

Boorman, J. (1969). Creative Dance in the first three grades. *Chapter Eight: The Observation of Movement*. Don Mills, Ontario: Longman Canada Ltd.

In this chapter Boorman focuses on the observation of movement both as a means for the teacher to understand the children's movement development and to enable children to express and explore their personal creativity at their own pace. Boorman looks at the principles of movement as questions: what the body is doing, how the movement is being achieved, where the movement is going and how group work is being developed. The first area of questioning is what the body is doing. During our first creative movement class we had the opportunity to put our teacher hats on and through observing our classmates movements we tried to determine their action words. We are learning to observe our children and to ask ourselves questions relating to their movement. The areas of questioning can also be used to focus the students' attention. For example: what is the most important part of that action, the jump or the turn? The second area of questioning, how the movement is being achieved, directs the students' attention to a quality of that movement. Can you make your downward movement more powerful? Or do the hands look strong or gentle? Where the movement is going looks at the space, direction, pathways and levels of the dance. A teacher may make observations about what floor pattern is being made, or in what direction the action is moving. These questions help the teacher to develop the children's awareness of where they are in space. Boorman cautions that sometimes a space question might elicit a body answer from the student and says that we must be clear in what we are asking. If we don't get the answer we're looking for, we've probably asked the wrong question. Finally, the last area of questioning looks at how group work is developed; where the partners are in relation to each other, and the situations in which they are working. Do they come together briefly, or is there leading and following?

The questions are intended as a reflection for the teacher, as well as for the students. This helps the teacher decide on what the next stage of learning should be. When the students are involved in a large group activity the teacher needs to be in a position to see the whole class, making observations about atmosphere (is it excited, calm, concentrated?). The teacher can also observe which students may need further help and support, have other students demonstrate for the group and can decide how to proceed. As we have learned in class, it is very important to use student examples, rather than have the teacher demonstrate, as this can limit creativity. In conclusion, Boorman lists several scenarios and what those situations help the teacher to know. This information will be a guide for the teacher on how to proceed with both the class as a group, as well as with individuals, so as not to deter students from the dance and their individual process of discovery.

This chapter provides suggestions for how to use the elements of movement as a reflection for the teacher and also as a guide for the students. It encourages teachers to make observations about their students using the principles of movement, sensitivity and concentration. Children have an innate love of movement, which is a vital part of their total development; however they can be stifled if not giving the opportunity to formulate the dance in their own way. Although much of the content of this chapter was not new, I found the scenarios and the examples of questions very helpful and I can see myself referring to them in the future.