

Ovanåkers Kommun



rhythm4inclusion

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The Dance Course

The rhythm4inclusion Consortium - Erika O'Neill and Jessica Engberg

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How to Promote Social, Emotional, and Learning Skills of Students with and without Special Education Needs by Developing Teachers' Capabilities in Music, Dance and Digital Competences. This Dance Course has been implemented by Erika O'Neill and Jessica Engberg in collaboration with a series of primary and secondary schools in Cyprus, Greece, Sweden and the UK, a multidisciplinary team composed of experts from various European Institutions with a variety of academic and professional background and specialties - academics, educators, special educators, art therapists, musicians and school psychologists.



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COURSE SCHEDULE

17/2 - 21 — 11:00-12:00 CET
24/2 - 21 — 11:00 - 12:00 CET
3/3 - 21 — 11:00 - 12:00 CET

CONTRIBUTORS

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Rhythm4inclusion - Dance



INTRODUCTION

Introduction In this project we aim to create an environment that allows all students to be a part of learning through rhythm and movement. A compliment to traditional teaching methods. We are focusing on using our bodies to create rhythm and through that get a better understanding of what each individuals needs are. We aim for this to be a place where young students can find focus and concentration to take part and learn how to manage their energy levels to benefit their traditional schooling. The hope is that this will enhance their capabilities to take part in a more traditional studying environment. The exercises on their own allows the student to activate their motor skills to keep up with the movement - this in turn leads to a better understanding of coordination, math, language, physical abilities as well as each person's self-esteem and self-image. A safe space where we can all develop no matter our starting point. The exercises are developed through movement, rhythm and play, to make the students want to join in, no matter pre-existing conditions such as a diagnose or not.

The project is developed as a method and to see the benefits of this alternate way of working we suggest you work through the entire syllabus.

The method is made up of 3 modules, each in which we have suggested a working plan and specific exercises and movements, however if you as a teacher feel like your students would benefit from slight changes feel free to adjust the material to suit your students.

Props - space - atmosphere - preparations

Props:

For this course some props are needed. We have used something called "tri-its", they are pyramid shaped beanbags. However small soft balls or normal beanbags would work just as well. The important thing is that they are easy to grab for the children and don't bounce. The props need to have individual colours - matching the geometrical shapes as you can see in the document "geometrical shapes".

Space:

You need to have an open space where the students can move around without obstacles - for example: a classroom where desks have been moved, a dance studio or outdoors in an open area.

Atmosphere:

It is important to create an atmosphere that is forgiving and respectful. Remind the students and yourself that there is no competition and that the success doesn't lie in the ability to catch the tri-its. The success lies in trying to keep up with all the different components of each exercise - the rhythm, the movement, the spacial awareness and the group's ability to interact without much speaking



Preparations:

As the teacher you need to have the tri-its (or equivalent) ready, and you need to know what colour means what geometrical shape. We suggest you also have big cut outs of the geometrical shapes in the classroom for the students to look at. You should also have practiced the movement to each colour/count/shape so that you can teach it with confidence.

Dealing with students with learning difficulties or disabilities.

All the exercises are made in a way that it can work both sitting and standing. One can walk around the room or if one is in a wheelchair the exercises works just as well.

In the cases of students who have a hard time joining in, not comfortable with being in groups or facing new classes - it is vital that those student are not forced to join. Invite them to watch if they want and let it take time. We have found it hard for students to not want to join in once they have had a chance to watch from a “safe” distance. Try and encourage everyone to join from the start but if this is not possible - they need to have a chance to watch first. Repeat this for every time you do the class and let them join in their own way - let them join for only one exercise if they want. The benefits of the class are lost when we force the students. Encourage and create a safe and respectful place by listening allowing the students to have a voice - without letting them decide and take charge over the class.

Class layout.

- Introduction (talking about what rhythm is and what the purpose of doing this is, this should only take a few minutes).
- Focus and warm up, in this stage we aim to find focus, be aware and get moving.
- Movement and rhythm exercises.
- Start by talking to the kids about rhythm and what benefits it has. Working with rhythm and movement enhances a person’s ability to focus and find co-ordination. It is a way to help children develop the ability to take in information and to manage their energy levels.



