

Once Upon A Rhythm

Professional Development Packet
with Quynn Johnson
Nationally Credentialed Teaching Artist
Performing Artist & Author

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About Quynn Johnson

Quynn Johnson, a graduate of Howard University in Washington, D.C., and native of Flint, Michigan, is an award-winning performing, teaching artist, and author. She has toured as the tap soloist in the Tony Award-winning production *After Midnight* (NCL) and performed both nationally and internationally. Highlights include featured 2020 recipient of the Kennedy Center Local Dance Commissioning Project, soloist in the Washington Ballet production of *The Great Gatsby*, Cirque du Soleil's *Mosaic* production, the Festival Folclórico del Pacífico and in Buenaventura and Cali, Colombia and has toured Peru as part of the Festival Internacional de Cajón Peruano. Quynn is the co-creator of the D.C.-based percussive dance company SOLE Defined with Ryan Johnson.

A National Credential Residency Teaching Artist with Young Audiences and a Wolf Trap TA, in 2014, 2017, and 2020 she won the Individual Artist Award for Dance Choreography (MSAC). As a teaching artist, Quynn has reached over 9,500 youth from pre-k through 12th grade with assemblies, residencies, and workshops. Her arts-integrated residencies bridge tap dance with literacy, math, Social-Emotional Learning. In 2011, Quynn became a self-published author with her children's book, *Lucky's Tap Dancing Feet*.

Follow Quynn on social media platforms @justquynn



Once Upon A Rhythm

A NOTE TO TEACHERS

This handbook is designed to help bring elements of tap dance into your classroom. It is my hope that these exercises and sample lesson plans help you in integrating percussive dance into your curriculum.

Please use the information within this packet freely. Alter them to fit your individual needs. Much of the handbook is designed to use for transitions, classroom management and can be integrated with reading and math. Its principles can be adapted to any academic subject. Students should be encouraged to be creative and experimental to express themselves in a new way. This also helps students to build a personal connection to what they're learning

THE PURPOSE/ RESIDENCY

The purpose of this workshop is to show how the art form of tap dance and its elements can be used as a tool to support students. Throughout this workshop, participants will brainstorm and develop ideas and activities that allow students to create a physical and personal connection to the art form and what they're learning academically, answering the question, how does kinesthetic activity (tap dance) reinforce and extend the learning experience for English language learners?

This workshop also aims to expand your repertoire of strategies that facilitate student-centered learning and model a training sequence that incorporates the principles of student-centered learning.

THE WHY

By bringing the arts into the classroom your students are able to create a personal and emotional connection to what they're learning. In short, it makes learning fun and when learning is fun, kids want to do it!



STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS WORKSHOP

FINE ART DANCE STANDARDS: Grade 4

Standard 3.0 Creative Expression and Production: Students will demonstrate the ability to create and perform a dance.

- Indicator 2: Develop the ability to combine the elements, aesthetic principles, and choreographic forms of dance to communicate meaning.
- Objective a: Create Individual and partner dance studies that integrate the elements of dance, choreographic forms, and aesthetic principles to communicate ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

COMMON CORE STANDARD: Grade 4

Reading: Literature

RI.4.1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it. Cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Common Core Standard: Math

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.OA.A.4

Determine the unknown whole number in a multiplication or division equation relating three whole numbers. For example, determine the unknown number that makes the equation true in each of the equations $8 \times ? = 48$, $5 = _ \div 3$, $6 \times 6 = ?$

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.OA.D.8

Solve two-step word problems using the four operations. Represent these problems using equations with a letter standing for the unknown quantity. Assess the reasonableness of answers using mental computation and estimation strategies including rounding.

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Informational Text » Grades 6th, 7th, 8th

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.1

Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences are drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences are drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.8.1

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences are drawn from the text.

Math>> Grade 6 » Expressions & Equations

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.6.EE.A.2

Write, read, and evaluate expressions in which letters stand for numbers.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.6.EE.A.2.A

Write expressions that record operations with numbers and with letters standing for numbers. For example, express the calculation “Subtract y from 5” as $5 - y$.



Kennedy Center ARTS INTEGRATION DEFINITION

Arts Integration is an
APPROACH to **TEACHING**
in which students construct
and demonstrate **UNDERSTANDING**
through an **ART FORM**.
Students engage in a **CREATIVE PROCESS**
which **CONNECTS** an art form
and another subject area
and meets **EVOLVING OBJECTIVES**
in both.



