



THE BLUE RIBBON CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL



CURRICULUM MATERIALS

PARSONS DANCE

March 12-14, 2025

Performances at 9:45 a.m. & 11:15 a.m. each day

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OVERVIEW

THE BLUE RIBBON CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

The Blue Ribbon Children's Festival, one of California's longest ongoing free arts education programs and a favorite among L.A.'s students and teachers, is an opportunity for students to experience the performing arts by a professional company, along with the chance to dance with each other.

WHEN?

March 12, 13 and 14, 2025
9:45 a.m. & 11:15 a.m. each day

WHERE?

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
The Music Center

WHAT DOES IT INCLUDE?

Performance by Parsons Dance

Materials for Teachers

Curriculum, Written Dance Instructions,
Video Directions for the Student Dance can be found here:

[Musiccenter.org/BRCF](https://musiccenter.org/BRCF)

WHO SPONSORS IT?

The Blue Ribbon
in association with The Music Center

BEFORE YOU COME TO THE FESTIVAL

P

REVIEW all the included background information. Encourage students to ask questions.

R

WRITE the word **DANCE** on your board.

- Ask students to brainstorm what they already know about this term or associate with this discipline.
- Ask them to share their feelings and experiences (all responses are acceptable).

E

SHARE and DISCUSS with the students what they are most looking forward to during this process.

P

TEACH students the Children's Dance. The instructional dance can be found at musiccenter.org/BRCF. Written dance instructions are included in this packet to help you.

A

- View the full Children's Dance.
- Help your students learn the Children's Dance by using the link to the dance patterns and the written instructions. Students can follow the dancers from the front or from the back. Practice the dance several times so the class feels confident about their ability to remember the dance and perform it well.

R

REVIEW the sample lessons on pages 17-21 to teach your class.

E

PREPARE students by reviewing "Things to Watch for at the Performance" on page 13 to increase their awareness and to guide their viewing.

ABOUT PARSONS DANCE

Parsons Dance is a contemporary American dance company, internationally renowned for its energized, athletic ensemble work. Founded in 1985 by Artistic Director David Parsons and Tony Award-winning lighting designer Howell Binkley, the company has toured to more than 445 cities, 30 countries, and 5 continents. The company performs works selected from the vast and varied repertory of more than 75 works created by David Parsons. In addition, established choreographers like Trey McIntyre and Monica Bill Barnes are invited to re-stage works from the American canon with its dancers. And, through its newly launched GenerationNOW Fellowship, the company offers commissions to young American choreographers whom Parsons mentors through the creative process.

Heralded by *The New York Times* as “one of the great movers of modern dance,” David Parsons has received many accolades throughout his career, including three Choreography Fellowship Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts; the American Choreography Award; the Dance Magazine Award; a Howard Gilman Fellowship; the Dance Masters of America Annual Award; and the Capezio ACE Award. He has collaborated with iconic artists across all disciplines, including Dr. Billy Taylor, John Mackey, Kenji Bunch, Stephen Schwartz, Milton Nascimento, Allen Toussaint, Donna Karan, Annie Leibovitz, Ellsworth Kelly, and Alex Katz.

Parsons Dance is committed to providing enriching experiences beyond its performances as it seeks to engage audiences of all ages through education and outreach programs: through post-show discussions, open rehearsals, studio showcases, video workshops, open company classes, summer workshops for pre-professional dancers, and in-school workshops for public school students. The company is especially proud of an initiative that it launched in 2016: Autism-Friendly Programs featuring sensory-friendly workshops and relaxed performances for audiences of all abilities.

All these activities are driven by the vision of Artistic Director David Parsons, who, for more than 30 years, has combined his choreographic gifts and talent for training highly skilled dancers with a real passion for the art form.



MEET THE CREATIVE TEAM

DAVID PARSONS Artistic Director

David Parsons, a Kansas City native, displayed his athletic talents early as a gymnast, wrestler, and trampoline enthusiast. His mother enrolled him in a summer dance program at Sunset Hill Academy when he was nine. The academy was affiliated with the Missouri Dance Theater, a local presenter who often brought companies like Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Joffrey Ballet, and Paul Taylor Dance Company to town. Through the



Missouri Dance Theater, Parsons met Christopher Gillis, a longtime Paul Taylor dancer. Gillis encouraged him to come to New York City to learn more about dance, and to Parsons, it seemed like the right move. So, at 17, after graduating early from high school, he moved to New York on a scholarship to the Alvin Ailey School. He further supported this opportunity by cleaning the Ailey studios, accepting \$100 a month from his grandmother and \$40 a month from his brother, while also pumping gas on New York City's Upper East Side. After Ailey, Parsons understudied with the Paul Taylor Dance Company before joining the company as a principal dancer for eight years. During summers, he toured with MOMIX, appeared with Mikhail Baryshnikov and Mark Morris in the first White Oak tour, and launched his choreographic career by setting work on the Taylor Company, the National Ballet of Canada, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Batsheva Dance Company, and the Paris Opera Ballet.

