

**For ArtWorks**  
**Teaching Artist: Amy Compton/Grades: 3-6**  
**Performance: BODYTRAFFIC**  
**Work of Art: “Resolve” choreographed by Wewolf.**

**\*Line Of Inquiry:** How does the choreographer Wewolf use a sequence of body parts and levels to create a variety of connections in the duet “Resolve”?

**Materials:** paper, pencil, scissors, staples or paper clips, smart board or jumbo pad of paper for open journal, music, and clear space for dancing.

**Pre-Performance Class**

*Exercises in this lesson plan are adjustable. The facilitator may decide it's best to create one dance with students as a group or encourage students to create individual dances with adjustable complexity depending on student's focus, interest and needs..*

- 1. Mirror Warm-Up:** The facilitator mirrors in slow motion a pre-choreographed sequence of dance to music which was created in the same way the students will end up creating today. The students should try to copy exactly how the dance teacher moves as if looking in a mirror.
- 2. Space Bubble Warm-Up:** Blow an imaginary bubble so big, you can fit your entire body inside. Float around the room in your bubble so carefully you don't bump into anything or anyone. Don't pop your bubble. Begin when music begins. Freeze when music stops.
- 3. Body Part Warm-Up:** Which body parts can you move separately from the others? Using open journal notes, make a random list of body parts that the students offer. For example:

Elbow  
Neck  
Head  
Fingers  
Knee  
Wrist  
Heel  
Pelvis  
Tail  
Shoulder  
etc.

...go through the list together asking, “Can you show me ways to move your \_\_\_\_\_?” until every body part in the open journal list has been explored. While exploring each body part on the list, occasionally pick an especially interesting movement from someone in the group and have everyone try moving the same way (sponging\*). Be sure to notice the level (high, middle, low) and include it in the sharing.

**4. Exploring Levels Warm-Up Tableaus:** On the count of 3 choose a frozen pose using your whole body in the high space, then middle space, then low space, and finally dancers choice. The teaching artist will pretend to take a picture in which the students get “caught” at every level. The class can then be divided into two groups so that the students can perform their level tableau for one another. The group watching can pretend to take pictures.

**5. Making Solos:** Everyone take a piece of paper and fold it into 5 horizontal panels. Each dancer should choose 4 body parts from our open journal list to write in the middle of the top 4 panels. Number your panels 1-4. Leave the last, 5<sup>th</sup> panel blank for something else later. Then go back and specify a level next to each body part (high, middle, or low). *If adding level is too complex, this can be omitted. (It might show up anyway.)*

Read your list of four body parts like a recipe to make your dance. Stand up and follow your recipe, creating movements for each body part listed with the appropriate level. Connect your movements together following your list order and practice it over and over again until your dance is memorized and you no longer need to look at your paper. As you practice with music playing, decide how your movements will match the music. You'll know you are finished when you have a movement sequence that can be remembered and performed the same way every time. Show your dance to your teacher. Try dancing it with your eyes closed. *This exercise can also be done as a class unison dance if breaking into solo's is too difficult. In this version the class would end up with one unison dance facilitated by the T.A. instead of individual solo dances the student's make themselves. (An intermediary step between creating a solo dance and learning to create a dance as a group could begin by having everyone write the SAME body parts and levels on their own 5 paneled paper. The group could practice putting this dance together as a class collaboration, ending up with a group unison dance. THEN, each individual could cut their panels loose with scissors, mix them up, put their panels down in a new order, re-numbering their panels in the order of their choice. Each person should take time to practice and memorize their own solo version of the original group dance. Paperclip or staple each student's order for safekeeping.*

**6. Exploring Duets Through Inquiry:** Choose a partner. How can you and your partner move together using just your arm? (The teaching artist observes and notes students discovering common choreographic tools such as *mirroring\**, *sponging\**, *joining positive space (touch)\**, *joining negative space (window)\**, and *counter (opposite)\**. Call FREEZE! Ask some duets to show their discoveries. Then ask, “How can you and your partner move together using your knee?” Observe and then call FREEZE! Ask some students to show. Then ask, “How can you move together using your baby toe?” Observe. Call FREEZE! Ask some students to show. Repeat with various body part limitations until you've seen students discover enough ways to connect with a partner. Record these discoveries in an open journal (mirroring, sponging, positive space, negative space, and counter). Go back to your “dance recipe paper”. In the blank 5<sup>th</sup> panel write, “Ways of Connecting: mirror, sponge, touch, window, and opposite”.

*If no one thinks of joining their partner in the positive or negative space an exercise can be set up where one partner observes the other's solo. When the observer sees their partner make a shape they want to attach onto (positive space) or move through the window of (negative space) they can say THERE! And*

*the partner dancing their solo will hold still in that spot so that the observing partner may join in and connect in the way they imagine.*

Collect and save all dance recipe papers for next class. Be sure student's names are on their papers.