SYLLABUS DANCE

Using dance and rhythm as a tool in theoretical subjects can be an effective new way to develop understanding in education. At its core, dance is simply moving your body, and thus, it is a common language and medium accessible to everyone. Engaging physical activity and associating it with curricular concepts encourages critical thinking, curiosity within textbook work, and teamwork. Starting with the students' imaginations and creativity, the teacher can lead the students into the world of Dance and physical expression. By moving when learning, you memorise not only with your mind, but with your entire body.

You develop a whole-body connection to the material at hand, which leads to a deeper understanding of the topic.

Using movement together with rhythm engages both your mind and physical body to understand and process information. By using rhythm and movement in this way the students develop their ability to focus. When working in a group with acceptance as a core element, positive self-esteem is encouraged and supported. Higher self-esteem can lead students to take on new and more difficult tasks with confidence, which in turn supports both the student's capacity to learn and their development as a young person.

OBJECTIVES

The aim with this course is to compliment the traditional education and give the students tools to manage their own abilities to learn. This is done by letting them explore new challenging tasks with both body and mind. The course is built up of modules in which the students receives material to work through as a group as well as a chance to create their own material for further development



LEARNING MODULES

The course is presented in three modules which are naturally progressive. Below you can see the course overview.

Introduction

The introduction shows what is needed in preparation for the classes but it also gives the teacher advice on the general layout of the course.

MODULE 1

Objektives

- To introduce rhythm
- To create a focused and safe space
- To engage students in classroom activities
- Individual ability to move and understand basic rhythm

Content

- Exercises for working with rhythm
- Exercises for working with dance
- Exercises to increase acceptance and feeling of achievement

MODULE 2

Objectives

- Further understanding of and building comfort with rhythm and movement
- The ability to use both body and mind simultaneously in exercises
- Collective ability to understand movement and rhythm
- Enhance focus and ability to maintain information

Content

- Exercises with rhythm and movement
- Exercises to develop a collective achievement

MODULE 3

Objectives

- Enhanced understanding of rhythm and movement
- Ability to create within dance and rhythm

Content

- Exercises to create material, individually and collecti



Module 1

Recommended work time: 20-30 minutes, 2-3 sessions a week.

Duration: 2 weeks.

Warm up

Stand in a circle and start throwing one tri-its to each other. No speaking, focus on getting eye contact to acknowledge each other. It does not matter if you catch or drop the tri-its. The point of the exercise is to be able to focus and see and respect each other. Add more tri-its on when the group have gotten a good flow with the first one however try not to rush this, let the first tri-its be in play for enough time. Talk about different rhythms and look at the geometrical shapes that corresponds i.e. Blue triangle = three counts and corresponds with the blue tri-its. What do three counts mean? Count together 123, 123, 123, also try to clap it. Repeat with all different paces.

Exercises

1. In the ring, throw the tri-its but this time, count to 3 and throw the tri-its on each count of 1. Make sure to keep the pace, and let the kids count as well. Important to note that mistakes are not bad, we are working on keeping the acceptance high, keep counting and try and help the students find the right tempo, we have noticed that the students are eager and often wants to go faster and faster. Try with the different coloured tri-its (and counts). This can be done either in spontaneous circle, where you throw to any person in the ring or in a pre-decided pattern.
2. Once the students have established a good pace and understands the use of the rhythm in the throwing exercise, allow them to continue for a little while to really establish the feeling of accomplishment. Once you feel you have achieved this it is time to move on to adding movement to each stroke. (The movements we have created you can see in the videos).
3. Now it is time to repeat the steps standing in the ring again, throwing the tri-its, as soon as you receive it, no matter if you catch it or drop it, you find the count in the music and you do the movement, then throw it to the next person. Here it is preferable to work in a spontaneous pattern, to really encourage the kids to keep focus and stay engaged with their surroundings. Start with working strokes three, four, and five and add more strokes when the group is ready.

