



Strand: Dance
Grades: 5 & 6
Content: 45 minute broadcast + hands-on activity

Dance with Heather Cameron

Overview

Using pop culture music and videos as stimuli, students will create movement vocabularies based on their artistic interpretation and personal perspective. Through demonstrations and group led improvisations, students will investigate their range of movement and explore a wider spectrum of physical quality that instills concepts such as contrast and repetition.

* Please see pages 4-5 for a **Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activity**. This activity will give students the opportunity to apply what they have learned during the broadcast.

Artist Bio

Heather Cameron is a professional contemporary dancer who believes that any human is capable of dance. In this program students will be lead through physical explorations that generate expressive movement.

Curriculum Goals

Creative/Productive:

Students will collectively dance and explore movement and utilize the techniques practiced with the artist.

Critical/Responsive:

Heather will demonstrate moves and techniques of dance. Students will respond by exploring their own movements and translate them into dance.

Cultural/Historical:

Heather will share exerps from FadaDance's original work, "Woolgathering", as well as show the work of Sigur Ross Valtari.

Pre-Broadcast Preparation

You will be moving and dancing during the broadcast. Please make space in your classroom for students to have space to freely move.

Post-Broadcast Resources

Follow the digital hyperlinks provided in this guide to activate music for activities

Broadcast Program (45 min)

Artist Presentation 1: (5 min)

- Artist Bio

On-Air Activity 1: (5min)

- WARM UP encourages students to take ownership of their own physicality and personal style of movement.
 - Copy Cat Stretch
 - Bone Articulation, circles
 - Dust off, finger flick & wake up tap [wash off with rain], 3 sounds, shake down

On-Air Activity 2: (5min)

- Brain and body connection

Artist Presentation 2: (3min)

- Video performance, Woolgathering

On-Air Activity 3: (11min)

- Paintbrush activity – different strokes/qualities, using shapes in photo
- Create off images – find movement inspiration from literal representation of pic
- Build something together - I teach a phrase using this vocabulary

Artist Presentation 3: (3 min)

- Sigur Ross's Valtari Music Video

On-Air Activity 3: (10min)

- Floor shaping - floor & body part connections (gym class vs. dance class)
 - Highlight variety of responses
- Do an example of linking 4 floor shapes
- Students set 4:
 - 2 Hands & 1 Foot
 - Back
 - 1 Hand & 1 Foot
 - 1 Knee & 1 Foot & 1 Hand
- Students link them
- Share a student demo

Artist Conclusion: Q & A (5min)

- Thank-you. Great job.
- Coming up next you will have a special session doing dance activities with your teacher! Make sure you take all the great skills you learned here into the classroom with you.

Saskatchewan Curriculum Outcomes:

CP6.2 Investigate and manipulate elements of dance and principles of composition including repetition and contrast.

CP6.3 Shape dance compositions using various choreographic forms (e.g., ABA).

CP5.1 Create dance compositions inspired by pop culture (e.g., street dances, current dance trends in music videos).

CP5.2 Express own ideas using pop dance forms and styles, and apply the elements of dance including:

- actions (extend repertoire of actions with flexibility and clarity of movement)
- body (arm and leg gestures that lead toward, away from, and around own bodies)
- dynamics (acceleration and deceleration)
- relationships (alone, partner, small groups)
- space (pathways, directions, levels, shape).

Materials and Resources

- Please make space in your classroom for students to move around and dance.
- Music links are posted in this document

Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activity (30min-1 Hour)

Goal: This post broadcast activity is designed to give teachers a tool bag of accessible dance activities that anyone can lead – regardless of their dance experience. Although they are structured activities, creative liberties are always encouraged!

Skill Sets Developed:

- Introduces “group mind” and ensemble building.
- Encourages students to focus and concentrate.
- Breaking familiar physical habits and challenging the body to move differently.
- Teaching new perspectives of what dance can be.
- Students learn to take on both roles of being a “leader” and a “follower” and places value and importance in each role.
- Encourages strong listening skills.
- Encourages learning from experimentation and by trial and error.
- All movements used are improvised allowing for individuality in movement and creative expression.
- Body/Brain connection is made. Students need to multi task and test their memory.

Lesson Plan:

Follow the exercises in this order. They are strategically placed so that the base skills acquired in the earlier exercises can be applied and practiced throughout the session.

1. Group Stop

Have the class walk around the room. To begin, encourage walking throughout the whole space with eyes off the floor. Encourage students to make eye contact and to walk in the corridors created by the other travelling bodies. Essentially, students are weaving through each other – not doing gym laps.

Using a drum or clap (or a handclap could also work), the students will STOP and START walking whenever they hear the drum. This functions much like a “pause” button on a remote control. Encourage students to observe the feeling when a whole group starts or stops together.

