your voice also assists well in guiding students prior to the music.

Recommended music: "Pathway Puzzle" on the CD "Creative Dance," Volume 2. Artist: Eric Chapelle.

Beginning dance formation: Each student starts in a low level in his/her personal space.

Description of Idea

This dance involves each student moving his/her body like a snowflake to three changing winds.

1. The Curving Smooth Wind - Creating pathways that curve through general space as well as demonstrating continuous flow of movement
2. The Slow and Breezy Wind - Creating slower longer lasting sustained movements.
3. The Poppy Sudden Wind - Creating sudden explosive movements that explode upwards and show continuous and/or sudden shape changes.

The dance begins with each child's body low to the ground in a closed position.

The following cues can be given to the class:

"With each tap of the tambourine, make your body change shape and suddenly form your snowflake as if it were water that was changing to snow." After five or six taps, each student's snowflake is in a frozen shape and ready to move.

"Now make your snowflake move through the air and throughout the gym to the 'curvy smooth wind' as you hear the windy sound I make with my voice. Move your body smoothly and lightly as you curve and travel and let your shape change as you move. When you hear my sinking

sound, close down and sink."

"Now to the breezy sound of my voice, move your body as a snowflake to the 'slow and breezy wind'. Make your body change levels and shapes as it moves slowly through space. Think of long lasting movements that are light and have different shape to them." Students again will sink down to the sinking sound of my voice.

"Here comes the 'poppy sudden wind'. When you hear the quick pop of the tambourine and the sound of my voice, Move your body suddenly with energy and changing shape to each pop. Pop...Pop...Pop...Pop...Pop...Pop...Pop...Pop..." Students will again suddenly sink their snowflake down to the sinking down sound with my voice.

After the class has performed this a few times, bring them together and listen to the song, "Pathway Puzzle". Have each student listen closely to the sounds of the three separate winds so he/she can recognize how the sounds contrast to one another.

Now begin the dance again. After students have formed their snowflake shape to the tap of the tambourine have them perform their snowflake dance to the music of the changing winds represented in "Pathway Puzzle". They need to remember to sink down each time according to the sinking sound within the music. Continue to encourage changing shape and speed in movement.

Variations:

As students become more comfortable performing the movements and sequence to this dance, allow them to perform their "Snowflake Dance" as partners or as a small group of snowflakes. They then have to form snowflakes together or separately and move together or separately as they explore the three changing winds. When students perform with other students they tend to become more creative and challenged in body shape, space and changing speed.

Assessment Ideas:

This dance involves creative movement which is qualitative in it's design. I have students assess one another by half of the class teaching the other half and picking out movements that we practiced in our dance. Having an audience motivates students who like to perform and create. Hearing feedback is valuable to all students as they become better and more challenged within the dance.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities:

This dance is geared for all ability levels, because it is based on quality of movement not quantity of movement.

Submitted by **Dave Olszewski** in Nashua, NH. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 1/14/2013.**

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