

NATIONAL *Dance* WEEK

Third Grade Dance Projects

Objectives

- ❖ To explore dance and movement as a form of non verbal communication.
- ❖ To provide use a combination of individual and team projects to foster creative thinking.
- ❖ To look at dance as an art form and begin developing an appreciation for different dance forms.
- ❖ To allow students to experience the joy of dance.
- ❖ To introduce dance to those students who have not had the opportunity to explore dance based movement activities.
- ❖ To encourage students who have an interest in dance to continue to pursue opportunities which will enhance their personal development and appreciation of the art form.

Physical Education I- Dance & Choreography (approx activity length 40 minutes)**Equipment**

Something to play music on (stereo, mp3 player and speakers, etc)

A clock with a second hand, stopwatch or timer

The song "Funkytown" by The Party Cats (Kids Dance Party 2 CD) (warm up song 1)

[Download single song here from Amazon](#)

[Download the full cd from Amazon here](#)

The song "Hamsterdance" by The Party Cats (Kids Dance Party 2 CD) (warm up song 2)

[Download the single song here from Amazon](#)

If you want to use different songs, the warmup exercise will work with songs which are approximately 7 ³/₄ minutes long with a beat range of 112 - 120 beats per minute

The song "Limbo Rock" by The Party Cats (Kids Dance Party 2 CD)

[Download the single song here from Amazon](#)

Other versions of this song will work as well. The version referenced above is about 4 ¹/₂ minutes long.

Any high energy age appropriate song that is about 3 minutes in length. Beats per minute is not important.

4 or 8 Hula Hoops (depending on total class size)

Warm up (approximate activity length 9 minutes)

Divide the students into lines so that they have room to move side to side while being able to maintain their personal space.

This warm up is a level more challenging than the activity presented in the **National Dance Week First and Second Grade Lesson Plans**. If your students are new to dance movements, the warm up exercises presented in the previous grades' lesson plans are appropriate for this age as well.

Explain to the students the benefits of warming up the body for activity. Remind the students that warming up their brains by working on coordination and musicality is just as important as getting their hearts pumping and warming up their joints and muscles. If you are facing the students to demonstrate, remember to use the opposite side of your body from what you are saying so that the students can mirror you.

Each interval is 15 seconds. During this series, present the students with the goal of keeping their feet moving together as they complete the other activities.

Physical Education - Dance and Choreography continued

Song 1 – Funkytown

- Interval 1** Step to the right side with the right foot, tap the left foot closed to the right foot, reverse and continue to alternate sides
- Interval 2** Continue moving the feet as above, but add a clap at the same time as the foot taps
- Interval 3** Continue to move the feet as above and relax the arms by the sides, nod the head “yes” avoiding any sharp head movements. The head movements do not have to time with the feet.
- Interval 4** Continue to move the feet as above and relax the arms by the sides, shake the head “no” avoiding any sharp head movements. The head movements do not have to time with the feet.
- Interval 5** Tilt the head towards the shoulder (like you are holding a phone between your ear and shoulder), return to center, repeat on the other side, return to center. Avoid any sharp head movements.
- Interval 6** Return to step, tap with a clap
- Interval 7** Step wide with the feet and instead of tapping closed, straighten one leg and tap the foot more side, at the same time stretch one arm overhead and climb an invisible rope
- Interval 8** Continue the same movement of the feet and legs, but change the overhead movement to more of a side bend – reaching towards the far corners of the room
- Interval 9** Return to the step, tap with a clap.
- Interval 10** Continue the step, tap with the feet and bend the elbows so that the hands are approximately shoulder high, shrug the shoulders up and down in an expression of “I don’t know”
- Interval 11** Step the right foot to the right, close the left foot to the right foot, step the right foot to the right and tap the left foot closed. Reverse and continue to alternate this pattern from side to side (step, together, step, touch is a quick way to say the pattern).
- Interval 12** Keep the feet moving in the same pattern as #1 and when the movement travels to the right, lift and drop the right shoulder as many times as possible. When moving to the left lift and lower the left shoulder as many times as possible.
- Interval 13** Continue the same movement of the feet and circle both shoulders back and around

Physical Education - Dance and Choreography continued

Interval 14 Continue the same movement of the feet and circle both shoulders front and around.

