

Dancing with Prepositions

Music	Rob van den Berg, Hugo Fredrix, Maria Speth
Improvisations	Daniël Daemen, Carlo Nardoza
Dance	Maria Speth
Time	4/4
Intro	8 bars
Musical genre	lounge
Formation	open space
Target group	suggested 10 – 18 years



Background Information

- Have you ever realised how much fun it is to learn English? Using the concept of prepositions, we are going to discover movement. Each preposition invites motion. But perhaps we should begin by listing prepositions.
- There are three verses with different musical atmosphere. The following suggestions are meant as guidelines only. Encourage personal creativity.
- The music in this dance is divided over 4 tracks. This enables the various parts of the dance to be studied separately.

Dance Exploration

- BETWEEN, WITH, OVER, UNDER ... each preposition invites a new motion, sometimes more than one. This is particularly successful if the pupils have an object to work with such as a chair, with which they may (figuratively) place their prepositions. The chair makes it easier to visualize their ideas. Following are a number of approaches to exploration.
- Set the chairs spread out throughout the room and allow the pupils to walk around, use active music. Stop the music and call out a preposition and allow the pupils to react immediately and pose with a chair: ON, BY OVER, AGAINST, UNDER, BETWEEN...

Practice Music nr 11

- Allow each pupil to create his or her own combination of three prepositions. Give attention to the various possibilities. For example, in how many ways can you be ON the chair, or BESIDE or, UNDERNEATH etc? The ideas can be shared with the group. This could be very dry. You may wish to make, as it were, three photos and the group may guess which prepositions fit with them. It is also possible for the groups to 'see' other options than those chosen.
- The next step is to let the pupils experiment with their own combinations. How do you transfer from one movement to another? Work from within the dance elements of time, effort and space. That can be a sudden movement, or a very slow slide from one pose to another. The transition from one shape to another can be done in parts, but you may also wish to 'embellish' the change from one pose to another. An example: you wish to move from a standing position BESIDE your chair to a sitting position AGAINST your chair, this you can simply do in the most straight forward way or maybe you will first crawl UNDER the chair and then slide OVER the back of the chair and plop yourself ON the seat. In this way you experience three new prepositions on the way.
- From a completely other approach: make a dance combination where the movements originate from prepositions. An example: jump ASIDE, wave FORWARDS with your upper body, with your arms OUT and IN, turn AROUND on your axle. Sometimes it is

easier to first think of the movement combination and then to look into which prepositions are shown. Are you able to clarify a preposition, or even replace it with another, how does your dance look now?

- Observing each other offers new ideas, for example: the audience observes the combinations and thinks about the prepositions that are not emphasized in the dance. Record these for later reading. Especially during an ‘embellished’ presentation there are many more prepositions shown than intended!
- Another interesting angle is to experiment with as many as possible different ways that you may dance the same combination. Do you keep the same order of moves? Do you repeat the same moves like a scratched cd that’s skipping? Or do you fly from one movement to the next so quickly that it is hard to distinguish between moves? Do you remain on the same spot or make use of the entire space?
- Teach the rap text, this works best in the following way:
 - Teach the rap by adding one preposition at a time and then repeating the text all over again. Do this without the music and have the pupils show each preposition with their hands along with the text. Encourage different ideas! The combination of text and movement usually works very well. When the music kicks in, cut the tempo in half. If that goes well, then try to perform the rap at the right tempo.
 - Have a short movement phrase made in pairs, in which each pair gives its own shape to the preposition rap. To prevent the duos from moving only simultaneously, you can give the tip that the partners alternately show a preposition, whereby they always complement each other instead of doing the same thing together. Or demonstrate a short part of the rap text for inspiration with a pupil!

Dance Structure

The dance structure is described in a general outline, because the structure should come out of the music. The following ideas are only suggestions, a starting point. A personal dance presentation may be created together with the pupils.

The music form is: intro A-B-A-C-A-D and a ‘fade out’

Bars

Intro

1 – 8 the music sounds like an old LP album... from here arises the approach to the chorus. The pupils stand in a freeze, or move in slow-motion...

A a1

1 – 8 the pupils rap the chorus or, better, their own text

B b

1 – 24 this verse involves the pupils dancing the chosen prepositions in solo movements with support, eg. a chair

Bridge

1 – 2 the pupils stand ready for the chorus

A a2

1 – 8 repeat the chorus

C	c
1 – 24	the pupils work this verse in pairs, with 3 new prepositions that they chose together. They may use the chairs from the first verse
Bridge	
1 – 2	the pupils stand ready for the chorus
A	a3
1 – 8	repeat the chorus
D	d
1 – 24	this last verse may become a group assignment, with 4 or more pupils working together to exhibit a series of prepositions in motion another approach is to work with large space, where the pupils illustrate their prepositions throughout the entire space with random cooperation when they meet each other.
Fade Out	the music of this verse concludes in a fade out with the same cracking old LP sound as in the beginning. The pupils may wish to end in a freeze.

Rap

Over, under, out and near
 Above, behind
 It's perfectly clear
 By, against, between, just call
I dance the prepositions and I know them all! YES!

Tips

- The music sounds like the prepositions. In the 1st verse the bass plays before the count; during the rap *on* the count. In the 2nd verse the bass plays after the count.
- Besides rapping the chorus, the pupils may also wish to create a movement combination for the entire group to be danced while the rap is being said.
- Time for exploration and observation are essential here. Offer basic ideas and allow the pupils to develop their own ideas alone, in pairs or in small sub-groups. Through observing each other and exchanging ideas the pupils will discover new methods to express the prepositions in dance. Another option is to number the various sub-groups and allow each group to take turns showing their composition during a verse.

