

Caleb Kennedy
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Annotation

Reading:

Boorman, J.. Creative Dance in Grades Four to Six. Chapter 1: Introducing Creative Dance (pg. 1-40). Ontario: Longman Canada Limited.

Key Idea- That creative dance should be tackled within the older grades even if there is no dance prerequisite to go upon.

Purpose- To give teachers, which are faced with teaching creative dance for the first time in grade 4, 5, or 6, “ways of embarking upon simple movement concepts in a manner that is acceptable to older children” (pg. xv).

Reasoning- They explain that “creative dance starts from the known” (pg.1), and therefore, in creative dance the children can transform concepts that are already known from the “functional to the artistic” (pg.1). The way to do this is illustrated within the lessons. Within the lessons shown the teacher begins by using common action words and exploring these in different ways. They then group the words together into “action phrases.” After this step they sometimes add some imagery to the “dance.” Then music is introduced, either through their own exploration or through guided listening. Eventually, the class is led to couple the movement with the music and voila, they are doing creative dance!

Assumptions- The only assumption in this article seems to be that the kids may either have no experience or may have had positive creative dance experiences. If the kids have been exposed to creative dance but in an inappropriate way, they may in fact be less inclined to partake. It is also assuming that the children’s knowledge of the vocabulary will be sufficient to engage them in the dance. If their understanding of the action words is limited the chapter offers no other real way to initially engage the students in that aspect of the dance.

Conclusion- After reading this article I have found a few good samples of lesson plans which could be adapted and used with inexperienced creative dancers in the upper elementary grades. It has also re-emphasized the idea of creating a sequential lesson plan and essentially tricking the children into dancing. This article also had a number of very relevant notes to the teacher which are very useful reminders of daily practices which can be used to foster a safe and encouraging atmosphere.

Significant Information- I really enjoyed this quote about one of the lessons and feel that it could be relevant to so many things while dealing with children. “This whole dance has a tremendous element of fun in it, despite its simplicity. It would be a mistake to present it “childishly”, whereas there is everything to be said for capturing “child-like fun” with your class” (pg.14).

Personal Comments- As I said I found this article to have some useful lessons for teachers who are unsure of how to start a dance unit. As well as the very insightful “notes to the teacher,” which are good reminders for any teacher. As for the content, however, I was not struck by anything particularly new or exciting that we have not already been introduced to either in class or in some of the other readings.