Remove the drum and challenge the students to continue stopping and starting as a group without the sound cue. There should be no verbal prompts or strategies in place. This exercise is about listening to the group. Encourage dancers to be both leaders and followers.

Once they get the hang of it, challenge their timing. Most often, students fall into a rhythm of how long they stop for and how much time before each stop. Challenge them to use different time durations. I often do this in silence or with a minimal soundtrack playing – something like “For Marmish, Pt. 2” by Floating Points. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9crzuLwn2-w>

2. Numbers

The teacher calls out different numbers that are the sum of the whole group. For example, if there are 18 students the teacher could yell out 10 and 8. The students work as a team, in silence, to create 2 groups made of these exact numbers as quickly as possible. I like to time them, or do a countdown, to add a sense of urgency to the game. Students will often need to be reminded that the goal is to do this as quickly as possible and that you are working as a team. This is a great test for situations like when you call out 1 and 17. Many students will want to be the “1,” but the goal is speed, not ego or attachment.

As an additional challenge you can start to add constraints to the groups. For example: groups must always be at opposite levels from each other, one group should be in contact while another group should not be touching, etc.

I often do this in silence or with a minimal soundtrack playing – something like “For Marmish, Pt. 2” by Floating Points. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9crzuLwn2-w> OR, you can turn it into a dance party with an upbeat song like “Eurodans” by Todd Terje <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCSyA2UQtMg> – this depends if you want to create energy or focus.

3. Handshakes

Have students walk around the room, making eye contact with each other. Each time students make eye contact have them say “hi” to each other. The next step is to take away the “hi” and instead students run to each other and give a “high 10” when they make eye contact. From here, you will build a group handshake together. Ask a student to add the next move after the “high 10.” It might be a spin or a hip bump, etc. Do an example with the new addition and allow the students to try it out. Repeat this process 3 or 4 more times, slowly creating a group handshake that everyone is a part of.

The next level is to then take students back to walking and when they make eye contact with another student they make up a secret handshake on the spot. The trick is to do it like it’s always been their secret handshake – even though they are figuring it out on the spot. It’s completely improvised and not planned out or discussed.

Finally, students can be put into groups of 2 or 3 and they can create their own secret handshake – this time taking the time to plan it out, rehearse it and share it with the group.

I like to use songs like “Holding On” (feat. Sam Dew) by Julio Bashmore <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kr7lh3ahp4> for when they are into the final (choreography) aspect of this exercise. For the earlier exploration I would use a song like “Kindergarten (Rube Remix)” by Unkle Ho. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAimsNppEYA>

4. Action Cannon

Have all the students stand in a circle. Pick one leader to start (good to have the teacher go first). As a warm up, the leader does a repetitive action (i.e. fists punching in the air) and everyone follows it. The leader continues to switch the action and the group follows. Essentially, this is doing a mirror exercise with a large group.

The challenge is to then ask the followers to always be one action behind the leader (i.e. they would not start “fists punching the air” until the leader moved onto a new action). This is called doing movement in cannon – much like a musical round.

The dancers now have 2 jobs – executing their action **in unison** with their group and keeping an eye on the leader to learn what their next move will be. This is fantastic brain/body work and is generally challenging at first. Have the leaders keep things simple when you are getting started.

Once you have demonstrated this concept in the large group, it is useful to break the class into smaller groups, giving more students the chance to be the leader.

This can be done in silence or try to a song like “Delorean Drums” by Todd Terje.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAJgYk52m7U>

5. Movement Conversations

Have students partner up. Introduce that they are 2 aliens speaking together, only this species does not use verbal language – it uses physical language. In a verbal conversation someone talks and someone replies. In this physical language someone moves and the other replies through movement. Allow the students to try this experimentation and see what happens. Encourage that just like a regular conversation, it’s important to **listen** before you speak back. This listening will inform how you reply.

The next step is to issue prompts that will inspire diversity in movement expression. Students could be challenged by:

- Timing & Pauses
- Levels
- Different Qualities (i.e. sharp vs. smooth)
- Facing different directions
- Proximity (how close, how far)
- Emotion

After this period of improvisation, direct the students to choreograph a “conversation dance” where students make create, rehearse and perform a small dance with their partner.

For this exercise I use songs like:

<https://vimeo.com/58115286> “Cirrus” by Bonobo

<https://vimeo.com/31823506> “Circling” by Four Tet.

6. Closing Circle

Save some time at the end for a group debrief. Pose a question like “what was one of the favorite things you saw today?” or “what was a new experience for you today?” The conversation takes care of itself once a few people start to share. Step back and give the students their chance to voice their thoughts. If appropriate, try to help them understand “why” they felt or thought those revelations.

Beats are available clicking on the live <https://> links in this document.