

Kayla St Claire

The guide takes you through the processes Kayla uses when creating both her own work and preparing public workshops.

Kayla demonstrates how, by gently exploring your space, the objects within it and the different ways in which you can move through it, you can create your own original dance sequences. Please remember that you should always take care when practising physical exercises and only go at a rate that is comfortable for you.



Think about it

Word, lists and phrases

- Find a place that interests you. This could be inside or outside your home.
- Make a list of all the things, emotions, memories you have of this place.
- Make a list of all the things you notice when you look around this place.
- Make a list of things that are part of the history of this place.

Treasure Hunt - things around you

- Explore the inside and outside of your home.
- Collect five objects from the room you feel most comfortable in.
- Display your objects as if they were in a museum
- If there were no objects or pictures in your comfortable room, how would you feel?
- Make a mind map to explore your feelings towards these objects and their place in your home.
- Why do you think familiar and favourite objects help you to feel comfortable?

Materials, patterns and textures

- Movement material can come from actions connected to an activity. For example gardening might suggest actions of digging, hiding, patting, sprinkling, stabbing, raking, stamping, crawling, scrambling.
- Choose movements that feel good in your body first rather than worrying what they look like.
- You won't need specialist materials and equipment as these activities work from the body and gestures and use props sourced in the home.

Make yourself at home

- It's important to find a place where you can feel safe and relaxed and can really let yourself go and explore.
- When working with movement the space must be big enough to move in and be light and airy. Try to find a floor that's not carpeted in case you want move along it.

Feelings

These movement based activities should help you to

- Re-connect with the five senses
- Create positive experiences and confidence
- Explore how space changes our mood



Get going

Warm up

Inside and outside

Inside, the space must be big enough for movement and stretching out in. Try to be aware of objects in the room or remove them if you feel they might get in the way.

Outside, make sure the area is clear of sharp objects and there is space for activity. Grass is ideal rather than a concrete area

- Start by breathing in deeply
- Stretch your arms up high
- Breathe out slowly
- Bring your arms down
- Breathe in gently
- Sway to your left
- Breathe out gently
- Sway to your right

Repeat this a couple of times.

Make a mark

Either inside or outside, take a journey around the space. How many ways can you move in or between spaces?

- Travel
- Walk
- Look
- Roll
- Sit
- Lie
- Stand
- Hop
- Jump
- Slowly
- Between - table and chair and floor and sofa and draw and window

Play

- Improvisation is an important process and allows the space for playing and creating movements that you might not have originally thought of.
- Try to be in the flow and use your senses, but also be aware that improvisation has rules, structures, and is about problem solving.

- As you play and develop your ideas you should gain a greater understanding of the things you are interested in and which aspects of these you can develop further.

Start anywhere

- Start with something you do every day
- For example make a mind map of all the actions you use to make tea
- From this choose 2 favourite actions or moments.
- Practice making the actions
- Develop these actions by ordering and/or repeating them over and over.

What's in your space?

Mind mapping around the following -

- I feel comfortable in my ... (garden/living-room/kitchen/shed/etc)... because...
- Explore through mind mapping how you feel in different environments.

Trace the space. What shape is your space?

- Use different body parts to explore the architecture and the objects in the space
- Trace it with your finger, your elbow, your toes
- Use other parts of your body to trace your space

Touch the space. Stroking, brushing, tickling, tip toeing, tapping

- Hug your bed
- Stroke the wall
- Tickle the door
- Tiptoe the floor
- Wave to the ceiling
- Kiss a window
- What does the space feel like? Smell like?

Don't know?

When you start working on an idea you don't always know what you'll end up with, or what it will look like, or what others will think of it. This can be disconcerting as you might prefer to be in control. Ideas about success and failure can stop you being in the moment. It's important not to judge, just keep playing and being excited by the possibilities.

If you knew what was going to happen or how it was going to end, then why would you be exploring it in the first place? We need to not know so we can ask questions about things that interest us. Passion and excitement come from not knowing, anticipation and transformation.

Children learn to move and interact with environments and others through creative play; they do not read a manual.



Keep going

Add in and take away

Continue to improvise using your body in space.

Find different ways you can connect to the surfaces of the space, which body parts are connected?
If you are working with someone else, can you connect to each other?
Exploring your body shape and size, can you be hidden in the space?
Do you think you can be seen in the space?
How can you make your body seen?
Close your eyes... breathe... can you see your space in your mind?

Chop & change

Select 5 everyday objects to explore through actions
What can you see around you? What does your object do? What do you do with your object? What is your favourite object?
Interacted with each object and make a movement action for each one.
Can you perform the actions connected to these objects? For example a spade; sprinkles, digs, pats, slices...etc

Questions?

What would happen if.....?

Don't stop

Can you put these actions in an order?
Can you repeat or change the order?
Can you make the actions bigger, faster, slower, travel across the space, choose a new order of actions?

Emergency restart

If you run out of energy -

- Have a break
- Have a drink
- Breathe – count to 10



How did it go?

How do you know when it's over?

- How does your body feel?
- If you're tired, hot, feeling breathless, it's time to stop.
- If you're feeling good about what you've done it's time to take stock, and celebrate.
- Cool down - find a surface to stretch and breathe

Any surprises?

- Was there anything you did that you were surprised by?
- Any thing you did that you thought you couldn't do?

Did you enjoy it?

Did exploring the space make you feel, comfortable, safe, intrigued, confused, nervous, excited, happy, sad, thoughtful, playful, protected, looked after?

Does the space seem different or changed now? How?

What were the best bits?

What was your favourite moment?

Would you like to try moving in a new space? Which one?



What next?

Choose another starting point

- Choose 6 favourite action words
- Number them 1 to 6
- Find a dice
- Roll the dice
- Dance the action
- Keep rolling
- Keep moving
- Keep a note of the order of actions