

dance notes lesson plans

Key Stage 1

Circles & Seasons



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Dance

Key Stage 1

Lesson Plan for Key Stage 1 Dance

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Objectives:

- Explore the theme of circles, including daily circles and the four seasons.
- Use various stimuli, such as music and masks
- Teach set moves and the importance of warm ups, cool downs and stretching.
- Help children create dance material on their own and with others based on the above themes, using different body parts, different levels and dynamics.
- Learn control and co-ordination in the basic actions of travelling, jumping, turning, gesturing and stillness.
- Use movement expressively to explore moods and feelings.
- Help the children to make simple judgements about dance.

The 4 Strands of the National curriculum:

- Acquiring and Developing Skills
- Selecting and Applying Skills, Tactics and Compositional Ideas
- Knowledge and Understanding of Fitness and Health
- Evaluating and Improving Performance

Unit Contents:

Week 1: Our Day is a Circle

Week 2: Spring

Week 3: Summer

Week 4: Autumn

Week 5: Winter

Week 6: Midwinter Celebration

Tracks Used *(click on links below to audition)*

- ◀ ["Awakening"](#) (Dance Notes Volume 2)
- ◀ ["Pot Doodles"](#) (Dance Notes Volume 1)
- ◀ ["Papillon"](#) (Dance Notes Volume 2)
- ◀ ["Behind You"](#) (Dance Notes Volume 5)
- ◀ ["Strange Magic"](#) (Dance Notes Volume 5)
- ◀ ["Rhythm Break"](#) (Dance Notes Volume 3)

Week 1: Our Day is a Circle

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Warm up ◀ "[Awakening](#)"

The class stand in a circle with enough space to lift their arms to the sides. March on the spot, lifting the arms up and down. Then turn around on the spot. Next wiggle the body down to the floor (bending the knees) and up again. All skip to the centre and back again. Repeat two or three times.

Main ◀ "[Awakening](#)"

Teach the following circle dance:

- i. All stand in a circle
- ii. All skip or gallop right (8 counts)
- iii. All skip or gallop left (8 counts)
- iv. Turn to the person next to you and hold their hands
- v. Pairs skip in circle one way (8 counts)
- vi. Pairs skip in circle the other way (8 counts)
- vii. All separate from partners and skip to make big circle again
- viii. All skip into centre and out again, raising arms up and down

B Find a space by yourself. Guide the children through getting up and going to bed. E.g. imagine you are asleep. You wake up and stretch slowly. You get out of bed and put your clothes on (make movements big). Skip around the room. Then come back to bed. Yawn. Be sleepy and tired. Get into bed and go to sleep.

C Get into pairs and practice getting up and going to bed.

D Watch pairs and discuss movement (See '[Resource 1](#)' for evaluation guidelines).

E Join C with A: 'getting up' first and move into the circle dance, finishing by 'going to bed'.

Cool Down

Walk around the room getting slower and slower. Finally stop and stretch arms, sides and upper and lower legs.

Key Vocabulary:

skip, gallop, stretch, circle dance

Week 2: Spring

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Warm up ◀ ["Pot Doodles"](#)

All find a space and do the following:

- Skip around the room (8 counts)
- Stop and stretch up and down (8 counts)
- Skip around the room (8 counts)
- Stop and turn to the right and then to the left (8 counts)
- Skip around the room (8 counts)
- Stop and balance on one leg (8 counts)

Main ◀ ["Pot Doodles"](#)

- A** Guide the children through the first spring growth. E.g. All is still and you are a seed in the ground. The seed begins to grow (start small then use different body parts and move them in the way plants grow - turning, gesturing, opening etc.). What are you? Are you a flower or a tree (etc.)?
- B** Spring is an energetic time of year in which many animals are born. Find a space and pretend this is your first day (lambs, rabbits etc.): jump, leap, wiggle, turn, roll on to the floor and up again.
- C** Teach the following movement sequence:
- I. Step to the side and carry arms from left, over the head to finish on the right (the sun going up and down) (4 counts)
 - II. Perform the movement the other way around - right to left (4 counts)
 - III. Perform a turn to the right (4 counts)
 - IV. Jump/hop on the spot with arms high (4 counts)
- D** Join **A**, **B** and **C**
- E** Split class in two. One half watches the other: each discuss the movement material (See ["Resource 1"](#) for evaluation guidelines).

