



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Adapted Physical Education
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**TOPIC NO. 4
Co-Curricular Activities for Disables**

**Lecture - 57
Adventure based Outdoor Programme:
Rhythmic and Dance Activities**

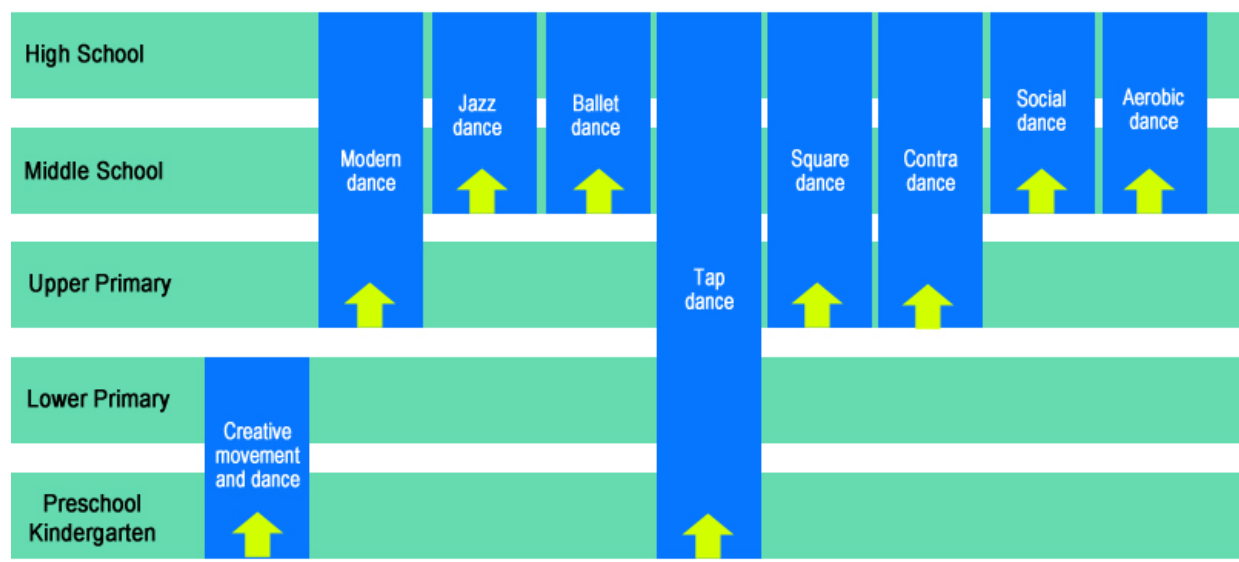
INTRODUCTION

Without rhythmic activities and dance, adapted physical education is meaningless. Rhythmic and dance activities often provides opportunities not only to improve motor skill but also to have fun and gain valuable learning experience in solving problem and creative expressions. Typically, dance is a part of physical education which includes three movement forms; **rhythmic movements, Creative educational dance (CED) and Structured dance** (e.g. Folk and social). In most cases these forms are taught separately. These links include movement principles that relate to balance, transfer of weight and alignment as well as to such movement concept as time, space and force. The degree of emphasis of these principles and concepts differs among movement forms, but each content can lead into the others, supporting and strengthening student's development in the other two forms. It is important to note differences as well as common abilities between dance therapy and education used in students with unique differences. First, the overall purpose of each is strikingly different. Whereas dance therapy is psychotherapeutic use of movement focused on the emotional as well as physical integration of individual and aesthetic needs of students with and without disabilities. Any student who moves

rhythmically can release tension, both physically and psychologically and thus derive therapeutic benefit.

RHYTHMIC AND DANCE ACTIVITIES CURRICULUM OF AGE APPROPRIATE CONTENT

Three forms of movement; rhythmic movements, Creative educational dance (CED) and Structure dance contains age appropriate content, but each form can be extended or simplified to accommodate a range of age and ability levels. CED considered most applicable to kindergarten through fifth grade, but by extending CED content to focus on progressively more complex forms for creative expression, teacher can easily adapt the content for sixth through eighth grade students. Structured or pattern dance content might be considered most age appropriate for upper elementary and middle school students, but many folk dance are easily modified for kindergarten students .Although some other social dances are age appropriate for middle school students Selection of age appropriate content are guided primarily by practical information about the developmental needs as well as social behaviors and interests of students. For an overview of the general order of dance forms suggested for K-through 12 in regard to traditional age appropriate dance contents. Kassing and Jay (2003) present the sequence as:



RHYTHMIC MOVEMENTS

“In dance, rhythm is the most persuasive and most powerful element...” (Humphrey,1980). The primary purpose of a rhythmic movement program is to provide opportunities for students to become competent in moving to various rhythmic patterns. In their simplest form, rhythmic movements can be described as a balance of contracting and expanding movements that are connected and repeated, such as inhaling and exhaling. When two movements are connected and repeatedly performed, a rhythm is created.

