Title of Work:
Impressions #1 (Henry Moore)

Creators:
Company: Lewitzky Dance Company
Choreographer: Bella Lewitzky (1916 - 2004)
Composer: Larry Attaway b. 1949
Decor & Light Design: Darlene Neel (1941 - 1999)

Background Information:
Bella Lewitzky is an artist of international stature. For over fifty years she has been a performer, choreographer and dance educator. Born to Russian immigrants, she spent her early childhood in the Mojave desert growing up amidst artists, intellectuals and others striving for an ideal society. Although she made up dances as a girl and acquired some dance fundamentals, she did not begin formal modern dance training until she met Lester Horton at age 17. She says that “His approach to movement and his capacity for invention were his most important gifts to me.” She has taken these gifts and used them to evolve her own approach to dance. The establishment of the Bella Lewitzky Dance Company in 1966 made it possible for her to choreograph her inventions and share them with audiences internationally. Her technique, rooted in the modern dance style, stresses alignment and strength. Ms. Lewitzky strives constantly to discover new movement and challenges her audience to bring something of themselves to the viewing and interpretation of her work.

About the Artwork:
Ms. Lewitzky has been a ‘visual collector’ of Henry Moore’s work for many years. While she was viewing an exhibit of van Gogh’s work in Holland, she realized that paintings and other forms of art can be a jumping off place for kinetic explorations. However, instead of beginning with the work of van Gogh, she surprised herself by starting with Henry Moore. Since it was impossible to bring his sculptures into her studio, she and her dancers worked from images found in books. She describes his figures as elongated and grounded with extended limbs, and states that they look perfectly symmetrical, but are not. He uses asymmetry to create an illusion of classical, curvaceous symmetry. She observed that his sculptures have lots of weight and mass, always touching the floor at two or three points, while the heads are small. There are also holes or negative spaces which entice the viewer to look through at different places, altering the perspective and showing that there are many views possible within one object.

Creative Process of the Artist or Culture:
Bella guided her company in experiencing the different aspects of Moore’s work. They explored how the pieces rested on the ground and took off from the resting place, how the feet, hands and arms were carried, and the upright position of the back. They worked with interlocking shapes and eventually developed a ‘Moore movement vocabulary.’ She has labeled her work in the same way Moore did, resulting in such titles as: Upright Figure and Knife Edge; Touching Points; Interlocking Shapes; Two Figure Forms and Three Rings.

“T’ve relished Moore’s sculpture for years, especially his female images. They’re voluptuous, yet they look like they can work, bear children.”
Bella Lewitzky
**Discussion Questions:**
After the video or slides been viewed:

**Slides:**
- Select a specific sculpture and describe it in words, using some of the following questions and thoughts:
  - Is it light or heavy? What makes you feel one way or the other about its weight?
  - How many points of the sculpture are touching the ground, as seen from the slide?
  - Describe the shape as you see it. (round, sharp, curvy, erect, long, thick, etc.).
  - Think of titles you might give to this work.

**Video:**
- How do the designs made by the dancers represent the ideas you observed in the Henry Moore sculptures?
- What most impressed you about the choreography in the video?
- How does this type of expressive dance differ from other forms of dance you have seen?

**Multidisciplinary Options:**
- Work with clay or sculpting material to design a sculpture of a human figure in the style of Henry Moore. Abstract the human form by elongating it, curving the edges, creating negative spaces within the form, balancing it on two or three points, forming a small head, giving it a feeling of large mass and weight. See recipe on page 9.
- Cut from the edges of a square of paper toward the center. Twist, turn, pleat, staple and curl the slashed strips to form a three dimensional paper sculpture with interesting negative spaces.
- Working with some of the following titles of Moore’s work, create your interpretation of these ideas combining found objects from your environment: Mother and Child, Three Rings, Traveling, Reclining Figures and Helmet Image.

**Audio-Visual Materials:**
- Artsource® video excerpt and photos: courtesy of the Lewitzky Dance Company.

**Additional References:**

**Sample Experiences:**

**LEVEL I**
- In partners, take turns sculpting each other into different three dimensional forms. Select about five or six ‘sculpted people’ and position them in relationship to each other, forming a ‘sculpture garden’ or environment.
- Create different body shapes. Explore movement ideas that begin and end with each. Vary by using one shape as a beginning and a different one as an ending, using eight counts of movement to get from one to the other.
- Take the concept of a flat circle and a round sphere. Show the first as a two-dimensional shape and the second as a three-dimensional form. Create circular forms alone and then spheres and domes with two or three people.

