

Tonya Kilburn | Session 3:

Exploring the Elements of Dance: Sky Expedition

List of Required Supplies:

- Picture of bird's flight formations (included in lesson plan)
- Paper and pencil
- Hand drum or other percussive instrument
- A way to play music
- Music of your choice

Space/Facility Requirements: Open floor space, free of obstacles (living room or playroom with furniture moved to provide space to move)

A water bottle (or access to water) is recommended

Student Time Required: Depending on your time allotment, each 60-minute lesson may be split into two 30-minute lessons, three 20-minute lessons, or four 15 minute lessons. I recommend including the warm-up (or a modified version) and the cool down/reflection with any class, regardless of time limits.

Additional Links: Kandinsky's *Composition 8*:

<https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/1924>

Dance Element - Space

Lesson Concept(s): Place, Level, Size, Pathways, **Directions**

Dance Element – Time

Lesson Concept(s): Tempo

Dance Element – Energy

Lesson Concept(s): Strong/Light, Sharp/Smooth

Step-by-step Instructions

Pre-Warmup (1 min)

Invite students to find their spot and get ready for another adventure.

Warmup – (6 min) basic warmup and locomotor/non-locomotor activity from Lesson 1

Sample Warmup:

(Below are suggested movements to warm up the body before dancing, but the possibilities are limitless. Feel free to adapt to fit your needs and comfort level.)

Counts

Movements

Plie (bend and straighten the knees)

1-8 Slow – 4cts bend; 4cts stretch (straighten)

1-8 Moderate – 2cts bend; 2cts stretch

1-8 Fast – 1ct bend; 1ct stretch

1-8 Rise up to releve and lower 8cts

Head and Neck

1-8 Look up 4cts; look down 4cts

1-8 Up 2cts; down 2cts

1-8 Look right 4cts; look left 4cts

1-8 Right 2cts; left 2cts

Shoulders

1-8 Roll back 4cts; elbows (hands on shoulders) 2cts; backstroke 2cts

1-8 Roll forward – same as above

Balance

1-8 On right

1-8 On left

High Knee and Stomp

1-8 Bring right knee to chest and hold 4cts, return home

1-8 Bring left knee to chest and hold 4cts, return home

1-8 Right knee up 4cts; left knee up 4cts

1-8 Right knee up 2cts; left knee up 2cts; march right, left, right, left

Go right into the locomotor/non-locomotor activity from Lesson 1 using different movements.

Counts	Movements
16 Counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – WALK
16 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – SWAY
8 counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – SKIP
8 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – PUSH
4 Counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – JUMP
4 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – PULL
2 Counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – HOP
2 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – SHAKE

Exploring the Concept of Directions:

In this lesson, we will be exploring directions. There are six general directions in which we can move our bodies through space:

- Forward (front of body leads)
- Backward (back of body leads)
- Sideways (right or left side of body leads)
- Up and down (up toward the ceiling or down toward the floor)

These directions can be combined together in many different ways (a leap will travel forward and up). Parts of the body can move in a direction or combination of directions (reaching a hand forward toward the sky), or the whole body can travel through space using directions.

Activity: Air Writing

This activity will take the air pathways explored in Lesson 2 a bit further.

- Ask students to stand in their spot and write their name in the air with a finger in the space in front of them. Start out writing from left to right, then explore writing beginning close to the body and writing away from the body.
- Encourage students to explore writing their name to the right and left sides of their bodies, behind their body without turning around.
- Encourage students to explore writing their name or other words on different levels and with different tempos (fast, slow) and with different energy (strong, light).
- This activity can be extended using scarves of different colors which will add a different quality to the exploration.

Activity: Writing with Footprints

This activity adds directions to the floor pathways explored in Lesson 2.

- Invite students to take out their magic paint can and set it on the floor in front of them. It can be any color they want.
- With both feet, jump into the paint.
- Ask students to face any direction they choose in the room. If room allows, all students will do this activity together. If there is not enough room for this, divide the class into manageable groups.
- Instruct students to write their name on the floor with their footprints (traveling rather than using one foot to 'paint' on the floor), bringing awareness to the four basic directions: forward, backward, sideways, up and down. For example, when writing, make intentional choices to go use the different directions.
- Students should make a shape of their choice on the level of their choice once they finish writing their name with their footprints. This will let you know when they are finished. Some names will take longer to write.

- Invite students to use their imagination and look around the room at all of the beautiful footprints on the floor.
- Allow students to change the paint color before repeating this activity. This time ask students to change the amount of energy they use when writing a word you call out (rocket, cloud, star, moon). Explore writing with strong force, then light force; sharply, then smoothly.
- Repeat the activity instructing students to add their whole body when writing the word you call out.
- Game: Ask students to sit on the floor in a safe position. Ask for a volunteer. Explain that you are going to give the volunteer a secret word for them to write and everyone else will guess what the word is. Once the volunteer has finished writing the word, choose only those with their hand raised to guess the word. Repeat this or allow the volunteer to come up with their own word and let students guess what it is. As the volunteer writes the word, reinforce the concept by calling out the directions you see them using, recognize how they traveled forward, backwards or sideways.

