

**Title:** Shadow Dances

K-4  
 5-8  
 9-12

**Subject Tag:**

Art and Music: Dance

**Synopsis:**

Students will explore the physical phenomenon of shadows through movement improvisation, and they will create an original dance phrase based on this imagery. By reproducing accurately the movement choices of another dancer, students will broaden their movement range and strengthen their skills of sequencing, observation, and evaluation. This activity integrates well with science units on the physical properties of light.

**Keywords:**

improvisation; choreography; phrases; movement sentences; imagery; shadows; light; level; turns; travel; axial movement

**Body:**

1. Demonstrate the creation of a simple shadow by shining a flashlight onto an object in front of a wall in a darkened space. Acting as scientists, students should observe and describe similarities and differences between the object and its shadow.
2. Have students pair up, and have one student in each pair sit behind his or her partner. The students in front begin by moving their arms slowly, and the partners shadow their movements. Add torso and leg movements. Switch roles and repeat. Prompt variations in size, direction, and tempo.
3. Repeat the improvisation standing.
4. Next, as pairs, students create an original dance phrase (movement sentence) based on the shadow imagery. The phrase should include the following elements: level change, turn, traveling, and axial movement.
5. Have each pair perform their phrase for the class, with a discussion following.

**Features:**

Contains Special Education Tips  
 Quick Activity  
 Requires Internet access for students to complete

**Objectives:**

Students will explore the physical phenomenon of shadows through movement improvisation, and they will create an original dance phrase based on this imagery.

**Standards:**

**NY: 1:** Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Arts. Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts. **3:** Responding To and Analyzing Works of Art. Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.

**NYC: A4a.** Learn from models. **A5 a.** Take responsibility for a component of a team project.

**CT: 1.** Elements and Skills. Students will identify and perform movement elements and dance skills. **2.** Choreography. Students will understand choreographic principles, processes, and structures. **4.** Thinking skills. Students will apply analytical and evaluative thinking skills in dance. **7.** Connections. Students will make connections between dance, other disciplines and daily life.

**NJ: 1.1:** All students will acquire knowledge and skills that increase aesthetic awareness in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. **1.2:** All students will refine perceptual, intellectual, physical, and technical skills through creating dance, music, theatre, and/or visual arts. **1.3:** All students will utilize arts elements and arts media to produce artistic products and performances. **1.4:** All students will demonstrate knowledge of the process of critique.

**Prerequisite Skills:**

No previous dance experience is required. More experienced students can benefit from this lesson by using the Space – Time - Energy elements with greater clarity and variety and/or by creating longer phrases.

**Time Required:**

30 minutes

**Technology and Materials Needed:**

1. flashlight
2. music (optional)

**Assessment Criteria:**

Peers can assess each other on the basis of accuracy of image, originality, and performance skill.

**Review Date:****Review Comments:**