

Using Movement to Teach Academics:  
The Mind and Body as One Entity  
**by Sandra Minton, Ph.D.**  
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*Using Movement to Teach Academics will help you teach your curriculum through the use of movement and dance, while giving your students a chance to use their creative problem-solving skills. This text describes a step-by-step process through which you and your students can learn to transform academic concepts into actions and dances. Examples of movement-based lessons appropriate for elementary and middle school students are described along with a glossary that defines movement related terms. The book contains 83 photos and drawings that illustrate the text.*

*Theoretical information is also included to demonstrate how movement-based teaching strategies connect with popular education theories such as Cooperative Learning, the Multiple Intelligences, Brain-Based Learning, Learning Styles and the Zone of Proximal Development. Learn how movement-based instruction complements how the human brain learns, while reading some persuasive arguments for using movement as a teaching tool.*

About the Author

**Sandra Minton, former dance coordinator at the University of Northern Colorado, is a dance specialist with Littleton Colorado Public Schools. She has had articles and research published in juried journals; was the 1999 National Dance Association Scholar Artist; and a Fulbright Scholar to Finland in 2001. Minton's other books include *Choreography: A Basic Approach Using Improvisation*, 3rd edition and *Dance Mind & Body*, both published by Human Kinetics. She regularly presents on-line and face-to-face workshops on the topic of this book through the University of Northern Colorado Extended Studies Division.**

**Endorsements**

"Watching the students "read" their books through movement was fascinating. By incorporating the entire body and mind, the kids seemed able to engage in the content of the books they were reading in a way that touched them deeply." —**Judy**

**Anderson, Founder & Artistic Director, Platte Forum, Denver, Colorado**

"With the continuing need to keep our students inspired and connected to the academic classroom, tools such as Ms. Minton's provide dance educators like myself with the opportunity to reach all students from the gifted and talented to those with special needs, reinforcing academic concepts through kinesthetic means."—**Fayla J. Curry, M.Ed, high school dance educator, Klein ISD, Spring, Texas & Dance Pedagogy Lecturer, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas**

"If the kids could verbalize in big grown-up language, it would mean the same thing. Let me do what I love to do [move], and I will love learning what you teach me." —**Robin Dunn, elementary school music teacher, Buena Vista, Colorado**

"Through my extended studies in dance education with Dr. Sandra Minton, I have developed a deeper understanding of dance and movement as it relates to the academic K-8 curriculum. Her application of contemporary educational theories and their link to teaching academic concepts through movement are clearly outlined and presented in an accessible manner--creating a jumping off point in which to develop your own individual movement explorations. In both my undergraduate and graduate dance pedagogy courses, I recommend Dr. Minton's books and workshops to my students in dance education as a valuable tool as they begin their creative careers in classroom."—**Jeanne Fornarola, University at Buffalo, Department of Theater & Dance, Assistant Clinical Professor**

"I have participated in several of Minton's workshops and am very pleased that there is now a book that includes her many examples of teaching academic concepts using creative movement. This book should be invaluable in meeting the needs of students with a variety of learning styles while also providing hands-on experiences, creativity and physical activity. Great examples for a partnership between the classroom teacher and the physical educator and a process for further collaboration."

—**Dr. Cynthia Herndon, Ph.D, Professor, University of Northern Iowa**

"This course has opened up a whole new world in terms of teaching concepts to students! I am amazed that something so elemental [movement] has such an impact on learning."—**Angela Hoffman, first grade teacher, Antelope Trails Elementary School, Colorado Springs, Colorado**

"Dr. Minton's book has helped in teaching my IB Dance students not only choreographic concepts and form, but how these concepts can be linked to other academic areas. Her instruction is specific and easy to follow; any teacher can utilize this information. Her concepts are attainable to any student at any level. From the non-dancer to the advanced choreographer, these exercises can be used in the academic classroom as well as in the creative process."—**Judi Hofmeister, dance and theatre teacher & International Baccalaureate Dance Programme Director, Douglas County High School, Castle Rock, Colorado**

"Educators throughout the world attempt to put into practice the work of Howard Gardner. Sandra Minton's work with movement and academics is just the tool teachers need to put his theory into daily practice in the classroom. Sandra was a presenter at our Day Of The Arts For Teachers, and she was inspiring!"—**Gary Holder, Curator of Education, Sangre de Cristo Arts & Conference Center, Pueblo, Colorado**

"I appreciated this experience because . . . [it] helped me think more constructively about what I already do so that I can do it even better." —**Kate Kuper, Teaching Artist & Visiting Lecturer, Dance Department, University of Illinois, Champaign & Kennedy Center workshop leader**

"I find my students enjoy movement-based lessons more than they do lessons where they are only reading or listening to a lecture."—**Robyn Leary, high school Social Studies teacher, Aurora, Colorado**

"I've tried to incorporate movement as much as possible each day, and the students have responded. To quote a student of mine--This moving around stuff is cool!" —**Tim McGovern, Reading Intervention Coordinator, Kemper Elementary School, Cortez, Colorado**

After taking Sandra's class, I decided to incorporate movement as a means to teach the math concepts positive and negative numbers. To do this, I had the students become a kind of moving pointer on an enlarged number line laid out on the floor. When they finished their steps, the students found themselves at the position of the answer and the looks of confusion and uncertainty were being replaced by the bright eye look, and comments that communicated, I've got it now!" —**Brian Overholser, 4th Grade Teacher, Eagleview Elementary School, Adams 12 Schools, Thornton, Colorado**

"Ms. Minton brings an array of integrated curriculum elements from math and language arts into her dance classes. From this she builds richness to her lessons with props, music, and creative movement."—**Gayla Ruckhaus, Arts Program Coordinator and visual arts teacher, Centennial Academy of Fine Arts Education, Littleton, Colorado**