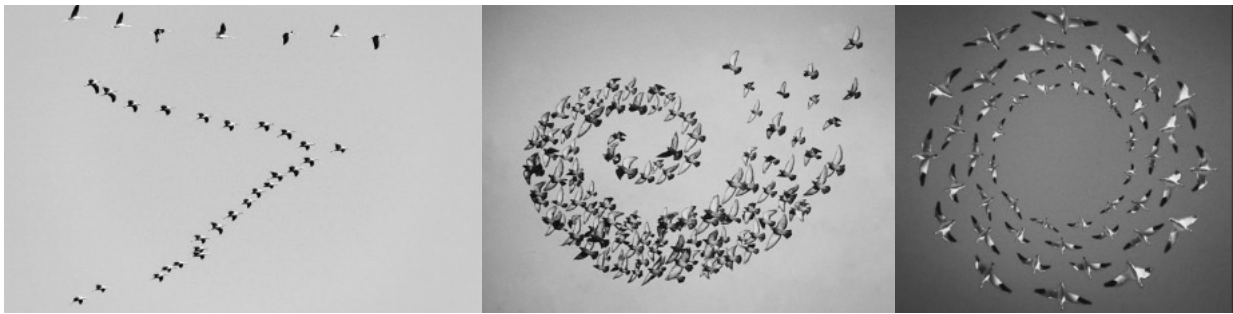
Storytime Adventure

“Let’s go on an adventure in the sky (make a small shape on the low level). Get ready for blast off! 3, 2, 1 blastoff! (jump up into the sky). We’re soaring above the clouds heading toward outer space (begin floating). We’ve landed on the moon (slow motion movements, no gravity). From here the earth looks so small (curved shape). Let’s walk around on the moon (moon walk) before we sky dive toward the clouds (dive). The clouds are soft and fluffy (cloud shapes) and so comfortable to relax on (resting shape). Look at the birds flying by! I wish I could fly like a bird. Wait! I can! (flying like a bird). I can fly (forward), I can fly (backwards), I can glide to the (right side) and to the (left side). I can (float up) toward the clouds and (quickly soar) toward the ground! Just like a bird, I can fly in a formation close to my friends (get close to others without touching). Whew! I need to rest with my friends on the telephone line (bird on a wire shape). Look at the red balloon (float).

It's going higher and higher and higher until....it bursts (collapse). I think I'll just (lie) here and look up at the sky now. The clouds look like spilt milk! And elephants (elephant shape) and tigers (tiger shape). What an adventure! The End

Birds in Flight: paper and pencil activity

Bring students back to their spots and show them pictures of the different formation's birds fly in together. Students will need paper and pencil to draw as many different formations as they can think of. It is not necessary to draw birds in flight (they can if they want) but they should think about the pictures the formations make: V shape, inverted V shape, circles, spirals, straight lines, curved lines, squiggles, etc. Give students a set time to fill their paper with as many shapes as possible.



Dance Study (15 min)

- Similar to Lesson 2, students will use the drawings inspired by birds in flight to create a short dance composition.
- The same structure from Lesson 1 will apply: a beginning shape, a middle shape, and an ending shape. The movement between the shapes will focus on directions and include their choice of locomotor and non-locomotor movements, levels, pathways, and shapes.
- Allow students to create and practice their dance using their own timing.
- All students will perform their dance at the same time to a random selection of music chosen by the teacher.

- Divide the class into groups of 5-7 students. Each group will work together to create a new dance using their individual movement and incorporating group formations (similar to birds in flight).
- Each group will perform their new dance study for the class using music or in silence or they can use their voices to accompany their dance. It's their choice.

Processing Questions:

- Was it easier to dance alone or with a group? Why?
- How did you make sure you were including the different directions in your dance?
- What did you like best about this experience?
- What would you do differently next time?

Cooldown and Reflection (3 min)

Bring students back to their spot and ask them to stand tall to begin the cooldown. Explain that the cooldown is an important part of taking care of their body. By stretching the muscles they just used, it will help prevent injuries. Ask reflection questions during the cooldown.

Suggested Cool Down Stretches:

- From standing, lunge forward with right leg (front leg is bent, back leg is straight) to stretch hamstrings and calf muscles of left leg. Hold for 8 counts. Shift weight to the back leg (bend back leg, straighten front leg) and flex the front foot to stretch the calf muscle of the right leg. Hold for 8 counts. In this position, forward bend with straight back, to stretch hamstrings of the right leg. Hold for 8 counts. Repeat lunging forward left leg.
- From standing, bend forward at the waist, reaching fingertips to the floor. Relax for 8 counts.
- Seated with legs extended in front of you (long sit), gently stretch forward, trying to touch toes.

- Open legs away from each other to the side, gently stretch forward and over each leg.
- Soles of the feet together (butterfly position), gently stretch forward over feet.

Reflection Questions:

- How many directions did we explore?
- Name a direction. (select 3-4 students to answer)
- What was the hardest thing about the dance study today?
- What was the easiest thing about it?

Thank You and Goodbye (1 min)

Explain to the students that it is a tradition to say thank you at the end of a dance class to show respect for the teacher and the students and acknowledge everyone's hard work. This is known as reverence in ballet. In this class, we will simply say thank you to one another.

- Teacher: Thank you dancers
- Students: Thank you Mr./Ms. (name of teacher)
- And.....Goodbye!