

Section 11:

AOSA Teacher Education Curriculum Standards

Movement/Dance in Orff Schulwerk Teacher Education Courses

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Philosophy

Movement is a pillar of Orff Schulwerk. To Carl Orff and his collaborators, Gunild Keetman and Maja Lex, the unity of music, dance, and speech (Musiké) was understood as a trinity of creative expression. Movement, music, and speech share roots in the elements of time and rhythm that permeate all aspects of the Schulwerk. Though it shares these roots, movement/dance in levels courses must be treated as an artistic medium with its own set of skills and concepts. Movement lessons should be designed to inspire expressive movement and relate to music and speech.

The goals of the movement curriculum are to:

- awaken the kinesthetic consciousness of the adult learner
- realize the body as an artistic musical instrument in space
- utilize the dance elements in the practice of teaching and in the creation of dance, music, and speech
- connect the relationship of movement to music making
- broaden aesthetic perceptions
- incorporate dances from historical and cultural traditions with an emphasis on elemental movement and music
- provide a safe space to improvise and create movement/dance
- present a widening range of dance possibilities
- explore ways to motivate and facilitate students from many social-economic and cultural backgrounds to move to learn music, speech, and dance

Though movement/dance is basic to the Schulwerk, it can be the most challenging aspect of the teacher education curriculum. Children respond spontaneously with movement. However, many adults are not familiar with the body as a creative instrument, the range of movement possibilities, or the pedagogy of movement/dance. Therefore, it is necessary to 1) help adult learners feel comfortable moving their bodies, 2) offer a strong and usable vocabulary of movement and dance for educational purposes, 3) demonstrate how movement and dance can be used in the classroom, and 4) expand the awareness of dance possibilities and aesthetic considerations.

Movement/dance in Orff Schulwerk courses is instruction in creative/intuitive dance *and* folk/traditional/formal dance. The Orff approach is unique in that these two aspects spiral throughout each level of the movement curriculum.

- Creative/intuitive dance instruction offers a playful way to teach children; it extends and enriches connections to music and transforms creative expression into performing artistry.
- Folk/traditional/formal dance shows the importance of dance in our societies: the historical implications of our origins, their relationship to music, and choreographic patterns and skills.

The emphasis at each level depends on the movement instructor and his or her experiences, but both strands must be included. In addition, we honor the holistic concept in which the expression of movement/dance is an equal partner with music making and speech. Either element can provide an impulse for the other.

Additional Considerations

To more fully realize the importance of the movement/dance aspects of the curriculum, we highly recommend that the basic/ensemble/pedagogy teacher work with the movement teacher to coordinate and integrate lessons of movement and music.

Movement/dance instruction throughout each levels course should include various approaches to moving, time for reflection and analysis of lessons, and opportunities for discussion of possibilities for classroom application. Some lessons should be specifically designed to educate adult learners to be better movers; others should be lessons that have been successful with children; and still others can be experimental, created for the specific group of adult students in the course.

It is crucial that movement teachers act as role models for the adult students to learn about music and movement, and be musicians and movers in their own classrooms. Movement instructors must endeavor to establish a classroom atmosphere that enables adults to feel secure exploring creative movement, building an educational approach for teaching creative movement with children, and teaching folk/traditional/formal dances with musicality and artistry.

Movement instruction in teacher education courses must recognize and allow for the wide range of movement experiences among students. Consider limitations due to physical condition and capability in planning activities. Students with religious objections should know the requirements before beginning a levels course. All students must be made aware of safety with regards to movement activities. Warm-up activities and lessons on alignment will help adult students move better and protect themselves from injury.

Recommended Space For Movement Class

We highly recommend that classes be held in a large room with a sprung, wooden dance floor. Students should work in bare feet. If such a space is not available, ensure the available room is clean (for lying on the floor and working in bare feet), warm enough to allow muscles to stretch, and large enough for all participants to have big personal space.