As an integral part of movement, rhythm can be said to characterize the quality of movement. For several reasons, such as lack of appropriate rhythmic experience, poor concentration and physical differences, some children might appear to lack the sense of rhythm. When students experience difficulty in moving rhythmically or “in time”, “their movements often appear choppy or awkward. In truth, a sense of rhythm can be developed and refined

through carefully selecting appropriate rhythmic activities that offer fun as well as challenging opportunities and result in feelings of accomplishment. When individuals develop a refined sense of rhythm, the quality of their movements reflects this change.

Content of Rhythmic Movement Programs

The essential content of a rhythmic program includes four elements: pulse, tempo, accent, and patterns.

The term **rhythmic pattern** connotes variety in rhythm and presents a level of complexity not found in pulse, tempo and accent. For example, if a rhythmic pattern is composed of a group of four steady beats, a combination of two or more different tempos would be included within the four beats. Translating this into movement, this four count rhythmic pattern can include two walking steps (counts 1 and 2) and four running steps (counts 3 and 4). Loco motor patterns such as galloping, sliding, rolling, or skipping can be used in this example by replacing the walking steps (counts 1 and 2) with the new loco motor pattern followed by the four running steps (counts 3 and 4). After the teacher guides practice combining movements of different tempos to match a group of set beats, students should be encouraged to create their own rhythmic patterns using other movements.

Speaking Rhythmically

The beginning signal given by the teacher or student leader is traditionally a verbal cue presented in a fashion described as “speaking rhythmically.” The instructor speaks loudly, clearly, and in rhythm with the beat of the activity. An example of speaking rhythmically would be counting an introductory set of eight beats and ending the set of counts with verbalizing, “... five-six-ready, and ...” Instructions given during the activity for changing the task must be announced before the change is to take place. For example, the instructor would say, “... five-six-ready, change,” For students with auditory difficulties, verbal cueing must be accompanied by visual cues. In these classes, simple hand responses, such as beating in time with the tempo of the activity, can be easily added.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS OF THE RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT

The following suggestions apply to any group of students who need to increase awareness of internal rhythms and develop awareness of external rhythmic patterns. This might include not only students with severe disabilities but also students who appear to lack a sense of rhythm. Lack of sense of rhythm, lack of appropriate rhythmic experiences, poor concentration, and physical differences can hinder rhythmic ability. Initially, these students might demonstrate difficulty moving to an external rhythm. Teachers can begin working with rhythms that originate from the students themselves by encouraging students to explore non locomotors and locomotors movements at their own speed before introducing activities that require moving in sync with external beats.

One teaching strategy for students who need to develop beginning rhythmic awareness is to match these students with peers or cross-age tutors. Matching students (with or without disabilities) with partners requires careful consideration of many variables, including level of maturity of the students, students preferences, body weights and level of rhythmic ability. In regard to students using wheelchairs, teachers might ask selected peers to attend an introductory class so that partners can be introduced to each other and the strengths of each student can be emphasized. To actively engage and foster responses of students with severe cognitive and physical disabilities in rhythmic movements, the following steps are suggested:

- 1) focus attention –secure eye contact,
- 2) provide opportunities for passive movements,
- 3) provide opportunities for mirroring movements of a partner and
- 4) provide opportunities for creating original movement responses.

Clarify the objectives for class is a crucial step in developing a rhythmic program. These might be based on national curriculum guides, state or locally developed guidelines, or knowledge of typical development. The objectives of the Beginning Rhythmic Movement sample lesson were based on typical rhythmic development. The activities included in the sample lesson were adopted from a program designed for middle school students with severe differences (Boswell & Vidret, 1993.) Even though the original discussion (Boswell & Vidret, 1993.) focused on students with severe cognitive and physical disabilities, the activities lend themselves to a wide range of adaptations.

