



Helping teachers work with children when they first return to school following major traumatic or life-changing events

Two Stars and a Wish

This dance work is a physical way for students to think about the good and possibly hard parts of having been in isolation. This work will take 3-4 dance sessions.

Level 3 Lesson Plan

Resources

Music for dance – *see notes about music*

Key Dance Language

Space - size, level, direction

Relationships – mirror, shadow, side by side

Warming into the work

Every student finds a space on their own

Create a movement to show one everyday kind of action

E.g. brushing teeth, buttering toast, checking the mail box

Each time the teacher calls 'change', find another everyday task. As they notice someone else's movement they may like to mirror this on the "change" call.

Exploring Dance

Students move for 8 counts and then create a shape and hold for 4 counts. Move again for 8 and make a new shape and hold.

Add challenges

- Make this movement take the maximum amount of space
e.g. Buttering action would be full extent of arm action as though a giant piece of toast
- Have the movement move through at least two levels.
- Find a way to make the movement lead you to leap, spin or turn from the spot *e.g. The buttering action could make you spin in a full circle.*
- Have all students walk for 8 counts and then do this movement.

Try a second one using a different everyday action.

Add the same challenges.

Walk for 8 counts, create second movement, walk for another 8 counts and create the first movement.



Creating Dance

1. In pairs or threes, students discuss their experience of the isolation using the simple “two stars and a wish” evaluating tool. Regarding the stars – some children will easily think of things they enjoyed. For those who find this harder, allow space to talk about what they didn’t like and see if they can turn the discussion to what they learned or how they handled it – essentially giving themselves a star for their resilience, patience or attitudes.

E.g. A star could be for stepping up to look after a younger sister as my parents were essential workers, or helping a sibling with online learning (even if they didn’t want to) or that they kept their room tidy.

Regarding the wish – this is something they wish they could have done – real or imagined while in lockdown – this may be seeing friends, going to the beach, escaping on a rocket ship.

2. Students take the first ‘star’
 - Make the action
 - Make the action bigger to take up as much space as possible
 - Make the action pass through 2 levels
 - Make the action include a turn, leap or spin.

Repeat this with the second ‘star’

- Make the action
- Make the action bigger to take up as much space as possible
- Make the action pass through 2 levels
- Make the action include a start or finish on a different body base

3. Add the two stars together to make one movement sentence. Students may need to repeat this 3-4 times to get it set in their body and mind. Remind them to start with a strong start and end freeze.

Repeat with the ‘wish’

- Make the action
- Make the action bigger to take up as much space as possible
- Be clear about where the action begins and ends.
- Make the action move through the space in a different direction

4. Students then decide on the best order of the ‘stars’ and the ‘wish’ movement sentences to create three movements that flow into each other. Rehearse this movement sentence several times until they are sure about it.

Shaping Dance

1. Partner up and teach each other your whole two stars and a wish movement sentence.
Encourages students to be specific when teaching each other.



Teacher to ask questions that ensures students are using the dance language and refining the work using the same language.

- Do you want your hands facing the same way?
- Can you find a way to solve the problem of when to start?
- Is there a place in the work that you can change the relationship of the pair?
Perhaps move from mirror to shadow or shadow to side by side.

2. Half and half share

This can be the finishing point and move straight on to sharing.

OR, pairs can combine with another pair. Each pair retains their own movement, but together they find a way of placing themselves in the space and in relation to each other.

E.g. A B A B or B A A B or

A B

B A

Sharing Dance

Students share either two pairs at a time if they remained in pairs, or one group at a time if in a group of 4 or more.

Tip: Use music without lyric that offers a mood for the piece.

Possible Future Steps

- Students create their own music to accompany the dance using Garageband or Soundtrap (or similar) loops
- Write about their best imagined isolation experience
- Find two stars and a wish in current events. There is a lot of doom and gloom so help students find the good news out there, and perhaps they create their own news story they wished they could see.

DANCE FOR UNDERSTANDING

A FEW TIPS

Creating a movement phrase or 'movement sentence' means students are working in the Developing Ideas strand of the curriculum. Creating within a structure helps those who are new to the work.

This dance work is designed to make space for students to discuss but not dwell on having been in isolation, making room for the positive and not-so-positive stories.

Adapt Like all work, the ideas here should be adapted for the age, stage and nature of the learners in your space.



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Encourage students to:

- start in stillness – like a capital letter
- finish in stillness – like a full stop
- to use all rehearsal time they have to rehearse and refine their work.
Using the phrase ‘movement sentence’ can help.

Time	Keep adding challenges that use dance language. About 1-2 minutes, is enough for each new challenge.
Sharing	A quick way of sharing the early ideas is to create a half and half share. Have half the room bob down where they are. The other half share their movement sentences at the same time. The movers then bob down and the other half share.
Creating	Have students explore ideas individually at first. Initially students may try to be with a partner so gently remind them to work individually during this phase. Once in pairs observe social distancing guidelines as needed.
Music	For this type of work, find music that is instrumental only to avoid students “dancing the words”. Use soundtracks from movies, classical music, background music – but get a range of tempo and timbre. Spotify even has a list called <i>Contemporary Music that is not Classical</i> .
Warm up	A warm up in dance should be part of the precursor to the work that is about to happen. Try to use the dance language at this time when setting out the task. <i>E.g. Can you use the levels in space differently and move high, middle and low?</i>
View	There are many pieces of dance online. Share dance often with students. Exposing students to the wide variety of ways people dance lets them into other worlds of expression.

Arts-based teaching is so valuable for the immediate return to school after crisis and trauma. For those looking to sustain the benefits in the longer term, check out *Mantle of the Expert* - a highly engaging teaching approach combining inquiry learning with drama. It allows ākonga to explore real world contexts in create, safe and meaningful ways through imagined ‘adventures’ lasting several weeks or a term. With *Mantle of the Expert*, you can extend on the strategies used in the process dramas on this site to support learning across the curriculum. For more on *Mantle of the Expert* and other dramatic inquiry approaches in a New Zealand context, visit www.mantleoftheexpert.co.nz or email mantleoftheexpertnz@gmail.co.nz