Recommended Movement Pre-Requisite For Level I

We strongly suggest that participants have previous movement experience from local chapter workshops or introductory courses to Orff Schulwerk before beginning any levels professional development courses. If students have not experienced Orff movement before an Orff course, encourage them to enroll in local colleges, dance studios, or community centers that offer classes in beginning movement or dance before beginning a levels course. Appropriate classes include contemporary, modern, ballet, jazz, hip hop, Yoga, Pilates, Feldenkrais, aerobics, stretching, alignment, improvisation, and ethnic or historical dance. Orff Schulwerk movement instructors should continually introduce enrichment experiences at every level of the course, and encourage life-long learning in movement. Above all, movement instruction must convey that teaching movement to children does not require performance skill—knowledge, enthusiasm, and a willingness to play, create, and learn are sufficient.

The Curriculum

The core of the movement content is developmental and creative. Creative/intuitive dance emerges from teacher-guided exploration, problem-solving tasks, individual and group improvisation, and composition using dance skills and concepts with impulses from songs, instrumental pieces, and speech. Folk/traditional/formal dance arises from artistically directed teaching, using skills and concepts from historical relationships with music in the past and present. This is the basic content of the movement curriculum. These strands are introduced in Level I, then reinforced and expanded throughout Levels II and III.

Level I strongly emphasizes creative/intuitive dance. This approach helps adults learn to become more comfortable and kinesthetically aware of moving all parts of their bodies as a musical instrument. Dance vocabulary including Laban's Effort Action Drives is introduced, taught, and continuously used to show connections to music and speech. At this level, students also learn beginning elemental patterning and choreographies of folk/traditional/formal dances. Build lessons that combine several elements, such as demonstrating various approaches to moving utilizing dance vocabulary, demonstrating successful lessons with children, allowing time for creation and performance, showing connections between musical phrasing and dance phrasing, and allowing time for reflection and analysis. Some courses may ask students to practice teaching a small assignment to build confidence in their ability to conduct movement in the classroom. We highly encourage reading and reflection assignments that focus on the importance of movement and its relationship to expressive speech.

Level II reviews, continues, and expands the work presented in Level I, and incorporates exploration of moving to the special qualities of the modes and reinforcing and creating movement in irregular meters (5/4, 7/8, etc). Working with elemental models releases a more sophisticated creative potential. Here many folk/traditional/formal dances may relate to the students' general cultural and ethnic understanding. Include elemental dance and music forms with more interesting choreographies. Consider improvised conducting "à la Keetman." We also suggest further readings and reflection assignments about movement lesson planning.

Level III continues study in dance vocabulary while introducing more sophisticated dance technique and awareness of the dancer from the audience's point of view. . This level highlights and broadens the range of dance possibilities for participants and their students. Teach additional dances from other cultures and historical periods to enable recognition of basic dance elements learned in Levels I and II, observing how these dance elements are expressed in specific dance forms, and determining whether they are dances meant for the court, dances meant for the folk, or dances from different cultures in the United States or the world. Demonstrate how to approach analyzing dance forms by looking for teachable concepts, while maintaining respect for historical periods and/or cultural contexts each type of dance commands. Acknowledge important contributors in the history of dance in the far and recent past. Continue experiences of how sound influences movement and movement influences sound, using the voice and body as a musical teaching tool. Address pedagogical approaches in teaching movement/dance within the framework of Orff Schulwerk in discussion and in possible practicum.

Format

The format of the revised curriculum is a grid that places what belongs to a particular level in one place and shows the progression of subsequent levels. The grid is describes what must be included at each level. This teacher education curriculum will be available on the AOSA website, where it can be accessed by any who search for it. It will allow for the addition of new resources and supporting materials.

Movement/Dance Glossary

Many of the supporting documents for movement found in the 1997 guidelines have not changed. They have been expanded and relocated into a movement/dance glossary. The definitions clarify movement/dance and its usage in Orff Schulwerk.