

Name/Title: Dancing Letters (March '08)

Purpose of Event: Used in the elementary setting, this combination can help students learn letters by incorporating their shapes into a dance. Used in the middle/high school setting, this combination can be a good warm-up for more vigorous activity.

Suggested Grade Level: K-12

Materials Needed: A CD player and music that is between 115-125 beats per minute. A portable microphone is almost a necessity in order to protect your vocal cords and still be able to cue above the music.

Recommended music: Elementary Age Children: “You’ve Got a Friend in Me” by Randy Newman; Middle/High School: “You Give Love a Bad Name” by Bon Jovi

Beginning dance formation: scattered or line dance formation

Description of Idea

These moves will be easy to cue and will gradually raise the heart rate, preparing the body for a vigorous workout. In addition, elementary children will learn letters while doing the movements. Try cueing by calling out the letters.

1-8 Grapevine R (step R to right, step L foot behind R, step R foot to R, and touch L foot next to R). “V” step (Step L forward and wide, Step R forward and wide, step back on L and back on R, feet should be together).

1-8 Repeat the V step leading with L foot. Grapevine to the L (step L to left, step R foot behind L, step L to L, touch R foot next to L).

1-8 “I” step – March two steps forward, jump out and in (like a jumping jack), March two steps back and jump out and in.

1-8 Repeat the “I” step.

1-8 “X” step - Step forward and wide with the R foot, step forward and wide with the L foot, step back with the R foot, step back with the L foot (feet should be together), step back and wide with the R foot, step back and wide with the L feet, step forward with the R foot, step forward with the L foot (feet should be together).

1-8 Repeat the “X” step.

You can make these moves more complex by adding the arms to letter movements. As you step forward and wide on R foot of the “V” step raise the R arm up and at an angle, as you step forward with the L foot raise the L arm up and at an angle. The arms are now in a “V”. As you

step back with the R foot bring the R hand in to the tummy. As you step back with the L foot bring the L hand in to the tummy. On the “I” step, raise the elbows to the side and down as you jump out and in. As you execute the “X” step raise the arms to the front and up as you step forward, bring them into your tummy as you step together, move them down and out at an angle as you step back and bring them to the tummy as you bring your feet together.

You can also ask your students to “jump” the V. Jump forward with feet apart. Jump back with feet together. Jump to the back with feet apart and jump forward with feet together. (Does this sound like the “dot drill”?) The “jumping X” can be four counts or eight counts depending on the speed you do the jumps.

Variations:

You can make the moves easier by doing a simple slide to the R and L instead of a grapevine. When making the letters, you can allow two counts to every movement instead of just one. You can repeat the letters as many times as you want. Make four “V”s instead of just two or make four “I”s instead of two.

Can you think of ways to make other letters? Don’t be afraid to be creative and have fun!

Submitted by **Brenda Goodwin** who teaches at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 2/25/2008.**

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