

MOVEMENT/DANCE

To Orff and his collaborators, Gunild Keetman and Maja Lex, music, movement and speech were understood as an artistic trinity of creative expression. Though movement/dance is basic to the Schulwerk, it can be the most challenging aspect of the teacher training curriculum. Although children respond spontaneously with movement, many adults are not familiar with the body as a creative instrument or with the pedagogy of movement/dance. Experiences in creative movement/dance are the core of instruction in all levels. These experiences should include movement/dance pedagogy and class discussions that lead to the understanding of its importance within the framework of Orff Schulwerk. The content in movement/dance at individual training courses will vary, depending on the length of movement sessions and the level of student development. Instructors must endeavor to establish a classroom atmosphere that enables adults to feel secure with exploration in creative movement as well as secure in the pedagogy of creative movement with children. Movement instructors should encourage between-level enrichment experiences and life-long learning in movement. Local colleges, dance studios, and community centers often offer classes in beginning dance (modern, ballet), alignment, improvisation, as well as ethnic and historical dance. Above all, movement instruction must convey that teaching movement to children does not require performance skill—just knowledge, enthusiasm, and a willingness to play, create, and learn.

Movement/Dance Vocabulary

The movement/dance vocabulary encompasses the concepts of the body instrument, movement, space, time, force, flow, and form.

1. The body instrument. Coursework should include activities to develop knowledge of basic physical development of the body. Students should experience exercises that, over sufficient time, can—
 - a. develop flexibility, strength, and stamina
 - b. develop correct body alignment and proper body mechanics
 - c. develop coordination and motor control
 - (1) perform actions with different body parts simultaneously
 - (2) improve balance
 - d. develop contrast between tension and relaxation by resisting and yielding to gravity
2. Types of movement
 - a. locomotor (*traveling, moving entire body from point A to B*)
 - (1) alternating: walk, run, leap
 - (2) non-alternating: hop, jump
 - (3) combinations: gallop, slide, skip, step-hop
 - (4) on other bases of support: roll (*front and back of body*), crawl (*hands and knees*), scoot (*seat*)

Supporting Materials—Movement/Dance

b. non-locomotor (*in place*)

(1) flex–extend (*bend–straighten*) and rotate (*twist*): individual body parts and trunk

(2) sway, swing, push–pull, shake: individual body parts and trunk

3. Space

a. personal space (*immediate area an individual occupies*), shared space (*overall area shared by a moving group*)

b. levels: high, medium, low

c. body facings: front, side, back

d. direction: forward, backward, sideways, clockwise, counter clockwise

e. pathways: curved, straight, on the floor, in the air

f. range: large or small

g. focus: point of eye attention, close, far away, diffused

h. body design and body shape

(1) curved, straight, and angular (e.g., ball-like, arrow-like, wall-like, spiral-like)

(2) symmetrical and asymmetrical

(3) positive and negative space (*negative space is the intervening space surrounding the positive body space*)

4. Time/Rhythm

a. breath rhythms and phrases

b. steady beat (*pulse*)

(1) in locomotion and non-locomotion

(2) to a common group pulse

c. binary and ternary division of the beat

d. tempo: fast, slow, moderate, accelerate, ritardando

e. accent (*stress*): role in duple meter, triple meter, mixed meter, polymeter, hemiola, syncopation, and irregular contexts

f. unison and complementary rhythm patterns

g. rhythmic augmentation and diminution

5. Force (*manner of energy release; interaction between time and space*)

a. degree of tension and relaxation (e.g., presence or absence of muscular tension)

b. identification of movement qualities (e.g., percussive, sustained, swinging)

- c. dynamics (*movement interest that comes from variation in qualities*)
- 6. Flow (*interaction between time and force*)
 - a. free (*uninhibited action in which it is difficult to stop the movement suddenly*)
 - b. bound (*restrained action capable of being stopped and held without difficulty*)
- 7. Form (choreography)
 - a. germ idea (e.g., abstract gesture, rhythmic motive, improvisation, spatial design and image)
 - b. motive and phrase development
 - (1) mirror and shadow movement
 - (2) delayed reaction movement (as in visual "echo") and canonic phrasing
 - (3) short motives and phrases of varying length
 - (4) question and answer movement
 - (5) call and response movement
 - c. beginning, development, climax, conclusion with appropriate repetition and contrast
 - d. transition, phrasing, and continuity
 - e. musical forms (e.g., AB, ABA, rondo, theme and variations)
 - f. texture
 - (1) solo
 - (2) partners, trios, quartets
 - (3) small and large groups moving simultaneously and/or in sequence
 - (4) unison and canon group movement
 - g. group design (e.g., circle, squares, diagonal lines, different facings)
 - h. repertoire of traditional dances (e.g., games, play parties, dances of other geographic locations)
 - i. shaping performance (e.g., entrances and exits, staging)

Principles of Teaching Movement/Dance to Children

The following, though directed toward the teaching of children, is applicable and true to the model of coursework in movement/dance that the adult learner will find in teacher training courses.