CREATIVE EDUCATIONAL DANCE

Creative educational dance (CED) can be defined as a movement form that focuses on refining natural movements as students explore the elements of movement (i.e., space, time, force, and the body). In this discussion, an integral part of CED is creating dances through problem solving. As students learn and master the content, they begin to create dances that communicate ideas or themes. One of the joys of CED for students comes from giving form to their natural movements so that they can communicate ideas as they perform their dances for their peers. There are many avenues through which one can approach the process of creating dances. Several terms have been used to describe programs that focus on exploration of space, time and force. Related terms include movement education, creative movement, and creative dance. Kassing and Jay (2003) summarize the history of these related dance forms, highlighting the influence of Margaret H'Doubler and Rudolf Laban. Although these terms might stress different aspects of exploration of the elements and emphasize different outcomes, Kassing and Jay underscore that “regardless of what titles they are given,” these approaches “provide age-appropriate movement and dance forms, other art forms, and in physical education” Kassing and Jay (2003).

Teaching Style

The teacher poses questions that encourage students to analyze and explore the body and movement concepts. For example, the teacher might ask, “Can you jump higher if you use a different body shape?” The heart of each CED lesson is this context; **exploration** is defined as “a systematic investigation, examination, search for making specific discoveries and learning about something”. The process of exploration of CED content is filled with **Improvisation**, which is defined as spontaneously responding to a stimulus, or “invention without preparation”. In CED lessons, exploration is replete with questions and movement problems” (also termed assignments) that require students to consider possible “spontaneous responses” and then select one of the responses to include in the dance. Specifically, in implementing exploration, teachers present questions that guide students in using “improve” as a strategy for exploring. For example, teachers ask students, “What body parts can make an angular shape like the letter S? Now, how can you create a different angular S shape with a different body part? Select one of these shapes and explore making that shape at different levels.” Clearly, there are different

levels of improvisation. Teachers can pose highly specified questions that offer few options, or they can ask questions that are completely free and open ended.

Content

The heart of CED is exploring the elements of movement: space, time, force and the body. Space, time, and force are concepts that allow us to think about and to analyze movement. These concepts, as well as the body, are considered four of the basic elements of movement and, as such, provide the rich content of CED.

STRUCTURED DANCE

Building on the Knowledge and skills gained in rhythmic activities and CED, students can discover the joy of learning structured or patterned dances. Structured dances, as the term implies, have specific sequences of steps. The terms “structured,” “patterned,” and “recreational” dances can be used interchangeably and include many types of dances, such as international folk dances, Heritage dances, contemporary line dances, and social dances. The degree of structure of these types of dance varies greatly from dance to dance. Many folk dances are characterized by a basic step and have a common figure or movement design performed by two or more persons. Structured dances also have a range of group formations, such as a circle, line, or square arrangement and diverse musical accompaniments. When high school students have opportunities to increase their skills and confidence in social dances, they experience dance as a lifelong physical activity that provides social as well as physical benefits throughout their lives.

Learning a structured dance should be accomplished in a minimum amount of time and result in a feeling of accomplishment. Variations of locomotors and non-locomotors movements previously experienced in rhythmic activities and CED are the basic ingredients. It is a natural progression from exploring running with a partner to learning a structured dance that uses running as the basic step. It is also a natural progression from exploring ways of traveling using a wheelchair with a partner to discovering ways of moving together to learn a structured dance. Approaching the process of teaching structured dances with a problem-solving perspective can contribute to the fun of modifying a dance and to the awareness of the importance of inclusion.

As forms of recreational dance, participation in structured dances offers lifetime health and social benefits. Moving in unison with others to music should be fun activities that students return to with pleasure and develop as a meaningful life time physical activity. Also, learning international folk dances provides excellent opportunities for students to increase their understanding of other cultures.

Content

The basic non-locomotors (bend, reach, twist) and locomotors (walk, run, jump, hop, and leap) movement patterns form the basic materials of structured dances. Combinations of these locomotors movements produce the gallop, slide, and skip. Many references for folk dances classify the dances according to the basic step used. One of the guidelines for selecting a structured dance in light of the developmental level of the students is that the steps should already be part of the students’ movement repertoire and one that can participate. The movement content of the dance should match the developmental level of the students to ensure that the class can learn the dance easily and practice it quickly with a sense of enjoyment and accomplishment.

Conclusion

Rhythmic and dance activity are powerful content areas for developing creative expression, problem solving and motor skills of students with and without disabilities. Rhythmic movement is the beginning of dance. These three movements forms i.e. rhythmic movement, creative educational dance and structural dance provide opportunities for students to refine their ability to communicate through movement; it also provides opportunities for teachers to re-envision movements associated with disabilities as potential source of artistic material.