

Primeros Pasos  
Ballet Hispanico's Education Program

Diego Rivera Lesson Plan Unit  
Movement Sentence Dance  
Prepared by Mercedes Pablos

**GRADE LEVEL:** 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

**OBJECTIVES**

Students will:

- learn and explore the concept of a movement sentence
- brainstorm nouns, verbs, and descriptive words (adjectives and adverbs) based on the observation of a Diego Rivera painting
- create their own movement sentence and perform it

**MATERIALS/MUSIC**

Diego Rivera paintings  
Dance drum  
Newsprint and markers  
Music: *Huapango* by Moncayo

**INTRODUCTION/WARM-UP/EXPLORATION**

Let's analyze this painting. What do you see? (Woman, flowers, floor, feet)  
These objects are called nouns. What verbs or action words do you see in the painting?  
(Embrace, kneel, hold, wrap, smell, bend, slide) Let's do the same with descriptive words or adjectives and adverbs. (Heavy, crowded, horizontal, vertical, pointy, smooth, parallel, round, symmetrical, asymmetrical, curvy, straight, wide) Observe the painting and tell me if it is day or night? Is the weather cold or warm? What kind of clothes is the woman wearing? How old do you think she is?

Let's find a good space in the room. Slowly embrace all the flowers that you see in the painting with your body. Can you embrace something which is under and over you, to your side, on the low level, with a jump, etc. Choose three different ways of embracing and connect them by performing them continuously. Now do the opposite: show me three different ways to embrace something but stop each time and hold the shape. What features do you see in the paintings that are symmetrical? Which are asymmetrical? Create a symmetrical shape. Can you make one on the low level?

Do symmetrical from the waist down and asymmetrical from the waist up. Reverse it. Let's explore some pointy movement. Try it with your arms on different levels and using different directions. Try your legs, elbows, head. Can you travel and do pointy movements at the same time? Can you jump in a pointy way?

**DEVELOPMENT:**

We are going to create a movement sentence. It has a beginning, a middle and an end. It starts with stillness and ends with stillness. Our movement sentence will be:

EMBRACE - SYMMETRICAL SHAPE - POINT

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Choose a beginning shape. When the music starts explore different ways of embracing, then do a symmetrical shape and afterwards explore pointy movement. End up in a shape. Divide in partners. Each couple will create a dance sentence with the vocabulary related to the painting.

**CULMINATION**

The movement sentences will be shared with the rest of the class.

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Diego Rivera Lesson Plan Unit  
Punctuation Dance  
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**GRADE LEVEL:** 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

**OBJECTIVES**

Students will: •express with movement the intonation and effort inherent in punctuation marks such as periods, commas, and exclamation marks.

**MATERIALS/MUSIC**

Diego Rivera paintings  
*Diego*, written by Jonah Winter, illustrations by Jeanette Winter  
Dance drum

**INTRODUCTION**

What is a period? A stop. Move your hands anyway you want to for eight counts, then clap and freeze. Show me gesture that means stop? What is a comma? A pause. This time move your hands for four counts, pause by taking a deep breath then continue moving your hands. Try this pattern with different body parts. What is the intonation of our voices in a question? It is from down to up. Try a movement that starts on the low level and ends on the high level. What movement makes you think an exclamation mark? A jump? an explosion? What about speed? A sentence with exclamation mark is usually read a bit faster.

**DEVELOPMENT**

"Day and night, Diego painted. His friends had to climb up a ladder just to see him!"  
(Excerpt from *Diego*.)

Choose a movement for the word DAY, then a movement for the word NIGHT.  
Take a breath for the comma and PAINT until you STOP for the period. Climb from low to high, increase the speed and end up with a jump for the exclamation mark.

Based on this example students will divide into four groups and create a small paragraph which includes a period, a comma, and a question or exclamation mark. Each group will perform their work.

**ENDING OF A LESSON**

Lay on the floor and stretch out your body making the shape of an exclamation mark. Now curl your body into the shape of a round period. Slowly stretch your legs to become a comma. Make the shape of a question mark either with your arm or your whole body.

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**DIEGO RIVERA**

Jose Diego Rivera was born on December 8, 1886 in Guanajuato, Mexico. People all over the world have heard of him. Why? Because he helped change the meaning of art. Instead of making paintings to hang in museums and galleries, the way so many artists before him had done, Diego Rivera painted murals in public spaces, for everyone to see.

For Diego, the public wall was the perfect place to express his deep respect both for the common people of Mexico and for working class people around the world, and to create an art form that was entirely Mexican. This is why he was asked to paint murals all over Mexico – in schools, in palaces, and in government buildings. But Diego's reputation stretched beyond his own country; he was also asked to paint murals in San Francisco, Detroit, and New York City, and his murals inspired North American artists to paint on walls too.

It has been estimated that in his lifetime Diego Rivera painted more than two and a half miles of murals. He died on November 24, 1957 while working in his studio.

(Excerpted from: *Diego*, text by Jonah Winter, illustrations by Jeanette Winter)