

PATTY PENCIL AND BILLY BRUSH

Music	Ton Vennix
Dance	Maria Speth
Time	4/8
Prelude	none
Formation	free use of space
Target Group	suggested 4 to 9 years old

Explanation

- In Patty Pencil and Billy Brush all kinds of forms are made with the body, depending upon where the brush or the pencil is. The pupils are busy with space. They are drawing in front of or behind themselves, in the corner of the room or on the ceiling. Next to that a point of special interest is the contrast between movements danced with different efforts, using strong or firm movements or maybe just the opposite.
- Patty Pencil and Billy Brush are imaginary drawing and painting' utensils with which one can paint all around them. Patty is a very thin marking pencil and Billy is a sturdy brush. One special thing about these utensils is that you don't just have to work with them by hand. Sometimes you can use them on your elbow, or the tip of your nose, or even with your bottom.
- Another special thing about them is that you don't just have to use them to mark on paper: you can use them to paint all over the place; in the air, on the walls and on the ground.
- The music for this dance consists of two separate sections. It is possible to work out the dance in different manners. The music in the first section is such that it can be used to depict both Patty as well as Billy. This section can also be used in the dance exploration, but it might be a bit too difficult for the younger pupils.
- The second section has a very depictive structure in which Patty and Billy are not always heard at the same time. The idea is not to have the pupils try to follow this music in a literal way with their dance. What's more important here are the general character and the movement qualities so clearly suggested by the music in supporting the pupils to dance.

Dance Exploration

- We visit Patty and Billy in their design studio. As a warming up and introduction the pupils can dance through the streets of the city where they alternately march through the straight streets with sharp corners or hop over winding roads. A map of the old city of Amsterdam, and for example, the centre of Manhattan, are excellent examples to visualize these two different routes. When you do this with the younger pupils, you dance along with them of course, because you know the way!

Practice Music #1 or #20 for the straight streets and sharp corners

Practice Music #2 or #26 for the winding roads

- Once arrived in the design studio we have to dance through, under, between and next to all the pots and painting materials around us. Sometimes with a big jump, sometimes step-by-step or winding among all brushes or very carefully along the paintings that are still wet.
Practice Music #13 and #15
- The introduction of Patty and Billy: bring various brushes and some paint along for illustrative purposes. This helps the pupils to see the differences between thin and broad strokes for example. Along with that, the pupils can also experience the difference in effort needed to make paint strokes with thin versus broad brushes.
- Involve the pupils in the movements while telling the story of Patty and Billy. Start with a single finger or perhaps a hand. Paint all around yourself with, for example, straight lines from top to bottom; or large and small wiggles all around you. Next to using your hands to paint with, involve different parts of your own body too. Using different parts of your body also influences the quality of the movement involved: dabbing spots with your nose is quite a different kind of movement than other movements with your bottom!
- Involve the pupils in exploring how it is to work with several different parts of the body. Where would Billy like to sit and on which part of your body would Patty like to rest most?
- Drawing can be done on the spot but also throughout the entire room. Drawing straight or wiggling lines, scratching or broad strokes. Circles or squares. In the meantime consider making a stop to dip a new part of the body in the paint in order to choose a new colour.
- The difference in movement between Patty and Billy is mainly the effort needed to perform the movement. While it is quite evident how some body parts will be involved in a movement (like the tip of your nose) other parts of the body can perform movements with both light and strong effort (the elbow for example). One way to help pupils experience the difference in effort is by encouraging them to first perform a movement with a certain body part for Patty and then the same one for Billy.

Dance Structure

Basically the dance does not have a determined structure. This is not so with respect to the musical aspects in the second track which has a definite sequence:

Bars

1 - 26	Billy Brush is at work
27 - 48	Patty Pencil's turn
49 - 86	duet of both brushes
87 - 102	Billy Brush dances once again alone
103 - 159	Together they both dance towards the end. At the end, each pupil should make a pose where it is clear on which part of the body Patty or Billy is standing.

Tips

There are a number of possibilities in making use of the structured music.

- Depending on the character of the music, the pupils alternate between movements with light and strong effort. When both instruments are playing they choose for themselves which kind of movement they want to make.
- One half of the group dances Billy. The other half - the Patty part - dances on the spot: standing, sitting or lying. When it is Patty's turn, Billy remains on the spot, and so on.
- Have the pupils form pairs of Patty and Billy and let them dance as described above.

