

The Worshipful Children's Dance Ministry Course Notes
Taught by Amy Tang and Jocelyn Richard
SESSION 1

Jocelyn Richard - Laying the Foundation for a Worshipful Children's Ministry

Children can know the goodness of the Lord and can understand spiritual things, even deeper things, enough to impart them to others.

Psalm 8

God has made young children to praise to silence the avenger. He's using their praise as a secret weapon.

Remind them, "God has made you to praise him."

Matthew 18:3 *Unless you are converted and become as a little child, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Children's play is their learning. Dance class should be fun. That is how they learn.

We have to be like children to get a word from God.

We have it backwards when we try to dumb down the gospel to bring it to their level.

As adults, we are to humble ourselves and be like them so we can see God.

Require them to pray, to fast, if it's okay with the parents.

Amy Tang - Practical Training

I. Keeping Worship and Ministry as the Focus

A. Begin with the vision God has given you.

Mission of Worship Dance Ministries: To lead a prayerful dance ministry in the church and community which tells God's stories through dance and movement, inviting Jesus' presence and work in people's lives.

Our dance is nothing if we are just up here trying to look pretty before people.

B. Set out a commitment ahead of time. Have children and parents prayerfully consider commitments.

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II. Having the right heart attitude for worship:

A *God Looks at Our Hearts when we Dance* - Lesson 7 from manual

1. First Beautiful Box

- a. It's empty.
- b. Empty is disappointing.
- c. Dancing can be empty.

2. Second beautiful box

- a. It's full.
- b. God wants our dancing to be full.
- c. I Samuel 6:7 - Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at our hearts.
- d. Close in prayer.

B. Vanity presents temptations for adults as well as children.

III. Practical tools in book

IV Helping Children Build Movement Vocabulary - so we can tell God's stories.

A. Using Sign Language to Tell God's Stories (Lesson 3)

1. We borrow from sign language and adapt it.
2. We add spins, lunges, leaps, runs to create dance movements
3. We pray and receive inspiration.

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Open the file "Building a Vocabulary of Worship" file with slides. (Follow along with the teaching)

- B. What are words we use most often in worship? We want signs for these.
1. Beauty (slide # 2)
 2. Bowing (slide #3) - powerful demonstration of abandon
Have children do the movements with you. When children take action, their heart follows their actions.
 3. Celebrate (slide #4) Add a spin or move side to side.
 4. Earth (slide #5)
 5. Glorify (slide #7) Big movements reveal his Glory.
 6. Father (slide #6) Try using 2 hands and alternate them.

Alternate movement - hug a tree
- C. Put words together to form phrases. (skip to slide/page #24)
1. Father, I love you. (slide/page #27) Do it more than one way.
 2. Adding more words:
 - a. Heaven (slide/page #8)
 - b. Honor (slide/page #9)
 - c. Lord (slide/page #11) Many variations
 - d. Love/Adore (slide/page #12) Many variations
 3. Children will make up their own.
 - a. Give a homework assignment. Have students create gestures.
 - b. You will get inspiration from them.
 4. More words:
 - a. Mercy (slide/page #13) Not a sign. Embody the word.
 - b. Name (slide/page #14)

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5. Creating More Phrases
 - a. Jesus is Lord. (slide/page #25)
 - b. Glorify Jesus. (slide/page #26)
 - c. Bow before the Lord. (slide/page #28)
 - d. Lord of Heaven and Earth (slide/page #29)

6. Pattern for class
 - a. Teach 8-9 words.
 - b. Put words in phrases.
 - c. Put students in pairs to create phrases.
 1. Good for students over 7 or 8 years old.
 2. Give phrases to younger children.
 3. With mixed ages, pair younger children with older ones.
 - d. Variations
 1. Stand or kneel.
 2. Vary direction.

Key: What is the heart of this word? What is going to communicate that word to the children?

 - e. How to get children to dance freely on Sunday mornings?
 1. Improvisation can be threatening for some.
 2. Put students in groups of 4 with 1 leader.
 - a. Use simple movements, no turns.
 - b. Rotate leadership.

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- c. Watch for who has the confidence, ability to lead in worship.
 - 3. Some will naturally be more free unrehearsed. Respect individual differences.
 - 1. Some students will want to lead improv.
 - 2. Others will need more help/direction.
 - 3. Use North-South-East-West (Lynn Hayden's exercise)
- 7. More Signs:
 - a. Praise (slide/page #16)
 - b. Sanctuary (slide/page #17)
 - c. Strength (slide/page #18)
 - d. Victory (slide/page #19)
 - e. Thanks (slide/page #20)
 - f. Wisdom (slide/page #22)
 - g. Worship (slide/page #23)
- V. Next Week - *Dancing the Scriptures - Joining the Worship of Heaven* (Lesson 8)
- VI. Question: How long should dance classes be held?
 - A. Younger Class (up to age 7) - 45 minutes
 - B. Older Class (8 and up) - 1 hour
 - C. Rehearsals with adults and children
 - 1. Release children after 45 minutes-hour
 - 2. Keep adults for 90 minutes to 2 hours
 - 3. Have frequent shorter rehearsals, rather than marathon rehearsals.
- VII. Sign is a great entry point for people of all ages

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VIII. Homework:

- A. Put together phrases
- B. Use worship phrases in your devotions
- C. Bonus: Photograph or video yourself doing worship phrase and send it to me: amy@worshipdanceministries.com. Please let me know if I may share it with others on my website.

IX. Additional Resources - see at end of manual