Interval 15 Continue the feet and circle the shoulders back when moving to the right and forward when moving to the left.

Interval 16 The same as #11 adding a clap at the same time as the foot taps

Interval 17 The same as #16 but replace the tap with a jump closing the feet together.

Song 2 – Hamsterdance

Interval 1 Stop the feet, have the students stand on one foot and bend the opposite knee. Circle the ankle of the foot that is in the air clockwise and counter clockwise.

Interval 2 Repeat #1 on the second side.

Interval 3 Open the feet to about hip width and bend both knees. Lift the arms out to the sides and slide the ribcage from one side to the other.

Interval 4 Place the hands on the hips and shift the ribcage forward and backward

Interval 5 Draw a clockwise circle with the torso, trying to keep from the hips down still

Interval 6 Draw a counterclockwise circle with the torso, trying to keep from the hips down still

Interval 7 Swing the hips from side to side

Interval 8 Circle the hips in a clockwise circle

Interval 9 Circle the hips in a counter clockwise circle

Interval 10 Have the students step on the right foot and kick the left foot between knee and ankle high, step on the left foot and repeat the kick with the right foot. Continue to alternate legs

Interval 11 Continue the kicks from above but encourage the students to increase the height of the kicks to be between knee and hip height

Interval 12 Have the students continue to kick until the end of the music, trying to kick their knees to their nose, not lower their nose to their toes

When the music is finished, have all of the students raise their right arm in the air and take a large bow.

Physical Education - Dance and Choreography continued**Choreographed Dance** (approximate activity length 20 minutes)

Have the students divide into multiple lines as for the warm up activity earlier.

Ask the students if they know what a grapevine looks like? Do the branches grow in straight lines or do they twist and curl in and out of each other? (correct answer – twist and curl)

The dance step grapevine involves the feet and legs crossing over each other.

1. Cross the left foot behind the right foot
2. Step the right foot to the right side
3. Cross the left foot in front of the right foot
4. Step the right foot to the right side
5. Cross the left foot behind the right foot
6. Step the right foot to the right side
7. Cross the left foot in front of the right foot
8. Tap the right foot next to the left foot

Reverse the movement to travel to the left

Have the students do 8 sets of grapevines (traveling to the right and left 1 time is 1 set).

Teach the students the paddle turn. First teach the footwork with no turn.

1. Step forward on the right foot
2. Put weight on the ball of the left foot, keeping the left foot basically in place
3. Continue to shift the weight forward and backward a total of 8 times
4. Repeat with the left foot in front 8 times

If the students are able to execute the movements in place next introduce the turn. When the right foot is in front the turn will go to the right. With the left foot in front the turn goes to the left. The goal is to complete 1 full revolution over the course of the 8 weight changes.

Have the students repeat the turns for 4 sets (1 turn in each direction is a set) alternating directions of rotation each time.

Walk back right, left, right, left

Step on the right and paddle turn to the right

Walk forward left, right, left, right

Step on the left and paddle turn to the left

Grapevine to the right

Grapevine to the left

Physical Education - Dance and Choreography continued

Explain to the students the idea of the limbo. Explain that the goal is to travel under a bar without touching the pole or having something other than the feet on the floor.

Play the song "Limbo Rock" for this activity

During the instrumental section in the beginning allow the students to do their own freestyle movements in place with the music. This section lasts about 32 counts and you will hear the words "Yeah now" right before the students start the choreographed dance.

