



**Educational
Theatre
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Changing lives through the arts

Whole Body Walking! Lesson Plan

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Grades 3-5

Standards Fulfilled by this Lesson based on the National Standards for Theatre Education Grades K-4:

- **Content Standard #2:** *Acting by assuming roles and interacting in improvisations*
 - a) Students imagine and clearly describe characters, their relationships, and their environments
 - b) Students use variations of locomotor and nonlocomotor movement and vocal pitch, tempo, and tone for different characters

Objectives:

The Learner Will use their whole body to show a character trait

TLW create a character based on movement that they do.

TLW use their imagination to explore different ways in which their bodies can move.

Set-Up:

- Room should be as clear as possible, with defined “ends of space” (even if just imaginary walls that the students can picture against a desk, etc.)
- A way to designate a spot for each student (squares on the rug, lines on the floor, something similar) is helpful during warm-ups, but not necessary

Introduction/Warm-Up:

- Students should stand in a circle with enough space between them to move without touching another student (take giant steps backward if needed) or should be in their “spot” if available in the room set-up
- Review the 5 rules with student help (1. Have Fun! 2. Respect each other and the room – only touch the floor and the air, etc. 3. Three Strike rule of ETC 4. Word of the Day – “when I say it, however silly, you say it back the same way and then close mouths and put eyes on me. Today’s word of the Day: Body!” 5. Have Fun!)
- Everyone stretch up and reach as high as possible, then flop over – do this 3 times, reaching higher each time (flat footed, on tip toes, etc.)
- Start moving your face around without sounds to stretch it out, then add any nonverbal vocalizations that go along with those faces
- **Poses**
 - Everyone stand in neutral (arms at sides, feet slightly apart, ready to go!) – can also modify if students have a lot of energy and have them jog in place instead of stand in neutral between poses
 - “At the count of 3, I want you to strike a [big, medium, tiny/small] pose that is _____”
 - Start with just an example of big, medium, and tiny/small with the encouragement of using the whole body, paying attention

to each part of your body and really focusing on using the body in a freeze no voices or sounds.

- After each pose, back to neutral, then do another pose
- Encourage a discussion with students about using their WHOLE body, even if a tiny pose. You can even select a few students who are doing well, but could change it up and do even more.
- Call out good poses – ideally a different student or two each time – that are frozen (these are poses, not movements) and that use whole body or are very expressive, innovative, etc.
- As an extension, can add a sound or word or nonverbal exclamation to each pose

Instruction:

- **Hybrid Super Animals!**
 - This is a continuation of “Poses,” and can build directly from there.
 - Have each student think of their favorite animal while standing in Neutral. At the count of 3, they should strike a large, full-body pose as that animal.
 - Return to Neutral.
 - Have each student think of their favorite Superhero (or, if they don’t have a favorite – at this age, they may start to think Superheroes are “uncool” – have them think of any Superhero). It does need to be a Superhero that has already been created, either from a movie or comic book, etc., not one they have thought of on their own. At the count of 3, they should strike another large, full-body pose as that Superhero.
 - Return to Neutral.
 - Have each student think about one superpower that that superhero has (since they may have more than one) and how they would combine that power with their favorite animal. At the count of 3, have them move around the room as that SuperAnimal – encourage the use of the whole body and whatever sound they think that SuperAnimal would make (encourage them to create their own).
 - Be sure to call out students who are being specific with their motions, whose powers and animals are very clear.
- **Watering Hole**
 - Have students line up (side-by-side) on one side of the room – having a carpet or clear line is helpful here
 - Explain to them that between one side of the room and the other is a large watering hole, like those found in Africa where all of the animals come to drink
 - Have them cross the watering hole as animals that you call out (giraffe, hippo, lion, etc.) each time needing to use their whole body to walk like that animal to make it to the other side of the watering hole



- For the second phase, explain that the watering hole is no longer full of water. It's full of spaghetti, hot lava, a gigantic boulder, etc., and then give them a different superpower/ability/skill each time they cross (my favorite is to put a giant boulder in the middle of the room that they can't cross over or make it around and then tell them they all have laser eyes)
 - Be sure to note the students who use their full body and really focus on what they're doing and verbally praise them in each cross!
- **Silly Tag**
 - Silly Tag is just like regular tag EXCEPT there's no running
 - Instead of running, everyone (including "It") does whatever the teacher calls out – flying like Eagles, dancing like Elephants, walking like Zombies, doing a Wiggle Walk, jumping like Frogs, hopping like rabbits, taking tiny steps, walking like Penguins, taking giant steps, etc.
 - The activity should change each time the person who is "It" changes
 - The teacher should call out who is It and what the activity is
 - I always point out that it's easy to follow the "no running" rule because as the person announcing how we're all moving, I won't ever say "running"!
 - Game is usually done once everyone has been It, or after the allotted time for this activity in your class schedule.

Wrap-Up:

- **Circle Time**
 - Have students come back to a circle and sit down
 - Review what was done that day and talk a little bit about why it is important to use your whole body when acting
 - Review the rules one-by-one and ask if they were followed, finishing with "And did you have enough fun that it was the rule two times?!"
- Have students gather up belongings and line up for dismissal

Back Pocket Game: Charades