

# LUNA DANCE INSTITUTE

## ~~PERFECT~~ IMPERFECT LESSONS

### Lesson #1: Energy Vocabulary (*Context*)

This 60-minute lesson, as seen in the video, was designed for 8-11 year olds with some dance experience. It can easily be modified for different ages, varied by length, depending on your teaching situation. See Extensions below.

**Lesson goal:** Students will expand their range of energy qualities and dynamics when creating and performing dance

**Learning objectives:** 1.) Discover new movement possibilities when exploring energy action words.  
2.) Create a duet using 3 energy words and a relationship.

**Elements of dance:** Energy modified by Body, Space, Relationships, Time, and Movement.

**Materials :** drum, music, energy vocabulary cards, dry erase markers and whiteboard

**Choosing modifiers for an exploration:** In this instance, the modifiers act like adverbs for a dance action, and assist a dancer in trying the action in a new way. Not all modifiers fit well with all actions. So how do you choose the best ones to offer your students? Try them out! Modifying ooze by tempo, for example, doesn't work because the nature of ooze is slow and sustained. Instead, try oozing in different body parts or through space. The modifiers offered in the lesson plan allow dancers to explore range of possibility with each energy action while maintaining its distinctness.

**Finding partners:** Depending on your students, you may choose to assign, let them choose, or have them find a partner randomly. Possible strategies: "Find a partner you haven't danced with today" or "Connect back to back with someone. Now elbow to elbow with someone else."

**Setting up the performance:** During Composition, clarify with your dancers where the audience will be sitting, and where the performance space is so that they can practice with appropriate facing. During Performance, remind the audience of their role as observers and to clap at the end. Remind performers to hold their final shapes until all dancers are finished.

**Connections:** Wonderful vocabulary words can be drawn from stories your students are reading in the classroom, and incorporated into this lesson, giving them a chance to understand vocabulary through embodiment. Classroom teachers might also use energy action vocabulary as transition ideas: "*Float* from the rug to the line. Once you get there, let's all *bounce* together."

**Extensions:** For 4-5 year olds, focus on the warm-up and exploration portion of this lesson and reduce the number of words explored. Layer them onto both axials and locomotors. Same for 6-7 year olds, but experiment with stringing energy words together into 2-3 word rhythmical phrases for an Improvisation. Middle and High school students can do this lesson as is. Take their investigation of energy words even further by having them draw 4-5 vocab words to create a solo, improvising by changing the order. There are hundreds of energy quality words to choose from so this activity can be repeated at any age with different vocabulary combinations.

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### Lesson #1: Energy Vocabulary (*Curricular Flow*)

Warm-up 5 minutes	<p><b>Name game:</b> in circle say name &amp; move body at same time, in different ways. Whisper (make small shape). Louder &amp; louder (shape grows). Laugh (laugh through body). Sneeze name (sneeze body). Rap (fragment). Sing (expand). Choose favorite way to say name and move body.</p>																
Exploration 20 minutes	<p><b>Vocabulary Game:</b> begin by dancing in general space any way you like. Introduce energy vocabulary one card at a time. Modify with space, time, body, movement prompts. Some ideas below.</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Scratch – long, short</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Bounce – small, big</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Press – direction</td> <td>Shiver – long, short</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collapse – part way, all the way</td> <td>Trace – fast, slow</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Punch – body parts</td> <td>Swing – upper, lower body</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pounce – near, far</td> <td>Flick – body parts</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ooze – direction</td> <td>Float – high, low</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wring – with turn, roll</td> <td>Vibrate – part to whole body</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weave – tight, loose</td> <td>Whirl – small, big</td> </tr> </table>	Scratch – long, short	Bounce – small, big	Press – direction	Shiver – long, short	Collapse – part way, all the way	Trace – fast, slow	Punch – body parts	Swing – upper, lower body	Pounce – near, far	Flick – body parts	Ooze – direction	Float – high, low	Wring – with turn, roll	Vibrate – part to whole body	Weave – tight, loose	Whirl – small, big
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Improvisation 15 minutes	<p><b>Working in pairs.</b> Experiment combining energy words with 3 relationship words.</p> <p>Introduce relationships <b>towards &amp; away, over &amp; under, around &amp; through</b>, one at a time, giving each pair time to play with each relationship. Meanwhile, also hand each pair an energy vocabulary card to layer in. As the improvisation continues, gradually add another energy vocabulary card, then another, so that eventually each pair has 3 cards.</p> <p>Give pairs lots of time to dance using all 3 energy vocabulary words, and any or all of 3 the relationships.</p>																
Composition 8 minutes	<p><b>Make a duet that includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your 3 energy words</li> <li>• 1 main relationship. All relationships can be used, but be clear about which is the main one</li> <li>• Beginning, middle and end</li> </ul>																
Performance 5 minutes	Show each dance twice.																
Response & Reflection 5 minutes	<p>Ask either after each duet or after all dances have been seen questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What energy words did you observe in this duet?</li> <li>• What kinds of relationships did you see in this dance?</li> <li>• Choreographers, why did you use these relationships?</li> <li>• If you were the choreographers, what would you name this dance?</li> </ul>																
Closing 2 minutes	Final dance across the floor all together.																