Cool Down

Start as a fully-grown flower or tree and pull in your petals, leaves, and branches to become a seed again. Stretch on floor.

Key Vocabulary:

growth, energetic

Week 3: Summer

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Warm up ◀ ["Papillon"](#)

Stand quietly in a space, close your eyes and imagine it is very hot. Next imagine you are a flower, plant or tree in the sun. How do you move? Show the shape and movement of the plant (remember that now everything is grown there are many leaves, petals and much colour), also show how it moves in the summer sun (slowly, big and luxuriant). Some open their eyes and watch others, until everyone has been seen.

Main ◀ ["Papillon"](#)

A You are 'at the beach'. Teach the following movement sequence:

- I. Lie half sitting on the sand
- II. Roll over and sit up again
- III. Circle one arm front to back
- IV. Sweep that same arm over the other as if putting on sun lotion
- V. Repeat with the other arm
- VI. Roll back over the way and put on sunglasses

B What other activities do you do at the beach? Play musical statues at the beach: when the music stops call out an activity that might be done at the beach, such as building sand-castles, swimming, collecting shells, fishing, boating etc.

C In pairs, create a short movement sequence describing one of the activities at the beach (given to pairs by teacher). Make the movements fairly big and show that you are happy.

D The pairs show their movement sequences. The group discuss the movement ([See 'Resource 1' for evaluation guidelines](#)).

E Join **A** with **C** and practice this a few times.

Cool Down

Pack up your things from the beach. All form a long line, two by two (as on a train) and make your way back home. All stop, and then alight from train and stretch.

Key Vocabulary:

beach, happy, sequence

Week 4: Autumn

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Warm up ◀ ["Behind You"](#)

Skip around the room and imagine that you are picking all the ripe fruits that appear in autumn. Reach high for apples - maybe even climb the tree, stretch and twist your arms to get that beautiful blackberry and bend low to pick the juicy strawberries from the ground (etc.)

Main ◀ ["Behind You"](#)

A Split the group in half, each standing at opposite sides of the room. Taking it in turns, one half travels to the other imagining that they are the autumn wind. Encourage sweeping, turning, rolling and low to high movements.

B Teach the following movement sequence called 'autumn wind':

- I. Lean to the right and sweep arm across and out
- II. Lean to the left and sweep arm across and out
- III. Perform a turn to the right and end in a crouch position
- IV. Rise slowly performing smaller sweeping movements with the arms
- V. On standing run in a small circle incorporating big jumps.

C Get into groups of four and decide which two will be the trees and which two will be the leaves. Guide the children through the following: It is getting windy now and the trees are moving, shaking, stirring and twisting in the wind. The leaves begin to fall off - they are pulled off the tree, swirl about (turning, swaying, twisting) and flutter to the ground.

D Join **B** with **C**

E Some groups perform **D** whilst others watch, until all have performed. Group discuss movement (See ["Resource 1"](#) for evaluation guidelines)..

Cool Down

All walk around the room, first playing in the leaves and then sweeping them up. Stop and stretch.

Key Vocabulary:

travelling, crouch, turn, sway, twist

Week 5: Winter

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Warm up ◀ ["Strange Magic"](#)

All walk around the room. Walk into spaces - see a space and walk into it. Next, whilst walking into spaces, try and keep as far away from others as you can, then get as close together as you can. End in a group shape.

Main ◀ ["Strange Magic"](#)

A Winter is a quiet time for nature. Practice going from movement to stillness:

- I. Walk (8 counts)
- II. Walk in slow motion (8 counts)
- III. Balance (8 counts)
- IV. Repeat and make the walking, both normal and in slow motion, more dance-like using arm and leg gestures and turns. When balancing, take on an interesting posture (like a tree in winter).

