

Creative Dance Annotation

Boorman, J. (1969). *Creative dance in the first three grades* (pp. 32-38). Ontario, Canada: Longman Canada Limited.

“Children learn to develop a clear idea of *where* they are in space; and movement vocabulary is again extended, physical skill level is heightened, and increased expressive ability is developed.”

In chapter three, Boorman outlines the ways in which the body uses the space around itself. She describes four major aspects of the use of space, including directions, extensions, pathways, and levels. These aspects provide additional clarity and expression to movement. When children move through space, they can travel in a variety of *directions*, including forward, backward, sideways, up, and down. When they use their bodies to create actions such as exploding, children are using *extensions* in space. They can extend far from the body center or contract near to the body center. They also create movement *pathways*, traveling in straight lines, zig-zag lines, circular lines, and varied combinations of these different lines. As children move, they incorporate different body *levels*, such as high, medium, or low, into their movement. This chapter seems to assume that these ways of using space will come fairly naturally to children as they use their bodies to create movement.

Boorman discusses some ways in which it is possible to work with other people in dance throughout chapter four. The beginning of the chapter sets the stage by outlining the important role of group work in creative dance. Children are communicating with each other while dancing or moving, and this inevitably involves a process of self-discovery because it allows them to think about and better understand how they are using their own bodies to create movement. Children with some experience in group work situations will adjust more easily to group work in dance.

Chapter three introduced me to the idea that there is much more to ‘movement’ than simply going from one place to another. It made me really think about the different ways that children can (and do) use the space around them when they move. This led me to realize that children should be encouraged to move about freely and explore the space around them with their bodies. Rather than having children simply run around the gym as an initial warm-up for P.E., it would be useful to have them move around and explore a certain aspect of space, such as directions or pathways, while they are moving.

The most significant information in this reading was the explanation of the four aspects of the use of space, including directions, extensions, pathways, and levels. With this knowledge, a teacher can provide his or her students with opportunities to explore and understand how their bodies can use the space around them. This allows children to better express themselves using their bodies.

This chapter was very interesting to me because I have taught creative dance to primary classes for two years in a row. Different ways to use the space around the body would be a great concept to teach early in a unit on creative dance because it would focus the children on how they can use their bodies to move about and express themselves. I would like to read further on this topic so that I can improve upon the creative dance units I have done in the past.

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