

Noctiluca Presents: Rhythm Method Lesson Plan

Target Age: Primary to high school ages.

Prior Learning and Rationale: Noctiluca will build on student expertise (choreography, dance) where appropriate. In all instances, we will explore creative expression through movement in response to musical examples.

KLA (s): Movement
Music
The Arts
Creative Thinking

Outcomes & Indicators

Students will explore different ways of responding to pulse in music (not always through movement). The lesson will begin with identify and moving along to pulse in simple ways. Students will move on to different ways of describing pulse in music and exploring their own dance moves along with these descriptions. The lesson will culminate with a “groove grid,” where students will create their own groove that they can dance and play along to while the musicians improvise within the grid.

Whole class objective:

Come to a strong understanding of rhythm and pulse in music and compose a groovy tune that everyone can perform together.

Resources & Equipment:

- White board or chart paper for groove grid
- (Optional) scarves if available for exploring different kinds of expressive movement.

Classroom organisation:

Ideally a larger floor space (dance classroom, gym, or auditorium) where students have space to move.

Different versions will be tailored to space available, including smaller spaces where students remain seated.

Lesson development:

1. Greet the class and begin with a musical example.
2. Introduce the concept of pulse.
3. Play a few musical examples to start and explore different basic ways of feeling pulse in the body (clapping along, clapping thighs, or shifting from foot to foot).
4. Play a few more musical examples with different mood and characters of pulse (fast, slow, energetic, calm, graceful, heavy). Encourage students to describe different pulses, possibly involving a word bank with younger students.
5. Can we clap along in a way that reflects these different pulse feels?
6. Can we come up with some dance moves that reflect these different pulse feels?
7. Could we get a few volunteers to dance along to the next piece?
8. Introduce the “groove grid.” Each instrument gets a row, and each beat gets a column. Demonstrate how we can make a “groove grid” to reflect the different pulse we’ve explored. For instance, in a waltz, one instrument might play on beat “1” and the other instruments might play on beats “2” and “3.”
9. Now ask student volunteers to come up and fill out squares on the groove grid to see what we come up with. Musicians will perform each group on “loop” 16 times so students can see how their grid sounds.
10. Surprise! There’s an extra row on the grid where students clap along.
11. Everyone performs the groove grid together!