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| **Lesson Plan:** BEST for ALL!**Teachers:** Mrs. Kavanagh (6th), Mrs. Michailos (5th), Mrs. Vincent (4th) | **Room Requirements & Arrangement:** Open space (if desk or chairs are in the way, these are to be moved to the walls of the room to create open space). |
| **Content Area & Arts Discipline:**  Dance Elements (body, energy, space, time) and social and emotional competencies (SEL) | **Proposed Time Frame:** 45 – 60 minutes**Date Unit Created:** October 2017 for Nativity BVM School (Biloxi, MS), MAAE Residency  |
| **Overview of the Lessons:**  Explore the dance elements (body, energy, space, and time), directly incorporating the SEL competencies (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making) | **Dates Unit Instructed:** 11/9, 11/14, 11/30, 12/7 **Unit Plan Author:** Julie White |
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**Day One**

* **Learning Objectives**
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate through movement activities specific characteristics of the body, including shape vs. movement, body parts vs. whole body, and relationships
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate through movement activities the SEL competencies of relationship skills (#4) and responsible decision-making (#5).
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate respectful participation in this type of movement-based class, including but not limited to giving their full attention to directions given, responding to the cue for attention, collaborating respectfully with their peers, and engaging in discussions and related movement explorations with enthusiasm, appropriate energy, and focus.
* **Materials/Equipment:** BEST handouts (50 total), pictures of dancers (10 total), student volunteer handouts (50 total)
* **Introduction of Expectations:** The TA will introduce herself to the students and take a moment to inquire about their collective interests. She will share her definition of movement in the classroom (a new way to learn and natural to us all), define her expectations for learning (see above) and for student volunteers, and share broad details of the residency (number of visitations, goals of working together in this way, etc.).
* **Introduction to BEST:** The TA will share that dance in the classroom will involve the dance elements, which are body, energy, space, and time. She will ask students to repeat this verbally and then will assign simple gestures to each, and continue to repeat these until it is clear that the students can recite and recall them confidently. She will then explain that today’s focus is on the body and learning the many ways it can be used to solve equations, demonstrate answers, explore and create perspectives on a topic in academic subject areas. She will give examples of these possibilities throughout instruction to continue to reinforce that the dance elements are partners for these other subjects in very defined and measurable terms, as well as being things to know and be able to do on their own.
* **Introduction to the BrainDance:** The TA will share that the BrainDance mirrors patterns that developed one at a time in their brain when they were babies and that by moving through each in the order that they occurred, they wake up their brain, get it communicating clearly with their body, and are able to refocus the attention. The TA will ask students to pay particular attention to following her lead as clearly as they can. BrainDance patterns/order: Breath, Tactile, Core/Distal, Head/Tail, Upper/Lower, Right/Left, Cross-Lateral, Vestibular. After the students dance this, she will suggest that they continue to do this in their own lives, and encourage the teacher to continue including it in daily practices in the classroom when needed. She will also share the student volunteer handout where this the BrainDance patterns are listed and ask students consider leading this with her in future classes.
* **Body Parts vs.Whole Body:** The students will follow the TA in moving one body part at a time, gradually building to moving five body parts simultaneously each doing distinct movements. Students will be called on (volunteers) to offer ideas for movements/body parts in this process.