- 1. General concepts and goals
 - a. the purpose of movement/dance education in Orff Schulwerk is to enable children to—
 - (1) experience the many possibilities of movement
 - (2) communicate and express themselves through movement/dance

- (3) develop a movement/dance vocabulary
 - (4) move with knowledge and safety
 - (5) realize the close relationship between music and movement/dance
 - (6) understand and experience musical concepts through the medium of movement
- b. personal creativity is encouraged by—
- (1) guided and problem-solving experiences
 - (2) individual exploration and discovery
 - (3) improvisation
 - (4) composition

2. Teaching process

- a. discovery (exploratory) experiences ("discovery" means a whole range of experiences that draw on and expand materials from a germ idea)
- (1) reaction games
Students learn to experience and adapt quickly to ever-changing situations by changing their personal movement responses to different stimuli:
 - (a) word cues (e.g., skip in circles with a partner, freeze in a curved shape, perch low)
 - (b) sound cues (e.g., move in response to different sounds, rhythms, dynamics)
 - (c) visual cues (e.g., imitate and contrast movement in mirror, shadow or canonic formation)
 - (d) imagery (e.g., move as if you were on hot sand, as if you were greeting or departing from a friend)
 - (e) visual arts (e.g., move according to the shapes or color values in a drawing or painting)
 - (f) tactile (e.g., move the way this object [feather] moves or feels)
 - (2) creative problem-solving (projects)
Through improvisation and dance studies, students solve creative problems derived from movement/dance vocabulary.
 - (a) word cues (e.g., with a partner, develop a dance study that demonstrates a walking, hopping, jumping dance. Add vocal accompaniment.)
 - (b) sound cues (e.g., create a dance to specific music; create four question and answer phrases)
 - (c) visual cues (e.g., with a partner, create a dance in which the A section is in shadow and the B section is in contrasting mirror; add instrumental accompaniment)
 - (d) imagery (e.g., create a dance study based on angry or awkward movements)
 - (e) props (e.g., in groups of 3 or 4, use the three foot rods to create a shape dance)
 - (3) guided studies in composition (e.g., compose and notate a dance to "Skip to My Lou")
- b. directive experiences ("directive" means a whole range of experiences in which movement sequences and dances are learned through imitation, dance notation, or dance vocabulary)
- (1) teacher directed
 - (a) simultaneous mirror movement
 - (b) movement sequences
 - (c) choreography
 - (d) historical and ethnic dances

- (2) notation directed. Simple dance notation can be devised or learned in order to record and teach new and old dances.
 - (a) exposure to various systems of notation (e.g., Arbeau, Laban, Keetman)
 - (b) learning a dance from notation (see American Edition 3, page 333.)
 - (c) creation of original notation
 - (d) use of spatial diagrams (see Keetman, page 114)
3. Evaluation. Students learn to analyze and critique movement projects. Guidelines include the following:
 - a. constructive rather than negative criticism or indiscriminate praise
 - b. evaluating movement in terms of its expressive qualities, rather than critically judging individual performance
 - c. successful or unsuccessful use of ideas
 - d. growth of movement/dance vocabulary and skill in execution
 - e. consideration of aesthetic principles of form (e.g., unity, variety, balance, proportion)
 - f. leadership and cooperation within group

Assignments for Students at Teacher Training Courses

[Specific assignments are determined by individual teachers at teacher training courses.]

1. Examples of written assignments and dance studies:

Level I

Write and/or perform original group or solo choreography for a rhythm, a speech, or a dramatic composition.

Level II

Write and/or perform original group or solo choreography for a selected instrumental piece or to an improvised sound accompaniment by classmates.

Level III

Choreograph and notate an original group composition.

Write an essay on the role of movement/dance in Orff Schulwerk.

2. Examples of teaching assignments:

Level III

Prepare a lesson that focuses on the integration of speech, music, and movement. Teach the lesson to classmates. Evaluate the resulting experience with the teacher and classmates.

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