
ACTIVITY PAGES

More Mudras (Movement & Music)

Mudras are hand gestures that are used in many dance styles from India. They are used for a variety of reasons, sometimes to mime the meaning of the song, or as simple aesthetic ornamentation within the dance. Abhinaya, which means “theatrical expression” – is a very important part of dance from India, and includes expressive facial movements, precise head and eye movements, and hand gestures (mudras). In the cases where an idea is being conveyed, it is more important to communicate clearly with hand gestures - adapting them if necessary - than it is to perform them with rigid correctness.

This activity, and “Gestures Have Special Meaning” are explorations of mudras, and can give your students an opportunity to tell their own stories using ancient hand gestures, and add their own brand new ones.

Practice the hand positions on these pages with your students, and note their meanings. Have the students tell a story using these gestures.

They can make up the story by writing regular sentences or outlined ideas. In order to tell the story with mudras they will need to get the main meaning across, without words such as “and” or “the.” For words of emotion or action that are not covered by the mudras given, they can make up their own mudras.

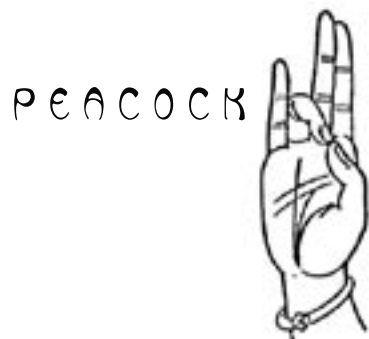
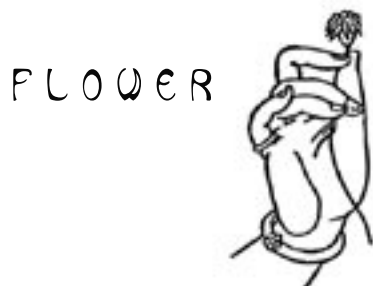
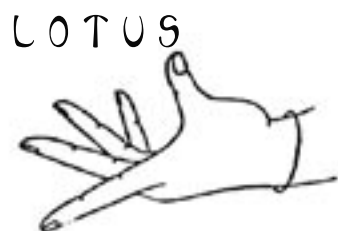
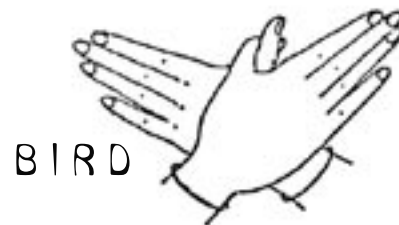
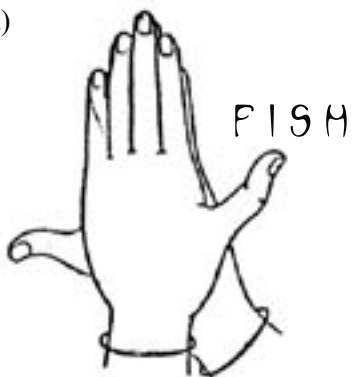
Have each student perform his or her story for the class. After their story (not during!) have the class say what they got from the performance. Remember that this is not a game of charades. Communication is important, and yet the task of telling a story is an aesthetic one, as well as a meaningful one.

Online: www.worldartswest.org/plm/guide/activitypages/movemusic/moremudras.shtm

Previous years mudra activity online “Gestures have Special Meaning”
www.worldartswest.org/plm/guide/activitypages/movemusic/gestures.shtm

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(More Mudras, continued)



Thank you to Chitresh Das Dance Company for providing these mudras.