* **Shapes – Sculptor & Clay**: The students will do “Sculptor and Clay” where they take turns moving/placing/directing a partner into an asymmetrical shape. The TA will model this with a student volunteer to make expectations for respectful touch and communication clear as well as encourage students to shape each part of the body. The TA will share that creativity and clarity are what matter most when creating and take a moment after each group goes to have students point out these two things amongst their peers. Each person in the partnership will do both roles. Students will be given one minute to “create” their sculpture and then the “sculpture” will freeze so that the “artists” can walk through the museum and admire them.
* **Movement – Mirroring:** The TA will once again ask for a student volunteer to help her model this activity, share creative possibilities, and reinforce participation expectations. She will take a moment to emphasize “communicating with one another through movement and focus only” and how this is an essential skill in dance. She will also discuss the importance of being both a good leader and a good follower in movement and in life and ask students to offer examples of each. The TA will then explain that mirroring is shapes that move and are thus called movement. Shapes are still and movement flows. She will ask students to take a shape and move is repeatedly and in a simple way in place as an example of the difference and to ensure that this is understood. She will then allow each student to be the mirroring leader and follower for a period of one minute each.
* **Relationships**
	+ **Making a Machine:** The dance element of the body includes relationships to others, the space, etc. To introduce this concept and to reinforce the SEL competencies of relationship skills and responsible decision making, she will have students create a “movement machine” where each of them (one at a time) add a repeating and simple movement and sound to the group. In the end, a collective “machine” is created. The TA will ask students to name machines that have many moving parts and make sure that the body is mentioned. She will also talk about how each part has a very unique shape, purpose, and sound and if one is missing or broken, many times the machine as a whole won’t work. She will relate this to each student’s unique contribution and role to their classroom and our learning through movement in particular and encourage them to be unique individuals and value creativity above all when doing this work.
	+ **The Knot:** The students will connect hands with others in a tight cluster, making sure that each hand is connected to a different person. Working together and using verbal directions and physical explorations and above all working respectfully and cooperatively with each other, they are to try to “unwind” and “unknot” themselves. This activity requires respect and an attention to safety, and demands the full application of the SEL competencies focused on during the lesson. The TA will stress that the process is more important than “solving the problem” or arriving at the product (getting undone), and also remind students that they will be listeners (followers) and share ideas/give directives (leaders) as needed while they work. Finally, she will remind students they they will be using their whole body, body parts, shapes, movement, and relationships in this activity bringing everything about the dance element of “body” into play.
* **Closure:** The TA will have students do “dance freeze” for several minutes, where they move when the drum is playing and freeze in a shape when it stops. She will call out options from the dance elements to make these movement explorations more interesting and creative, but above all will encourage students to enjoy this moment of “doing their own thing” after so much good focused learning. She will also thank them for their participation, taking a moment to reinforce the SEL competencies as well as specific moments that students excelled. In partnership with this, she will identify (if needed) the areas that students need to improve in and will remind them that getting better at this type of class is a learning process and one she knows they will succeed at eventually.
* **Homework:** The TA will hand out the BEST worksheet and review the dance elements with students, returning briefly to the movements used to help them remember these and repeating them in sequence several times to review. She will then ask students to write down three things they observe or experience in their worlds before her next visit that have to do with the body and specifically what they learned in class today: shape, movement, body parts, whole body, relationships. She will also share pictures with students of dancers and ask that each class select one to serve as an example for what they are to find/draw themselves – a picture of an interesting shape that they can put into their bodies in the next class.

