

Elk Grove Unified School District
Visual and Performing Arts Resources
Dance

Grade 4: Lesson 4

Title: Square Dancing

Standards Addressed

Artistic Perception

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Dance

- 1.5 Describe specific movement using appropriate dance vocabulary.
- 1.6 Identify, define, and use phrasing in dances they learn or see.

Historical and Cultural Context

Understanding the Historical and Cultural Dimensions of Dance

- 3.1 Perform and identify dances from various countries with different arrangements of dancers (e.g., lines, circles, couples).
- 3.4 Perform and identify folk/traditional and social dances from California history.

Time: 30 minutes

Floor Plan: Inside or outside area with boundaries.

Materials Needed:

- Video of square dancing
- CD with music (optional)

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to expose the students to the background and vocabulary of square dancing. The students will watch a video and, using previously learned terminology, perform a basic square dance.

Background:

It is assumed that students have a very limited idea of what square dancing is, as well as the necessary vocabulary needed in order to understand the dance.

Key Questions:

- What kind of dance is square dancing?
- Where does this dance come from?
- Can the students work well with partners?
- Are partner expectations already set up?

<u>Steps of the Lesson</u>	<u>Thoughts for the Teacher</u>
<p>1 Set up purpose/goals Tell the students that you will read to them about the history of square dancing and they will learn a few basic steps.</p>	<p>How are you making your purpose clear to the students?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make a transparency of history for visual learners. ▪ Watch the video beforehand so you know what to do. ▪ Use slow calls without music to start.
<p>2 Engage students Ask the students if they know what square dancing is. Do they know why it is called square dancing?</p>	<p>How can I effectively get the students interested in the content of the lesson? Answers: An American folk dance. It is performed in a square with four couples.</p>
<p>3 Learning Sequence</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Discuss history of square dancing. b) Show video (optional) c) Show basic steps to students. d) Have students practice steps. e) Allow students to perform steps. 	<p>What are the BIG idea(s) of your presentation? How will students understand/experience the material that you present? Square dancing has a rich history and is a dance performed using just a few basic steps.</p>
<p>4 Assessment Assessment embedded within the lesson.</p>	<p>How will you allow your students to deepen their understanding of content presented? (Reflect, revise, retell, refine, practice) Can the students execute the dance steps correctly?</p>

Actual Lesson Sequence

1. Put up transparency of Brief History of Square Dancing and read to students. If necessary, answer any questions they may have.
2. If you have gotten the video from the LRC, show the first clip so they can see something similar to what they will be doing.
3. If you do not have the video, draw how they will need to stand in the square. Then explain that they will have partners. Explain that the norm is boy/girl, but if you have more boys than girls (or vise-versa) they will have to have same sex partners.
4. Have eight people model a square and number each couple 1-4.
5. Standing next to each other, the boy will put his right hand on the small of the girl's back and the girl will hold his left hand with her left hand. Her right hand is on her skirt or hip. They walk clockwise around until they return to their original position. This is called "home" position. Walking around in this manner is called a "promenade." This is an old Greek word that means to walk.
6. From home position, have the eight people join hands and walk around the circle to the left and then around in a circle to the right. Their feet should be crossing in front with each step.
7. Return to home position and have them bow to their partner. Next they bow to the person at their corner, next to them on the other side. Call out circle to the left, circle to the right, promenade. Once they can do this, teach the next step.
8. Next you will teach the "dosádos" (doe-see-doe). In this step the couple walks around each other without touching, making a square. The boy walks on the girl's right side around her in a square until he reaches home position. The girl walks around his left side until she reaches home position.

9. Have each couple practice until you can add that to the movements they can already do.
10. Have the groups switch partners and practice with other people. They should be able to start in home position, bow to their partner, bow to their corner, circle to the left, circle to the right, promenade, and dosádos.

Closure:

Today we learned four basic square dancing steps. Who can tell me what they are?
(circle to the left, circle to the right, promenade, and dosádos)

Who can tell me where square dancing came from?

Other Considerations:

- You can use any type of fast music if you don't have any square dancing music. You do not need to use music at all, you can just clap your hands and do the calls.
- Special Needs: Adjust the lesson according to the student's abilities.

Extensions:

Have the students research and present the history of Square Dancing in Europe and in the United States.

Brief History of Square Dancing

Square dancing was brought to America with the early English settlers. The people who danced it were aristocracy, from whom the dance originated. Once they settled in America, square dancing changed as much as the people who danced them.

Dancing became an acceptable social activity in spite of the Puritan influence in the settling of the New England colonies. During the American Revolution everyone danced. They danced at all occasions—anywhere there was room to form a square. The Americans adapted this dance form by inventing the caller. If the caller gave directions while dancing, he only prompted. If he was outside the square, as we know callers today, he made up rhyming phrases using rhyme in couplet fashion to fill in between the prompts.

Originally the dances were all memorized, but as the pioneers moved west and south, calling became the norm, and couples would only follow the caller in order to do the dance. Today square dancing is done all over America, but it is especially popular in the Appalachian and southern states. It is always done with a caller, but it is not always done in a square.