

Elements of Dance

Space: refers to the space through which the dancer's body moves (general or personal space, level, size, direction, pathway, focus).

Time: is applied as both musical and dance elements (beat, tempo, speed, rhythm, sudden, slow, sustained).

Force/Energy: the force applied to dance to accentuate the weight, attack, strength, and flow of a dancer's movement (sharp, strong, light, heavy, bound, free-flow).

Relationship: refers to the relationship the dancers' body parts have to everything else (spatial relationships, time relationships, relationship to music, and to each other).

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Suggested Activities

Embodying the Elements of Dance

Space:

- Ask students to move through the space in specific line shapes (straight, curvy, diagonal, zig zag, vertical, horizontal...)
- Have line shapes on individually written on a card, divide students into 4 groups and have each group pick one card from which to create a sequence that moves in the line spacing.
- Have two groups at a time present their sequence.
- Ask students to not only look at the line spacing but also:
 - Whether the group moved in personal or general space
 - Whether they had high, medium or low movements in the space
 - Whether their movements were big or small.
 - Whether they noticed any type of relationship (time, force, movement)

Time:

- Ask students to think about the concept of time. How do you tell time? (seconds, minutes, hours) Any movement takes time, but unlike a clock the speed can speed up and slow down.
- Mirroring: In pairs, have students face each other (one will be the mirror and the other will initiate the movement that the 'mirror' must follow). Ask lead to come up with slow movements that the mirror can follow.
- Shadowing: Have the mirror then become the person that the other person must shadow. Allow leads to do faster movements.
- Slowland/Fastland: Divide room into two areas that students can move between. One is dedicated as Slowland and the other is Fastland. (medium speed can be on the border of the two lands)

Force:

- Smoothland/Sharpland: Divide room into two areas that students can move between. One is dedicated as Smoothland and the other is Sharpland.
- Make 4 groups and have them come up with a sequence of Smooth and Sharp movements that they can do strongly or lightly. Have each group share their sequence for the class.
- Ask students whether they noticed any type of relationships (spatial, time, movement)



Body:

- Ask the group to come up with 4 body parts to explore in movement. One at a time have them move around the space moving that body part in as many different ways that they can imagine for each identified body part. (you can have them decide individually to move from one body part to the next or to give them a signal that indicates moving from one body part to the next)
- Divide the group into two so that they can see how others explore the body parts and how it looks in a group.
- Ask the audience to not only look at the exploration of specified body parts but also:
 - The shapes that are being created
 - What groupings they see happening
 - Whether they noticed any type of relationship (spatial, time, force, movement)