

Frankincense the Flea & Me

Music	Son Thomsen
Dance	Maria Speth
Time	2/4 (boogie, classic, march) and 3/4 (waltz) and 4/4 (ragtime)
Intro	none
Musical genre	boogie, classical, ragtime, waltz, march
Formation	open space (squatting) in front circle
Target group	suggested 4-8 years

Background Information

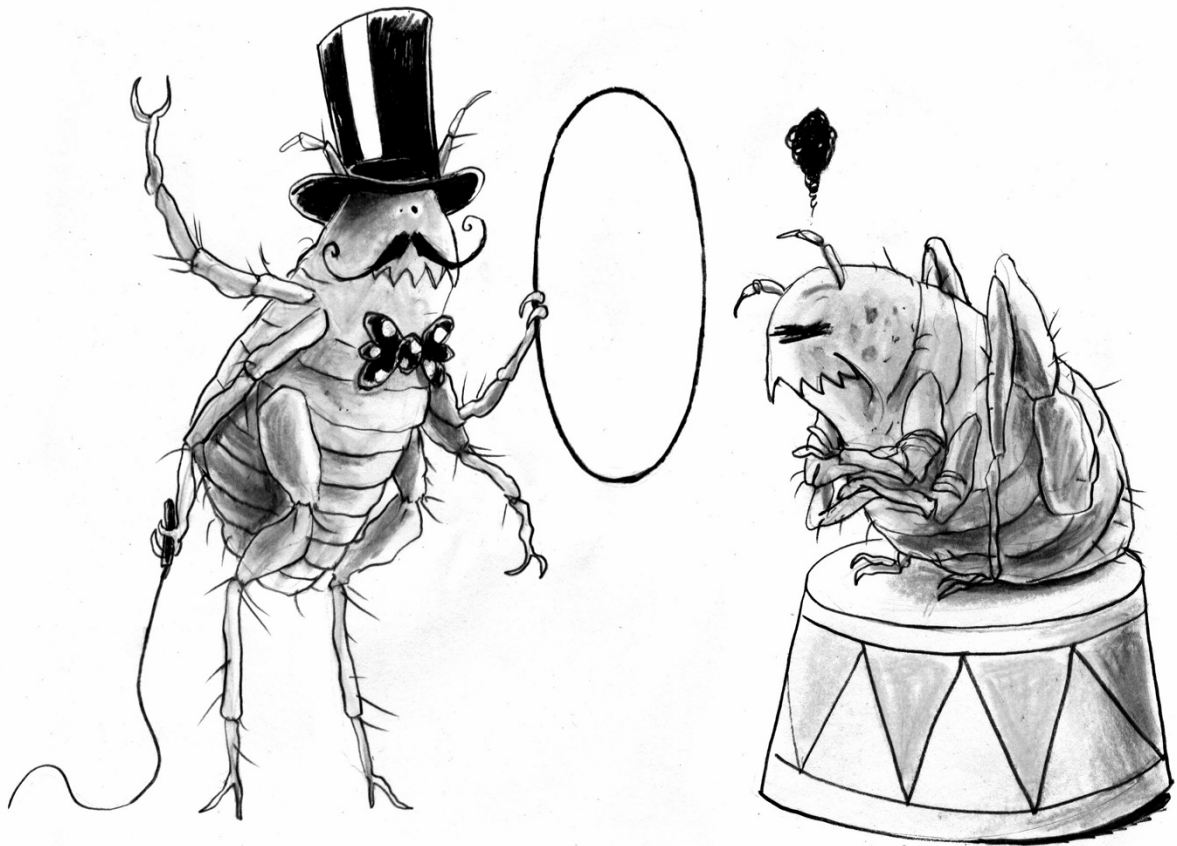
- Frankincense works in the big flea circus and practices hard every day together with all the other fleas. The Flea-act is very important. Jumping, hopping, orientating in space, total movement and simple isolated movements are all involved in this dance.
- It is valuable to first listen to the music together with the pupils. Are they able to identify the flea jumps in the music? The music gives clear indication of the transition in the dance. In the beginning it is understandable to stop the music once in a while to get your bearings. For example - creating the circle can be difficult for the youngest pupils. The following description is one example.