Limbo Rock Choreography

Counts	Movements
1-4	Walk backward r,l,r,l
5&6&7&8	Paddle turn to the right (7 weight changes so left foot is free to start)
1-4	Walk forward l,r,l,r
5&6&7&8&	Paddle turn to the left (8 weight changes so left foot is free to start)
1-8	Grapevine travelling to the right
1-8	Grapevine travelling to the left, turn ¼ turn to the left as you tap on the last count
1-8 x 3	Hip sways or other stationary movements that can get progressively closer to the floor, the goal is to get as low as possible
1-8	Hip sway or other stationary movement back to standing
1-8 x 4	Repeat the 1 st 32 counts
1-8 x 4	Repeat the 1 st 32 counts
1-8 x 4	Repeat the 1 st 32 counts
1-8 x 2	Have the students try bending backwards like they are trying to move under an invisible limbo pole and return to standing
1-8 x 3	Hip sways or other stationary movements that can get progressively closer to the floor, the goal is to get as low as possible
1-8	Hip sway or other stationary movement back to standing
1-8 x 4	Repeat the 1 st 32 counts

Physical Education - Dance and Choreography continued

- 1-8 x 4 Repeat the 1st 32 counts
- 1-8 x 4 Repeat the 1st 32 counts
- 1-8 x 3 Hip sways or other stationary movements that can get progressively closer to the floor, the goal is to get as low as possible
- 1-8 Hip sway or other stationary movement back to standing

Let the students do their own freestyle movements until the end of the music.

Divide the class in half. Have each group perform the dance for the other group. When 1 group is finished performing, encourage them to take a bow and have the other group applaud at the end. The groups then switch roles.

Over, Under, Around and Through (approximate activity length 11 minutes)

Use any upbeat, age appropriate song for this activity.

Divide the students into 4 or 8 groups. Give each group their own area of the gym for this activity. Place 1 hula hoop in section.

If using 4 sections, 1 is for each of the following: over, under, around or through. If you are using 8 sections allow 2 sections for each.

Give the students the length of 1 song to come up with a way to move as a group in the given direction (over, under, around or through the hula hoop). All students must do the movement so if successful completion involves holding the hoops, the students must take turns during their time period.

At the end of the song, have the students rotate to the next station and complete the next movement. Continue this until all of the groups have each completed all 4 movement directions.

Physical Education II - Letters (approx activity length 45 minutes)**Equipment**

Optional – music to play in the background and equipment to play it on

Paper and pencils to write on, if needed

Building the Alphabet (approximate time 25 minutes)

Divide the students into pairs or groups of 3 and have each group move so that they have space.

All the students will build their letters at the same time as each other.

Students can make either the lower or upper case letter.

Announce the letter and have the students build it, using just their bodies, with the rest of their team. Continue through the alphabet.

If the students cannot visualize how to build the letter, have them try writing the letter on the paper first.

The Name Game (approximately 20 minutes)

Have each student try to write their name in movement across the floor.

Names can be printed or cursive.

Remind the students to use a capital letter for the start of his / her name.

Encourage the students to let their movements reflect their personality.

If your class is very large, have 2 or 3 students “write” their names at the same time.

Have each student try to write their name in movement across the floor.

Names can be printed or cursive.

Remind the students to use a capital letter for the start of his / her name.

Encourage the students to let their movements reflect their personality.

If your class is very large, have 2 or 3 students “write” their names at the same time.

Math Skills – Division (approximate activity length – 30-45 minutes)**Equipment**

A piece of instrumental music of a slow tempo

Equipment to play the above piece of music

Paper

Pencil

Space for the students to move in safely

Movement Exercise

Divide the students into pairs or groups of 3 (depending on your class size).

Give the students an 8 count movement combination and tell them that this is pattern "A". Some examples are:

- Walk, walk, jump, walk, walk, turn, pose, hold
- Run, run, leap, walk, walk, pose, hold, turn
- Jump, walk, walk, walk, turn, pose, hold, hold
- Walk, clap, walk, clap, walk, clap, clap, jump

Have the students write that combination down

Have the students practice moving through that combination to the music a few times so that it becomes comfortable.

Ask the students to divide the total number of counts that they have to complete the combination in half.

