



Dance Games: Art Gallery & Sculpture Garden

Exploring Space, Shape & Body

This game is a pairs activity that can be adapted for any age group. It is a jumping off point for many lessons about using Space and Body as Dance Elements. The game explores the use of shape and the body. It makes students aware of parts of their bodies and how to create shapes.

For older age groups, it can investigate the power of stillness to create impact, focus, and meaning. The game is made more complex, for an older age group, by introducing more spatial components as a part of the Dance Elements.

The Dance Game Rules

- In pairs, one student directs their partner's body into a shape that is aesthetically pleasing to the 'artist'.
- Once the 'artist' has finished their 'sculpture', they can take a photo of the work of art. This could be imagined or as a way of documenting the activity.
- The other 'artists' in the class then visit the art gallery of 'sculptures'.
- Reverse roles and repeat the process.
- Extend the activity on the next rotation by giving the 'artist' some parameters for their creations. Each 'artist' draws a list of 'artist instructions' from a hat. They then sculpt according to the instructions.

See *Sculpture Garden Instruction Cards* below. You will have to do copies of these, so each 'artist' gets instructions. Return the instructions to the hat for the 2nd rotation.

This is an opportunity to check for student understand about dance terms. Some dance terms to include could be high, middle and low levels, large to small size (range), direction of gaze (focus), curved and angular (body), symmetry and asymmetry, relationship of one body part to another.

The Dance Discussion

Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden is great for discussing body zones.

For example, body areas front and back, cross lateral. It is also a time to talk about aesthetics and what each of the children prefers to look at. The individual preference is important in this game, and in dance aesthetics.



Top Tips

- ✓ Depending on the age group of the children you may only like to bring in a few dance terms at a time. Be sure to only use ones that you have taught about in previous lessons. All the children need to understand what you mean for the game to be fun.
- ✓ I often identify a particular shape that is interesting to me. I have the student hold the position and the class looks at the shape from a number of angles.
- ✓ This duplicates the art gallery process of looking at sculpture. Walking around. Then forming ideas and opinions.
- ✓ I talk about what it is that I really like about the shape. This could be how they've really curved their torso but angular shapes on their arms. Or it could be about my personal love of all things asymmetrical!
- ✓ This is a wonderful moment to introduce the concept of positive and negative space. These are terms that apply to visual art as well as the Dance Element of Space.
- ✓ The use of symmetrical and asymmetrical shape is another integrated learning area for this activity. From a Mathematics perspective, you could also discuss angles that the body make or include them as the partner is 'sculpted'.

Extension Activity

Take the shapes the students have created outside into a garden space to create a sculpture garden. This choreographic activity also has performance outcomes.

- Each pair chooses their favourite 3 shapes they have created and makes transitional movements between each.
- Ensure that the transitions are in slow motion and have a logical connection to the next shape.
- The students should reflect on the natural environment they are working in, as they start to move and position their sculptures.

They need to talk about safety issues, including ground surfaces and about designing transitional movements that are appropriate for the environment they are working in.

- You can perform your sculpture garden by having half the class (the audience), walk through the 'sculptures'. As the audience walks past the sculpture it initiates the movement sequence. Put it to music that is calming and serene to add to the mood. [\(34\) Erik Satie - Gymnopédie No.1 - YouTube](#)

This performance is a lovely example of still shapes being used as an inspiration for movement. Filming this choreography, in a natural setting, is a lovely documentation of the activity.

It also is about planning a dance piece outdoors and adapting movements to suit a site specific performance space. Performing it slowly and using held, still shapes is also about technical skills that include body control, strength and balance.

You could also perform this using another class as the audience or as an end of term performance for parents.



In pairs you are to create 3 different shapes on each other.

You will end up with a total of 6 shapes.

Please include in at least one or more of your shapes the following elements:

High and low levels in your shape

A large size shape

Angular shapes

Asymmetrical shapes

At least one shape that has the inside of the elbow close to, or on the knee



In pairs you are to create 3 different shapes on each other.

You will end with a total of 6 shapes.

Please include in at least one or more of your shapes the following elements:

Middle and low levels

A small size shape

A downward gaze

Curved and angular shapes

**At least one shape that has the inside of your elbow on
or close to the top of your head**





In pairs you are to create 3 different shapes on each other.

You will end up with a total of 6 shapes.

Please include in at least one or more of your shapes the following elements:

High and middle levels

Curved shapes

A Symmetrical shape

A gaze that focuses on a part of your body

At least one shape that has the arch of your foot on your other knee



In pairs you are to create 3 different shapes on each other.

You will end with a total of 6 shapes.

Please include in at least one or more of your shapes the following elements:

High, middle and low levels

A large shape

Curved and angular shapes

Symmetrical and Asymmetrical shapes

At least one shape that has your nose as far away from your big toes as it can be

