

1.

FURTHER NOTES ON Y DANCE "321 GO" WORKSHOP SPECIALIST ADVISOR ASSESSMENT

The following is a more in depth report to clarify some of my earlier comments concerning the suitability of the content of this resource.

1. Stretches, particularly the thigh and calf stretches are inappropriate for this age group
2. Children from age 4-6 will have difficulty with duet work and as can be seen from the video clip will find some of the suggested movements impossible to do. The back to back with arms linked is in fact contra-indicated.
3. In the world cup fever video clip, the children may be older than primary three and the suggested ideas were more suitable for primary 4-7.
4. In many of the workshops it was suggested that the children discuss, work together to make a movement / animal and link 4 movements together. Children age 4-7 do not have the mental or physical maturity to carry out many of those tasks.
5. Movements shown were obviously taught by the tutor and everyone was doing exactly the same movement. This is not creative movement. Teachers need to see that children will produce variety and also they need to know how to teach for variety and development.
6. There is a general feeling that the resource is product and not process led. There may be too much emphasis on putting a dance together.

Although a resource of this kind could be a useful tool for a primary teacher for home preparation, the content is not equal to the technical expertise of the CD rom. Teachers with training and experience with this age group would know that much of the content of this resource is inappropriate. In my opinion Y Dance is now in a market that highlights their lack of real experience and training in the early years sector. The resource has not been placed in an educational context and shows no cognisance of work developed by others. There are other resources available and there are practitioners more experienced and more suited to this age group who have researched current thinking on motor development and have put this into practice. The importance of a good quality movement experience in the early years, which takes into account motor development is increasingly accepted as it lays the foundations not only of all sports and activities but also for learning.

The following is a list of some resources and practitioners of which I am aware.

RESOURCES

5-14 Physical Education Guidelines- this would complement the work of Y Dance

2.

R. A. D. pre-school syllabus for age 3-7.- this rivals and surpasses Y Dance

This is based on motor development and good Physical Education/Education practice and although it is called pre-school it is for a world wide audience and will go as far as 7 years old.

Basic moves-

Edinburgh University's movement foundation programme which like the above has been well researched. Y Dance would benefit from this understanding

Resources already in school such as:

The Borders Pack.

Tops Dance- Sport Scotland's Dance resource which although it is for primary 4-7 has elements, ideas and language suitable for this age group.

Both of these would complement Y Dance's knowledge

PRACTITIONERS

There are other agencies which have experience in this early years field and would certainly rival Y dance.

Physical Education Teachers

Scottish Ballet's Education Unit

The Dance House- Rosina Bonsu

Individual Dance Artists at Dance Base and City Moves and other agencies.

Dance in the primary school lies firmly within Physical Education and uses the Laban principles of movement. As such it has a language of dance that is suitable for young children which will give them a vocabulary that can enable them to be creative and use their imaginations. There are already resources that in my opinion have more educational value and are easier to use than "321 GO"

Y Dance had a marvellous opportunity to use flair, enthusiasm and experience to continue to develop dance for young teenagers. This is where it is needed This is where the Y Dance team could shine. In the early years area, there are others with a far greater knowledge not only of "Dance" for young children but of children and their movement development needs, potential and ability.

If the company are to continue along these lines it would be worth its while considering employing someone with expertise or embarking on a programme of continuing professional development.

Val Munro, May 2004