Dance Exploration

- How does a flea jump? Does he pull up his knees? Does he use only his legs? Or does he also throw his arms up into the air? Big and small jumps, on the spot and covering space. Taking turns or jumping all together into a whole in space. Fleas also wobble, softly bouncing on the spot. They wobble high and low, and sometimes from left to right.
- This is a good time to go into further depth with the pupils. By observing the pupil and at the same time naming aloud what you see: “Look how Tom pulls up his knees when he makes a wobbling jump. That's good. Tom, can you do that same jump again? And can someone imitate it exactly like this?”, three things happen:
 - Tom hears your comment, feels appreciated and will therefore perform the movement even more consciously and precisely, because he wants to do it as well as possible.
 - The focus of the other pupils is directed by your comment on the said action, they learn from their peer and are eager to try the jump themselves. In addition, they naturally also want your attention and appreciation. So that promotes intrinsic motivation in students.
 - The students also discover that there are many different possibilities for one idea! This appeals to both their cognitive and creative skills and they are encouraged to look beyond the first possibility themselves. This way you create curiosity that leads to further deepening and knowledge!
- In the beginning the teacher may point to the fleas that may jump. You may notice that in the beginning the pupils are ready to jump as soon as they are alerted. A natural reaction! But they must learn to wait for the musical signal...
- During the 2nd act one of the fleas may show their skills, the others may observe and naturally they will wish to learn the same skill. This is also audible in the music. How many different skills can the fleas demonstrate? Jumping on one leg, or flapping with one hand or wobbling and waving at the same time, or pitter pattering as soft as they can. In

the beginning the teacher can show examples of the movements, if the pupils are more familiar with the dance they may create/offer their own ideas about movement.

- It is the intention that the pupils observe the ideas of movement of each act before joining in (from Bar 5 onwards). This is clear to hear in the music.
- Did you know that fleas also pick for fleas? How do they do it? On their own or for each other? This is done very carefully because a flea on a flea is so very very small... For the youngest pupils you may include the names of the body parts where the flea is picked from or replaced upon.
- In closing, while all of the fleas jump through the room, there are even unexpected stop moments where the music is very soft and plays slowly, these would be good balancing moments, or where each flea shows their own skills, or one flea demonstrates and the others copy.
- For the young pupils you may choose for sitting skills (on the spot) rather than the suggestions above. Ideas to think about: cycling, juggling, twirling a hula hoop, tossing imaginary balls to each other, etc.



Dance Structure

Bars

Intro

Open the music repeats a chord 14 times (flea jumps), the teacher may assign one or more pupils that jump out of a squatting position. all of the fleas jump up on the 15th and last time and pitter patter towards a front circle.

Interlude 1

1-2 the pupils and teacher stand ready for the first act

1st act

1-3 Frankincense (the teacher) demonstrates a movement (e.g. wobble from left to right)

5-13 all of the pupils join in the dance

Interlude 2

1-2 the pupils and teacher stand ready for the second act

2nd act

1-8 Frankincense (the teacher) demonstrates a movement (e.g. balancing on one leg)

9-17 all of the pupils join in the dance

Interlude 3

1-2 all of the pupils join in the dance

3rd act

1-3 Frankincense (the teacher) demonstrates a movement (e.g. jumps)

5-16 all of the pupils join in the dance

Interlude 4

1-2 all of the pupils sit on the floor in a circle picking fleas

1-15 moving back and forth the pupils pick their own or each other's fleas

Interlude 5

1-2 the pupils stand up

Balancing artists

1-40 the pupils skip through the room and take on a balancing shape when the music slows down (on one leg, on one buttock, on one hand and one foot).

Coda

Open the fleas creep quietly away (to their own place).

Tips

- In the beginning the teacher may best choose to demonstrate the movements in the circle, when the pupils are familiar with the routine, they may wish to take on the role of Frankincense and offer their own ideas.
- It may help in the section of balancing artists to offer an assignment (see dance structure), but once the pupils are familiar with the music, they will offer their own ideas.
- The music provides clearly audible differences in impulses and it is essential to become familiar with the music!