

ARTS • BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

• pre-k • • middle school •
• elementary • • high school •

title

Who Started the Motion?

skill



dance



theatre

about the strategy

Theatre games are a staple in the training of actors of all ages and are easily put to use in the classroom as a means of increasing student engagement and creating an ensemble quickly and with little or no preparation. Learning to look and really “see”, use peripheral vision, extend a high level of concentration, trust others in the group and have fun in the process, your students will get better and better at playing this game as they practice. *Who Started the Motion?* works well at the beginning of class to get students involved in a non-verbal activity that forces immediate concentration and focus that will translate to whatever activity immediately follows the activity.

visual

Close observation of subtle and obvious physical movements, use of peripheral as well as direct vision

auditory

Sound created and used with movement

kinesthetic

Creation and replication of specific and varied physical movements

instructional steps

objective

Students originate and replicate movement and movement patterns in a way that is smooth and organic to the group while one student's objective is to figure out where the movement patterns originate, (*who exactly is starting the motion?*).

materials

None

procedure

1. Modeling

- Ask students to sit in a circle on the ground, let them know this is a non-verbal activity.
- Ask students to mirror your movements as leader, and begin to move your hands, arms and upper body, with the students mirroring you.
- Determine what sort of movements work best, are most easily imitated by the group, are most interesting to do and to watch. (the group will see that movements that are slow, complete and use levels work best)

Who Started the Motion?

instructional steps

procedure

- Ask one of the students to take the role of leader, and continue the activity, asking students to begin to use peripheral vision and to mirror the person across the circle from them, not necessarily looking directly at the leader.
- Encourage the students to function as one complete ensemble, with the leader blending in with those mirroring him/her.

2. Applying

- Ask one of the students to leave the room, and when he or she is out, designate a new leader and proceed to play the game.
- Call the student back in the room and ask him/her to stand in the center of the circle and guess who is the leader; who is starting the motion?
- When the student guesses, either correctly or incorrectly, ask him/her what led to the choice? Why did he/she think a particular person was the leader? Encourage students to use an extensive vocabulary to describe what they have seen that led them to their guess, and insist that they be specific as they describe why they made their choices.
- Repeat process, using different student leaders.
- Use music in the background
- Ask the student leader to add subtle vocalized sounds, (hum, buzz, vocalization)

Students will note that the level of difficulty in guessing who is the leader increases as the group pays close attention to detailed mirroring of the leader, creating and mirroring slow, deliberate movements, fixed, straightforward focus rather than looking directly at the leader, strong extended concentration on the part of all participants working “as one” ensemble.

Who Started the Motion?

strategy for curricular connections



social studies



science



mathematics



language arts



music



dance



theatre



visual arts



physical
education



technology

- This strategy, with its emphasis on smoothly coordinated physical movement, concentrated eye focus with both peripheral vision and direct gaze, and strong elements of non-verbal communication, poises the participants for learning. According to recent brain based learning breakthroughs, strategies and activities like this one allow students to extend attention spans and focus. Any subject that is taught following this activity will benefit from the level of attention and focus the students will carry over to it.

ARTS•BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

Who Started the Motion?

multiple intelligences target



visual•spatial



bodily•kinesthetic



interpersonal



musical

adaptations

to simplify

- Have students use simple movements only, (hand movements).

to challenge

- Ask students to never look directly at the leader and use only peripheral vision, add music, ask students to use verbal sounds along with movements, have students stand to play the game and use their entire bodies to mirror the leader's movements.

special needs

- This activity is accessible for most learners.