**LEVEL II**
- Introduce the idea of negative and positive space. Create shapes which have spaces between body parts and between body parts and the floor. Explore how partner and group shapes can be created using space over, under, around and through each other.
- Explore the concept of volume. Explore ways to create volume in one spot and then travel through space while shaping and forming volume in a variety of ways.

**LEVEL III**
- Take the concept of Traveling, Reclining Figures, one of Moore’s pieces and the title of one of the dance sections. Build an improvisation around these ideas.
- Work first with partners, then in small groups and build a sequence of three to five Interlocking Shapes. Have a short traveling movement which works as a transition from one to the other.
- Create a list of nouns, such as chair, door, tree, pencil. Find three variations for creating each idea as a human sculpture. Work in groups of 3-5 people and either combine these ideas into a 3-D tableaux or create plural examples in a series of group sculpture, e.g. chairs.

* Indicates sample lessons
INTRODUCTION:

Sculpture is a three-dimensional art form. It can be a carving, model, assemblage, or other created form that has height, width and depth. The human body can be shaped into different sculptural forms and make an aesthetic statement. The artform of dance uses both sculptural designs and selected motion to achieve an aesthetic expression.

OBJECTIVES: (Student Outcomes)

Students will be able to:

• Purposefully ‘sculpt’ or position the human body into selected shapes. (Creating)

• Learn to move another person’s body with sensitivity and aesthetic intention. (Creating & Responding)

• Describe, discuss, analyze and connect information and experiences based on this lesson. Refer to Assessment at the end of this lesson. (Responding & Connecting)

MATERIALS:

• Images of Henry Moore’s work.

• Classical or New Age music (optional).

PROGRESSION:

• Show images of the Moore sculptures, as well as ancient and classical ones. Instruct your students to look at them in some of the following ways:

  • How is the sculpture balanced on the ground? How many points (bases of support) are touching the ground?
  • Is the sculpture symmetrical (the same on both sides of the center) or asymmetrical (different on both sides of the center)?
  • If it is a human figure, where are the different parts of the body (arms, head, legs, torso, etc.) positioned?
  • Does the sculpture feel light and unbound by gravity or does it feel heavy and bound by gravity? Is it fighting to free itself from the pull of gravity or is it balanced with the force of gravity?
  • Does the figure look static (in a still position) or does it have a feeling of action?
  • Are there negative spaces (openings and spaces) within the sculpture? How would the sculpture look if there were no negative spaces? What effect do the negative spaces have?
• Divide the class into partners. The teacher should demonstrate with a student to show how one partner will be the sculptor and the other will be the material to be sculpted. The teacher carefully moves the parts of the student’s body into different positions. Make the following points:
  • Move your partner with care and gentleness.
  • Elbow and knee joints only move in one direction. Don’t force them to move in other ways.
  • Be sensitive not to hurt your partner nor put them into any embarrassing or inappropriate positions.
  • When you are the one being sculpted, cooperate and assist the person and hold the position.

• Have each set of partners determine who will be the first sculptor and who will be sculpted. Give a signal to begin and ask that each partner make three to five changes and then stop. If they wish to lower the person, they are to ask the person’s help in getting to the ground. When the sculptures are completed, the sculptors move to the sides of the room and look at the different pieces which have been created.

• Ask a few questions to increase their ability to observe, such as: Which ones are at low levels or high levels? Are they all facing the same way? Which ones look static and which ones have a feeling of action? Why? Are any symmetrical? Are there any without negative spaces? Which ones have more than two points touching the ground?

• Repeat the procedure, having the partners reverse roles.

• Divide the class into four groups. Three groups will observe while one group of partners work in a central space. One group of partners designs their sculpture, relating their partner’s position to the others. When all sculptures are finished, the sculptors should move to the side. Ask the audience to comment of what they observed and make any constructive suggestions for improving the unity of the group relationships. Repeat this problem, giving each group a chance to create a ‘garden’ of sculptures. Music is recommended.