B Snow in winter: spread out and lie on your tummies, sides or backs. To the soft music, imagine that you are snowflakes lying on the ground. The wind is beginning to blow, and you are beginning to drift and roll about on the ground (be careful not to bump into each other). As the snowflakes roll, they begin to grow into snowballs. Show how your shape changes. If you meet up with another snowball, you can roll together - you can even link up and form a bigger snowball - what strange shapes are formed! Next stand up and imagine you are snowflakes falling from the sky. Snowflakes stick together when they meet - how can you link up to show this?

C Join **A** with **B**

D Taking it in turns, some groups watch the others perform **C**, until all have performed. Discuss the movement material and how it made them feel ([See 'Resource 1' for evaluation guidelines](#)).

Cool Down

It is cold in winter: jump up and down to keep warm. Jump and reach to the side. Take it down to steps until you are still. Stretch arms, sides, upper and lower legs.

Key Vocabulary:

quiet, stillness, soft, drifting

Week 6: Midwinter Celebration

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Warm up ◀ ["Rhythm Break"](#)

All stand in a space in the room. Put on your coat, scarf, gloves and hat using big movements. You go outside. It is very cold (show this). You run around to get warm. Eventually you come inside where it is warm. You take off your outside clothes with big movements.

Main ◀ ["Rhythm Break"](#)

In midwinter we like to celebrate - whether it is Christmas or some other sort of party and feast. Here are some midwinter party dances!

(C can be performed using the [masks](#) suggested in the resource section)

- A** Spread out in the room. Practice silly walks to the music. Change to a new walk on a signal (tambourine or hand clap). Suggest: take tiny steps or giant ones, walk very slowly or very fast, raise your body high or low, walk like a chicken etc. If you are tapped on the shoulder, freeze until tapped again. Finally children show one favourite walk and the others copy.
- B** Dance to the music. Imagine that the different parts of your bodies have minds of their own and want to move in different ways and different directions. Next divide the group in pairs. The partners take turns dancing and freezing - inspiring each other to try out new ideas and carry on a dance dialogue.
- C** Change partners. One partner in each pair puts on a mask. The masked partner will be the leader and the other will follow. They dance carefully (because of mask) to the music and after a minute or two they change over. Partners continue to change back and forth. Suggestions for movement may be called out from the side, and 'freezing' can be used so that they can watch each other and avoid any collisions. Tempo can be increased as they become accustomed to the mask.

Cool Down ◀ ["Rhythm Break"](#)

We have almost come full circle and soon it will be spring. To celebrate, perform the circle dance from lesson 1. Wear the masks and dance in character (*See 'Resource 1' for evaluation guidelines*). Stretch arms, sides and upper and lower legs .

Key Vocabulary:

Silly, tiny, giant, slow, fast, high, low, partners, celebration

Resource 1

[Download Lesson](#)

QCA Guidelines: Unit 1, Section 4

Evaluating and improving performance

Objectives

Children should learn:

- To talk about dance ideas inspired by different stimuli
- To copy, watch, and describe dance movement

Activities

- Teach the children to sit, watch each other dancing and talk about their dances.
- Encourage them to explain how the dances make them feel.
- Help the children to watch and describe actions and different qualities of movement.
- Ask them to describe what body actions they see and what body parts are being used.
- Ask them why they think particular actions have been chosen for a dance.
- Ask the children to talk about how they might be more expressive in their movement.

Outcomes

Children:

- Use simple dance vocabulary to describe movement
- Talk about dance, linking movement to moods, ideas and feelings

Resource 2

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Making Masks (Lesson 6)

The children can make masks in an earlier lesson. The masks can be any style, but cut extra-large eye holes so that the children can see enough to dance safely. Masks must fit comfortably over the head and not slip - so that they follow the head movements without getting in the way or falling off. The masks can represent clowns, animals, or whatever has been inspired by the 'The Circular Seasons' 6-week lesson plan. For children who are not accustomed to dancing, the mask may help them to feel relaxed and more comfortable with dancing and with other children.