***Taking the Scenic Route: Making the Journey Meaningful & Memorable with Movement***

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**The BrainDance!** (Gilbert, 34)

1. Breath: breathing in and out 5. Right/Left: body halves right only then left
2. Tactile: brush, squeeze, tap, tickle 6. Upper/Lower: body halves upper only then lower
3. Expand and Contract: reach big, get small 7. Cross Lateral: hand to opposite knee and repeat
4. Head/Tail: bobblehead; move that spine 8. Vestibular: lean and sway side to side

**Defining an Exemplary Teacher (and Why Movement Needs to be a Part of the Equation!)**

* Being an artist
* Staying a learner: get out of your comfort zone
* Reaching every student in your charge: differentiating instruction and fostering self-motivation and self-actualization
* Balancing the focus on testing with a focus on discovery, interaction, and collaboration during the learning process
* Being a leader amongst colleagues: be an educator not just an instructor
* Staying interested: teaching is NOT just a job, it is a calling (and wanting to stick around)
* Having fun and making learning enjoyable (again, wanting to stick around)
* Being active: staying healthy and energized so you can do your best ALL day and have a life outside of what you do

**Why Move Your Students?**

*The real and broad benefits of kinesthetic learning in your classroom*

* The kinesthetic learner: comprehension and retention (30% of all learners are kinesthetic)
* The integrated brain: using the whole brain (both hemispheres in communication and active)
* The “joy factor”: when learning is enjoyable, learning doubles and intrinsic motivation occurs
* Physical wellness: exercise, releases stress, increases circulation, reduces sitting time (offsets sensory deprivation and deficits), positive body image (body = expression)
* Provides an appropriate expressive outlet: self-expression and tending to the whole student (emotional, social, physical and mental): a student can be “smart” but not “whole”
* 21st Century Skills. The 4 “C’s”: critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity/innovation.
* Movement is natural (we just forgot this)…the “Name Game”

**What is Interdisciplinary Dance?**

* “Meaningful instruction that combines the art form of dance with one or more content areas based on mutual concepts and authentic connections shared by both disciplines” (Kaufman, 5).
* Both concepts (movement and academic subject area) equally emphasized
* National Dance Education Standards exist, but interdisciplinary dance uses Creative Movement and Dance Elements instead of traditional dance steps and dance forms/techniques.

**Elements of Dance (BEST)**

1. ***Body***
   1. Body Parts: head, tail, hands, feet, legs, arms, etc.
   2. Body Shapes: straight, curvy, symmetrical, assymetrical
   3. Relationships: over, under, near, far, etc.
   4. Balance: on, off
2. ***Energy***
   1. Qualities of Movement: sharp, smooth
   2. Weight: strong, light
   3. Flow: free, bound
   4. Action Words: locomotor (walk, run, leap, jump, hop, gallop, slide, skip, crawl, creep, roll, fly, tip-toe, step-hop, prance, slither, skate) and non-locomotor (bend, twist, stretch, swing, push, pull, fall, melt, sway, spin, kick, poke, lift, curl, lunge, wiggle, shrink, rise, flick, float, glide, press)
3. ***Space***
   1. Place: self, general
   2. Size: big, small
   3. Level: high, low
   4. Direction: forward, back
   5. Pathway: curved, straight, zig zag
   6. Focus: single, multi-focus
4. ***Time***
   1. Speed: fast, slow
   2. Rhythm: pulse, patter

**Ways to Incorporate Movement into the *Experience* of Learning**

***The Rest Stop: just move them (non-curricular movement in the classroom)***

* Go Noodle, Move to Learn, WIGGLE GENIUS!
* Doing the Wave
* Stretching & Deep Breathing & Mindfulness Practices
* Walking and Learning (permission to travel when needed)
* The Braindance (go through the sequence for relaxation, focus, rejeuvenation)

***The Dinner Stop: use movement to represent a concept (integrated movement in the classroom)***

* Rock, Paper, Scissors = Shoot!
* Physicalizing concepts (i.e. levers, ELA, math)…trying academic concepts out on the body
* The Braindance (go through the sequence emphasizing simple concept such as towards/away = magnets)

***The Final Destination (interdisciplinary movement in the classroom)***

**Three - Five Part Interdisciplinary Dance Lesson Plan (20 – 45 minutes)**

1. Warming Up (teacher directed, knowledge): Braindance
2. Building Knowledge/Exploring the Concept (student centered, comprehension): share the academic concept verbally (review or introduction) and explore the associated movement concept fully
3. Connecting/Developing Skills (teacher directed, application/analysis): merge academic and dance concepts, teach in partnership
4. Creating/Performing (student centered, synthesis): share creative work/ideas with the class
5. Review & Reflect/Cooling Down (teacher/student centered, evaluation): discussion, feedback