7. **Reflection Questions:** What was it like to make your solo (or group) movement? How did you memorize it? Using your new dance vocabulary, what are some of your favorite ways to connect to your dance partner. How did you communicate your ideas to your partner today? How did you decide when to say “THERE!” during your partners solo? How did you feel dancing today? What was your favorite part of class today? What is good theater field trip etiquette? What does it look like? What does it sound like?

### **Post-Performance Class**

1. **Performance Reflection and Warm-Up:** Record all observations in an open journal asking, “What did you notice when you went to the BODYTRAFFIC performance at the Lensic? Can you show us? Do you need a partner(s)?” Physicalize any movement related observations with the whole class as a warm-up. After reflecting and warming up, circle any reflections in the open journal related to “Resolve”. If no one observed mirroring, sponging, counter, or positive/negative space connecting, lead students to it. Announce today's task is to create duets similar to “Resolve”.

2. **Remember Solos:** Pass out dancers solos from the Pre-class. Have dancers review their solos in their own space bubble. *If the class made a group dance in the Pre-class, review the group dance together.*

3. **Observation Practice:** Find a partner and go to opposite sides of the room creating two groups. One group performs for the other group. The group observing the performers notices all of their favorite movements. If you see a mistake or something you didn't like, please keep it to yourself. We are only looking for comments about what we liked. Share your observations with the performers.

4. **Create Duets:** Partners come back together and find a “bubble” place in the room not too close to anyone or anything. Partner 1 performs their solo. Partner 2 observes Partner 1 and calls out “THERE” when they see their partner do something they can connect to via mirror, sponge, touch, window or opposite connecting. Partner 2 stay “there”. Partner 1 might have to see their partner's solo a couple times to decide where “THERE” is. Next practice dancing it from the beginning without saying “THERE”, just remembering where “THERE” is. Last, student's should go back to their papers and circle the way they connected in the 5<sup>th</sup> panel. Next write the connecting word on their partner's paper in the appropriate panel (next to the movement they've chosen to connect to.) Ask for volunteers to show what they've made so far. We'll label this duet A.

Next have partners go back to their bubble spots. Switch observer and dancer roles. Partner 2 performs their solo while partner 1 observes calling out THERE when they see something they want to connect to. Initiate the connection. Repeat. Refine. Rehearse. Record choices on panel papers. Ask for volunteer duets to show. We'll label this duet B.

5. **Create a TRANSITION Connecting Duet A to Duet B:** How can you put your duet pieces together? Who is going first? Who is going last? How will you move between duet A and B? (Work out these questions on a volunteer duet to help demonstrate problem solving. For example it could be as simple as the first solo dancer walking away after the first observer connects in order to begin observing the next partner's solo, continuing right into duet B. It could also be something more complex.)

6. **Closing:** Please tell someone next to you what you enjoyed the most about this BODYTRAFFIC unit. Possibly share some of these favorite with the class if there is time.

#### **Curriculum Connections:**

- Have dancers write out their body part sequence like a math equation.
- Draw pictures in a math notebook of your body angles, shapes, connections to your partner, etc . What shapes do you see?
- Answer these questions in your Language Arts journal: Is there a narrative story in “Resolve”? Yes or No? Provide evidence for your answer. Is the duet “Resolve” really dancing? Provide evidence for your answer. Is there a narrative in your dance? Provide evidence for your answer.

#### **Vocabulary (as used in dance)**

- Collaboration: The action of working with someone to produce or create something.
- Mirroring: Reflecting the movements of another person as if they are a mirror mage (facing each other).
- Spinging: Doing the movements of others either as a replacement for your movement or in addition to your movement.
- Unison: When 2 or more people dance the same way at the same time.
- Non Unison: Dancers are not doing the same thing at the same time.
- Joining: Entering the kinesthetic space (bubble) of others, making contact and forming connections of mutual purpose.
- Positive Space: In dance this is where the dancer's body is when dancing. It is where people usually look when watching dancers.
- Negative Space: The negative space is the empty air around the dancer. Look for the “windows” in between the dancer's body.
- Counter: To act in opposition to. In dance it looks like moving the opposite way of your partner: high/low, big/small, fast/slow, etc.
- Observing: Following the physical movements of another with your eyes.
- Transition: A change from one position, idea, place, etc., to another”. In dance transitions are created to connect all of the movements and sections of choreography together into one big dance.
- Tableau: A picture or artistic grouping of something in stillness.
- Solo: A dance done by one person
- Duet: A dance done by two people.