

Learning Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate a variety of shapes and words with their bodies.
- Students will observe and classify the movements of others using descriptive language.
- Students will work with a partner to create a short movement phrase that demonstrates an idea or theme from a selected text.

Activity 1- Describe the Shape

1. Write the following ENERGY words on a white board:
Strong, heavy, light, sharp, smooth, bound, free, straight, curved
2. Set up the class so that all students are in a circle, facing in.
3. Select two students to stand in the center of the circle. One is the mover and the other is still. They should stand back-to-back so they can not see one another.
4. The “mover” creates a unique shape, using their whole body, and must hold it still for a significant length of time.
5. The students around the circle take turns describing the shape to the student who is standing still, in order to get them to recreate the shape without looking. Guide them to use descriptive language, including the energy words. Use the following guiding questions to help them be as clear as possible:
*Are the arms heavy or light? Is the shape on a high, middle, or low level?
Are the fingers open or closed? Are the arms to the front, side, or back?
Does the shape have sharp or smooth energy?*
6. As much as possible, write down the words they use and add them to the white board in list titled “descriptive words”.
7. Go around the circle until the class, as a group, has decided the two shapes are identical. Both students in the middle can then look. Repeat.

Activity 2- Verb Dances

1. Select a text, paragraph, poem, chapter, etc. Read aloud once as a class.
2. Ask each student to select 4 or 5 verbs (or gerunds) that are particularly important or pivotal in the selection. They must then create a short movement, shape, or gesture that demonstrates each verb, being sure to emphasize the qualities that make it unique (*digging strongly, walking slowly with exhaustion, reaching with sharp energy through the fingertips*). They can use the list from the previous activity to spark creativity.
3. Read the paragraph/story aloud as the students perform their movement sequence. They can either do the movements only when you say the word they choreographed, or do their movements at any time during the reading.
4. Split the class in half- half as observers and the other half as performers. Repeat the read aloud performance, and then switch groups. Ask students to identify their 2 or 3 favorite movements or shapes they observe.

Activity 3- Creating Choreography Based on Text

1. Students will now work in pairs. Have them share their own movements, or their identified favorite movements of others from the previous activity, with their partner.
2. Together, students must combine the movements to create a short movement phrase. They can choose to accompany it with text or decide to perform just the movements. Options for using text include:
 - *One student reads/speaks, the other moves*
 - *Use the text exactly from the selection, or just the words that are shown*
 - *Use the words with the matching gesture, or mix them up*
 - *Speak first, then do the movements*
 - *Students create their own summary/text based on the selection*
 - *Use one student's text, and the other's movements*
3. Time permitting, have each pair to share their compositions followed by an explanation of how they combined their writing and movements. With limited time, divide the class in half and share performances in two groups.

Variation: Create compare/contrast movement composition. Each pair creates two phrases (two different characters, two contrasting themes, two different locations, two contrasting points of view, two contrasting texts) and performs them simultaneously to demonstrate the contrast. Encourage students to select contrasting movements, in addition to contrasting narratives.

Dance Standards

- 1.1 Understands and applies dance concepts and vocabulary
- 1.2 Develops dance skills and techniques
- 1.4 Understands and applies audience conventions in a variety of arts settings and performances for dance
- 2.1 Applies a creative process in dance
- 2.2 Applies a performance process in dance
- 2.3 Applies a responding process to a dance presentation
- 3.1 Uses dance to express and present ideas and feelings
- 3.1 Uses dance to express and present ideas and feelings
- 4.2 Demonstrates and analyzes the connections among the arts and other content areas

Reading GLEs

- 1.3.2 Understand and apply content/academic vocabulary critical to the meaning of the text, including vocabularies relevant to different contexts, cultures, and communities.
- 1.4.2 Apply fluency to enhance comprehension
- 2.1.3 Apply comprehension monitoring strategies during and after reading: determine importance using theme, main ideas, and supporting details in grade-level informational/expository text and/or literary/narrative text.
- 2.4.5 Analyze text to generalize, express insight, or respond by connecting to other texts or situations.

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