THE COMPANY

**Joey Anderson, Odin Brock, Joseph Cyranski,
Justine Delius, Emerson Earnshaw,
Megan Garcia-Ziminski, Joanne Hwang,
Téa Pérez, Luke Romanzi**

REPERTOIRE

NASCIMENTO (1990)

Choreography by David Parsons
Lighting by Howell Binkley
Music by Milton Nascimento
Costumes by Barbara Erin Delo
Original Costumes by Santo Loquasto

THE ROAD (2021)

Choreography by David Parsons
Lighting by Christopher S. Chambers
Music by Yusuf/Cat Stevens
Costumes by Christine Darch

THE RARE WALK (2019)

Choreography by David Parsons
Lighting by Howell Binkley
Music by Ezra Collective

MR. WITHERS (2023)

Choreography by David Parsons
Lighting by Christopher S. Chambers
Music by Bill Withers
Costumes by Christine Darch

THEMES

Artistic expressions holds a mirror up to life and Parsons Dance reflects an energetic one. Use the themes below to make connections to your own life.

- **COLLABORATION:** It takes a tremendous amount of cooperation to create and to perform together. What activities are you involved in at school that require collaboration? Outside of school? With your family?
- **DIVERSITY:** The show contains diversity in terms of performers, styles, techniques, rhythmic tempos, beats and artistic media. Where can you celebrate diversity in your class? Your school? Your life?
- **CHALLENGE*:** The performing artists of Parsons Dance are always trying to improve by practicing their skills and exploring new ways to work. What do you want to do better? What new skills do you want to learn? How can you find a new challenge to help you get better at something?

***Definition of challenge:** a test of one's ability and resources in a demanding but stimulating undertaking.



A Short History of Dance

Dance is an art form that is expressed primarily through movement, emotion and energy. It often has rhythmic elements and is performed to music. People danced long before there were theaters, lights, fancy costumes or even shoes. It is one of the most ancient forms of expression, used by humankind to communicate to the Gods, impact nature and tell stories. Styles of dance are diverse and include tribal dances, folk dance, social dance, ballet, modern, jazz, tap, and musical theater, as well as popular culture and street dance styles.

Modern Dance is a broad genre of western concert or theatrical dance which includes dance styles such as ballet, folk, ethnic, religious or social dancing. It primarily arose out of Europe and the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was considered to have been developed as a rejection of, or a rebellion against, classical ballet and a way to express social concerns like socioeconomic and cultural factors.

In the late 19th century, modern dance artists such as Isadora Duncan, Maud Allan and Loie Fuller were pioneering new forms and practices in what is now called aesthetic or free dance. These dancers disregarded ballet's strict movement vocabulary (the particular, limited set of movements that were considered proper to ballet) and stopped wearing corsets and pointe shoes in the search for greater freedom of movement.

Throughout the 20th century, sociopolitical concerns, major historical events, and the development of other art forms contributed to the continued development of modern dance in the United States and Europe. Moving into the 1960s, new ideas about dance began to emerge as a response to earlier dance forms and to social changes. Eventually, postmodern dance artists would reject the formalism of modern dance, and include elements such as performance art, contact improvisation, release technique, and improvisation.

American modern dance can be divided (roughly) into three periods or eras. In the Early Modern period (c. 1880–1923), characterized by the work of Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, and Eleanor King, artistic practice changed radically, but clearly distinct modern dance techniques had not yet emerged. In the Central Modern period (c. 1923–1946), choreographers Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Katherine Dunham, Charles Weidman, and Lester Horton sought to develop distinctively American movement styles and vocabularies and developed clearly defined and recognizable dance training systems. In the Late Modern period (c. 1946–1957), José Limón, Pearl Primus, Merce Cunningham, Talley Beatty, Erick Hawkins, Anna Sokolow, Anna Halprin, and Paul Taylor introduced clear abstractionism and avant-garde movements, and paved the way for postmodern dance.