Have the students practice completing the combination in 4 counts (so that they have $\frac{1}{2}$ count for each part of the movement)

Once the students are comfortable with cutting all of the counts in half, ask them to come up with a different way of completing the steps in 4 counts. Some parts could take 1 count where other parts could take $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ of a count.

Next, have the students come up with their own combinations that include whole, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ count movements and demonstrate them to the rest of the class. Allow a total of 8 counts to complete the combination.

Language Arts – Communication (approximate activity length – 30 - 45 minutes)**Equipment**

Space for the students to move in safely
Paper and pencil for each student

Discussion / Writing (allow up to 10 minutes for this section)

Talk about communication. What are some forms of communication that we use:

- ❖ Speech
- ❖ Written word
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Art
- ❖ Sign Language
- ❖ Body Language
- ❖ Dance

Have the students write down a simple sentence that they wish to communicate. The statement should take 3-4 movements to relate. An example is "I brush my teeth, comb my hair and go to bed".

Language Arts - Movement Exercise

Have the students sit in a circle, all facing out of the circle. Have the first student and the student sitting next to him /her move into the circle. The lead student will make his / her movement statement. The 2nd student repeats it.

The 1st student returns to his / her place (but faces inside the circle now) and tells the 3rd student to go into the circle.

The 2nd student demonstrates the movements for the 3rd student, the 3rd student repeats the movement, the 2nd student goes back to his / her place and sends in the 4th student.

This continues all the way around the circle. When the last person goes, everyone is facing into the circle and the goal is to see how close the movements are to the original and if people can guess the meaning of the movement phrase.

The 2nd person now begins a new statement with the next person.

To increase the challenge, allow 10 – 15 seconds per student.

To further increase the challenge, don't let the students copy the initial person, just see the movements and then remember it until it is his / her turn to demonstrate to the next student.

Continue in this manner until everyone has demonstrated his / her movement statement.

Science / Health – Healthy Lifestyle

(approximate activity length 30 minutes)

Equipment –*Paper and pencil for each student***Discussion**

Talk about the components of a healthy lifestyle and how dance can be beneficial. Some of these are:

- Cardiovascular Health
 - Dance can improve cardiovascular fitness by working the heart
 - Dancers rank on par with athletes for physical conditioning
 - There are many different styles of dance so people can find something they enjoy doing and continue that activity for the rest of their lives
 - People are more likely to engage in an activity that they enjoy than in one that they don't like.

- Balance
 - Dance movements help teach and improve balance
 - Better balance reduces the risk of falling
 - Better balance increases athletic performance

- Flexibility
 - Many styles of dance require better than average flexibility
 - There is a direct link between flexibility and the health of the blood vessels in the body
 - As people get older, they tend to lose flexibility, so starting an activity that improves flexibility and staying with it can be beneficial
 - Many athletes find dance training helpful to improve their flexibility

- Stress Management
 - Explain what stress is
 - Ask students what they do to reduce the feeling of stress
 - When we dance, our bodies release chemicals / hormones into our brains which can reduce the impact of stress – just like other exercise
 - Listening to music we like is proven to reduce stress, so if we listen to music as we dance we are reducing stress in 2 different ways at one time
 - Doing something we find enjoyable is another way of reducing stress. If you enjoy dancing, doing it when you are stressed can help to relax you.

- Social Interaction
 - People need friendship and interaction with other people to stay healthy
 - Some forms of dancing are done with partners so the benefits of exercise and human connection are both experienced
 - Other forms of dancing are done in groups, so it is a chance to socialize with other people and share the experience

Science / Health – Healthy Lifestyle – continued

- Learning
 - Physical activities that increase our heart rate also help our brains to grow new connections and pathways
 - Activities that require working under time deadlines, like dancing and having to stay on beat with the music, help our brains develop cognitive abilities
 - Learning new skills helps our brains to continue to grow and develop

- Family
 - Dancing is used at many social occasions like weddings, birthday parties and anniversaries as a way to celebrate and bond with family members
 - Dancing with a parent or sibling helps to increase the bond we feel with that family member
 - Teaching another family member how to dance allows us to share our knowledge and improve our feeling of self worth
 - Creating a dance with another family member allows us to spend time working on a project we both enjoy

- Strength
 - Dancing is considered a weight bearing activity. Weight bearing activities help us to build strong bones
 - Dancing builds muscles throughout our bodies

After discussing the above areas and any other related areas that come to mind, have the students write down a physical, emotional or educational goal on their papers. Ask them to explain how dancing might help them to meet their goals.