**Day Two**

* **Learning Objectives**
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate through movement activities specific characteristics of the dance element “energy” including strong vs. light, sharp vs. smooth, bound vs. free, and action words in sequence
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate through movement activities the SEL competencies of self-awareness and self-management.
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate respectful participation in this type of movement-based class, including but not limited to giving their full attention to directions given, responding to the cue for attention, collaborating respectfully with their peers, and engaging in discussions and related movement explorations with enthusiasm, appropriate energy, and focus.
* **Materials/Equipment:** Music, Boombox, posters for each teacher on the dance elements and the BrainDance to post in their respective rooms, three poster boards with action words written on them for each classroom
* **Review & Introduction of Energy**: The TA will ask students to share what they observed/experienced/wrote about the dance element of the “body” since the last class. She will also ask the students to share their picture of an interesting shape with a partner and then ask them to put both of these to the side of the room for later. The TA will then ask for student volunteers to remind the class of what they learned about the “body” in the last class (body parts vs. whole body, shape vs. movement, relationships) as well as some of the specific exercises we did to explore these. To introduce the concept of energy, the TA will walk across the room and ask the students what she is doing (walking). She will then walk with low energy and ask the students what seems to be going on (tired, sad, hurt) and with high energy (late, excited, scared). The TA will again ask what the movement was for all three (walking) and then point out how different energies truly transform the “way” this movement is done and also what it potentially means. She will compare this to the use of language when telling a story either verbally or in writing – “how” we say things, along with what words we choose to use, convey meaning and affect interpretation and intention. Dance is similar here.
* **BrainDance:** The students will perform the BrainDance to prepare and focus for learning.
* **Introduction of Sharp vs. Smooth:** The students will be put into partnerships. One person will move very slowly and smoothly in place while the other person moves through the space and around them doing quick very sharp movements. Music will be played that has them change roles every 20 seconds or so and six times in succession. The TA will model what this can look like and offer movement options with a student volunteer prior to having students try this. She will also review safe and respectful partnering. Afterwards she will lead a brief discussion asking students to comment on how important it was to be aware of the space and their partner, as well as self-aware when dancing.
* **Bound and Free/Heavy and Light Lands:** The TA will mark off two areas and explain that in both areas students can do any movement they would like to, but in one area they are to do these with freedom and lightness and in the other they are to move bound and be heavy. She will demonstrate this and also invite students to do both qualities on the dividing line between the two “lands” if they would like an extra challenge. She will point out how “speed” is a factor in that it is difficult to move quickly when bound, or slowly when light, but it is possible and exploration is encouraged. Because the students are generating their own movement for this exercise, the TA will once again take a moment to affirm that creativity and clarity are the priority.
* **Action Words:** The TA will hold up the posterboard of action words and ask each student to select one. She will then model how each word can have multiple interpretations in terms of movements used to show them (i.e. shake can be a whole body shake, shaking a finger, acting like the floor is shaking, etc) and ask the students to find their own space in the room and create three different ways to show their word. This is the first time the students have worked on their own in the creative process, so the SEL competencies of managing oneself, staying motivated and focused independently, and making responsible decisions are all in play and largely self-directed. After a few moments, and in the smaller classes, the TA will ask the students to form groups of four and share these actions. She will then ask each person to pick one of their three versions for their action word (each member of the quartet does this) and to put them together in a set sequence with a beginning, middle(s), and end. Everyone in the group will learn these movements and memorize them for clarity and confidence in performance. In the larger classes, the TA will select movements from 8 people/volunteers and put them in a “class action phrase” that everyone will learn and practice.
* **Connection & Closure:** Class will end with students retrieving their picture and once again working with their original partner to create a shape in the body to represent it and then finding a way to “move” this shape with a specific kind of energy, based on what was learned today (sharp, smooth, bound, free, light, heavy). The TA will thank the students for their participation, specifically reinforce successes and correct areas that need improvement (if applicable), and take a moment to go over homework.
* **Homework:** The TA will ask students to write down on their BEST handout “energy” that they observe/experience directly before she returns for the next class. She will also write out the group or class “action” phrases and give these to each teacher asking them to review them with their students so that they are ideally memorized and ready to share by the next time they meet. Finally, the TA will encourage each of the three teachers to post the dance elements and the BrainDance in their rooms and also integrate both in some way during the next week independent of the TA.

