

# **Teaching Creative Movement**

## **Unit Plan**

**Name:** Belinda A. Sáenz, BFA, MEd., MA.

**Date:** April 29, 2013

**Title of Unit:** Social dancing and socializing!

### **Unit Description and Context:**

The unit is presented in the context of prior basic dance skills and exploration of LMA concepts. Also, prior to this unit, students should have experienced improvisation and collaborative exercises.

### **Unit Goal:**

- The unit will introduce various social dance forms as material for creating unique dances and enhance their creativity while composing collaboratively.
- The unit will provide knowledge on various social dance forms such as Jitterbug, Fox Trot, Charleston, Rock n' Roll, Swing, and Latin dances.
- The unit will incorporate prior knowledge such as Laban movement analysis (Special focus on relationship), individual work, partnering, and imagery experiences into engaging dance making processes.
- The unit will incorporate improvisation and collaborative work in order to establish social principles of dance while enhancing students' collaboration and socialization skills.
- The unit will enrich students' dance vocabulary and movement repertoire towards creative dance making.

### **Unit's Learner Objectives/ Students will be able to:**

- Execute basic social dance steps and movements.
- Create simple and complex dance movement inspired by social dance forms.
- Create relationships with social dance performance and creative dance composition.
- Experiment with movement and technical aspects of social dance forms.
- Explore movement through social dance elements, LMA concepts, improvisation, collaboration, and imagery.

### **Unit-Overarching "Essential Questions":**

- What are the dance elements that can be used to create movement in structured social dance styles?
- How can you use these elements to compose your own dance style?

- How can you combine the use of improvisation, LMA, and social dance aspects when creating dance?

**Unit Duration:** 6 weeks

**Lesson Duration:** 45minutes.

**Grade/Age:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade/9-11 years old.

**School Environment:** Unit designed for the public sector. Students meet once a week

**Lesson titles included in this unit:**

**Lesson 1:** Social Dance, what is it? (Full lesson plan attached)

This lesson will introduce movement concepts and dance elements of social dance forms. The lesson will rely on technology as student will watch videos/visual aids about the various dance forms. We will introduce the concept of social dance and allow students to share their knowledge. Their experiences in social dance forms will frame the pre-impact phase of the lesson. Basic steps and movements from swing, Charleston, fox- trot will be introduced (triple step, kick ball change, rock step).

**Lesson 2:** Social dancing, socializing, and improvising

After discussing the elements of social dance forms we will learn new material (shake, shimmy, Charleston, salsa step) and experiment individual and group improvisation exercises to explore new movement patterns while keeping in mind the social dance forms we learned last week and today. They will be working on specific LMA concepts such as relationships to enhance their understanding on social dances. At the end of the exercise they will create a chart or list on terminology and will reflect into their recent improvisation exercises.

**Lesson 3:** Relationship in social dance forms

There will be a review on composition elements such as levels, pathways, etc. in conjunction with LMA concepts. Students will work in groups to practice material and discuss their observations on relationships in social dance forms. The key words of this lesson are: partnering, mirror, and locomotor to strengthen understanding on relationships found in social dance forms. They will reflect about how they can use relationship into the creation of new movement. They will spend about 20 minutes collaborating. The assessment of the day will consist on sharing their work.

**Lesson 4:** My own social dance

Students will now bring into the table their own experience with social dance forms. These should be forms we have not seen and aspects we have not discussed. Students will write a short

reflection on social dance forms they have experienced and similarities and differences with the dances we have studied. They will draw, write, talk, or dance about social dance forms related to their background, ethnicity, tradition, etc. They will pick two steps/movements/concepts and will teach them to their partner. They will reflect on the idea of style and create their “signature” movement to incorporate it into their own social dance phrase.

**Lesson 5:** Social dancing it’s fun. (Full lesson plan attached)

Students will compile the knowledge of the previous weeks in order to review structured material and use it to create new movement.

**Lesson 6:** Sharing time-Our social dance adventure

This will be the closing lesson of the unit and will consist on a “party” The lesson will consist on creating the environment of a social event where the students dance for fun. They will be able to observe, dance, and share as they would do if they were at a party. The “social dancing party” will consist on playing fun music and everyone can try out the dances they created, new free-style movements, and more...

**Modes of Assessment/ Academic Prompts:** Teacher observations, peer observations, verbal response, teacher, peer, self-assessment. Embedded/ formative and summative assessment.

Daily journals will be kept and students will write their entries as homework reflecting about their lesson experience. Two vocabulary words or phrases will be listed on the board at the end of the day where the student will need to enter a definition or example of what they understood and remember from class.

There will be a total five reflection papers/drawings/poems, etc; each given at the end of the specific lesson. There will be in-class performance opportunities along the six weeks.