We recommend working with this module for 2 weeks, but this can be altered to suit your students and your timetable.



Module 2

Recommended work time: 20-30 minutes per session, 3 sessions per week.

Duration: 2 weeks.

In this module we are advancing from module one and the exercises are built on the ones from module 1. We will be looking at moving at the same time, in time with the music or counted strokes. This will be an exercise that will help the students put in practice the rhythm training together at the same time as learning movement. The movement used in this module is attached in video document in this module.

Warm up

Stand in a circle and start throwing one tri-its to each other. No speaking, focus on getting eye contact to acknowledge each other. now it does not matter if you catch or drop the tri-its. The point of the exercise is to be able to focus and see and respect each other. Add more tri-its on when the group has gotten a good flow with the first one however try not to rush this, let the first tri-its be in play for enough time.

Talk about different rhythms and look at the geometrical shapes that corresponds i.e. Blue triangle = three counts and corresponds with the blue tri-its. What do three counts mean? Count together 123, 123, 123, also try to clap it. Repeat with all different paces.

Exercises

Go into pairs (person A and person B) - each pair has one tri-its. Person B puts their hands behind their back, person A holds the tri-its in one hand in front of their body above their head. Person A and B holds eye contact, person A decides when to drop the tri-its and it and person B tries to catch it - Then swap roles. Try a few times each.

1. Stand in small group of 3-4 people. Form a circle with your hands out to the side, one with the palm facing up, the other one facing down. Start with one tri-its. Drop it from your hand into the hand of the person standing next to you, on the count of one. The next person has two counts to get the tri-its to their other hand to prepare to drop it on the next count of one. Let the tri-its work its way around the circle. The goal is for everyone to have a tri-its and everyone dropping simultaneously.
2. Repeat step one with the counts of four, five, six and seven with the correlated movement.



Module 3

Recommended work time: 3 sessions per week; 30-45 minutes per session.

Duration: 2 weeks.

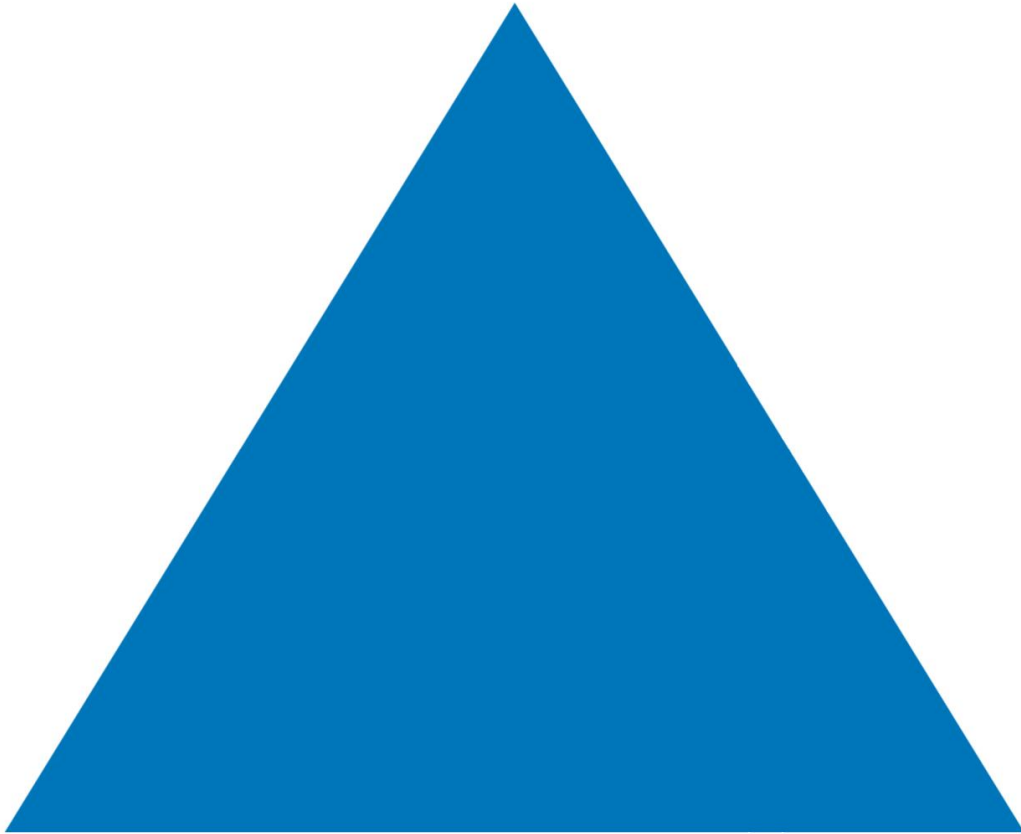
In this module it is time for the students to start developing their own movement language, use their creativity and challenge their knowledge of rhythm.