**K12 Elementary Interdisciplinary Dance Lesson Plan Examples & Ideas**

*Academic Concept (AC) and Dance Concept (DC)*

* Alphabet: shapes of letters (AC), straight and curved lines (DC)
* Magnets: attract and repel (AC), relationships (DC)
* States of Matter: solid, liquid, gas (AC), qualities of movement (DC)
* Plant Life Cycle: stages of growth (AC), size and level (DC)
* Moon Phases: different stages of the moon (AC), body parts vs. whole body (DC)
* Punctuation: how punctuation changes intent (AC), types of energy (DC)
* Counting: counting by 5’s (AC), sequencing action words (DC)
* Spelling: correct spelling of given words (AC), non-locomotor and locomotor movement (DC)

**K12 Secondary Interdisciplinary Dance Lesson Plan Examples & Ideas**

* Language Arts
  + Parts of a sentence compared with parts of a dance phrase (beginning/middle/end, climax, etc.)
  + How personal voice and intention are conveyed in writing and also in dance (style, energy levels)
  + How to tell a story with words and movement (compositional elements, development, etc.)
* Math
  + Fractions and body halves/body shaping
  + Math equations and dance sequencing/spatial relationships
  + Showing the answer through movement (assigning movement to numbers 1 – 20)
  + Place value and levels/degrees of energy/size
* Science
  + Chemical reactions and literal vs. abstract movement
  + Chemical properties and qualities of movement
  + Anatomy dance
* History
  + Dancing facts and names (movement alphabet)
  + Tableaus that transition with movement
  + Dance styles related to historic time periods (1920’s Charleston, 1970’s Disco, etc.)
* Building Community, Personal Identity, and Conflict Resolution
  + “Me” dance and “Diversity” dances
  + Social issues and current events and choreography
  + Trust games and weight sharing, mirroring, flocking (non-verbal communication)
  + The “name game”

**Try it! The Master and the Disaster Lesson Plans: Why they are initially PERFECT for Interdisciplinary Dance Instruction**

* Share one of yours with a partner(s) – decide on one clear academic concept
* Brainstorm which dance elements would be an “elegant fit” for the academic concept
  + Work only with two opposite dance concepts
* Design a simple movement exploration for the dance concept
* Think about how the Braindance can introduce the academic and dance concepts in terms of what words/cues you give students while they do it
* Think about what additional dance concepts you might use to keep students exploring movement and truly finding creativity (i.e. change levels, change speed, change direction, etc.) and challenge as needed
* Design a “culminating” activity where students could “show” what they know
* Decide what makes a “good” or “correct” performance/demonstration so you can grade it objectively and share with students exactly what you want them to focus on

**How to Manage a Movement Experience**

1. Get a cue and use it (let students call peers to attention)
2. Establish personal space (make students earn general space)
3. Demonstrate (if you dare!) and/or dance with them!
4. Use music to manage volume
5. Point out what you want more of…”I See” statements and positive reinforcement
6. Make students leaders (BrainDance, feedback after performances, etc.)
7. Use proximity and change facings
8. Keep teaching interactive in terms of choice-making
9. The magic of SLOOOOOOOOOW motion (to calm, focus, clarify)
10. Set firm guidelines for touch and appropriate interaction/movement (no play fighting, no sexualized movement or music video recreations…”already seen that; interested in what you can do”)

**Unsolicited Advice on Effective Integrated Instruction**

* The “junk food effect”…three times and they are good to go
* Get comfortable with a bit of noise
* Be a learner, take risks, and move with confidence…what you do, your students will do
* Sell it…love it…fake it till you feel it…make movement cool, fun, the best thing since sliced bread
* Make music your teaching partner
* Make movement “normal” in your room so that integrated lessons aren’t “abnormal”
* Post the dance elements in your room (poster size) for easy reference during integrated instruction (go to them during teaching to write, speak, try, do)
* Consider sharing the students’ movement with administration, colleagues, parents, etc.

**Resources**

***Websites***

[www.artslynx.org](http://www.artslynx.org)

[www.artsforlearning.org](http://www.artsforlearning.org)

[www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org](http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org)

[www.creativedance.org](http://www.creativedance.org)

[www.ndeo.org](http://www.ndeo.org)

[www.artseveryday.org](http://www.artseveryday.org)

***Books***

Gilbert, A.G. (1992). *Creative Dance for All Ages.* Reston, VA: AAHPERD.

Gilbert, A.G. (2002). *The Three R’s*. Bethesda, MD: National Dance Education Organization.

Kaufman, K. (2014). *Dance Integration*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Kuczala, M. (2010). *The Kinesthetic Classroom.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Publishing.

Overby, L. (2005). *Interdisciplinary Learning Through Dance.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

**Parting Thoughts…**

Be an artist.

Create memories.

Take the scenic route.

Trust the process.

Consult the experts.

Steal =).

Share!

MOVE.

Your kids need to.

You need to.

You can do this.

“Merde” future teachers!

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