Tap Vocabulary

Stomp- 1 sound with the entire foot

Heel Stomp- 2 sounds place heel in front of the body then stomp in place

Toe -toe Stomp- 3 sounds place foot behind you and tap the toe twice then stomp in place

Shuffle Stomp- 3 sounds, swing your foot forward then backward, letting the ball of your foot brush the floor

Slide Stomp- 2 sounds, travel to one side of the floor and then stomp in place. Repeat to the other side.

Elements of Tap Dance

Beat- A steady pulse

Rhythm- A pattern of beats. Can be accented or unaccented.

Choreography- A sequence of steps or movement in dance. With choreography, you learn the movement, practice it, and then perform it.

Improvisation- To make things up as you go along. To move freely or freestyle with dance steps.

Elements of Dance: Energy, Space, Time

Energy- How the movement is done

Weight- Strong (heavy, firm, powerful), light (gentle, soft)

Space- Where is the movement happening

Self Space- Space immediately around the body

General Space- Space throughout the room

Direction- Forward, backward, sideways, up, down

Time- When does the movement happen

Beat- A steady or recurring pulse

Tempo- How fast or slow a beat happens

Rhythm- A pattern of beats. Can be accented or unaccented



1

Objective: Students will explore creating beats with their feet while expanding their knowledge of basic tap movements and the tap element, beat. Improvisation builds student's gross motor skills, spatial awareness, self-regulation, enhanced vocabulary, creativity, and identity.

Materials & Supplies:

- Open space
- Tap vocabulary word posted on the board

Basic Tap Steps

Using CALL and RESPONSE practice three basic tap steps

- Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Heel Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Toe-toe Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Shuffle Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Slide Stomp 4- 8 times each

Modeling:

- Begin the session by having the students stand in a circle.
- Show tap step number one, then do it all together being sure to count the steps.
- Repeat this with the remaining tap steps
- Be sure to layer each step

Bonus

Consider practicing these steps with upbeat instrumental music.

Tap Element 1 BEAT



2

Objective: Students will practice creating their own tap rhythm and phrase. Improvisation builds student's gross motor skills, spatial awareness, self-regulation, enhanced vocabulary, creativity, and identity.

Materials and Supplies

- Open space
- Tap vocabulary word posted on the board

Review Basic Tap Steps

- Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Heel Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Toe-toe Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Shuffle Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Slide Stomp 4- 8 times each

Improvisation

With teachers and students standing in a circle, review the definition of improvisation and connect it to the idea of freestyle movement.

Count the students in (1,2,3,4) followed by everyone improvising together

- Round 1: Everyone improvises at the same time for 4 counts. Repeat twice
- Round 2: Everyone improvises at the same time for 8 counts Repeat twice
- Round 3: One at a time, students individually do their own steps for 4 counts
- Round 4: One at a time, students individually do their own steps for 8 counts

Bonus

Try this with music for rounds 3 and 4

Note

Be sure to encourage students to express themselves freely



Tap Element 2 IMPROVISATION

3

Objective: Using four basic tap steps, participants explore how these movements help make a personal connection to descriptive words and build vocabulary comprehension.

Materials and Supplies

open space, paper, pencil, tap vocabulary words on the board

Review Basic Tap Steps

- Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Heel Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Toe-toe Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Shuffle Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Slide Stomp 4- 8 times each

Guided Practice:

Teacher chooses a theme (i.e. joy) and leads students in writing down things that bring them joy.

- Students choose their favorite word from the list and circle it
- Students circle the word from their list and create a gesture that embodies their word choice
- Students choose a tap step from above and connect it to their gesture
- Practice the tap step and the gesture 4 times
- Repeat with a second tap step and the same gesture (or change your gesture)

Independent Practice: Pattern (AABB, ABAB)

Create a pattern using your tap step and gesture

For example:

AABB- A=Stomp, =Stomp, B=Toe Toe Stomp, B=Toe Toe Stomp

Students write down their pattern and practice for 2 minutes

Present:

Each student presents their Joy word, Gesture, and Tap step

Reading & Rhythm

Connecting the element of Improvisation to descriptive words



4

Objective: Using literary text, participants explore ways to physically embody character traits, descriptive words, adjectives, and adverbs by using elements of tap dance. This allows students to make a personal connection to literary words and text

Materials & Supplies

open space, paper, pencil, tap vocabulary words on the board

Review Basic Tap Steps

- Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Heel Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Toe-toe Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Shuffle Stomp 4- 8 times each
- Slide Stomp 4- 8 times each

Text

- The teacher chooses a text with multiple characters for the class to read and explore. Choose a text that has 2-3 characters.
- As a group students come up with character traits to describe each of the main characters

Independent Practice: Choreography creation

Review the definition of choreography

- Each student chooses a word to describe a character from the story
- Choose 3 tap steps to connect to each word and write it down
- Practice the tap steps doing each step 2 times.