EXTENSIONS:

• Repeat the process adding music and ask the sculptors to use motion which is exaggerated, slow and purposeful as they manipulate their partners. When the sculptures are completed, ask them to find a motion which begins from their position and transforms them into a second position and then a third position. They can repeat the entire sequence. Ask the audience to comment on how the motion changed the look of the sculpture garden. What did they specifically notice?

• Research another sculptor such as Isamu Noguchi. Find a specific sculpture of his and show your impressions through movement.

VOCABULARY: sculpture, sculptor, symmetrical, asymmetrical, ancient, classical, points, base of support, unity

ASSESSMENT: (Responding & Connecting)

ANALYZE: Use the questions on page 3.

Emphasis on: Common Core - CA State Standards for Language - Reading; Writing; Listening; Speaking
LEVEL II Sample Lesson

INTRODUCTION:

Positive and negative space are concepts which are used in both visual arts and dance. Positive space is described as the elements that form the image. Positive space is partly defined by the negative space surrounding it. Negative space refers to the unfilled space surrounding shapes or forms in a work of art. In dance, the positive space describes the body parts and the negative space refers to the spaces in, around and through the body parts.

OBJECTIVE: (Student Outcomes)

Students will be able to:

• Demonstrate the concepts of negative and positive space in original individual and group body designs. (Responding & Creating)

• Describe, discuss, analyze and connect information and experiences based on this lesson. Refer to Assessment at the end of this lesson. (Responding & Connecting)

MATERIALS:

• Music is optional. The music of Vivaldi is particularly good for the Extension ideas.

PROGRESSION:

• Introduce the concepts of positive and negative space. Demonstrate this by asking for a few volunteers to create different poses. Point out the parts which are filled and the parts which are empty. Also, look at different objects such as a vase, empty shoe and pencil sharpener. Identify both the negative and positive spaces.

• Ask the class to find a space where they have enough room to move. This can be an open space or one near their desk. First, direct them to make a body shape which has no spaces between the body parts. Then ask them to open up spaces between the body parts, starting from their first position. Have them repeat this problem three or four times, continually finding new solutions and designs.

• Informally divide the class into two parts and have half observe and half repeat the above problem. Ask the audience to observe the different ways that each person designs his/her body to create negative and positive spaces. Switch groups.

TUILERIES

(A park in Paris, which is filled with sculptures)

by Susan Cambigue-Tracey

People and gods imprisoned in stone are released to play their games by sculptors who knew they were there.
DESIGN AND DUPLICATE:

• Ask the students to individually design three to five shapes which combine negative and positive space. Then, divide them into partners and have one person design three different shapes which the partner will copy (duplicate) in sequence. Then switch roles.

SPACE DESIGNER AND SPACE FINDER:

Tasks:

• Next, do a demonstration with one set of partners where, instead of copying the design of their partner, they fit their body over, under, around or through without touching. The person who designs the first shape (Space Designer) waits until his/her partner fits into the spaces in and around his/her shape. Then the Space Designer carefully leaves the design, travels to a new spot and forms a second shape. Each time the remaining partner (Space Finder) follows and finds a new way to relate and fit into the spaces. Each partner has three turns in a row to be the Space Designer and three turns to be the Space Finder.

• Divide the class in half and have one group observe while the other group performs improvisations. Have the observing group comment on what they specifically saw and which groups created ideas they hadn’t yet thought of. Switch groups.

• Ask each set of partners to combine with another set to form groups of four. Each group will number off one through four and will move in their numbered order to create a positive/negative design. Each person will build on each preceding idea. Each group design should incorporate both volume and negative spaces. Have each group perform their work, either two or three groups at a time or individually.

EXTENSIONS:

• After the first group design is built, have the first person in the group carefully leave the design, moving in slow motion, and travel to a new spot to begin the next design. Each person in the group will leave the design sequentially, dissolving one design in order to create the next one. Add music to this study, giving additional support and musical motivation.

VOCABULARY: positive space, negative space, duplicate, locomotor movements, design, shape

ASSESSMENT: (Responding & Connecting)

DESCRIBE: Describe the differences between ‘Space Designer’ and ‘Space Finder.’