**Day Three**

* **Learning Objectives**
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate through movement activities specific characteristics of the dance element “space” and a brief introduction of the dance element of “time” including self vs. general posters for each teacher on the dance elements and the BrainDance to post in their respective rooms, three poster boards with action words written on them for each classroom, big vs. small, high vs. low, directions, pathways, and focus.
	+ The student will work with self-direction and self-control in all given exercises, but especially the walking pattern. They will demonstrate social awareness of differences and approaches to the creative process during the “add the focus” group work in relation to the walking phrase and also in the review of the “class action” phrase (SEL competencies).
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate respectful participation in this type of movement-based class, including but not limited to giving their full attention to directions given, responding to the cue for attention, collaborating respectfully with their peers, and engaging in discussions and related movement explorations with enthusiasm, appropriate energy, and focus.
* **Materials/Equipment:** Music, Boombox, drum, yoga and mindfulness cards/deck
* **Review:** The TA will ask for a student selected volunteers to lead the class in mirroring to focus our attention and get us working and dancing together. She will then thank these students, and ask students to share what was discussed during the last class (energy). She will then briefly define this for the students referencing the dance element poster as she does. The TA will introduce the dance element of space referencing this poster and remind students that during the class they will be exploring all aspects of “space” as they have with the other elements and to do their best to be clear, creative, and collaborative in their work.
* **BrainDance & Dance Freeze -- Self vs. General Space:** The TA will lead students in the BrainDance but during this will include movement in place and through space to share these concepts with the students. Immediately following the BrainDance, students will be directed to move through the room doing any type of movement they choose and then freeze (responding to the music being paused) in a shape. The TA will repeat this four times. Following these exercises/warm-ups for body and attention, the TA will ask students to define (verbally) the difference between self and general space.
* **Big vs. Small (Size):** The TA will ask students to put their shape in their bodies once more. She will then ask students to make this shape small and make it as big as possible. She will than ask them to recall their movement that they did three different ways and ask them to move small and move big. Finally she will ask everyone to do these four things in a row and half the room at a time, so students can observe one another and comment on clarity and creativity and the TA can clearly assess student comprehension and application of this concept. Time allowing, students will continue to move half the room at a time. One side will do a small gesture while one does this same gesture big. They will take turns choosing the gesture and leading. The TA will point out that they are communicating by observing and watching and continuing to work on relationships because of this as they are dancing.
* **High vs. Low and GO:** The students will move across the space at low level. They will come back across the floor at high level. The TA will give them certain specific movements to do occasionally but also invite movement invention and improvisation along the way.
* **Pathways and Directions:** The TA will tell students that they have grown enough in their understanding of movement to learn an actual choreographed movement phrase with specific counts, directions, and pathways. She will explain that trying to do what is “set” is ideal but that students should grasp what they can and not get frustrated. This is advanced stuff!
	+ **Walking Pattern:**
		- Four walks forward (straight path)
		- Four jumps back (zig zag)
		- Eight chasses side (circular) to the right
		- Grapevine right and clap, grapevine left double clap
		- Run and snake (curved path) to the left for 8 counts
		- REPEAT
* **Focus:** The TA will explain to the students that students need to add in the final element of space to the walking phrase which is focus. Students will be put into groups of four and directed to pick specific places to look as they are moving through the space. They will also be encouraged to add in arms/gestures if they want an extra challenge.
* **Connection & Closure:** The TA will ask students to keep this phrase rehearsed and ready to show and combine next week with other things. She will also ask students to take a moment (if needed) to go over the “class action phrase”, their shape and their movement. The TA will explain that for the final class next week they will briefly explore the element of “time” and then put everything together in one long phrase to show to one another.
* **Homework:** Students will be asked to continue reviewing things on their own as needed to prepare to combine everything next week. Student volunteers will also select cards to share with their classmates about mindfulness and focusing exercises based in movement for the classroom. They will be asked to read and lead these sometime during the week. Student volunteers will also be selected by each teacher to lead the BrainDance, collect papers, and play the drum cue for the final class.

