

# Tonya Kilburn | Session 2:

## Exploring the Elements of Dance: Water Expedition

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### List of Required Supplies:

- Paper, pencil, markers
- Picture of Kandinsky's painting - *Composition 8* (included in lesson)
- Hand drum or other percussive instrument
- A way to play music
- Music of your choice

**Space/Facility Requirements:** Open floor space, free of obstacles (living room or playroom with furniture moved to provide space to move)

A water bottle (or access to water) is recommended

**Student Time Required:** Depending on your time allotment, each 60-minute lesson may be split into two 30-minute lessons, three 20-minute lessons, or four 15 minute lessons. I recommend including the warm-up (or a modified version) and the cool down/reflection with any class, regardless of time limits.

**Additional Links:** Kandinsky's *Composition 8*:

<https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/1924>

### Dance Element - Space

Lesson concept(s): Place, Level, Size, **Pathways**

### Dance Element – Time

Lesson Concept(s): Tempo

### Dance Element – Energy

Lesson Concept(s): Strong/Light, Sharp/Smooth

## Step-by-step Instructions

### Pre-Warmup (1 min)

Invite students to find their spot and get ready for another adventure.

### Warmup (6 min)

#### Sample Warmup:

(Below are suggested movements to warm up the body before dancing, but the possibilities are limitless. Feel free to adapt to fit your needs and comfort level.)

Counts	Movements
	<b>Plie</b> (bend and straighten the knees)
1-8	Slow – 4cts bend; 4cts stretch (straighten)
1-8	Moderate – 2cts bend; 2cts stretch
1-8	Fast – 1ct bend; 1ct stretch
1-8	Rise up to releve and lower 8cts
	<b>Head and Neck</b>
1-8	Look up 4cts; look down 4cts
1-8	Up 2cts; down 2cts
1-8	Look right 4cts; look left 4cts
1-8	Right 2cts; left 2cts
	<b>Shoulders</b>
1-8	Roll back 4cts; elbows (hands on shoulders) 2cts; backstroke 2cts
1-8	Roll forward – same as above
	<b>Balance</b>
1-8	On right
1-8	On left
	<b>High Knee and Stomp</b>
1-8	Bring right knee to chest and hold 4cts, return home
1-8	Bring left knee to chest and hold 4cts, return home
1-8	Right knee up 4cts; left knee up 4cts
1-8	Right knee up 2cts; left knee up 2cts; march right, left, right, left

**Go right into the locomotor/non-locomotor activity from Lesson 1 using different movements.**

<b>Counts</b>	<b>Movements</b>
16 Counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – <b>GALLOP</b>
16 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – <b>TWIST</b>
8 counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – <b>LEAP</b>
8 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – <b>SWING</b>
4 Counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – <b>SLIDE</b>
4 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – <b>FLOAT</b>
2 Counts	Travel using a locomotor movement – <b>WALK</b>
2 Counts	Stop traveling and use a non-locomotor movement – <b>MELT</b>

### **Exploring the Concept of Pathways:**

- Students will begin in their home spot and travel throughout the general space exploring the different pathways.
- Explain that pathways are the places where the body travels through space. There are pathways on the floor created when traveling through space using locomotor movements and pathways in the air that are created using motions of the extremities (primarily) in the space around the body (ex. drawing a line in the air with a finger).
- Pathways are made up of straight and curved lines or a combination of both.
- Straight – turns or change of direction must be sharp (like a military turn)
- Curved – there are no straight lines, a more flowing and swinging quality
- Zig-Zag – straight lines that change directions often
- Scalloped – curved lines that change directions often

- Figure 8s – scalloped lines that connect
- Instruct students to walk to the beat of the drum (changing tempo throughout – speed up, slow down) exploring general space without emphasizing pathways.
- Call out a specific pathway for students to follow as you continue beating the drum. Remind students to be aware of direction changes for the different pathways (sharp/sudden, smooth/sustained). Allow students to explore all of the different pathways to ensure understanding.
- Invite students to return to their home spot following any pathway they choose.

### **Storytime Journey/Adventure**

Create a narrative that will include specific elements of dance for the students to perform while the story is being read. Here is an example of a narrative using locomotor, non-locomotor, levels, shapes, and pathways.

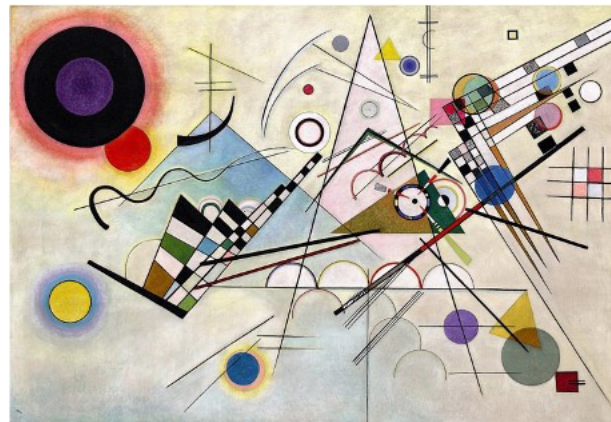
“Our journey begins early in the morning (march in place). As we enter a dark, dense forest, we have to weave through the big trees (zig-zag or scalloped pathway). We must move through the heavy vines hanging from the trees (large arm circles to the front and side up and down).