Modern dance has evolved with each subsequent generation of participating artists. Artistic content has morphed and shifted from one choreographer to another, as have styles and techniques. Artists such as Graham and Horton developed techniques in the Central Modern Period that are still taught worldwide, and numerous other types of modern dance exist today.

Reference: Wikipedia

5th Grade VAPA Dance Standards:

Connecting – Anchor Standard 11: Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historic Context to Deepen Understanding

5.DA: CN11 Describe how the movement characteristics and qualities of a dance in a specific genre or style communicate the ideas and perspectives of the culture, historical period or community from which the genre of style originated.



AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

HOW TO BE A GOOD AUDIENCE MEMBER

You can enhance the enjoyment of your students by preparing them for this artistic experience. They will be able to participate more fully if you provide them with some background information on the company, Parsons Dance. Please teach them the children's dance so they can perform it outside with the students from other schools.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Coming to a theater performance is different from going to a sporting event. The theater is a very special place that has been designed especially for people to see the artistic performance. You will notice the lights on, around and above the stage. This focuses all the attention on the stage, and everyone begins to feel a sense of excitement and anticipation. **Please don't steal attention away from the performers!**

Here are three guidelines for appropriate audience etiquette. By discussing appropriate behavior ahead of time, the students will be better able to act with courtesy, concentrate on the performance, and show respect and appreciation for the performers.

QUIET CONCENTRATION

Sound carries very well so that the music and voices can be easily heard. This also means that any sounds in the audience such as whispering, rustling papers, laughing, or speaking will also be heard. To enjoy the performance and allow the rest of the audience to enjoy it, be quiet and concentrate. **It is not acceptable to take photos with a flash in any performance because the flash may disrupt the performers' ability to concentrate or see clearly.**

RESPECT

The performers have worked extremely hard to prepare a wonderful program for you. The audience shows respect for the performers by watching quietly and attentively. The performers show respect for the audience by doing their best work. This requires them to concentrate so they can focus their energy on dancing.

APPRECIATION

When a performance ends, it is appropriate for the audience to applaud. Applause is the best way for a theater audience to share their appreciation and enthusiasm with the performers. It lets the performers know that they did well. In performances, it is sometimes acceptable to applaud in the middle of the featured segment (such as a solo or duet) or in responding to a spectacular step or special moment.

MOVEMENT TERMS

Axial Movements

(when dancers stay in one place)

Bending – shape or force into a curve

Pushing – tension applied to connection

Swinging – movement that creates arches or circular shapes

Twisting – the body moving in opposition

Stretching – to elongate a part of the body

Locomotor Movements

(when dancers move through space)

Jump

Walk

Leap

Slide

Skip

Roll

Climb

Hop

Bounce

Gallop

Freestyle

Combinations of these, and with turns, jumps and gestures

Other notable terms relating specifically to Parsons Dance:

Solo – a featured performer.

Duet – two performers moving as partners.

Trio – three performers working together.

Ensemble – a group of performers working together

Gravity – a powerful natural force that holds or pulls performers to earth.

Focus – the performers line of sight; putting attention on a central idea or activity.

Weight and Balance (weight distribution) – Performers must be aware of how to balance their weight alone, and with others.

Lifts – one or more performers lifting or being lifted or supported.

*The California Arts Standard: **Connecting-5th Grade Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experience to make arts. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.***

5.DA:Cn10 a. Compare two dances with contrasting themes. Discuss feelings and ideas evoked by each. Describe how the themes and movements relate to points of view and experiences.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR AT THE PERFORMANCE

Here are some things to remind yourself as you watch the performance:

- I. **Observe how each piece begins and ends.**
 - Are the performers already on stage or do they make an entrance?
 - What is the mood or image at the beginning of each piece? Does it change?
 - How does each piece end? (Performers onstage, exiting, still or moving poses.)
- II. **Listen closely as each piece is performed.**
 - What sounds do you hear?
 - Which piece did you most enjoy? Why? Do you agree or disagree with the musical choices? Why or why not?
- III. **Notice the lighting choices used for each piece.**
 - How do the color choices and lighting create different moods throughout the performance? You may notice the lights getting brighter or dimmer. How does this impact the performance?
- IV. **Feel the emotions communicated in each piece. Think about the meaning.**
 - Do any of the pieces make you feel a specific emotion (Strong, playful, determined, confident)? If so, what are the emotions or moods they communicate to you?
 - What is the most powerful moment in the performance for you? Why?

