

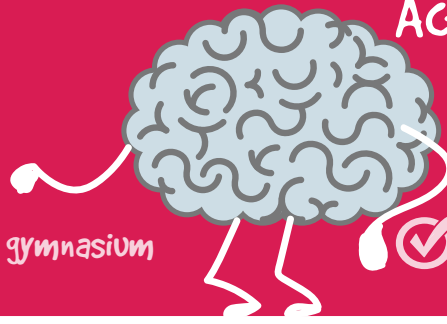
# Brain Dance

Action Schools! BC

✓ classroom

✓ gymnasium

✓ outside



K - 3

Healthy Minds

Active, healthy kids are better learners. Movement serves to energize and activate the body, improve focus, develop the brain, contribute to positive mental well-being and enhance student learning potential. Physical activities also help to develop movement competence and confidence, promote positive social interactions, and increases self-esteem.

*BrainDance* reinforces fundamental developmental movement patterns and the related neural connections. Performing movements regularly improves efficiency of movement, clarity of thinking, and rejuvenates energy.

HEALTH  
COMPONENTS  
OF FITNESS

FLEXIBILITY  
STRENGTH

BALANCING  
SWINGING

FUNDAMENTAL  
MOVEMENT  
SKILLS

## CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



### BIG IDEAS

- Daily physical activity helps us develop movement skills and physical literacy, and is an important part of healthy living (K-1).
- Good health comprises physical, mental, and emotional well-being (K-1).
- Our physical, emotional, and mental health are interconnected (2-3).
- Learning how to participate and move our bodies in different physical activities helps us develop physical literacy (2).
- Movement skills and strategies help us learn how to participate in different types of physical activity (3).

### CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES:

- Develop and demonstrate a variety of fundamental movement skills in a variety of physical activities and environments.
- Describe the body's reaction to participating in physical activity in a variety of environments (K-1).
- Identify and describe practices that promote mental well-being (K-1).
- Identify and apply strategies that promote mental well-being (2-3).

## CONTENT

- Proper technique for fundamental movement skills, including non-locomotor, locomotor, and manipulative skills.
- How to participate in different types of physical activities, including individual and dual activities, rhythmic activities, and games.
- Effects of different activities on the body (1).
- Effects of physical activity on the body (2).
- Movement concepts and strategies (3).
- Practices that promote health and well-being.

## FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING FOR ALL STUDENTS



- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

## COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH CONNECTIONS



## RELATIONSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENTS

- Use a large open area to ensure that students can move around without bumping into each other or objects.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

- This activity allows students to exercise their heart, muscles, and brain to help them develop their movement skills, physical health, and learning potential in the classroom.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Invite other classes in the school to participate.

## OUR SCHOOL POLICIES

- Students follow school/class guidelines on how to speak and treat each other.

## EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

- Computer/tablet with internet access and music player
- Music: *BrainDance* CD or a Yoga CD or a variety of energizing and relaxing music.
- *BrainDance* Poster available from [www.actionschoolsbc.ca/resources](http://www.actionschoolsbc.ca/resources)

## IMPLEMENTATION

- Introduce *BrainDance* (see below) with a brief explanation of its purpose and benefits and explain the importance of focusing on one's own body and noticing how the movements feel.
- Review the poster with your students for the first time so they become familiar with the movements.
- The dance can be done standing, sitting, lying down, or to nursery rhymes.
- Keep it interesting – try mirroring with partners or student leaders.
- Have students reflect on and explain how participating in this activity can influence their physical and mental well-being (e.g., It can help lower stress levels during the day, it can help to increase their strength and endurance levels, it can help to practice movement patterns, etc.).
- Put poster up in classroom for students to refer to.
- Have students propose and explain strategies and reasons for using dance in their lives (e.g., At recess or lunch to develop strength and endurance levels, after a test or quiz to help relax the mind, it can contribute to a sense of self and cultural understanding, etc.).
- Incorporate different types of First Nations/Aboriginal dances.

## ACTION TIPS

- Music motivates and its tempo can influence the effects of the activities from energizing to relaxing.
- Use actions to stimulate the brain, de-stress before a test or quiz, or as a warm-up before other activities.
- The *BrainDance* movements are most effective if performed on a regular basis (1-2/week).
- Once students are familiar with activities try some other types of music.

## SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure students warm up before the activity and cool down and stretch afterwards.
- Ensure teacher is present and can observe students at all times during the activity.
- Ensure surfaces being used are free from clutter or objects that might cause students to trip or slip on.
- Ensure students have enough space to move in without hitting another student or wal..

## EXTENSION OF LEARNING

- Invite an organization into the school to teach students the basics of First Peoples singing and dancing.

# BrainDance – With Rhymes

**1**



**BREATH**


Take 4-5 deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth. Fill the belly, chest and back with air. Feel getting bigger then smaller with each breath.

**ACTIONS:** filling and emptying

**IMAGINE:** balloons, waves

**Breath**

**5**



**UPPER-LOWER**

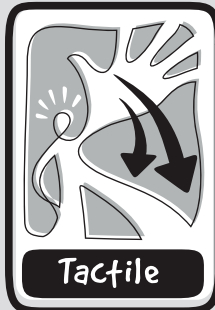
Move all parts in the upper body, keeping the lower body still and firmly planted. Explore pushing, pulling, swinging and circling the arms and torso. Move all the parts in the lower body, keeping the upper body still. Explore shifting weight from leg to leg, moving hips, bending knees and ankles and kicking, circling and lifting legs.

**ACTIONS:** swinging, circling, stretching, bending

**IMAGINE:** ice skaters, sumo wrestlers

**Upper-Lower**

**2**



**TACTILE**

With the hands, squeeze, tap, slap, and brush the front and back of arms, legs, torso, neck and head. Notice how touch feels.

**ACTIONS:** squeezing, tapping, slapping, brushing

**IMAGINE:** wind, raindrops, hugs

**Tactile**

**6**



**BODY-SIDE**


Move all parts on the left side of the body, keeping the right side still and firmly planted. Switch sides. Explore stretching, balancing, swinging, bending and lifting. With the arms bent in a “w”, open and close both sides of the body like a book; follow the hands with the eyes for horizontal eye tracking. Head remains still, only the eyes move.

**ACTIONS:** stretching, balancing, swinging, opening and closing

**IMAGINE:** a bear walking, a lizard crawling

**Body Side**

**3**



**CORE-DISTAL**

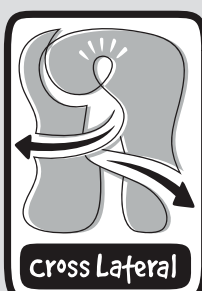
Move from the core (navel) to the extremities – stretch the arms, legs, head and tail (pelvis) into the surrounding space. Explore growing and shrinking, stretching and curling, moving in and out.

**ACTIONS:** growing and shrinking

**IMAGINE:** starfish, snails

**core-Distal**

**7**



**CROSS-LATERAL**


Move and connect body diagonals – the right hand to the left foot, the left elbow to the right knee, etc. Explore cross-lateral full body movements e.g. walking, climbing. Move eyes up and down for vertical eye tracking.

**ACTIONS:** walking, crawling, climbing, twisting

**IMAGINE:** climbing a ladder, picking apples

**cross Lateral**

**4**



**HEAD-TAIL**

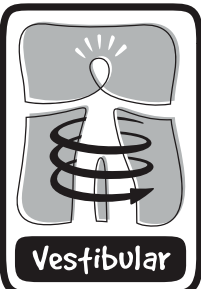
With the knees bent, move the head and tailbone towards each other. Move the spine in slow, fluid motions. Explore rolling, waving, curling and arching the spine forwards and backwards, and side to side. Stand tall – feel strong and lifted through the spine.

**ACTIONS:** curving, arching, rolling, waving

**IMAGINE:** snakes, fish swimming

**Head-Tail**

**8**



**VESTIBULAR**

Fold forward and move the head and torso back and forth, and side to side. Spin one way until dizzy; rest; spin the other way. End with 3-4 deep breath.

**ACTIONS:** swinging, swaying, tipping, spinning, rocking

**IMAGINE:** swings, merry-go-rounds, tops

**Vestibular**

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Reference: Action Schools! BC BrainDance Poster / BrainDance CD (Eric Chappelle)