**Connections to other subject areas:** Strong connection to social sciences and history as the development social dance forms will be explored. Students will analyze diverse time periods, cultural and social concepts, trends, poetry and music. Technology: Video exploration

Groovie Movie (1944). Funny jitterbug instructional video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbaNYWkQYYA>

Hooked On Swing Dancing- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHANNkKBSNU>

Real 1950s Rock &Roll, Rockabilly dance from lindy hop

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rf55gHK48VQ>

Amazing Latin dance!-<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5zCGgZMaWQ>

## **Lesson Plan 1**

**Title of Lesson:** Social Dance, what is it?

**Teacher Name:** Belinda A. Sáenz

**Lesson Duration:** 45 minutes

**Age Group:** 5th Grade, ages 9-11, with prior experience

**Materials Needed:** White board/SmartBoard, Cards/images of social dance forms, paper sheets, pencils, videos (Rock n Roll, Swing, Fox-Trot, Jitterbug, etc.).

### **Lesson Goals:**

- To introduce students to social dance forms.
- To introduce them to the basic concepts of social dance forms such as partnering and improvisation.
- To create social and cultural awareness through movement.
- To engage them into creative ideas of free-style.

### **Learner Objectives:**

- Students will be able to define social dance.
- Students will be able to identify the general characteristics and settings of social dance forms.
- Students will be able to clearly demonstrate understanding on basic steps in social dance forms.
- They will be able to execute the movements allowing for individual expression and uniqueness.

**Key words to use:** Social Dance, rock step, triple step, kick-ball change, shake, shimmy.

## **LESSON ACTIVITIES:**

### **Warm Up (5 min):**

Start facing the mirror. Teacher will guide students through a warm up that include basic isolations, stretching, and rhythmic exercises. Remind students about their own space in relation with others for safety and freedom of movement. Introduce movements that they will learn though out the social dance unit such as footwork, style, etc.

### **Presentation of Theme (5 min):**

Sitting in circle: Teacher will begin short discussion on what is social dance? Students will share their understanding and experience with social dance forms. Their comments will be

begin our concept list: Dancing with the Stars, Broadway shows, Movies, theatre, parties, patterns, and tricks (Raise hands). Today, we are going to watch several videos with various dance forms that are social. We are going to learn some basic aspects of these social forms. We are going to dance together to have fun!!! Who has heard about swing? Rock n' roll? Charleston? Jitterbug? What do you know about those? What kind of settings is required to perform those dances? Is the music different from each other? How are those similar or different to the ones you have seen on TV, theater, or parties?

### **Individual Activity/ Videos (10 min):**

Students gather around the monitor to watch the video/ visual presentation. They write their observations after each clip. They reflect on the steps, movement in terms of LMA, and settings. Teacher will engage them into a discussion about the videos and their concept list from the pre-impact phase. Find relationships. Allow some time for students to reflect and share their observations. (Important emerging curriculum possibilities). Distribute a piece of paper to each student and have them explain in words or drawing why do they think social dance forms may help us create new movement.

### **Individual Activity/ Cards (5 min):**

Students will observe several cards with images of social dance forms. They will chose one card and will write two words that describe the image in the card.

### **Guided instruction (10 min):**

Students will stand facing the mirror. They will learn rock step, triple step and kick ball change. Students will execute the steps and will repeat those steps changing fronts, facing each other, in a big circle and lining up. Teacher will cue the changes and will guide them as necessary. Form small groups to review and peer assess.

### **Group Activity/Dance Making (10 min):**

Students will remain in the assigned groups. Write the steps and movements on the board as review (rock step, triple step and kick ball change). Allow students to create their own combinations using the social dance steps they just learned, their observations about the videos they watched and the two words from the card they chose.

### **Accommodations and Modifications:**

Older/More experienced students: Adding movement qualities and advanced and or new steps for any of the styles in study.

Younger/Less experienced students: Fewer steps/movement, extra time to review previous material, more guidance in putting steps/movements together, assign peer leaders to offer

support. i.e. pick just one step and one movement word, provide assistance in putting them together.

Students with physical movement impairments: Focus on free-style and their particular movement abilities. Offer modified movement and steps. Encourage their participating in a group and support them with ideas on how to incorporate these qualities into the group work.

Students with Social Anxiety Disorder SAD: Make sure the students are feeling comfortable through constant monitoring. Allow for individual work if the student is not able to participate in groups.

### **Connections with NYC Blueprint:**

History and culture in dance movements, costuming and musical accompaniment.

- Describe who dances a dance, and where, when and why it is danced.
- Discuss how values and beliefs are reflected in a dance.

Apply Dance Vocabulary, Terminology and Symbols:

- Use words and symbols to describe and name dance activities and ideas
- Respond to action words and symbols with appropriate movement
- Express basic elements of dance by naming different body parts, and actions

Understand Dance as a Means of Expression and Communication:

- Use descriptive language to distinguish between contrasting movements, both as performer and observer

Analyze, Critique and Communicate About Dance:

- Recall movements and general impressions

Develop Skills and Techniques:

- Articulate body parts, shapes and actions, balance on various parts of the body.

