

Annotation

Reading: Boorman, J. (1969). Creative Dance in the First Three Grades. *Chapter Six: Stimuli*. (1st ed., pp. 63-93). Ontario: Longman Canada Limited.

“Children gain tremendous satisfaction from portraying certain words” p. 87.

Issue/Focus:

The chapter demonstrates how to use various stimuli as a way of encouraging imaginative thought in movement. The focus is for students to learn how to represent the characteristics of a stimulus through movement, not actually trying to ‘become’ that stimulus. Many areas of movement, such as body awareness, time and energy, space, and relationships, can be taught through the exploration of a stimulus. Strategies and lessons are presented throughout the chapter and each lesson explores all the elements important for creative dance. Using stimuli to promote creative movement also has potential for cross-curricular connections. For example, a movement sequence on leaves could relate to weather, seasons, or a nature study. Boorman also notes the importance of choosing stimuli that are rich in movement potential in order to produce a movement response.

Reasoning:

Boorman provides seven lessons in this chapter, all which have been developed through teaching. The lessons allow children to explore various movements that represent a stimulus and as a result children begin to understand that movement is expression and there is not one *right* way to dance. There are pictures accompanying each lesson, which helps the reader visualize how the movements represent the stimulus.

Assumptions:

The author assumes that the students have an understanding of the stimuli presented in the lessons. Teachers who decide to use stimuli as a way of teaching creative movement should ensure that all students have a deep understanding of the stimulus in order to represent its characteristics correctly. As a new teacher, I would probably gain more experience with creative movement on other forms, such as creative dance (‘A Nightmare In My Closet’), because I believe children need some background to creative movement before they attempt to represent a stimulus in movement.

Conclusion:

Creative movement can be taught by using certain stimuli to enrich the learning experience. When teaching creative movement, the focus should be on representing the characteristics of a stimulus rather than trying to “become” that stimulus. Using stimuli for expressive movement explores all the elements of creative dance while promoting imaginative and critical thinking and is an integral part of learning.

Significant Information:

- focus on movement, do not ask children to “become” something
- portray characteristics of stimuli with movements
- carefully choose stimuli that have movement potential:

- ✓ varied bodily activity
- ✓ varied use of space
- ✓ changes of time and force
- ✓ permit children to dance
- stimuli used for creative movement can connect to other subjects for a cross-curricular learning experience
- lesson progressions should work with individual body awareness, space, effort, and relationships with other children
- combine movement and imaginative thinking
- an entire 'dance story' can be created with a simple stimulus
 - Some examples are:
 - ✓ leaves
 - ✓ bonfire
 - ✓ snow

Personal Comments:

I think this chapter holds valuable information on how to develop creative ideas and movement sequences. It provides simple guidelines for choosing appropriate stimulus for promoting imaginative movement. Each suggested example is broken down into easy to follow sections and covers body awareness, time and energy, space, and relationships. This is definitely a resource I would use and introduce to my class.