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Community Dance Project

Musical Movement Games

GETCA
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Steady Beat Claps

Formation: Circle, all kneeling

Music: Anything with regular 8-beat phrases. I like to use the music of a dance that I will present later on.

Level 1

Leader improvises, with 7 beats and one beat, to emphasize the 8-beat phrase. Could be 7 times on the floor, and one clap, or 7 on the knees and one clap.

Level 2

Seven light taps (two fingers) and one louder clap.

When the groups can do this reliably in time with the music, a leader enters the circle, approaching someone in the outside circle, and they pat each other's hands on the 8th beat. Change leaders after a few times.

Level 3

Same as Level 2, only change leaders every 8 beats.

Level 4

Same as Level 3, with a 4-beat phrase i.e. 3 claps to yourself, and one to someone else.

Level 99

I'm sure you can figure out ways to make this harder. 2-beat phrase? Cumulative? Concentric circles?

Steady Beat Round

Formation: Circle

Music: Can be done with no music, but the leader must be able to keep a steady beat. Or you can use a piece of music for a dance that you will teach later.

Level 1

Leader improvises 4 beats (tap head, jump four times, snap fingers). In the next four beats, the others copy the leader, and the leader rests.

Level 2

Leader improvises as in Level 1, but while the children are copying the motion, the leader does the next motion, so that the followers must be repeating a motion, and looking for the next motion at the same time.

Level 3

As above, but there are two groups of followers. Leader improvises 4 beats, first group follows, then the second group follows. Similar to a round such as 'Row Row Row your Boat.

Sanna's Mexican Clapping Game

Formation: Partners facing

Music: Can be done by singing a familiar song such as You Are My Sunshine, Muffin Man, I've Been Workin on the Railroad. However, it's most fun when done to Mexican polkas. Try it with other types of music as a cultural experience.

Clapping sequence (one beat per clap):

Clap both your partner's hands, clap in front, clap behind, clap in front

Try it with 4, 8, or 120 people. Great for improv.

Sarasponda

Formation: Seated in a circle, quite close together.

Sa - ra-spon-da sa - ra-spon-da sa - ra-spon-da ret set set Sa - ra-spon-da sa - ra-spon-da
Left___ and___ right___ and___ left etc.

sa - ra spon - da ret - set set Ah Dor - ay oh ah
Hand sh cross hand

dor - ay or - ay oh a dor - ay or - ay ret - set set Ass - ay pass - ay o!
sh___ cross hand sh cross___ hand___ sh___ cross Roll___ Up!

Knees:

Hands on knees, starting to the left:

Keeping your arms parallel, pat your neighbour's right knee with your left hand and your own left knee with your right hand.

Pat both of your own knees

Pat your right-hand neighbour's left knee and your own right knee at the same time.

Arms:

Extend right arm, and with left hand, touch right hand,

Touch right shoulder

Keeping left hand on right shoulder, cross hands to touch both shoulders

Repeat with left arm extended.

Penguins, Attention

Pen-guins, At - ten - tion! Pen-guins, be - gin! Did you e - ver see a
pen-guin come to tea? Take a look at me, a pen-guin you will see.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in treble clef. The first staff contains the lyrics: "Pen-guins, At - ten - tion! Pen-guins, be - gin! Did you e - ver see a". The second staff contains the lyrics: "pen-guin come to tea? Take a look at me, a pen-guin you will see." There are asterisks under the first few notes of the first staff, and a double bar line at the end of the second staff.

Formation: Circle, hands free

Penguins, attention! (salute)
Penguins, begin! (return hand to your side)

Did you ever see, a penguin come to tea?
Take a look at me, a penguin you will see.

While you are singing, do the following motions, adding one each time through.

Flap one wing
Flap the other wing
Flap one leg
Flap the other leg
Nod the head
Walk around

How d'ya Dootee

Formation: Circle, with arms crossed and hands joined.

How d'ya dootee, How d'ya dootee How d'ya do today?
(*move crossed arms up and down in time with the chant*)

Do you live where you used to live, or have you shifted away?
(*change the cross of your arms and continue*)

I'm sorry you're so disagreeable, I only stopped to say...
(*change the cross again and continue*)

How d'ya dootee, How d'ya dootee How d'ya do today?
(*everyone finds a new place in the circle*)

I Left My Wife in New Orleans

Formation: Conga line, with hands on the shoulders of the person in front of you.

I left my wife in New Orleans with forty-two kids and a can of beans
 And I thought it was
 Right,--- right,---- right for my country whoop-ti-do!

On the 'whoop-ti-do', your feet do Right-left-right to get you back on the left foot.

The musical notation is written on a single treble clef staff in 6/8 time. It consists of three lines of music. The first line contains the lyrics: "I left my wife in New Orleans with forty-two kids and a can of beans and I". Below the notes, footwork instructions are given: "(steps) L R L R L R L etc.". The second line contains the lyrics: "thought it was right right right for my". The third line contains the lyrics: "country whoop-ti-do Left Left I". Below the notes, footwork instructions are given: "L R L R Left Left I".

Yellow Bird

Formation: Circle, no partners, hands free

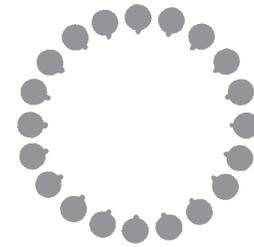
To start: Right hand palm down, Left hand palm up, hovering near your neighbours' hands.

Oom – clap neighbours' hands
 Chick – clap own hands
 Chuck – reverse hands so that right palm is down, left palm up.

The musical notation is written on a single treble clef staff in 4/4 time. It consists of one line of music. The lyrics are: "Oom chick oom chick chuck Oom chick oom chick chuck etc." and "Yel_____ low bird_____ up high in ba-na na tree_ etc.". The notes are marked with 'x' to indicate specific rhythmic points.

Tunnelmania

This little bit of mania sits in the grey area between game and dance, but I include it here because it is a great icebreaker and requires the dancers to listen and react to the music. It's usually so popular that I have to put a ban on requesting it, in order to get anything else done!



Formation: Circle, no partners

Music: Any tune with a recognizable melody (see below)

Two dancers form an arch by joining both hands at eye level. All the other dancers march counterclockwise around the circle and under the arch. When the music stops, the arches come down and a dancer is caught. This person waits in the centre while the whole process is repeated, and when another dancer has been caught, these two form another arch on the other side of the circle. Each time the music stops, more dancers are caught and make more arches, eventually creating a circular tunnel. When all are caught, one final piece of music is played, and the original archers get to make a tour under the arches all by themselves.

CAUTION: Of all the dances I've ever done with kids, this is the one most likely to result in a bloody nose or broken eyeglasses. Hence, a few guidelines are in order:

1. March, don't run.
2. Arches must stay up until the music stops. No bonking or catching early.
3. If there is no one to catch when the music stops, the very next person is the one caught. Your dancers will figure out pretty quickly that they can avoid being caught by listening for the end of the phrase and then stopping just before they get to an arch. This can result in a game that never ends.
4. If you push or cut corners, or dive through and touch the ground, you're automatically caught.

The real purpose of Tunnelmania in a dance program is to train the dancers to listen for the end of the phrase. For this reason, I don't recommend that you stop the music randomly, which would make it closer to a game of tag or musical chairs. Live music works best—have the teacher or one of the students play a lively bit of music and stop at the end of a recognizable phrase.

If you don't have the luxury of live music, then use a familiar tune with regular phrases (Pop Goes the Weasel, Star Dance, or one of the jigs, reels, polkas or marches from Step Lively 1 or 2).