



Young Audiences of Massachusetts

Educational Materials

Please forward to teachers

9/28/2010

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Karen Montanaro

Grade levels: K-5

Imagination in Action artfully connects movement to narrative, demonstrating the connection between physical gesture and language arts. In this dynamic presentation of dance and mime, Karen Montanaro uses her superb technique in both ballet and performance-mime to tell stories through movement. Her presentations demonstrate how movement can influence choices when creating verbal or written narrative, and how movement is driven by imagination. Montanaro is a world-renowned dancer and mime artist, an award-winning choreographer, and the innovator of "Mimedance" (the fusion of two classical art forms). Her vast experience with performances, workshops and residencies in dance, mime/movement, and creativity brings a variety of offerings to students of all grade levels.

LEARNING GOALS:

1. To present movement as a literary art.
2. To develop an appreciation for our innate literary skill in understanding the language of movement.
3. To draw parallels between eloquence in speech and eloquence in movement.

PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Ask questions and create discussions to demonstrate to students how much they use physical movements to communicate with each other on a daily basis.

POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Review the three definitions of mime which Karen gave; physical magic, physical poetry, and physical storytelling. Explore these definitions through gestures and mime. Then combine mime and dance by asking students to put the gestures they just used into a choreographed pattern.

PRE-ACTIVITY

LEARNING GOAL:

To demonstrate to students how they use physical movements, body language, and facial expression to communicate with each other on a daily basis

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

No materials needed

TIME:

45 minutes

STEP 1:

Ask students if they think it's possible to "say" something without opening their mouths or making any noise whatsoever. Bring out the fact that they do this all the time (for example, when they raise their hands to "say" that they have an answer or a question).

STEP 2:

Ask questions that may increase students' appreciation of how well they communicate on a daily basis through movement. For example: How do you "tell" someone you're sad (or tired or angry or happy, etc.) without saying it in words?

STEP 3:

Ask questions that bring out how much they already know about the physical language of gesture, posture, movement, etc. Without using words, how do you "tell" me that you're paying attention? (If they don't understand the question, substitute the word "show" for the word "tell.") How do you "tell" me that you expect to do well at [name an activity that they are about to do, even hypothetically, such as take a test, or make a basket in a basketball game, etc.]? How do you "tell" me that you don't believe you will do well at _____?

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) Have the students practice purposeful non-verbal communication, i.e. ask the students to have an entire short conversation without speaking.
- 2) Ask students if they know how people in other parts of the world communicate non-verbally. Discuss how other cultures' nonverbal communication may or may not be different. For example, do you think "I'm tired" looks similar across the globe? What about "I love you" or "I'm angry"?

POST-ACTIVITY

LEARNING GOALS:

Review the three definitions of mime which Karen gave; explore these definitions through gestures and mime

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

No materials needed

TIME:

45 minutes - 1 hour

STEP 1:

In her program, Karen gave three different definitions of mime: physical magic, physical poetry, and physical storytelling. What were those three definitions? Explore these definitions separately.

STEP 2: PHYSICAL MAGIC

Ask the students to come up with one gesture that suggests the presence of something that isn't really there. Examples: eating an invisible apple, sitting in an invisible chair, talking to an invisible person.

STEP 3: PHYSICAL POETRY

Come up with some similes (for example, as mad as a hornet, as happy as a clam, as fast as the wind, as stubborn as a mule). Ask students to show these similes in one movement or one pose.

STEP 4: PHYSICAL STORYTELLING

Pick a situational gesture such as opening a door. Show how many ways you can open a door (for example, open a door to a surprise party for you, open a door as though you're afraid of what's on the other side, etc.)

STEP 5: COMBINING MIME AND DANCE

Take any of the gestures you did in the activities described above and "dancify" those gestures - that is, put one or two of those gestures into a choreographed pattern. Give the gestures a rhythm or repeat them several times, then slightly change the shape of those gestures so that they don't mean anything but are merely interesting to watch. Ask several students to stand together and do the same gesture at the same time or do the gesture as a movement-round.

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Grade Levels: K-5

RESOURCES:

Wiertsema, Huberta. 101 Movement Games for Children. Hunter House, Inc. Publishers, 2002.

Rooyackers, Paul. 101 Dance Games for Children. Hunter House, Inc. Publishers, 1996.

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:

Karen is a world renowned dancer and performance-mime artist, an award-winning choreographer, and the innovator of "mime-dance" (the fusion of two classical art forms). Karen studied ballet at the Cantarella School of Dance, the Ram Island Dance Center (with Andrea Stark) and on scholarship with the Joffrey Ballet School. She danced professionally with the Ohio Ballet and the Darmstadt Opera Ballet in Germany. Upon moving back to the United States, Karen also danced principal roles with the Portland Ballet Company. For more than a decade, Karen toured and taught internationally with mime master, Tony Montanaro. She currently tours the world with her one-woman show entitled "Tanzspiel." Ms. Montanaro is a teaching artist and offers residencies in movement, mime and dance in public and private schools throughout the United States.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:

Young Audiences / Arts for Learning (YA), America's largest arts in education nonprofit, transforms the lives and education of our youth through the arts. The organization connects professional artists with schools, libraries, community organizations, and hospitals to provide artistically excellent assembly programs that further develop Creative Learning and Life Skills.

All YA artists are professional artists who have completed a rigorous interview and audition process and are evaluated annually on their work. Through in-school assembly performances, workshops, master classes and artist-in-residence programs, teachers and coordinators integrate the arts in their academic and enrichment programs while directly addressing national and state content standards.

Healing Arts for Kids expands YA's mission to make the arts a part of EVERY child's education. A group of professional artists provide assembly programs, small presentations, and residencies to acutely and chronically ill children, physically and emotionally challenged children, and other special education populations in K-12 schools, hospital schools, hospitals, and homeless shelters.