Exercises

1. Divide the students into groups of 3-5 students, and give them a specific stroke, for example 5. The group then has to create movement and sounds to make sure they stay on the counts. For example. Two people clap their hands. 1 person takes two steps forward and two backwards and a small jump. Two people do a turn and a clap. They put it together and have small rhythm based choreography. Let the students choose whether or not they want to show their work
2. Make sure you mix the groups for your classes so we allow all students to work in different groups, respecting their peers and allowing for acceptance in the classroom.



BLUE TRIANGLE = BLUE TRI-ITS = THREE (3) COUNTS



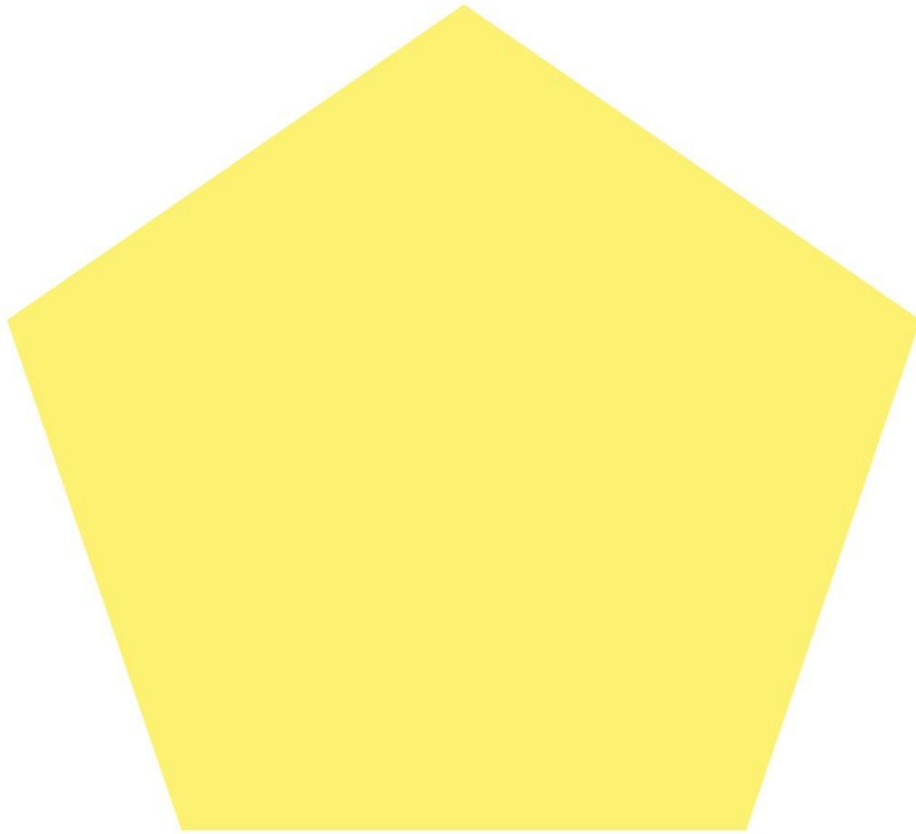


GREEN SQUARE = GREEN TRI-ITS = FOUR (4) COUNTS



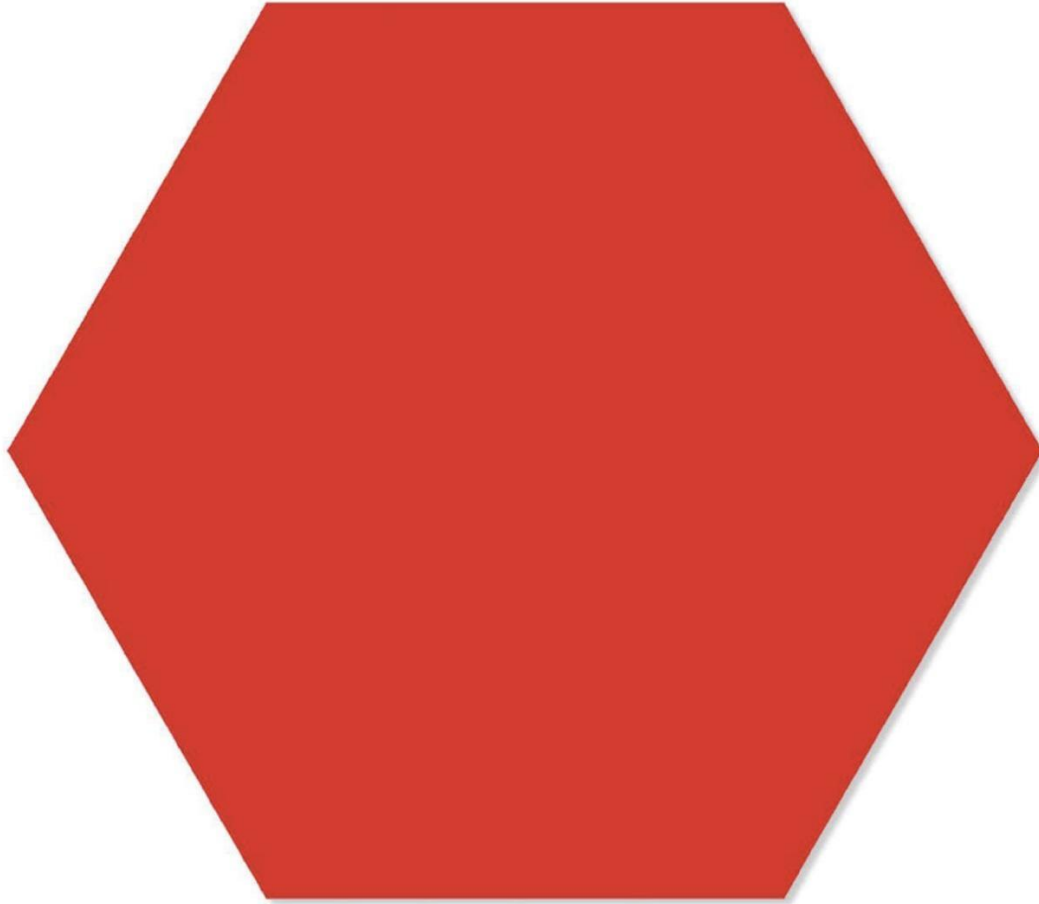


YELLOW PENTAGON = YELLOW TRI-ITS = FIVE (5) COUNTS





RED HEXAGON = RED TRI-ITS = SIX (6) COUNTS





PINK HEPTAGON = PINK TRI-ITS = SEVEN (7) COUNTS



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EVALUATION

Once you have gone through the entire syllabus the goal is to see an increased ability to focus and improved self-esteem in your students as well as a better awareness of each other in the group.

These traits are easily visible and only part of the goal. The bigger goal is that there are benefits for each individual in daily life and in ordinary education, benefits that might not be as easily visible but have a great impact on results of student's development.

Once you have completed the modules, do an evaluation with your group:

- What did they like?
- What did they not like?
- Do they feel it has been of benefit to them?
- Do you as the teacher see any differences in your group, in any aspect, focus, skills, mood, etc.

If you feel the group has developed and you want to keep using this method, you can always add more counts or do the module from the beginning but with new movements.