Present

Split the students into two groups where they present for each other.

Note

This activity can be done in small groups with each group working on a different character. In the groups, students take turns choosing a descriptive word, tap step, and gesture for the beginning, middle, and end.

Tap Element 3 CHOREOGRAPHY Reading & Rhythm 2



The wisdom of the Eagle and the treachery of the Hyena.

20 Sep, 2015 in Narrative / Adventure / Adventure / Africa / Western Africa by Frans Timmermans

Once upon a time a hyena was out foraging in the bush. It was a fine sunny day and he was looking forward to catching some morsels to eat. But as he was sniffing around, he fell into a hidden trap set by a hunter. He found himself at the bottom of a hole, with the trap catch closed over him. He tried to push it open but it just would not budge. It was rather well made.

So he started shouting: “Help! Help! Somebody get me out of here please. A lion passed by, looked to see who was in the trap. When he saw it was hyena, he just moved on. Help me, let me out of here, please!”, hyena shouted, but the lion closed his ears. You should know that most animals did not like hyena very much. He was always stealing food belonging to other animals and laughing at them behind their backs. So it was no surprise the lion moved on.

So the day passed, but every time an animal passed by the trap, however much hyena begged and promised to be nice to them in the future, none stopped to help him. At last monkey came by. “Help me please, monkey, get me out of this trap. I’ve been here all day and the hunter will be back soon and he will surely kill me! Help me please!”

“Well now”, monkey said, “That’s all very well. I would help you, but as soon as I pull you out of there, you will only kill me.” Hyena protested, “monkey, I promise I will be good, I will not touch a hair on your head. If you let me out I will go straight home. I promise!” Now this monkey was very kind, so he agreed to help hyena. He removed the trap and threw down a branch so hyena could pull himself out of the trap. But then as soon as he was out, hyena realised he’s been in this trap all day long and had not eaten anything, at all! So, instead of going home, as he had promised, hyena attacked the kind monkey.



Just then an eagle was flying over the bush and saw the hyena attacking the monkey. So he swooped down, landed on the hyena's back, and with his powerful claws pulled the animal of poor monkey, who was screeching in pain. After he'd separated the two, the hyena wanted to know what was going on. Monkey explained what had happened: that he had helped the hyena escape from the trap because he had promised not to attack him!

Eagle said: "In order for me to understand exactly how this happened, I would like you to show me exactly what you two were doing. So, Mr. Hyena, you get back into the trap, and then we will start again." Hyena realized he did not have much choice but to do as he was told, so he jumped back into the trap. Eagle covered it again with the trap and made sure it was secure. "Now, Mr. Hyena", said the eagle, "you can stay there and die, for all I care. You don't deserve the kindness of other animals if you cannot keep a simple promise". With that, he advised the monkey to go home to his family, and he himself flew off to continue his journey, leaving the hyena to his fate.

Five benefits of Tap dance

1. It's Fun!
2. Improves Coordination
3. Full body workout
4. Exercises the mind
5. Both dancer and musician at the same time





5 TIPS FOR BEGINNER TAP STUDENTS

1.) Tap Legs

This may sound crazy, but don't forget your right foot from your left. Tap dance helps to improve coordination and when learning it's always good to try steps on one foot then the other.

2. The Shift

With tap dance and movement, shifting your weight from side to side is important. Try standing with your feet shoulder-width apart and shifting from side to side and don't forget to soften your knees.

3. Dancer + Musician

Tap students get the best of both worlds. You are both a dancer by creating movement and a musician by creating rhythms with your feet.

4. Loosie Loosie

Relax your ankles, it will help you make the sounds

5. Breathe, Yes Breathe

No need to be nervous so don't tense up your muscles. It's cool, you got this. Just relax, breathe, and have fun.

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Children's Author

Co-Founder of SOLE Defined

I hope you enjoy trying out the lessons with this packet. Feel free to expand upon them and use them in different ways. If you have further questions on ways to incorporate elements of tap dance in your lesson plans feel free to reach out to me directly.

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