

How Timing and Music Affect Intention in Dance

Topic, or Concept, and Goal (if the lesson is part of a learning experience or a unit plan)

This lesson helps students identify their intention for movement and how music can affect those intentions. While music can enhance movement themes, it can also detract from it. This helps students understand the relationship between the movement and the sound.

Grade

Grades: 9-12

Class

90 minutes

State Dance and/or Physical Education (dance) Standards

Nebraska Fine Arts/Dance Standards:

FA 12.3.1: Students will employ dance elements and choreographic principles, structures, and processes to create dances that communicate ideas, images, feelings, and experiences.

FA 12.3.1.a: Generate movement and create dance phrases to communicate ideas, images, feelings, and experiences based on inspiration from a variety of sources.

FA 12.3.1.b: Create a dance sequence that uses a variety of dance elements to implement simple choreographic structures and principles to fulfill choreographic intent.

FA 12.3.1.c: Understand and apply the role of improvisation to create choreography with others.

FA 12.3.2: Students will apply movement skills in dance.

FA 12.3.2.b: Apply time, space, weight, and flow to perform dance.

FA 12.3.3: Students will understand how to apply performance values (kinesthetic awareness, concentration, focus, and etiquette) to enhance dance performance.

FA 12.3.3.b: Understand the impact of performance values of clarity, concentration, focus, and projection on dance performance.

FA 12.3.4: Students will apply critical thinking skills to analyze and evaluate dance.

FA 12.3.4.a: Use accurate dance terminology to describe how elements of movement and choreographic structures are used to communicate ideas in dance.

Nebraska Physical Education (dance) Standards:

PE.HS.10.1/13.1: Demonstrates competency in motor skills and movement patterns needed to perform a variety of physical activities.

PE.HS.10.1b: Creates and performs dance phrases to communicate ideas, images, feelings, and experiences based on inspiration from a variety of sources.

PE.HS. 13.1a: Creates and performs a dance sequence that uses a variety of dance elements to implement simple choreographic structures.

PE.HS.10.2/13.2: Applies knowledge of concepts, principles, tactics and strategies related to movement and performance to achieve and maintain a health enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

PE.HS.10.2a/13.2a: Analyze similarities and differences in various dance forms

National Dance Society *National Dance Education Standards Framework*

Strand 3 Creative and artistic communication in dance

Standard 3.2 Artistic development of expression in dance

Performance indicator (9-12) Student will analyze a variety of accompaniments (sound, music, spoken text, silence) to change the artistic intent of the movement and dance.

Learner Objectives or Outcomes (must include one “real world” objective or outcome for assessment)

Cognitive: Movers will examine how internal stimuli affect external movement through participation in discussions and movement explorations.

Psychomotor: Movers will build short movement phrases and compare how those phrases are manipulated by various sounds and music.

Affective: Movers will compare how various sounds and music affect the internal stimulus of the mover through discussion and movement explorations and differentiate between the tones and tempos that enhance or disrupt their message in order to make thoughtful, intentional decisions regarding music when choreographing.

Rubric	Exceptional (4)	Accomplished (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)
Psychomotor				
Cognitive				
Affective				

Materials, Resources, Space Requirements, Media and Suggested Music

Teacher:

Markers/Large Notepad or Dry Erase Board (to write responses on)

Sound system and speaker

Drum (optional)

Music of various tempos/feelings

Spoken word text/poem

Found sounds

Students:

Clothing they can move comfortably in

Vocabulary terms

Action — Human movement

External Stimuli — Impulse to move comes from outside of the dancer.

Found Sounds — Sounds made from objects that are not typically considered musical.

Internal Stimuli — Impulse to move comes from within the dancer.

Musical Accompaniment — Music played in partnership with movement.

Spoken Word — A general designation for poetry and is orally performed.

Tempo — definition found in NDS standards glossary

Dance Lesson Instruction

The **dance lesson instruction sequence** includes **Introduction** or **Warm-up** (time), **Exploratory Experiences** (time), **New Material** (time), **Recap of Learning** (summary) and **Cool Down** (time), **Closure** (time), and **Assessment** (time). Timing of each dance lesson section may be determined by the teacher.

Each of these instructional topics **may** require **management** (diagrams), **transition** (between each lesson component place and content), **teaching process** (the how), and **teaching points or cues** (technique or music).

Teacher's pre-assessment of the students in class is ongoing observation and assessment throughout the dance instruction sequence.

Warm-up or Anticipatory Set (10 min)

Explain what internal stimuli are: "A stimulus that comes from inside an organism"

Example: Person experiences an internal stimulus of hunger and moves to get food to eat.

The internal stimulus can become motivation to do an external action.

Make a list of possible internal stimuli that could motivate someone into action.

*Advanced Option: Also explore external stimuli as motivation for movement. Compare internal and external stimuli as they affect movement.

