



ACTIVITY INFORMATION

Length: 20 – 30 minutes

Suggested Age: 9- 12

Equipment:

- Display board (white-board, chart paper, etc.)
- Paper and markers

Music: Drum (optional)

Primary outcomes:

- Understanding and practicing rhythmical accuracy
- Learning about sentence structure and punctuation
- Demonstrating constructive and cohesive group work

EXPLORE

PART 1

- Begin with the participants in a circle facing you. Ask the group to suggest a word that has one syllable. For example, 'day' or 'food'. Ask the group to make a single stomp as they say the word.
- Repeat this with two syllable and three syllable words, having the group practice stomping out the beats for each.

PART 2

- Now, write a complete sentence with punctuation on paper or a display board. Stomp the sentence together as a group.
- Draw participants attention to the sentence punctuation. Ask the dancers to consider how to best represent different forms of punctuation with their body. "How would you dance a question mark, comma or period?"
- Once the group is confident stomping the sequence, try it with clapping. Ask them to explore ways that their body can become a percussion instrument and try their ideas together.
- Often participants will may want to create sounds using their voice; however, asking them to find non-vocal ways of creating sound will encourage them to explore their physicality. Use your best judgment as a little bit of sound effect can be a way to make things fun.

CREATE

- Divide the participants into groups of four to five dancers. Each group will create their own sentence sequence.
- Begin by giving the participants time to create and write out their sentence.
- Remind the participants that their choreography should include punctuation.
- Emphasize the importance of accuracy and clarity. The goal is to be synchronized as a group so that it sounds like one dancer.
- As the participants are working, circulate around the space to offer encouragement and support.
- Before they present their sentence, the groups can also decide on a formation. For example, they can dance a line, a circle, or facing each other.

Prompt questions

- "What other ways can you create sound with your body and movement?"
- "is your sentence a question or a statement? How does that look with your body?"
- "What kind of rhythm does your sentence have? Slow and clear, or a fast and energetic?"
- "What kind of feeling does your sentence have? Does it have a sad feeling or a happy feeling?"

Things to Look For:

- Team work, each participant playing a role in the creative process
- Groups that are able to maintain a consistent rhythm
- Creativity and imagination in the design of their punctuation
- Rhythmical accuracy that matches the syllables of their sentence

Sentence Stomp

SHARE

Once you feel the participants are ready, have them present their percussion sequences to each other.

- What kind of punctuation did the group perform at the end of their sentence?
- Did the sentence percussion look like a group effort? Did the group choose to present their sentence as one or did they do some things differently?
- Did they choose to create a slow or fast sequence?
- What kind of body percussion did they use? (E.g., clapping, stomping, tapping the floor, tapping their knees, etc.)

DEVELOPMENT:

- Try the same sentences they created with each member of the group making different percussive sounds.
- Try creating longer sentences or placing a couple of sentences together to create a short paragraph.

ADAPTATION:

- Complete the activity in pairs. This activity works well in pairs or in a larger group as well.
- Instead of writing out a sentence, participants can choose 1-4 words and create percussion for those words.