(Continue marching) “In the distance we can see light! (make a shape looking in the distance). Finally, after trudging through the forest, we come out on the other side and find a huge canyon (look down) with a narrow bridge leading across to the other side (tip toeing as if on a tightwire). On the other side there’s a large bush we have to (crawl under). Staying low to ground, we find a path leading to the bottom of the canyon (curved pathway). Now we’re on the banks of a river (slide sideways). There are eight smooth rocks across the river, let’s hop across (hop eight times counting out loud). Continue marching. “Look at all of the beautiful flowers. Let’s stop and pick eight of them (stretch and bend at the waist and ‘pick flowers’ as low as possible).” Continue

marching. Look the river has turned into a lake! Let's swim across (with arms, do front stroke, back stroke, slow then fast) on the other side, bees begin swarming you (swat the bees and run). (Continue marching) "We have finally reached our cabin in the meadows. Our journey is over (sit on the front porch or lie in the grass). Let's take a few deep sighs of relief (breathe in big, hold it, then let out slowly a few times). THE END"

## Pathways in Art

- Show students the work of art by Vasily Kandinsky and notice all of the geometric shapes.
- Instruct students to find the straight lines, the curved and scalloped lines, and the lines that zig and zag.
- Ask students to zoom in on one part of the painting they feel especially drawn to and study it for a few seconds. Look at the lines in the painting as pathways.
- Students will now take a few moments to plan how they will recreate this part of the painting with their movement. How will they make the wide, bold lines? The thin, narrow lines?
- Give them time to practice drawing this partial painting with their body moving through space.



Kandinsky, *Composition 8*, Guggenheim Museum

## Create Your Own Kandinsky! (10 min)

Using the paper and pencil and/or markers or colored pencils, instruct students to draw an abstract piece of art using straight lines, curved lines, and zig-zags.

### **Dance Study** (15 min)

- Using their Kandinsky-like drawing, students will now create a dance based on their drawing.
- The same structure from Lesson 1 will apply: a beginning shape, a middle shape, and an ending shape. The movement between the shapes will focus on pathways and include their choice of locomotor and non-locomotor movements, levels, and shapes.
- Allow students to create and practice their Kandinsky Dance using their own timing.
- All students will perform their dance at the same time to a random selection of music chosen by the teacher (something with an abstract feel to it).
- Divide the room into 4 groups. Each group will perform their dance together.
- Ask for volunteers to perform their dance alone for the class. If there are no volunteers, move on to processing this experience.

### **Processing Questions:**

- What did you notice most about pathways when watching other groups dance?
- Did it help to have the drawing first before creating your dance? Why?
- What did you enjoy most about this activity?

### **Cooldown and Reflection** (3 min)

Bring students back to their spot and ask them to stand tall to begin the cooldown. Explain that the cooldown is an important part of taking care of their body. By stretching the muscles they just used, it will help prevent injuries. Ask reflection questions during the cooldown.

### **Suggested Cooldown Stretches:**

- From standing, lunge forward with right leg (front leg is bent, back leg is straight) to stretch hamstrings and calf muscles of left leg. Hold for 8 counts. Shift weight to the back leg (bend back leg, straighten front leg) and flex the front foot to stretch the calf muscle of the right leg. Hold for 8 counts. In this position, forward bend with straight back, to stretch hamstrings of the right leg. Hold for 8 counts. Repeat lunging forward left leg.
- From standing, bend forward at the waist, reaching fingertips to the floor. Relax for 8 counts.
- Seated with legs extended in front of you (long sit), gently stretch forward, trying to touch toes.
- Open legs away from each other to the side, gently stretch forward and over each leg.
- Soles of the feet together (butterfly position), gently stretch forward over feet.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- How many pathways did we explore?
- Name a pathway (select 3-4 students to answer).
- What is the name of the artist we learned about today?
- What did you like most about the dance study today?
- What did you like least about it?

### **Thank You and Goodbye** (1 min)

Explain to the students that it is a tradition to say thank you at the end of a dance class to show respect for the teacher and the students and acknowledge everyone's hard work. This is known as reverence in ballet. In this class, we will simply say thank you to one another.

- Teacher: Thank you dancers
- Students: Thank you Mr./Ms. (name of teacher)
- And.....Goodbye!