Exploring the Concept (20 min)

Pick 4 spots in the room and verbally number each spot

*Simplified Option: Can put visual number signs in each location

On a drum beat or a clap, call out a number and have movers turn their heads to look at that spot
Once movers are confident in the location of each spot, have movers point to the designated spots when the assigned number is called

Then pick different parts of the body to "point" toward the numbered spots that are called out
Eventually ask movers to pick an internal stimuli/motivation that explains why they are reaching to the designated spots

Examples: Calling to someone, Looking for someone, Waving hello

*Students may want to pick a stimulus from the list created in the Anticipatory Set

Continue calling out random numbers and have movers reach toward those spots with their decided internal stimuli

*Advanced Option: Each new focal point has a different internal stimulus so that every reach shows a different internal motivation.

*Advanced Option: Each new focal point alternates between internal and external stimuli

Once students practice different internal stimuli, ask them to choose one corner as their focal point

Keeping the same internal stimuli (up to 4 of them), perform gestures that reflect those motivations to the one designated corner

Keep repeating the sequence of gestures toward the one focal point until the sequence feels comfortable.

*Movers may notice a bit of a narrative forming in the sequence they perform

Developing Skills (20 min)

Ask movers to start changing up the speed of different gestures/movements. Make some go slower and some faster until the speed of the gestures fits the internal stimuli/motivations more clearly.

Now that movers are feeling comfortable in their sequence and feel like their intentions are clear, the teacher will introduce a change in the timing.

Ask movers to do their entire sequence in an 8 count

*Discuss: How did the confides of 8 counts change the intention of the movement?

What stayed the same in the sequence and what changed?

How did they have to adapt what they had created?

Have movers do the sequence 4 more times making the 8-count tempo quicker each time

Have movers do the sequence 4 more times making the 8-count tempo slower each time

*Count or clap the tempo aloud for the movers, keeping the sequence in 8 counts but with different tempos

*Discuss: How did the change in tempo changes the intention, mood, feeling, etc., of the sequence?

How did the mover have to adapt to the changes?

What choices did they make in the moment?

Have movers start to connect how making their movements fit into a set amount of time relates to what music can do to a dancer's intention/message/theme/motivation/etc.

*Discuss: How does tempo affect our message or feeling in dance?

How do you think music with a strong tempo affects movement?

How do you think music with a varied or no tempo affects movement?

How does moving to silence differ from moving to music?

When might silence, found sounds, or music with no strong rhythm be helpful to enhancing a dancer's movement intention?

When might music with a strong beat, even pulse, clear emotional influence, or words enhance a dancer's movement intention?

How can music compliment or hinder one's intention in dance?

Creating/Summarizing (35 min)

After movers respond to the questions have them explore their responses with movement

Movers will perform their same movement sequence to different styles of music, silence, spoken word, found sounds, etc.

*Simplified Option: Pick a strong, quick music tempo, a slow, legato music tempo, and silence as the three to explore. (This also can be done to same time)

*Advanced Option: Pick music with different tempos and different emotional feelings. Use silence, found sounds (clapping, horns honking, bees buzzing, or other sounds), and spoken word (poem, prose)

Ask movers to be aware of how the musical accompaniment changes the feeling, intention, internal stimuli, etc. of the dance.

Discuss:

How did the various sounds affect their movement?
Which sound or tempo seemed to fit the best with the dancer's initial intention?
Which sound or tempo seemed to fight the dancer's initial intention?
What did it feel like to move their sequence in silence? With spoken word? With found sounds?
Did the change in sound or tempo change the intention/internal stimulus of the movement?
What other awarenesses did the movers discover while doing their movement experiment?

After discussion seems concluded:

Teacher summarizes what he/she heard in the discussion. Pointing out similarities of thought or themes that arose in the discussion.

Teacher leads a talk about how music can be a great support for movement, but it can also sometimes overcome the intention of the movement. Knowing how to pick the right kind of musical accompaniment is important. It is important to know the purpose for performing the movement, the intention of the mover, the potential theme or message of the dance, and who the intended audience is when choosing musical accompaniment.

Cool Down (5 min)

Students come to the center of the room

Reach up and take a bow

Clap before leaving the space

Assessment

See rubric and review for informal assessment or use the rubric for formal formative assessment.

Observation in class will allow the teacher to assess students understanding and awareness.

Teacher may choose to keep track or give points for those that participate in discussions.

Checking that students are participating in the movement explorations.

Modifications (Gifted and talented students)

Pick more spots in the room as focal points: 8 instead of 4 spots

Incorporate external stimuli/motivations into the lesson with the internal stimuli

Keep changing the internal stimulus when changing different focal points

Have students pick both internal and external stimuli when creating their movement sequences to one focal point

Individualized accommodations can be made on a person by person basis.

Accommodations (Individuals with disabilities)

Put visual numbers in the designated focal points instead of verbally numbering the points of focus

Pick body parts to reach to designated spots rather than letting mover choose

Give intentions instead of letting movers choose their own, mover may draw them from a bag

Reduce options

Individualized accommodations can be made on a person by person basis

Extensions (Interdisciplinary topics)

Create larger choreographic works using informed choices about music
Create movement that purposefully contrasts the sound or music being used

Lesson Reflection and Next Teaching Steps

This lesson works well at the start of a choreography unit. It helps dancers start to explore their intentions in movement and decide how sounds can enhance or detract from that intention. Having this understanding will help them progress into choreography explorations.

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