CONNECT: Discuss where sculpture exists in the environment and from what materials it is made?

Emphasis on: Common Core - CA State Standards for Language - Reading; Writing; Listening; Speaking

Jennifer Handel, Nancy Lanier, Laurie McWilliam
Lewitzky Dance Company
Impressions #1 (Henry Moore)

Photo: Vic Luke
INTRODUCTION:
In dance there can be moments of stillness framed within the active dance energy. This lesson will deal with the contrast between traveling movements and reclining positions. In this case, ‘reclining’ will refer to positions which lean or tilt.

OBJECTIVES: (Student Outcomes)
Students will be able to:

• Travel in a variety of positions and create leaning and tilting shapes which are held still with contained energy. (Creating)

• Explore ideas and respond to the ideas of others within an improvisational format, thinking and responding spontaneously within a specific set of limitations. (Responding & Connecting)

• Describe, discuss, analyze and connect information and experiences based on this lesson. Refer to Assessment at the end of this lesson. (Responding & Connecting)

MATERIALS:

• Drum and beater.
• Music of your choice (optional).

PROGRESSION:

• Explore ways to travel, such as walking, skipping, galloping, sliding, hopping, jumping, rolling, etc. Using the elements of dance, such as level and directional changes, rhythm, strong and light energy to vary each locomotor idea. Have different members of the class share their inventions and ask the class to try a few of the ideas.

• Next, ask the students to design different individual shapes. After each shape is made, ask them to explore ways to make the shape travel from one place to another. Other parts of the body can also add additional movement, but each person must basically remain in the shape which he/she has created. This is a form of problem-solving. Select a few ideas to share with the class. Encourage the students to explore several possibilities for traveling each shape, rather than limiting themselves to one idea.

• Introduce the concept of ‘reclining.’ Stress the idea of a horizontal or leaning position of the body which maintains energy. Ask the students to select five variations for the idea of ‘reclining.’ They can change level, position of body parts, the number of parts which touch the ground, the direction they are facing and their focus. In addition, the energy can change from strong to soft. Put on some music and ask them to slowly move from one variation to the other in their own timing. Later, they can also add quick, abrupt changes.

• Repeat the above idea, but select seven to ten students to stand in close proximity to one another.
Instruct them to be sensitive to each other and to make their changes respond to the stillness or action of others in the group. They may go through their sequences of five variations several times and also add the possibility of walking to a new position within the group setting. If they have trouble doing the improvisation, have them change their position on a drum beat or vocal cue or give them numbers which are called out at random. However, the goal should be to have them improvise in their own timing, responding to the rhythm and energy of the group.

• Repeat this idea until all of the students have had a chance to improvise and to observe. Ask the class for comments and suggestions after each group has performed.

Task:
• Next, set a one-minute improvisational problem which is similar to the following:

TRAVELING AND RECLINING IMPROVISATION SUGGESTION:

Define a performance area in the room. Students can only travel horizontally, from one side to the other. They can select traveling movements of their choice to either get to a spot within the performance boundaries or continue to the other side. Their options also include taking a ‘reclining’ position alone or near someone else. They may change positions one to three times in their own timing or may stay in one position for as long as their wish. When they are ready, they may continue traveling across to the other side or travel back to where they started. They may improvise using these ideas as many times as they wish within the time frame of one minute.

In summary, the improvisation includes traveling movements which progress horizontally across the performance space, with options to recline in one or more ways alone or in relationship to others.

EXTENSIONS:

• Working in partners, find ways to travel with ‘connecting points’ (contact). Then explore ways to make complementary or contrasting reclining positions. Encourage connections which use different points of contact and traveling ideas which use other body parts in addition to the feet.

• Use a prop, such as a chair, and do reclining shapes in relationship to the chair or other prop.

VOCABULARY: reclining, locomotor movement, improvisation, connecting points, contact

ASSESSMENT: (Responding & Connecting)

DESCRIBE: Describe what you observed in the ‘Traveling and Reclining Improvisation.’

DISCUSS: Discuss the process of improvisation and what makes it different than something planned.

ANALYZE: Discuss how artistic expression in dance is similar, yet different from artistic expression in sculpture.

Emphasis on: Common Core - CA State Standards for Language - Reading; Writing; Listening; Speaking