*The California Arts Standards: **Performing-5.TH:Pr4**. a. Describe the underlying thoughts and emotions that create dialogue and action in a drama/theater work.*

*The California Arts Standards: **Creating-5.DA:Cr1** a. Build content for choreography using several stimuli.*

Common Core State Standards Speaking and Listening K-5:

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher led) with diverse partners building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Common Core State Standards Language K-5:

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Discuss



- Ask each student to pick one word, or short phrase, that best describes the performance, passing quickly from one student to the next. Encourage each one to think of a different word or phrase.
- Allow each student to express something they noticed or responded to in the performance (all answers are acceptable; avoid making judgmental comments).
- Use the questions in **Things to Watch for in the Performance** (Page 13) to guide the discussion. This section includes questions on stage design, movement, music, and lighting.
- Ask students to close their eyes and think back to the performance. Then, ask them to describe the images, rhythms, movements, and melodies that come to their minds, being as specific as possible. Who is on stage? What is the action? What words, sounds or music do you hear? What feelings do you have when recalling this? How are the performers arranged on stage?
- Strong teamwork is absolutely necessary for the ensemble to be successful. Talk about the components of effective teamwork. When strong teamwork is needed, how do you make it work? What happens when teamwork is weak or disorganized?
- Give the students a prompt to stimulate and focus their ideas so they can write about their experience. Prompts can include: *I was surprised by...*; *The piece I found most interesting was...*; *The thing that impressed me the most was...*; *The feelings I had were...*; *I saw images that reminded me of . . .* ;
- Describe the role of a critic who analyzes the performance for a newspaper or online publication. Direct students to select one of the pieces and write about it from the point of view of what worked well and what they would suggest as changes. What was most surprising or entertaining? Share responses with a partner or small group. For a bigger challenge, publish their pieces as a class review of Parsons Dance.
- Ask students to write a letter to a friend or relative telling them about the performance. Encourage them to describe their favorite part with as much detail as possible.

Common Core State Standards Speaking and Listening K-5: *Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.*

Common Core State Standards Speaking and Listening K-5: *Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details speaking clearly at an understandable pace.*

Draw



Direct them to select one of the pieces and identify colors that represent their feelings. Ask them to draw one of the scenes they remember, using the featured colors.

Support everyone's choice of colors. Keep in mind some students might be color blind and see colors differently.

- Direct students to recall a moment from one of the pieces. Then, encourage them to capture the mood, costumes and poses (shapes or designs) of the artists.
- Select only three colors and use them to show the movement, mood, pathway, and rhythm of the performers rather than drawing people or objects. Use the music from the Children's Dance or other appropriate pieces to enhance this activity.

*The California Arts Standards for Dance 5th Grade: **Connecting-Anchor Standard 10:** Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.*

*The California Arts Standard for Dance 5th Grade: **Responding-Anchor Standard 8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.*



Dance & Movement

- Use the suggested lessons (on pages 17-21).
- Learn the Children's Dance by accessing this link:

[Musiccenter.org/BRCF](https://www.musiccenter.org/BRCF)

- All students will participate in the Children's dance together on March 12-14, 2025.

The California Arts Standards for Dance: **Creating Anchor Standard: 3** Refine and complete artistic work.

5.DA:Cr3: Explore through movement the feedback from others to expand choreographic possibilities for a short dance study that communicates artist intent. Explain and document the movement choices and refinements.

AN ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENTS

(Make copies for your class)

The BLUE RIBBON CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE

Parsons Dance

What did I **know** about modern dance before the performance?

1.

What did I **learn** from watching the performance?

1.

2.

What would I **like to know more about** (or what questions do I have)?

1.

2.

Select one of the following writing prompts that describes your response to the performance. Write a paragraph about the one that most interests you.

1. Most amazing or unusual

2. Most memorable or inspiring

3. Most confusing or mysterious

4. Made me think or ask questions

5. Most physically challenging or risk-taking

LESSON PLANS

A Vehicle for Self-Expression

Essential Question: How can we draw upon our personal experience and culture to connect through dance?

Performing-Anchor Standard 5: Develop and Refine Artistic Techniques and Work for Presentation
5.DA:Pr5: a. Recall and execute a series of dance phrases using technical dance skills (e.g., alignment, coordination, balance, core support, clarity of movement.)

