

September 20, 2005

EDUC 405 (F01)

Annotation on a Creative Dance Resource

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Joyce, M. (1994). The method. In *First steps in teaching creative dance to children* (3rd ed., pp. 27-45). London: Mayfield.

On Tuesday, September 13, 2005, we lived The Method. Dr. Hopper modeled Joyce's practical strategies for teaching creative dance. Joyce's method casts teachers in a supportive role. There were no teacher demonstrations. Dr. Hopper did not need leg warmers for aesthetics or insulation because he circulated. Students will be empowered as dancers, if they learn "what their bodies can do" (p.29). Student input also creates ownership in the dance experience. The Joyce Method involves questions and challenges.

Repeat after Joyce, "Ask them, don't show them", the exception being visual aids (p. 29). We saw how a visual aid, like a book, can be used to extend the dance element of body steps into the form of a nightmare. Joyce also explains how the "Crossover" Technique allows teachers to combine separate dance elements in one lesson. For example, we combined body and space when we galloped with

direction changes. We were asked if we could gallop with changes in levels and leading foot. We explored and extended our concept of gallop. Effective questions and challenges allows a teacher to structure a dance element (gallop) into a form (the nightmare). Form involves a starting shape, movement and ending shape (p. 32). We were nightmares and closets. We also performed. Joyce suggests that everyone can dance or teach creative dance.

Joyce's assumptions are elementary. Students are mobile, but even a student in a wheelchair could participate. Perhaps, students need to have potential energy—the will to explore. Teachers transform students' potential energy into kinetic energy using the method. Teachers need access to music and/or percussion instruments and schools need to have gyms or other areas suitable for dancing.

Joyce also includes memorable descriptions of special dances. These include Showtime (performance), free dancing (teacher does not watch, but serves as DJ, drum banger or volume adjuster) and the good-bye dance (allows teacher to watch each child dance to line up). The good-bye dance is an important ending. If you went to The Magical Brain Workshop, you know our nifty neurons thrive on ritual.

Personally, chapter two was not enough. I want to read the whole book.

Joyce presents the method for teaching creative dance in this chapter.