## **Lesson Plan 6**

**Title of Lesson:** Social-dancing it's fun.

**Teacher Name:** Belinda A. Sáenz

**Lesson Duration:** 45 minutes

**Age Group:** 5th Grade, ages 9-11, with prior experience

**Materials Needed:** White board/SmartBoard, Magazines and/or images of social dance forms, paper sheets, pencils, color pencils, stereo with iPod hookup, iPod with music (Rock n Roll, Swing, Fox-Trot, Jitterbug, and other Jazz kid-friendly music).

### **Lesson Goals:**

- To help students review their previous learned basics from social forms.
- To help them recognize incorporate the familiar components of those steps and incorporating new, individual ideas to create something new and fun.
- To help them create social awareness as they are encouraged to partner up and work in groups to create dances that include the basics, their own ideas, and partnering work.
- To help them use movement and steps to stimulate their free-style.

### **Learner Objectives:**

- Students will be able to clearly demonstrate understanding of basic steps (social dance, social dancing, partnering, free-style, rock-step, Charleston) through execution and incorporation into creative dance making.
- They will be able to combine these movements to create their own unique “moves.”
- They will be able to repeat the basic steps individually and with a partner if they are ready.
- They will be able to recognize and verbalize when dancers are using basic steps and doing free-style movements.

**Key words to use:** Social Dance, Partnering, free-style, rock step, Charleston, triple step, kick-ball change, mirror, shake, slide, jumps, turns, locomotor.

## **LESSON ACTIVITIES:**

### **Warm Up (10 min):**

Start standing in a circle. Teacher will guide students through a vernacular warm up that include previous material. Remind students about their own space in relation to others for safety and freedom of movement. Introduce movements that they have learned though out the social

dance unit. Encourage them to apply these to different steps and movements into their own style...free style warm up to have fun and warm up!

### **Presentation of Theme (5 min):**

Sitting in circle: We have had lots of fun watching videos of cool social dance forms. Most of you have expressed how much you love Dancing with the Stars, other have mentioned Broadway shows you have seen live or on Movies that have Swing, Rock n Roll, Salsa, etc. (raise hands) Today, we are going to put everything together and work with each other. We are going to learn a way to make up your own cool dances but instead of dancing we are going to social dance. Using the concepts we have used like mirroring, and partnering... We are going to dance together to have fun. If I do a triple step...do you think a can partner with someone and still be able to do it? If we want to add a turn, how would it be? If I want to free-style and then partner up with someone and do the Charleston...would it work? Who can think of combinations like these? Everyone try combining steps you have learned in class with fun movements you enjoy while dancing at a party! Take students' suggestions, keep trying different combinations.

### **Group Activity/Dance Making (15 min):**

Students spread out in their own spaces again. Assign their groups. Write the steps and movement words on the board as students review them (Social Dance, Partnering, free-style, rock step, Charleston, triple step, kick-ball change, mirror, shake, slide, jumps, turns, locomotors). Allow some time for students to try their own combinations and create a few of their own "moves." Monitor their work, support them, give suggestions when needed, and answer any questions. Distribute a piece of paper to each group and have them explain in words or drawing why their dance is fun, unique, and why is it important for them. Allow them to discuss how they are going to express their work and then encourage them to participate.

### **Sharing/Performance (10 min):**

Assign students an order of performance. Audience will be asked to be seated at a designated area (NYU-Mirror) Show each group's work. Other students will be reminded that as audience must remain respectful and attentive. Their task will be to identify steps and movements they recognize and can name. Also they will guess why that dance is unique. They will have a piece of paper and they can write or draw their observations after each group is finished.

### **Group Discussion (5 min):**

What steps/combinations did you see that you liked? Anything unexpected occurred? Share with your peer...someone next to you that is not from your team. Share with the class. What did you notice in terms of partnering and group work? Did all the groups do the same? Why do you think they were different? Do you think they all are unique?



## **Accommodations and Modifications:**

Older/More experienced students: Adding movement qualities and advanced and or new steps for any of the styles in study.

Younger/Less experienced students: Fewer steps/movement, extra time to review previous material, more guidance in putting steps/movements together, assign peer leaders to offer support. i.e. pick just one step and one movement word, provide assistance in putting them together.

Students with physical movement impairments: Focus on free-style and their particular movement abilities. Furthermore, I would focus less on calling out specific steps or holding a partner, but I would stress “moving for the sake of having fun” to the music and/or by observing other. Encourage their participating in a group and support them with ideas on how to incorporate these qualities into the group work.

Students with Social Anxiety Disorder SAD: Make sure the students are feeling comfortable through constant monitoring. Allow for individual work if the student is not able to participate in groups.

## **Connections with NYC Blueprint:**

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Analyze, Critique and Communicate About Dance:

- Recall movements and general impressions

Develop Skills and Techniques:

- Articulate body parts, shapes and actions, balance on various parts of the body,

Improvise:

- Invent original body movements in response to words

Choreograph:

- Chose and order the movements in a sequence with beginning, middle and end
- Recall, repeat and practice the sequence
- Cooperate with a partner or small group