



EduTrend Contents

W4C · PERFORMING ARTS · MIDDLE SCHOOL

Choreography Motifs

Create and develop a dance motif

Ages 12–14

Level: Intermediate

60 minutes

Groups of 4 · up to 30

Activity 04

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 04 · AT A GLANCE

Choreography Motifs

Students respond to a stimulus such as a photo or poem, create a four-count motif, then develop it by changing actions, space, dynamics and relationships. Groups use unison and canon to structure a short dance and perform it for feedback.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- create a motif from a stimulus;
- develop a motif using actions, space, dynamics and relationships;
- use unison and canon to structure a dance;
- evaluate choreography using dance vocabulary.

KEY WORDS

motif · development · action · space
· dynamics · relationships · unison ·
canon · stimulus

CURRICULUM LINKS

Dance and PE: composition and performance. Music: structure and tempo. English: interpreting a stimulus.

1**WARM UP**

Body and voice

2**EXPLORE**

Play and try

3**CREATE**

Devise and shape

4**REHEARSE**

Practise and polish

5**PERFORM**

Share with an
audience

6**REFLECT**

Feedback and
improve

Materials

- A cleared space or hall
- A music player and instrumental tracks
- Stimulus cards: photos, short poems or words
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Choose instrumental music with a clear beat.
- Prepare stimulus cards.
- Plan a simple demonstration motif.
- Check the floor is clean and dry.

SAFETY

Warm up fully. Dance barefoot or in suitable shoes on a clean floor. Keep lifts and floor work simple.

ACTIVITY 04 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Keep the motif short: four to eight counts is enough to develop in many ways.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–10 min Warm-up	Mobilise joints, raise heart rate and stretch gently.	<i>"Which body parts need warming?"</i>
10–20 min Motif	Groups create a four-count motif from their stimulus.	<i>"How does the movement show the idea?"</i>
20–35 min Develop	Change level, direction, speed, size and relationship.	<i>"Which development makes it more interesting?"</i>
35–50 min Structure	Build a 32-count dance using unison and canon.	<i>"Where will you use canon for effect?"</i>
50–60 min Perform	Groups perform; audience identifies the motif and developments.	<i>"Could you spot the motif each time?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Create a four-count motif and develop it in at least three ways, then structure a 32-count group dance using unison and canon.

ACTIVITY 04 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The performance craft in brief

A motif is a short phrase of movement that represents an idea and is repeated and developed through a dance. Choreographers develop motifs by changing actions (what the body does), space (where it moves), dynamics (how it moves) and relationships (who it moves with).

This framework draws on the movement analysis of Rudolf Laban. Unison means dancers perform the same movement at the same time; canon means they perform it one after another, like a round in music. Contrast between unison and canon helps hold an audience's attention.

Common ideas to listen for

- "Choreography means making lots of new moves." Developing a few moves is often more effective.
- "Dance must follow the music exactly." Movement can contrast with music too.
- "Canon is just being out of time." Canon is a deliberate, timed device.

Adapting the activity

Support

Give a ready-made motif and focus on two developments.

Stretch

Add a retrograde (performing the motif backwards) and explain its effect.

WORKSHEET 1

Stimulus and motif

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Record your ideas.

Our stimulus and ideas

Our four-count motif

Count	Movement
1	
2	
3	
4	

WORKSHEET 2

Development grid

Show how you developed the motif.

Developments

Change	What we did
Action	
Space	
Dynamics	
Relationships	

WORKSHEET 3

Dance appreciation

Evaluate a group's dance.

Motif and developments seen

Use of unison and canon

One suggestion

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Creates a motif from a stimulus	Develops motif in varied ways	Evaluates using vocabulary

Suggested codes: W = working towards • E = expected • G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Choreography Motifs is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents W4C Performing Arts programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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