

Blue Sky Theater Teacher Guide #4
(Accompaniment to Youtube Tutorial #4)

TIME



TIME



Time is a fascinating element to explore with movement. All of the time considerations used in music: duration, speed/tempo, pulse/beat, accent, meter, phrase, syncopation, rhythm etc. can be explored with movement in space.

Dancers are always making choices about how they use the element of time. Sometimes they have counts or beats to dance to, but other times they use more intuitive and natural timing (as in breathing). They can also manipulate the speeds of the movement. They might move really fast or accentuate some movement. Then there are times when they slow down and suspend their movement, or freeze their body in complete stillness. They can create different feelings or effects by altering their use of time in their dancing.

Clapping and Accentuating Movements

Help your students develop a good sense of time as well as movement coordination by teaching some clapping and moving patterns with accents.

- ★ Ask your students to make their hands available. Establish a comfortable tempo/speed to count from one to eight.
- ★ Try clapping on count 1 and 5. During the “empty” or “waiting” counts, you can bounce to keep the feel/tempo. Practice until you get it. For younger grades, have them follow you the whole time. For older grades, you can challenge them to keep going without you, and not speed up the tempo!
- ★ Try a few other combinations of numbers between 1 and 8 to clap on. Which one is easier and which one is harder? Have your students pick some numbers.
- ★ Now get your whole body ready... to move on the variety of combination of numbers! You might start by using your arms, because they are the easiest. As you get more practiced and comfortable with the concept and the structure, encourage your students to move more body parts such as ... can you involve your head? Your torso? Your legs?

Decumulating Counts Exercise

This is an excellent exercise for your students to understand and feel the duration as well as the value of time. Students can also work on controlling the speed of their movement. It is also a perfect warm-up because it involves the whole body and get your heart going!

- ★ Ask your students to reach up high to the highest point in space you can reach with your arms
- ★ Give 8 counts for them to go all the way to the ground. The only rule is that they have to control their timing/speed so that they fill up all 8 counts. They can't arrive to the lowest point too soon and wait.
- ★ Come back up to the highest point in 8 counts. Same rule applies - they have to figure out a way to use all 8 counts before they reach the top.
- ★ Now take away 1 count at a time to repeat going all the way down and coming back up in 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1.
- ★ You start to realize that there are many pathways of movements that can be created between the highest and the lowest in space. Once students know the structure, encourage them to be inventive and creative as they go up and down. What if they have to find a new way every time? What are the potential pathways - spiral, zigzag, straight? Can they be aware of their whole body dancing and using the time wisely?
- ★ Can you think of how to develop and take the same activities in different directions such as sideward, forward, or backward direction?

Simple Choreography/Sequence

Now you are ready to put together a simple sequence for your students, exploring different aspects of time.

- ★ **Feeling the tempo/beats in the music:** Walk/move around the space for 8 counts, and freeze in any shape for 8 counts.
- ★ Walk/move around the space for 8 counts, and freeze in a **high level shape** for 8 counts. (Also, as mentioned in the tutorial, they could do any kind of motion during these counts ...run, skip, hop slither,oose. dart, roll as long as they make the shape at the end of the sequence.
- ★ Create a **low level shape**. Challenge the older grades to memorize these **high** and **low** shapes. For younger grades, make sure they are being really high and really low as they improvise their shapes.
- ★ **Speeds of the movement:** Help students practice moving from one shape to another as quickly as they can. Quickly move to low shape and hold for 8 counts. Quickly back to high shape and hold for 8 counts. Repeat.
- ★ Now switch gears and help them explore the slow speed. They have 8 counts to gradually and **smoothly** move from one shape to another. Again, use the whole value of 8 counts; fill up the whole time. You might also explore other motional qualities during these counts.

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- ★ **Accentuating movements/various timings:** like in the Clapping and Accentuating Movements exercise, try and change your body directions on different combination of numbers.
- ★ **You have the makings of a dance!:** Once the sequence is put together, go over it a few times so that you and your students really know it (rehearsal). Then put on a fun music and Voila! You have your time exploration dance.

Music in the Blue Sky Theater Tutorial #4 is from the wonderful album called Pirouette Park by Jon Scoville.
<http://www.albertsbicycle.com/>



Thank you!



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