

## A MOUSE IN YOUR HEARING HOUSE



Music	Gerdien van Stralen
Arrangement	Ton Vennix
Dance	Maria Speth and Gerdien van Stralen
Time	2/4
Prelude	1 bar
Formation	semi-circle and free use of space
Equipment	visual materials to support the chosen subjects in the song
Target Group	suggested 4 to 12 years

### ***Explanation***

- The idea for this dance came from a moment of disruption in a class. The teacher finally said to the class, 'Why are you not listening? You must have a mouse in your hearing house...' And when the mouse came out many more followed!
- This dance works well during a gift-giving celebration or the carnival week. What is coming out of your ear? A complete carnival parade? It also works well with a Magic theme or birthday parties.
- At the end of this dance description there are a few lyrics as examples. Creating your own lyrics is also fun, particularly for the older pupils. During the song a number of objects are listed. Ensure that the text for the younger pupils has fewer objects to collect. Instead of 6 objects, 4 will also work. This will offer a calm setting while singing. See the sample text below.
- This dance has two parts. Begin with the song part that is built up step by step. This can be learned in the classroom setting. Then there are the various couplets where the pupils submit their own ideas.
- Music in this dance is divided over 4 tracks. This enables the various parts of the dance to be studied separately.

### ***Dance Exploration***

- While learning the text for the song, the objects can be placed centrally for all pupils to see. The pupils might sit around this central place. Sing the first two lines from the text a few times without music. The pupils will pick it up quickly.
- Each time you name a new object provide a visual example and lay it on the ground or table in front of you. Do this in the normal reading direction for the pupils so they can see the order of the objects as sung in the song.
- Next, encourage the pupils to think of movements that personify each object. The movements must be short and vigorous in order to fit with the lyrics. For example, if you sing about 'a football and a bike pump' it should be clear that each word has a defined movement or pose. There is little time to show this. The movements will be executed on the spot.

Try to avoid dancing a cliché movement. These are natural first reactions to the objects. Try to dig deeper into the imagination and encourage the pupils to identify other movements to represent the objects. This will offer a more dynamic dance for each object. The younger pupils may require a simplified version of the movements to fit the text and tempo.

- After introducing the new object and the movement, repeat the song. In this way the pupils scaffold the learning of the dance and acquire the pattern of the song text and movement phrases. The music has a fast tempo! Use the music as a support to the learning.
- The last line of the song is: 'what else will there come out'... This is where the pupils may offer new dance ideas to be danced during the musical couplets that follow. Be aware that the movements will need adjustment since the tempo continues to vary in the different couplets. Another reason to create a clearly defined movement is to distinguish between opposites in motion: slow vs. quick impulses, avoiding and approaching, large vs. small, and so on.

1st couplet: trumpet/normal tempo;

2nd couplet: recorder/quick tempo;

3rd couplet: trombone/slow tempo;

4th couplet: tin flute/quick tempo;

5th couplet: all instruments/normal tempo.

The various instruments mentioned here are for the characteristics of the couplet. It is not the intention to incorporate the instruments into the dance. They merely play a leading role in the tempo of the different couplets.

- After listening to the interlude, stop the music and take time to come up with a new idea that could be danced and that fits the musical tempo. A wide variety of concrete objects can be used: a rubber bouncy ball, ghosts, clowns, animals, dancers, a person rushing around. Take time to create an inventory and research all of the movement possibilities. For example, the bouncy rubber ball can bounce through the room. But, WHAT (body action) does bouncing mean? Could it be two feet jumping up and down or hopping from one foot to another or even shrugging your shoulders? HOW (dynamics) do you bounce? Is it always bouncing to the same tempo/rhythm or with the same effort? WHERE (space) does it bounce? Does it always bounce on the same spot, in the same direction or in all directions randomly? And, WITH WHOM (relationships) does it bounce? What happens when you meet another bouncer? These questions, 'What, How, Where, With Whom', will challenge the pupils to respond with a variation of ideas.

Variation I:

An abstract image is also an interesting starting point. How would you move as a 'flutterfloo', as a 'springyspill' or as a 'chikkychak'. Together with the pupils analyse motions that would fit with the sounds or the image that the sounds inspire. Short sounds might become quick motions as opposed to rounder, longer sounds. Playing with sounds and language, even nonsense language, are good practice for language development and for stimulating the development of creativity and cognition.

Variation II:

'I dance, I dance, what you don't hear and that is...' a fun dance game. All pupils sit on the ground in a large circle and sing the refrain together. At the interlude, one child (or a small group) comes to the middle during the next couplet to dance their own movement. The other pupils guess what is being danced.

**Dance Structure**

Bars

A	a
1 - 8	jumping on the spot sing the song while supporting the rhythm with clapping
9 - 16	call out the objects in order and act each of them out with one motion
interlude	b
1 - 6	get ready for a new movement
B	c
1 - 33	the pupils dance the chosen object while moving freely through the space

The dance will be performed 5 times.



## Sample Lyrics

### Original text

Ear, ear, ear, its' tickling in my ear, 2x  
A mouse, a car, a football,  
A bike pomp and a trout,  
A tiny, tiny jump rope,  
what else will there come out?

### Holiday Wish List for the older dancers (or adjust to cultural celebrations)

Game, horse, bike, what present would I like 2x  
a cell phone and some candy, a jump rope and a book  
a monster and a turn top,  
I know just where to look.

### Holiday Wish List for the younger dancers (or adjust to cultural celebrations)

Look, look, look, what do I see, a book 2x  
A puzzle and a football, a very long, long, train  
A big and yummy cookie, again, again, again!

The musical score is written in 3/4 time on a single treble clef staff. It consists of four lines of music with lyrics underneath. Chord symbols G7, C, and G are placed above the staff. The lyrics are: "Ear, ear, ear, its' tick- ling in my ear, Ear, ear, ear, its' tick- ling in my ear, A mouse, a car, a foot- ball, A bike pomp and a trout, A ti- ny, ti- ny jump- rope, what else will there come out?"