Social Studies – Maps and Stage Directions (approximate activity length 20 minutes)**Equipment**

A black or white board

Appropriate writing instrument for the board

A large map

Paper and pencil for each student

Index cards with the words – north, south, east, west, northeast, southeast, northwest, southwest, center stage, upstage, downstage, stage right, stage left, upstage right, downstage right, upstage left, downstage left – written 1 per card

Ask the students to look at the map. Have a student come up and find: North, South, East and West.

Ask students to show where Northeast, Southeast, Northwest and Southwest are.

Once the students are comfortable with the 8 directions above explain that the stage is like a map. Dancers use fixed points on the stage to reference movements.

Ask the students to copy your drawing and words onto their papers as you go through this exercise.

Draw a large rectangle on the board.

Atop the rectangle, write the word "Audience". Explain that the audience is our reference point when we are on stage

Draw an "X" in the center of the rectangle. This X is called center stage.

At the top of the rectangle (on the inside of the box) write the word "Downstage". Explain that when stages and theatres were first built, the stage – not the audience – sloped. Ask the students about the last time they went to a movie theatre. Was it flat? Did the seats get higher as they went away from the screen? Old stages weren't quite as angled, but it was the same idea. When a performer travelled downstage, he or she was literally moving downhill.

Ask the students what they think the opposite direction to downstage is. The correct answer is upstage. Write upstage on the line opposite where you wrote downstage.

When the performers travel to the right as they face the audience, it is called "Stage Right". Write that word on the right hand line of your rectangle.

Going in the other direction is "Stage Left". Write that word on the left hand line of your rectangle. Explain to the students that if a performer moves to stage right, the audience sees them moving to the left side of the stage. Demonstrate this fact by facing the students and moving to your right side. Which way do the students see you travel?

Social Studies – Maps and Stage Directions

Remind the students about the Northeast, Southeast, Southwest and Northwest directions on the map.

Based on how those directions were determined, have the students find Downstage Right, Upstage Right, Downstage Left and Upstage Left.

Ask the students to pretend that their stage diagram is now a map. Use North, South, East and West as well as the combined directions and label their stage diagram accordingly.

Erase your diagram from the board and ask the students to turn their papers over. Tell the students that the wall with the board on it (or whatever feature is unique to the front wall) is the audience or top of the map.

Have the students stand up in the center of the room. Ask 1 student to select an index card and call out the direction listed on it. Have the students move to that location in the room.

Continue having a different student draw a card and call out the new location. Each time the other students in the class move to that location.

Art / Music – Production Aspects (approx activity length 30 – 45 minutes)**Art****Equipment**

A piece of paper to draw on

Colored pencils, crayons, markers, paints

A piece of paper to write on

A pencil

A piece of music that conveys a strong feeling or emotion

Something to play the music on

Ask the students to listen to the piece of music and as they are listening to it think of how it makes them feel.

Next ask them to think of what colors they see in their mind when they are listening to this music.

Have the students write down what emotions the music brings out in them.

Does that emotion make them think of dark or light? Have the student write down his / her answer.

If they were watching a dance to this music would there be 1 person on stage, 2 people, a small group (3-7), a large group (7 – 15), a very large group (16+)? Have the student write down his / her answer.

Ask the students to draw a costume that would match the emotion, color and movements that they picture going with the music.

Have the students write down a short plot summary of what they would expect to see from hearing this piece of music.

If you have the time and space, ask the students to get up and give a short demonstration of the movements they picture going with the music, costuming and emotions.