

Clowning Around



Movement Objectives



Relationships
Action / reaction

Dynamics

Cheeky facial expressions,
Big, energetic and over-the-top

Space

Levels: low and high

Warm up ↑

Imagine they are at the circus in the audience – sitting down in a space

- Applaud
- Look up high to watch the trapeze artists above their heads
- Laugh at the clowns
- Point to the acrobats
- Cover their eyes when they watch the tightrope walker
- Eat their 'refreshments' including popcorn and cotton candy

Stand up and step inside the circus ring. Start walking around inside the big top. When the music stops ask them to freeze. Include...

- Freezing with silly expressions on their faces
- Walking around in unusual ways
- Travelling low to the ground
- Travelling with lots of high elevation

Finish with a big stretch – pretend to fall over (carefully), lie on the floor and stretch out through the arms and legs.

Spoitoresa - Mahala Rai Banda



Clown Characters

Knockout Drops - South Shore Concert Band



Discuss what kind of mischief clowns get up to! What do they wear? Get dressed into the character by miming putting on...red noses, big shoes, face paint, brightly coloured wigs and anything else the children suggest.

Facial expressions. How cheeky can they be?

- Stick out tongues
- Pull funny faces
- Go cross-eyed

Funny walks. Can they walk in an unusual way?

- Tilt from one side to the other, so they walk in a zig zag pattern
- Lift and stretch each leg out (a la Monty Python)
- Wiggle in between each step

Custard pies.

- Throw them!
- Dodge them by stepping, jumping, leaning
- Pretend to have been hit in the face – try out different ways to react to this

Falling over.

- Pretend to trip over some thing
- Imagine they've been pushed over

Clown Duets

In pairs. Ask the children to practice their favourite clown actions with their partner.

Develop each of the clown ideas into a duet...

Facial expressions

- Pull funny faces at each other
- They could hide behind each other and then pop out to pull their faces

Funny walks

- Walk in unusual ways attached to their partner (holding hands, connected to their shoulders, back to back)

Custard pies

- Action: one person throws a pie at their partner
- Reaction: the partner chooses to dodge the pie or be 'hit' by it
- Swap over

Falling over

- Pretend to trip each other up
- Action: one person holds out a leg
- Reaction: the partner pretends to trip and falls (carefully) onto the floor

Choreography

In the same pairs as before.

What other actions might clowns perform? Juggling, squirting water, playing tricks?

Ask the children to improvise some new clown movements with their partner – how many new ideas can they think of to try out? Each choose their most favourite idea so they have two new movements. Practice them – which order will they go in?

Create an ending position – something still to show that their dance has finished. Ask them to include different levels, so one person is high, whilst the other person is low.

Rehearse the whole duet with their partner: facial expressions, funny walks, custard pies, falling over, their 2 new ideas and their ending position.

Performance & Appreciation

Create names for each of the paired clowns - what name would they like to call themselves? (Bozo and Zizzi? Buttons and Bam Bam? JoJo and George?). Write all the names down on a piece of paper / on the whiteboard.

Take on the character of a ring master! Stand in the middle of the room and announce 2-3 clown acts that will enter the circus to perform their duets. Repeat until everyone has had chance to perform.

What did the audience enjoy about the dances? What moments made them laugh? Which clowns had the funniest faces? And which pairs worked well to create action / reaction in their choreography?



Cool Down ↓

Walk around the room – use the time to get out of character. Shake out their arms, legs, torsos, bottoms, heads (very gently) to remove their cheeky clown characters. Rub the faces too.

Finish with some animal circus yoga...

Camel / bridge pose – great for strengthening the core

- Lie on the back with the knees bent
- Slowly curl up through the spine, peeling your back off the floor
- Arch your back in this position, making sure you are comfortable
- Slowly curl back down through the spine, lowering back down to the floor

Elephant breath – good for energising and waking up

- Start with feet wide apart and hang over your legs. Keep the knees soft at all times to protect the lower back.
- Place the hands together like an elephant trunk
- Breathe in as you stand up and lift the arms up high
- Breathe out as you lower yourself back down

DANCE

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