

dance notes lesson plans

Key Stage 2

Castles



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Dance

Key Stage 2

Lesson Plan for Key Stage 2 Dance

Curriculum Objectives:

- Apply & develop a broad range of movement skills
- Learn how to use these in different ways
- Link them to make actions & sequences of movement
- Enjoy communicating and collaborating with each other
- Develop an understanding of how to improve
- Learn how to evaluate and recognise own success

Learning Outcomes:

- Use a variety of movements in isolation and combination
- Develop flexibility, strength, technique, control and balance
- Perform dances using a range of movement patterns
- Compare and evaluate performances against previous ones
- Demonstrate improvement to achieve personal targets

Unit Contents:

Week 1: Shapes and Structures

Week 2: Moats and Curtain Wall

Week 3: Attack and Defence

Week 4: Tournaments

Week 5: Rooms and Interior

Week 6: Castles

Tracks Used:

- ✦ ["Here We Go Swaying"](#)
- ✦ ["Whoop-Wah-Wah"](#)
- ✦ ["Throw Some Sounds"](#)
- ✦ ["Journey of Discovery"](#)
- ✦ ["A Tender Moment"](#)
- ✦ ["Ebb and Flow"](#)
- ✦ ["Heavenly Beats"](#)
- ✦ ["Mixed Emotions"](#)
- ✦ ["Or Did She Have Me?"](#)

Week 1: Shapes and Structures

Starter

Discuss castles. What do we know? Has anyone been to one? What shape are they?
Rectangular towers surrounded by high walls, later round towers at each corner with square towers midway each wall.
You could use different pictures for inspiration.

Warm up ◀ "Here We Go Swaying"

Start by skipping around the room to generate heat, then pausing when the music stops. Encourage focus and concentration. Create shapes with the whole body: stretchy, curved, angular, straight. First hold the shapes still, then move quickly from one to another.

Main ◀ "Heavenly Beats"

- A. In small groups, make castle shapes. Use different body parts and find interesting ways to connect to each other.
- B. Choose an individual starting position, then - in slow motion - move into your castle shape, structuring one person after the other.
- C. Share with the rest of the class.

Cool Down ◀ "Journey of Discovery"

Stretch in small groups. Sitting in a circle with your group, hold hands and stretch your arms. Join feet together and stretch to the centre of the circle. Then, lean back away from the centre, stretching the whole body.

Key Vocabulary:

shapes, structures, create, slow-motion, stretch, share

Week 2: Moats and Curtain Wall

Starter

Discuss the moats that surround the castle. The castle walls drop into water with a courtyard inside. 'Concentric Castles' had circular walls, one inside the other. The gatehouse would face the only bridge over the moat. The moat was there to defend the castle.

Warm up ◀ "Throw Some Sounds"

Travel around the room, using different pathways: straight, circular, zigzag, erratic. Try travelling at different speeds and levels, still sticking to the pathways.

Main ◀ "Heavenly Beats"

- A.** As a whole class, make a few circles - one inside the other - and join hands. Travel around the circle, each circle travelling in the opposite direction to the one inside and outside.
- B.** Recap Week 1's castle groups and practice adding these after the whole group circles
- C.** In your castle groups, travel in a circle using 'water' movements to create the moat.

Cool Down ◀ "Journey of Discovery"

Solo stretch: stand tall, like a castle tower. Then, seated with legs stretched out, reach to your toes. Then, bend your arms and legs back towards the body. Then, stretch out again - like a drawbridge.

Key Vocabulary:

travel, pathways, levels, speed, direction, actions, space

Week 3: Attack and Defence

Starter

Discuss how castles were used to attack and defend.

Warm up ◀ "Whoop-Wah-Wah"

In pairs, stand face-to-face. Take it in turns to warm-up each body part, mirroring each other. Find actions that mobilise the joints as well as stretch the muscles.

Main ◀ "Mixed Emotions"

- A. In pairs, create a duet. Find complimentary and contrasting actions to attack and defend. No contact is to be used. Use different levels.
- B. Show your duet to another pair and feedback to each other. What actions could be added to make it more interesting? Jumps and turns etc.? Then join the two duets together to make a quartet.
- C. Choose a section of your quartet to perform in slow-motion.
- D. Recap the work from weeks 1 and 2, adding the quartets after the moat section.

Cool Down ◀ "A Tender Moment"

Partner stretches. Sit opposite your partner with legs stretched out and hold hands. Move forward and backwards. Then, lie down and relax; imagine you are resting after battle.

Key Vocabulary:

complimentary, contrasting, mirror, levels, dynamics, duets

Week 4: Tournaments

Starter

Discuss castle life and the tournaments that were often held at castles.

Tournaments went on for several days and included jousting, archery, sword fights and wrestling.

Warm up ◀ "Whoop-Wah-Wah"

In pairs, create three shapes, connected together, that stretch the body. Then, find three ways to travel around the room, joined together. Repeat the shapes and travelling 3 times. As well as warming up the body, we are also practicing working together.

Main ◀ "Mixed Emotions"

- A. In pairs, create a duet. Choose one of the tournament activities. Include a starting and finishing position and a variety of actions, dynamics and levels. Decide who is going to be the winner!
- B. Practice the duet so that it is well-rehearsed and keep it to 24 counts, so that everyone's duet is the same length.
- C. Recap the work from weeks 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Cool Down ◀ "A Tender Moment"

Partner stretches. Sit opposite your partner, with your legs stretched out and hold hands. Move forward and backwards. Then, lie down and relax; imagine you are resting after battle.

Key Vocabulary:

improvisation, duets, actions, levels, dynamics, rehearse, timing

Week 5: Rooms and Interior

Starter

Discuss the inside of the castle. What rooms did they have and what was life like living in a castle? *The Great Hall, The Chapel, The Kitchen, The Toilet, The Courtyard with Well.*

Warm up ◀ "Here We Go Swaying"

Whole-class improvisation. Call out different rooms and improvise actions for each room.

Main ◀ "Or Did She Have Me?"

- A. Choose one action for each castle room. Make the actions extra big and add jumps and turns. Remember, in dance our actions don't have to be exactly realistic, we can make them more interesting.
- B. Divide the space into five areas, each one corresponding to a different room of the castle. Everyone chooses a room to start in and performs their actions for that room. Then travel to another room and perform your actions for that room. Decide on different counts for each room, then move on until everyone has been in each one.
- C. Recap the work from weeks 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Cool Down ◀ "Ebb and Flow"

All make a circle. Hold hands and stretch your arms. Join your feet together and stretch to the centre of the circle. Then, lean back - away from the centre - stretching the whole body.

Key Vocabulary:

space, actions, improvise, gestures, group work

Week 6: Castles

Starter

Recap everything we've explored over week 1 to 5. What are your favourite parts of the dance? How can we transition from one section of the dance to the next? Share ideas on an ending for the dance.

Warm up ◀ "Throw Some Sounds"

Play musical statues, using ideas from discussion of movement and statues.

Main

- ◀ "Heavenly Beats"
- ◀ "Mixed Emotions"
- ◀ "Or Did She Have Me?"

- A. Re-cap and rehearse the dances from weeks 1 to 5. Maybe you'd like to change them a little or add some more to them?
- B. Add transitions and an ending to the dance.
- C. Rehearse the whole dance.
- D. Perform to an audience or to a camera to watch back.

Cool Down ◀ "Ebb and Flow"

All make a circle, hold hands and stretch your arms. Join your feet together and stretch to the centre of the circle. Then, lean back - away from the centre - stretching the whole body.

Key Vocabulary:

experiment, rehearse, develop, props, perform