

## Chapter Summary For Creative Movement

Joyce, M. (1994). The Theory. In *First Steps in Teaching Creative Dance to Children* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 1-26). London: Mayfield.

As probably guessed from the title, Mary Joyce's book serves as a resource for those interested in learning how to teach creative dance to children. As most first chapters usually do, this chapter starts with the basics and serves as an excellent introduction or refresher for those who may have little or no previous experience in the area. Joyce's chapter is divided into titled sections that make the reading very organized and easy to follow.

The first section "The Elements of Dance" goes over just that. Body, space, force and time are introduced as the four basic elements of dance and are each briefly touched upon within this section. It is explained that basic body elements include: body parts, body moves, and steps. Elements of space are introduced as shapes, levels, direction, size, focus, place and pathway. The elements of force are introduced as attack, weight, strength and flow. Finally, the elements of time are introduced as beat, action, speed, duration and pattern.

The next section in this chapter is titled "The Importance of Creative Dance". The section explains that children discover a great deal about their bodies, minds, language, thoughts, imagination and ideas through creative dance. It is explained that the skills learnt through creative dance are transferable and always used within their everyday living. The section also touches on the important fact that while most schools have a PE program, there are many that lack in any dance programs.

The next section titled "The Goal" explains that the goal of creative dance is to lead children to the creative use of the elements of dance. It is explained that to reach this goal there must be a structured lesson plan that presents an element, gives the children an opportunity for experimentation, and requires the children to use the element in simple form.

"Pitfalls and Pointers" and "What to Expect" go into fairly detailed description using realistic examples of what we might see in a class experiencing creative movement. Beginning procedures, helpful comments, closure, music selection, volume, and questioning are all topics that are briefly covered within these two sections. Other factors such as variety and evoking expression are discussed within these helpful sections.

The rest of this first chapter in Joyce's book deals with imagery and its many uses within a creative movement class. Images that lead to movement, images that arise from movement, and imagery as a basis for dance are among the topics that are covered in detail to finish this chapter off. Examples such as: flowers, popcorn and firecracker are given along with helpful questioning techniques that should be used within the class.

In conclusion, I feel that while Joyce's chapter was an informative read, it didn't offer me much new information that wasn't already common sense or issues that we as teachers' in training have already covered in our studies. I also felt that while Joyce's comments and ideas would be useful for the primary grades she didn't offer much in regards to the more difficult and self-conscious older elementary grades. I would hope that this would be a topic Joyce may cover in later chapters of this book.