Common Core Standards (Grade 5):

Speaking and Listening CCSS ELA 1.D: Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions.

Student Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Create, memorize, and perform sequences of movement with focus, energy, and clear intent.
- Convey a wide range of ideas using gestures, postures, movement and props.

Lesson Outcomes: Participants will be able to:

- Create gestures to embody feelings.
- Work collaboratively in groups or pairs.
- Create and sequence movement patterns.

Key Vocabulary: Canon, Elements of Dance (Energy, Space, Time), Formation, Gesture

Progression of Skills:

- Think about an experience you have had in your life; it can be a positive or negative experience.
- Close your eyes and allow yourself to feel all the emotions that you felt during that experience.
- Write down three words that come to mind while thinking about that experience.

Task Part 1:

In small groups, share your three words. As a group, choose three words that most resonate and stand out to the group. As a group, create a gesture for each of the chosen words. The gesture should represent the meaning of the words chosen. Once the group has created the three gestures (1 gesture per word), begin to piece everything together.

Create a sequence: In what order will the movements be performed? Will you dance in unison or a canon?

The structure of the dance will be:

1. Word 1 will be read aloud
 - Movements for word 1 will be performed.
2. Word 2 will be read aloud
 - Movements for word 2 will be performed.
3. Word 3 will be read aloud
 - Movements for word 3 will be performed.

Each group has the option to perform their movements in unison or a canon.

Task Part 2:

Now that each group has completed Part 1, we will begin to add layers. Using the Elements of Dance, the participants will choose three different elements to add to their dance. This is the stage in which we enhance the dance - making it stronger and more powerful to the participants and audience.

Elements of Dance:

- **Space** - Level Change: High, Middle, Low, Formations
- **Energy** - Movement Qualities Collapse, Percussive, Suspended, Sustained, Swing & Vibratory
- **Time** - Slow, Fast

After the participants add the elements of dance, the groups share their work.

For a more advanced lesson, add in Task Part 3:

Participants continue adding to their work. Before each of the three gestures, add in 4 counts of movement. Participants may add in locomotor or non-locomotor movements.

The pattern would follow this sequence:

1. Word 1 will be read aloud
 - 4 counts of movement
 - Gesture 1
2. Word 2 will be read aloud
 - 4 counts of movement
 - Gesture 2
3. Word 3 will be read aloud
 - 4 counts of movement
 - Gesture 3 (end)

Criteria:

- Participants will create three gestures.
- Participants will put all movements into a sequence - creating an order of first, middle & last will perform the movement sequence in unison or in a canon.
- Participants will work effectively and cooperatively with group members and will create gestures that show strength and emotion and display focus.

Reflection & Assessment:

After each group performs, participants reflect on the elements of dance they saw in the choreography.

- What elements of dance did you see in the group's performance?
- How did the performance make you feel?
- How would having more or fewer elements of dance change the dynamic of the group's choreography?
- Dance is about telling stories - what story did you see?
- If you had to describe your experience today in one word, what might that word be?
- What ideas do you think the choreographers were trying to convey in the dance?

Group Discussion: How is dance used as a vehicle for self-expression?

- Dancing vs. Speaking: Are there topics you would feel more comfortable dancing as opposed to talking about? Why? Provide an example.
- How were the elements of dance used to give depth and meaning to the choreography?
- Performance-based: Evaluation of the task using criteria.

Reach and Withdraw

Variety and Mood in Simple Motions

Introduction: This lesson helps students find dance expression in ordinary, everyday movements. Students learn to make personal choices and find creativity within limitations.

Performing-Anchor Standard 5: Develop and Refine Artistic Techniques and Work for Presentation

5.DA:Pr5: a. Recall and execute a series of dance phrases using technical dance skills (e.g., alignment, coordination, balance, core support, clarity of movement.)

Common Core Standards (Grade 5):

Speaking and Listening CCSS ELA 1.D: Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions.

Student Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Create, memorize, and perform sequences of movement with focus, energy, and intent.
- Convey a wide range of ideas using gestures, postures, movement and props.

