Name/Title: Swing Dance Combinations (May 2009)

Purpose of Event: The students will be able to perform a swing dance combination using the basic single time swing dance step.

Suggested Grade Level: 6-12

Materials Needed: CD player

Recommended music: "Rock and Roll Music" by the Beach Boys or any swing music with a slow enough tempo to allow the students to practice the basic steps.

Description of Idea

Students will learn the basic single time swing step as well as some turns and variations.

Basic single time swing step:

Gentlemen (the lead) will start with their left foot and girls (the follow) with their right. They should be facing one another. The rhythm for the step is slow (2 counts)-slow (2 counts)-quick (1 count)-quick (1 count). The basic pattern for the male is: step L (slow), step R (slow), step backward on the ball of the L foot behind the R heel (quick) and step R in place (quick). The girl's part mirrors the boy's.

Cue with the dance with the words "slow-slow-quick-quick" or "step-step-rock-step"
Help your students remember the sequence by reminding them that the boys will always step back with the L foot, and the girls will always step back with the R foot.

The Moves:

1. The spin or underarm turn: Couples will have hands joined, approximately waist high. The lead will raise his L hand, drop his partner's L hand, and spin the follow under his L arm. The follow turns clockwise on her R foot, steps on her L foot and both dancers do a "rock-step" after the follow has completed a full turn.

2. Dishrag turn – Couples will have hands joined, at approximately waist level. The lead will raise his L arm and his partner's R arm. Both dancers will follow their arms and make a complete turn without releasing hands. They will end up facing each other again and end with a "rock-step."

3. Octopus turn – Couples will have hands joined at approximately waist level. Both dancers swing their arms up and place their L hand behind their own head and the R hand behind their partner's head. They each release the L hand and slide R hands down the R arms to catch hands and do a "rock-step."

After teaching the basic single swing step and the turns, try this combination:

3 basic single swing steps – 1 underarm turn
3 basic single swing steps – 1 dishrag turn
3 basic single swing steps – 1 octopus turn
3 basic single swing steps – students finish with their favorite turn or ask them to be creative and finish the dance combination with their own step.

Remind the students that swing dancing has no set choreography. It should be fun, upbeat and creative!

Variations:

If students have quickly learned the basic single swing step, introduce the double and triple swing step. Have students research the history of swing dancing and its many variations and patterns.

Submitted by **Brenda Goodwin** who teaches at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 5/15/2009**.

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