

2009 TMEA Professional Conference

San Antonio, TX

Dalcroze Eurhythmics in Limited Spaces

Dalcroze Eurhythmics is an approach to music education pioneered by the Swiss musician, dancer, and actor, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze. Eurhythmics is the spontaneous and individual realization in movement of what you hear in music. The approach prepares all performing artists with a sequential, comprehensive education in rhythmic skills, inner hearing, and improvisation. The three facets of Eurhythmics—time, space, and energy—are manipulated through exercises and games with appropriate transfers to education and music therapy. This participatory-based session provides strategies for teaching elementary-aged children rhythmic concepts and to internalize rhythm within the limited space of the classroom.

Benefits of Nonlocomotor Movement

- To help children learn to follow movement directions
- To encourage language development and thinking skills when students are asked to talk about movement
- To help the student develop body awareness—what each part of the body can do, what body parts can do together, and what the whole body can do
- To help students develop creativity through problem-solving activities, guided exploration and imagery
- To strengthen students' awareness of time, space, and energy
- To help students with the following key experiences: expressing creativity in movement, feeling and expressing pulse, beat, rhythm, and meter, and moving with others to a common tempo
- To accompany locomotor movement, thus creating *integrated movement*

Movement Guidelines

- A static movement (one that involves a stopped movement, such as placing both hands on the shoulders) is simpler than a dynamic movement (one that involves continuous movement such as patting the shoulders)
- A movement in which arms or hands touch the body is easier than one in which they do not, because the latter does not have a tactile endpoint
- Movement of the upper body is usually simpler than movement of the lower body
- Movement of the torso is easier than movement of the limbs. Movement of the limbs is easier than movement of the fingers (Gross-motor to fine-motor movements)

- Most nonlocomotor movement (no weight transfer) is easier than locomotor movement (weight transfer) nonlocomotor or locomotor movement using *either* the arms *or* the legs is easier than integrated movement that involves using both the arms and legs at the same time
- Movement without objects is often easier than movement with objects
- *Bilateral movements* (movement of paired body parts—two hands, two legs) are easier to do than moving one side of the body several times followed by moving the other side several times; but moving body parts on one side at a time is easier than alternating movements from side to side
- *Symmetrical movements* (paired body parts moving in the same way) are easier than *asymmetrical movements* (paired body parts moving in different ways)
- Single movements are easier than sequenced movements (two or more movements in a row). Most sequenced movements are easier to do than continuously changing movements
- When moving in groups, using *personal space* (the area around the body available as one engages in movement while remaining in one spot) is easier than using *general space* (the area available when one moves about the room)
- Movement without a partner or group beat is easier than movement timed with a partner or a group beat
- Movement alone without a specified beat is easier to do than movement alone to a specified beat
- Nonlocomotor movement to a faster beat is often easier than nonlocomotor movement to a slower beat
- Nonlocomotor movement to a beat that is closer to the student's internal tempo is easier than movement to a beat that is either faster or slower than the student's natural tempo

Movement for Pre-K

Discovering space and expanding vocabulary (hula-hoops)

- Stepping inside, outside, around
- Jumping, sliding, hopping, galloping

Changing levels

- In front, behind, above, below, through, over
- Upper body movements

Beginning partner work

- Passing the hoop
- Changing spaces

Movement for Early Elementary

Manipulating Time, Space, and Energy:

- Arm swings to discover energy in same space
- Make a gesture within space (4 counts)
- Double the size of the gesture (8 counts)
- Decrease the size of the gesture (2 counts)
- Create patterns

Phrasing (neckties):

- Manipulate mirror and opposite movements (horizontal and vertical)
- Work with instructor and student leaders
- Regular and irregular phrase lengths
- Phrase patterns

Movement for Upper Elementary

Tension & Relaxation: (stockings)

- Tension toward and tension away from
- Working towards a gradual relaxation
- Tension in phrasing
- Experiencing tension in pairs and small groups

Creating movements to reflect tension: (nonpitched instruments)

- Realizing movement in sound
- One person moves and four imitate with instruments
- One to one imitation (pair instrument with person)

R. J. David Frego, Ph.D.
Department of Music
UT San Antonio