Progression:

- Reflect on the first dancers in Parsons Dance and discuss how the dancers used gestures of reaching and withdrawing. Ask the students what they liked best about their movement. Ask them to identify and analyze why the movement was interesting and communicated strong emotions.
- Ask the class to find a space where each person can move freely. Direct them to reach upward slowly and then reverse the action and pull inward slowly. Repeat these movements several times, asking them to reach in different directions each time.
- Repeat the idea of reaching and withdrawing, but using quick, sharp energy. Then combine both slow and fast (e.g., reaching slowing, withdrawing quickly; vice versa).
- Try the same actions varying the type of energy used (e.g., reach strongly, withdraw weakly, vice versa).
- Explore ways to reach and withdraw (pull inward) while walking from one spot to another spot. Try reaching as you travel forward and withdrawing as you walk backward, then reverse. (Try using different sets of counts for each: 8 – 4 – 2.)
- Play a powerful piece of music, have the students improvise several ways to use these two gestures (reaching and withdrawing) to convey different feelings. Have them change levels, vary the speed (tempo), experiment with different energy qualities, and exaggerate the size of their movements.
- Divide the class into two or three groups and have one group perform their improvisations while the others watch. Talk about peer support and that they are to observe with quiet respect. After all the groups have shown their ideas, ask them to discuss what they learned and enjoyed about the experience.

Assessment: Discuss the process of exploration, invention and selection that they went through as a group. Discuss how this experience related to the movement that was seen in the Parsons Dance Company.

Dancing Museum

Movement vs. Stillness

Introduction: The students will discover and explore making shapes and gestures that display a range of emotion to tell a story with the use of their bodies.

5th Grade Dance Standards

Performing—Anchor Standard 4: Select, Analyze, and Interpret Artistic Work for Presentation

Enduring Understanding: Space, time, and energy are basic elements of dance.

Essential Question: How do dancers work with space, time and energy to communicate artistic expression?

5.DA:Pr4: a. Integrate static and dynamic shapes as well as floor and air pathways into dance sequences. Establish relationships with other dancers with intentionality and focus. Convert inward focus to outward focus.

ELA Standards

• Speaking and Listening CCSS ELA #1:

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

• Speaking and Listening CCSS ELA #6:

Adapt speech to a variety of context and communicative tasks, demonstrating command and formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Student Outcomes: Students will be able to:

- Display focus during the activity
- Express emotion through gestures & shapes
- Experiment with time and space
- Experiment with pathways and movement
- Work collaboratively with peers
- Mimic the gesture or shape of peers

Key Vocabulary: Gesture, Stillness/Movement, Variety, Strength, Collaboration, Locomotor Movements, Wide, Mirroring, High, Statue, Low, Shapes

Materials: large empty space

Progression:

Students will create a "Gesture Museum" (Shapes & Gestures which are frozen). The museum will display students in shapes and gestures that embody an emotion.

- Have the students explore different shapes and gestures with their bodies. Direct the students to make shapes and gestures at high, middle and low levels. Below is an example of different high, middle and low-level shapes made with the body.
- Have the students create a shape and a gesture that embodies a specific emotion. Call out an emotion and level and ask the students to create a shape/gesture. For example: Level-High; Emotion-Excited. Give the students five seconds to create the shape/gesture. On the count of five, all students should be frozen. Encourage them to be creative and explore a broad range of

possibilities. This allows the instructor a moment to look at the emotions and gestures being displayed in the museum.

- “Dancing Museum” (adding movement and pathways). Choose half the students to be the dancers and the other half to be the statues.

Group 1 Statues

The students that are the statues will begin in a gesture/shape and emotion. The instructor can call out various levels and emotions. For example: The instructor can say “low level shape/gesture; emotion-disappointed.” The students who are the statues will put their bodies in the appropriate positions which emulate the instructions. The music will begin, and the statues will stay frozen and silent in their gesture/shape/emotion while the dancers move around the museum.

Group 2 Dancers

Dancers will move through the dance space on a pathway of their choice of the “museum” until they decide to take the place of one of the statues. The dancer’s movement could be walking, skipping or any combination of locomotor movements. In order to take the place of a statue the dancer must step in front of the statue and replicate the gesture/shape and emotion being displayed. Once the dancer students have chosen a statue to replace, the statue student then becomes the dancer.

This structure continues until the instructor calls a freeze. Once freeze is called, another level and emotion may be called out and the pattern of the activity begins again.

Assessment: Reflection Questions

- What challenges did you encounter with this activity?
- What did you learn?
- How did you feel when you were the dancer? Vs. the statue? Why?
- Did one role offer more feelings freedom? Why do you think you felt that way?