**Day Four**

* **Learning Objectives**
	+ The student will understand and clearly demonstrate through movement activities specific characteristics of the dance element “time” (fast vs. slow, syncopated vs. even)
	+ The student will combine the dance elements learned and movement created in response to them during the unit in a creative and clear way. They will have the option of working alone, in a partnership, or a small group and will be asked to demonstrate the five SEL competencies when doing this work and in performance/showings.
* **Materials/Equipment:** Music, Boombox, drum, yoga and mindfulness cards/decks, books and music for resources (6 total), three drums, dancing scarves, 30 pencils, 50 student evaluation forms, four teacher evaluation forms, videocamera
* **Review:** The TA will review the gestures for body, energy, space, and time and ask students to memorize and repeat these (physically and verbally) four times. This will be the opening of our “BEST dance” that we make today in class.
* **Leader Announcements & the BrainDance:** The TA will ask the teacher to let her know who the student leaders are and will give the drum cue leader the drum, will ask the paper collector to distribute and gather things at the end of class, and will have the BrainDance demonstrator step up and help lead the class in this.
* **Introduction of Fast vs. Slow:** The TA will have students work with a partner and similar to dancing opposites in sharp and smooth, students will be asked to dance fast and slow. This time, however, they do not have to stay in place and are invited to dance through the space and interact with everyone. They simply have to come back to their partner when the music (and their roles/dynamics) shift. The TA will ask students to remind her what this is called in terms of space (self and general) and will encourage students to use all different levels when they move as well as different sizes and pathways too, thus making this exercise a review of “space” simultaneously.
* **Introduction of Rhythm:** The students will be put into groups of 3-4 and asked to come up with a simple rhythm that they can clap, lasts 4 counts, and can be repeated many times. They will be asked to clap and share what they have created. They will then be directed to put this rhythm into gestures using the scarves. Finally, students will be asked to identify whether their rhythm is even or uneven and students will be guided to combine their rhythms to create a “rhythm orchestra” of first sound and then movement to show their peers.
* **BEST Dance:** The TA will direct students’ attention to the elements of dance posters at the front of the room and explain that they are going to work alone, with a partner, or with a small group (student’s choice) to create a dance that includes components of each. The TA will distribute a handout to each student letting them know the requirements involved and the order that they will occur. They are as follows:
	+ All students do the gestures and say the words for body, energy, space, and time four times and change facings each time they do, ending facing front
	+ BODY: All students will make their own shape (based on their picture) in their own space and make it big and then small and repeat this four times (Day 1)
	+ ENERGY: Action Words, either in the “Class Action Phrase” or in selected action words being called out (Day 2)
	+ SPACE: Levels (High and Low) with scarves and the “Space Phrase” (small groups performing one at a time, Day 3)
	+ TIME: Fast and Slow with scarves plus a brief rhythmic phrase (Day 4)
	+ All students will pose three times and then freeze
* **Performing & Feedback:** Half the room will dance at a time and give feedback to the other half based on creativity, clarity, and confidence in dancing. The TA will then ask all students to perform together one more time as a collective and she will videotape this and send this to each teacher to share with parents, administrators, other classes after the last class.
* **Evaluations and Closure:** The TA will ask students to take a moment to fill out feedback sheets. She will add to the MAAE form so that students can comment directly on BEST and SEL competencies in action. The TA will ask teachers to complete their evaluations via email/electronically and to also watch Wiggle Genius in support of knowing how to translate this new language in movement and these new teaching strategies into their own classrooms. She will encourage students to keep using the drum for attention, the mindfulness cards and the BrainDance in the classroom, and to never stop dancing…that it is a part of who they are and a great way to share what they are thinking, feeling, and learning. The TA will ask the collection volunteer to gather these evaluations along with the BEST handouts and will thank all students and teachers for their participation.

**Day Five**

* The teachers, principal and students will share their final phrases and BEST dances with other classrooms, colleagues, parents, and peers time allowing and independent of the TA. The TA will have forwarded the videotaped performance during day four for reference during ongoing practice and to help the students see their own performances. The TA will also distribute all granted supplies and resources to keep in the three individual classrooms as well as point classroom teachers to the “Wiggle Genius” website for integrated dance lesson plans and ongoing tutorials on integrated dance instruction.