

LUNA DANCE INSTITUTE

~~PERFECT~~ IMPERFECT LESSONS

Lesson #3: Rivers & Stones – locomotors, shapes, relationship (Context)

This 45-minute lesson, as seen in the video, was designed for 5-7 year olds with minimal dance experience. It can be modified for different ages, varied by length, depending on your teaching situation. See **Extensions**.

Lesson goal: Students will expand their range of locomotors, shapes, and movement relationships when creating and performing dance

Learning objectives: 1.) Discover new movement possibilities when exploring locomotors and shapes.
2.) Create a duet using relationship.

Elements of dance: Locomotors and Shape modified by Body, Space and Relationships.

Materials: drum, music, optional hoops

Using the neurocellular developmental patterns: These patterns, the basis of the Brain Dance™, can be used in multiple ways throughout class to warm-up, get the children moving through space, support self-regulation, and cool-down. You can repeat patterns and add variations, focus on one pattern, and play with the order, depending on your purpose.

Finding partners: Depending on your students, you may choose to assign, let them choose, or have them find a partner randomly. Possible strategies: “Find a partner you haven’t danced with today” or “Connect back to back with someone. Now elbow to elbow with someone else.”

Composition with young children: Developmentally, most 5-7 year olds are not choreographing dances with steps they will perform exactly the same each time. They are just beginning to learn about sequencing, so their dances are looser improvised scores, with ingredients to include. They may need reminders to include an ingredient, or to end their dance.

Setting up the performance: During Composition, clarify with your dancers where the audience will be sitting, and where the performance space is so that they can practice with appropriate facing. During Performance, remind the audience of their role as observers and to clap at the end. Remind performers to hold their final shapes until all dancers are finished.

Connections: Exploring relationship is exploring prepositions. Because classrooms are often filled with furniture, learning to dance safely over, under, around and through desks, shelves, and chairs can expand the potential of small dancing spaces. Playing with other prepositions (between, towards, away, on, off) will build kinesthetic spatial awareness in relation to objects and others.

Extensions: Young children in parent-child classes will enjoy stopping/starting and making shapes in relation to their grown-up, including hiding inside an adult shape and watching adults go through their body tunnels. For older dancers who are familiar with contact and weight, incorporate strong base shapes that can take their partner’s weight with an on/off relationship. Dancers can drape and perch on their partner, and repel or launch, slide and roll off their partner. Talk about consent, where to place weight, and how to communicate about what is/is not working. For dancers for whom contact and weight might not be accessible or comfortable, a sturdy chair can be used as a partner to investigate relationships, including locomotors toward/away, over/under, around, through and shapes with and on/off.

All these ideas can be found in *Body, Mind & Spirit in Action*, 2nd ed. ©2015 by Patricia Reedy.

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Lesson #3: Rivers & Stones: locomotors, shapes, relationships (*Curricular Flow*)

Warm-up 5 minutes	Neurocellular Development Patterns: breath, tactile, core/distal, head/tail, upper/lower, body sides, cross-lateral, vestibular.
Exploration 15 minutes	Freeze Dance: begin by dancing in general space any way you like. Introduce concept of freeze, and freezing in shapes. Introduce locomotors. Modify with space prompts, and some energy. Introduce holey shapes, modifying with space and body prompts. Rivers & Stones. Divide class in half, with one half as stones, other half as rivers. Stones dance into the space and freeze in a holey shape. Rivers dance through the space, and over, under, around, and through the stone shapes, discovering all the ways they can dance in relationship with the stones. Change roles many times.
Improvisation 10 minutes	Working in pairs. Play with River & Stone structure, experimenting with partner how and when to change roles within the dance.
Composition 5 minutes	Make a River & Stone duet that includes: • Frozen shapes • Locomotors over, under, around, through • Changing of river and stone roles • Beginning, middle and end
Performance 5 minutes	Show each dance once.
Response & Reflection 3 minutes	Ask either after each duet or after all dances have been seen questions like: • What kinds of relationships did you see in this dance? • How were the dancers dancing over, under, around and through? • How did they begin their dance? • How did they end their dance? • Choreographers, how did you communicate with your partner about when to switch roles?
Closing 2 minutes	Final dance across the floor all together.