



# LESSON 5

## Movement

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Identify movement.
- ◆ Define rhythmic movement.
- ◆ Define expressive movement.
- ◆ Understand the importance of movement in theatre.
- ◆ Participate in both rhythmic and expressive activities.

### Warm Up



**W**hile sitting at your desk, create a pattern of beats with both hands that you could teach the class to perform.

### rhythmic movement

the ability to move to a beat or pattern of beats.

### choreography

the art of planning and composing a dance.

### expressive movement

the ability to express feelings through physical action.

**M**ovement, the last of the five personal resources discussed in this chapter, is an essential element in theatre. It is the way we communicate with our bodies. The activities for movement will develop your understanding of your own body in motion but will also develop cooperation and ensemble. Two types of movement will be discussed in this lesson: rhythmic and expressive.

## Rhythmic Movement

**Rhythmic movement** is movement to a beat or pattern of beats. A beat is a mark of time or accent given to time. Rhythm is movement with a regular repetition of a beat or accent. Rhythmic movement is especially challenging because it requires discipline and practice. You must try to be in complete control of your body. It requires not only physical attention but mental attention. You may be directed to perform movements at different speeds to produce special effects onstage. You may also be directed to move to music onstage. The rhythmic movements and arrangement of steps are referred to in the theatre as **choreography**.

## Expressive Movement

Studies on body language tell us that people often express how they feel through physical movement. This type of movement is called **expressive movement**. You will have a chance to explore nonverbal communication through the expressive movement activities. Emotions and thoughts can be expressed through the use of your entire body, from head to toe.

Movement can reveal what a person is feeling at a particular moment. But when you express yourself physically, you must also think

## motivation

an inner drive that causes a person to act a certain way.

## emotions

strong feelings, such as joy, fear, hate, and happiness.

about what is going on inside you. How you are feeling inside greatly affects how you react on the outside. Emotions are more successfully expressed if you think before you act. In other words, your action must result from an inner drive, or **motivation**—the reason you are acting the way you are. If you do not think first, your expressive movement will be meaningless and incomplete. You will not communicate your feelings effectively, and you will not be believable onstage. Remember, you must respond mentally, as well as physically, to feelings of expression.

We have been talking about emotions. But what *are* emotions? **Emotions** are strong feelings, often reactions, such as happiness, sadness, anger, jealousy, fear, loneliness, grief, joy, excitement, love, hate, and embarrassment, to name only a few. In the following exercises, you will be given the opportunity to try rhythmic movement exercises and expressive movement activities by using facial expressions and other body movements. Some assignments will also include verbal communication to enhance the expression of your feelings.

# ACTION



## Rhythmic Movement Activities

- 1. Rhythm of the Beat.** Form a circle with your classmates. Your teacher will have you pass a ball around the circle. Match the rate of passing the ball with the rate of a drumbeat. Each student must focus on the rhythm of the beat.
- 2. Rhythm of the Music.** While music is playing, move to the rhythm of the sounds. Stay on the beat and listen to the patterns and rhythm.
- 3. Rhythmic Movements.** Create a rhythmic movement that matches the loudness and intensity of these sounds.
  - a. a scratching sound
  - a soft whisper
  - snoring
  - a high, shrill whistle

Rhythmic movement can help you warm up and relax before a rehearsal or performance.





These actors are engaged in some very expressive movements on stage.

- e. a popping sound
- f. a bang
- g. a snap

- h. a tap
- i. a boom
- j. a swishing sound

**4. Animal Motion.** Move to the teacher's or leader's drum beat as each of these animals would if they were searching for food. Next, move to a different rhythm or beat given to you as if the animals were tired from a day's hunt. Do not use any sounds the first time through the list. Use sounds the second time you do the motions.

- a. a cat
- b. a dog
- c. an elephant
- d. a snake
- e. a rabbit
- f. a giraffe
- g. a fish
- h. a bear
- i. a fly

### **Expressive Movement Activities**

**1. Emotional Recall.** Express the following emotions. First, think about the body tension that you have when you feel these emotions. Your teacher will help you express these emotions using your hands, arms, neck, face, and so on.

- a. anger
- b. sadness
- c. happiness
- d. jealousy
- e. grief
- f. fear
- g. surprise
- h. embarrassment

Now discuss situations in which classmates experienced the different emotions in the past. Replay the expression of the emotions. Which activity was the most successful? Why?

**2. Emotional Relay.** Divide into groups and stand in single file. You will participate in a relay game using movement to express an emotion. Each member must complete four emotions (anger, fear, sadness, and happiness) before tagging the next team member in line. Two chairs are placed on opposite sides of the room. You must remember the order of the emotions and express each one as you run from one chair to the other.

**3. Relay versus Emotional Thoughts.** Use the same emotions as in the previous activity. In a class discussion, think about these emotions and share situations when you have experienced the emotions. Where were you when you felt these emotions? What activity were you engaged in when you felt these emotions? Your teacher will ask you to recall and express each of the four emotions. Compare the outcome of this activity with the outcome of the emotional relay. Name specific differences.

**4. Emotional Fitness.** Form a circle with your classmates. Each student will be given an emotion to express. Each student must think of a facial expression, body movement, and sound that fits the emotion. The activity begins with the first student expressing his or her emotion. The activity continues one student at a time, until everyone in class has had a turn. All of your personal resources are used in this activity.

**5. The Music Moves Me.** Divide into groups of four or five. Your teacher will play some music. After listening to the music for a few minutes, each member of the group—individually, not in unison—must use body movements to express the music

What type of music do you suppose inspires these dancers to move so expressively and joyfully?



- 6. Expressive Movement and Sound Scenes.** Use the following situations for dramatic play. Use expressive movement and sound drawn from life experiences to perform a short scene alone or with a partner.
- A teenager is excited about going to a sports event.
  - A student is called to the principal's office.
  - Your best friend has talked about you behind your back.
  - You have just lost a pet.
  - You have been hit with a basketball.
  - You are coming down with the flu.
  - You believe that you are being given too much homework.
  - You walk into the cafeteria, and discover that they are serving your favorite meal.
  - Your friends start laughing and applauding when you walk into class.
  - You get your progress report, and there are all A's on the report.
- 7. Let's Go on a Picnic.** Imagine that you are at a picnic. Instead of being one of the people at the picnic, become one of the ants or some other animal that sees and smells the food. Move the way the animal would.
- 8. Is That Bacon I Smell Frying?** Pretend that you are a strip of bacon in a frying pan. Someone has just started cooking you when the phone rings. The cook answers the phone and forgets about you. How would you move in the frying pan while the cook was on the phone?
- 9. Imaginary Walk.** Imagine that you are walking with the following:
- a melting ice cream cone
  - a hot pan you took out of the oven
  - your toothbrush in your mouth (full of toothpaste)
  - a newborn baby
  - bees that are stinging you
  - a stack of books in your arms
  - a large musical instrument, such as a tuba
  - beach equipment (ball, umbrella, lunch basket, towels, suntan lotion)
  - a pet that is sick