ABOUT THE MUSIC CENTER

The Music Center convenes artists, communities and ideas with the goal of deepening the cultural life of every resident of Los Angeles County. We strive to continue creating an increasingly relevant, multidisciplinary performing arts center, not only as a home for classical art forms, but also as a driving artistic voice for diversity and inclusion that reflects and responds to the ever-evolving landscape of Los Angeles. The Music Center is also home to four renowned resident companies—Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles Master Chorale, LA Opera and LA Phil.

The Music Center Arts (TMC Arts) is the umbrella department for our artistic and educational programming, which provides year-round programming inside The Music Center's four theatres, and outside on The Music Center Plaza, at the 12-acre Grand Park and in schools and other locations across Los Angeles County. TMC Arts presents world-class dance with Gloria Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, free and low-cost public concerts and events, as well as arts education programs reaching over 150,000 students and educators annually.

The Music Center is a national leader in arts education and is committed to helping provide standards-based instruction in the arts for all students. For over 40 years, The Music Center has designed programs to help schools increase capacity in and through the arts by engaging the active participation of students, teachers, school leadership, and the whole school community. The Music Center believes that the arts transform lives and are crucial to the development of every child. We work year-round to provide lifelong learning opportunities that benefit students in grades PreK-12 and educators in schools throughout Los Angeles County and directly at The Music Center, cultivating the next generation of artists, leaders and creative thinkers.

For more information, visit musiccenter.org.

**Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
@MusicCenterLA.**

Written Instructions

Blue Ribbon Children's Festival Student Dance 2025

The dance begins in a standing pose with feet hip distance apart with the head looking down. Slowly bring your head up with the music.

Pattern 1: Shoulders

- Right shoulder up, down, up, down (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Left shoulder up, down, up, down (ct. 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Shimmy both shoulders down towards the ground (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Shimmy shoulders as you come back up (ct. 5, 6, 7, 8)

- Right shoulder up, down, up, down (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Left shoulder up, down, up, down (ct. 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Shake both shoulders down towards the ground (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Shake shoulders as you come back up (ct. 5, 6, 7, 8)

Pattern 2: Open Arms

- Arms and legs open (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Reach to the left (ct. 5, 6)
- Reach to the right (ct. 7, 8)

- Arms and legs open (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Reach to the left (ct. 5, 6)
- Reach to the right (ct. 7, 8)

Pattern 3: Fall and Release

- Right knee lifts up (ct. 1, 2)
- Fall to the right side (ct. 3, 4)
- Right knee lifts up (ct. 5, 6)
- falls to the right side (ct. 7, 8)
- Right knee lifts (ct. 1, 2)
- Fall to the right side (ct. 3, 5)
- Spin with feet together to your left (ct. 5, 6, 7, 8)

Pattern 4: Roll Down

- Roll down (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Roll up (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

- Roll down (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Roll up (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

Pattern 5: Push Forward

- Step forward on your right foot and push both arms out in front of you (ct. 1, 2)
- Step backwards on the right foot (ct. 3, 4)
- Step forward on your right foot and push both arms out in front of you (ct. 5, 6)
- Step backwards on your right foot (ct. 7, 8)
- Step forward on your right foot and push both arms out in front of you (ct. 1, 2)
- Step backwards on the right foot (ct. 3, 4)
- Step forward on your right foot and push both arms out in front of you (ct. 5, 6)
- Step backwards on your right foot (ct. 7, 8)

Pattern 6: Kicks

- Kick the right leg to the left- Kick front, Kick back, Kick front, Kick back (ct. 1, 2, 3)
- Step down (ct. 4)
- Kick the left leg to the right- Kick front, Kick back, Kick front, Kick back (ct. 5, 6, 7)
- Step down (ct. 8)
- Pivot turn right leg (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Kick the right leg to the left- Kick front, Kick back, Kick front, Kick back (ct. 1, 2, 3)
- Step down (ct. 4)
- Kick the left leg to the right- Kick front, Kick back, Kick front, Kick back (ct. 5, 6, 7)
- Step down (ct. 8)
- Pivot turn right leg (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

Pattern 7: Poses

- High Pose (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Wide Pose (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Curved Pose (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Power Pose (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

Pattern 8: Rainbow

- Step out to the right and sweep both arms around like a rainbow to the right side (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
- Bring the arms back around from the right side to the left side (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)

Ending Pose: Reach Up