



Education &  
Communities

*Public Schools NSW*



# Dancing with D'Arts

## Teacher handbook

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## Session 1: Getting started

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In this session, we will be looking at:

- strategies and techniques to help support a creative yet safe space to dance
- finding out who is in the class and how to best support them
- techniques to help students with a diverse range of needs.

### Setting up the dance space

- Ensure the room is bright, free from obstacles and accessible for all students. Your room may need more tactile objects if you have low vision or blind students. You may need to describe what is in the room or point to objects in the room to remind students to be safe. As a task, ask the students to calculate the size of the room so they are already thinking of the space before you move.
- Have the music source close at hand and easily accessible. Create several music playlists to draw on depending on the task of the day. Use a mix of music that is varied from soundtracks, soundscapes, contemporary, popular and old-school favourites.
- For any hearing impaired or deaf students that require a bass sound for vibration sensations, set up the sound system on the floor (and a wooden floor if possible).
- Depending on the time allowed and who is in the room, suggest taking off school shoes and having comfortable clothes to move in (sports uniform) for this session.

### Creative strategies for engaging students

- Use the 'voices on and off' method to set up control and bring the class back to focus when needed. This is an arm action based on Auslan (Australian Sign Language). The students will enjoy this method, like a game to keep quiet when needed.
- Use word stimulus such as 'freeze' or the Auslan sign for 'freeze' as a visually fun way to allow students to hold a shape or stop in the room if it's unsafe.
- Using simple copying of actions rather than instructing students through using your voice sets up the students to use the follow-the-leader technique. Of course, students who may have a vision disability or who are blind may require more descriptive words to begin. Keep these words colourful and not boring, perhaps using a different voice than the usual teaching voice to engage.

### Who's in the class?

Find time at the beginning of the class to discover who is in class today and use the energy and students in the room to find out what is happening in their life.

For example, some students may have struggled to get to school by bus, so this could be useful when creating a dance task today – you could do a transport dance to ease the concern for this student.

Allow students to express ideas and contribute to the creative process. This can be a powerful and effective way to enhance the learning process. Remember, there is no wrong when it comes to learning dance. The only limitation is coming from the perspective of what dance is supposed to be!

## Support

Trying to do and be everything for all students can be challenging for a teacher, so having someone to support you during these classes is really helpful. A support person or carer can assist you in monitoring each student's needs – this is critical for a successful session.

A deaf or hard-of-hearing student may need assistance, such as an interpreter, to attend the session. Other students could also assist you in the session, making it a valuable experience for all.

## Teaching techniques

Using fast, quirky movements or noises, such as simple clapping rhythms or sounds, can help engage students and spark attention.

- Visual cards or images on your smart board can also trigger creative shapes and movements.
- Learn how to fingerspell words using the Auslan Sign Bank (see resource list) or use a trained interpreter to help with communication but also trigger more creative ways to move.

## Resources

- [Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus \(2006\)](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/creative-arts-k-6-syllabus): [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/creative-arts-k-6-syllabus](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/creative-arts-k-6-syllabus)
- [Dance 7–10 Syllabus \(2003\)](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/dance-7-10): [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/dance-7-10](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/dance-7-10)
- [Dance Life Skills Stage 6 Syllabus \(2009\)](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-creative-arts/dance-life-skills): [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-creative-arts/dance-life-skills](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-creative-arts/dance-life-skills)
- [Supporting students with disability in learning](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/diversity-in-learning/special-education/supporting-students-with-disability-in-learning): [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/diversity-in-learning/special-education/supporting-students-with-disability-in-learning](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/diversity-in-learning/special-education/supporting-students-with-disability-in-learning)
- [Inclusive dance workshop for teachers](http://artsunit.nsw.edu.au/program/inclusive-dance-workshop-for-teachers): [artsunit.nsw.edu.au/program/inclusive-dance-workshop-for-teachers](http://artsunit.nsw.edu.au/program/inclusive-dance-workshop-for-teachers)
- [Inclusive practice hub](http://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub): [education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub](http://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub)
- [Auslan Signbank](http://auslan.org.au): [auslan.org.au](http://auslan.org.au)
- [Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children Auslan Tutor: Key Signs](https://apps.apple.com/au/app/ridbc-auslan-tutor-key-signs/id390629037): [apps.apple.com/au/app/ridbc-auslan-tutor-key-signs/id390629037](https://apps.apple.com/au/app/ridbc-auslan-tutor-key-signs/id390629037)
- [Auslan Dictionary](https://apps.apple.com/au/app/auslan-dictionary/id1531368368): [apps.apple.com/au/app/auslan-dictionary/id1531368368](https://apps.apple.com/au/app/auslan-dictionary/id1531368368)

## Session 2: The Howdy Partner warm-up

### Howdy Partner warm-up

1. Students travel around the space in different directions, forming pathways. This may be a walk, skip, crawl or travelling in a wheelchair.
2. As students travel past people, they can use any body part to react or say 'hi' to someone nearby. Students can create their own 'hi' gesture or borrow a movement from a friend (which helps with students who aren't comfortable creating but are happy to mimic movement)
3. Repeat, but this time with eyes closed and using senses to feel when others are near.
4. Add some variation to the 'hi' gesture:
  - Levels – use high or low levels to greet classmates.
  - Tempo – move in slow motion or at a very fast speed.
  - Size – make the movement bigger or smaller.
  - Use visual cards to indicate when and how to change the movement.
  - Use the Auslan sign for 'How are you?' (sweeping open palm across chest into thumbs up sign). Students may respond to this with 'I'm good!' (one thumbs up) or 'I'm great!' (2 thumbs up) or any variety of ways to express how they are feeling.
  - Add abstract words to suggest movement, such as red rock, spaghetti, cowboy, or super shape.

### Howdy Partner dance

Time	Movement
1 x 8 beats	Travel to a friend for 8 beats.
1 x 4 beats	'How are you?' shape or movement based on the Auslan sign
1 x 4 beats	Friend 'I'm great!' thumbs up
1 x 4 beats	Clap – this can be interpreted as clap and then clap a friend
1 x 4 beats	Slap body parts or clap your friend.
1 x 4 beats	4 dodge movements (small side-to-side movements)
1 x 8 beats	8 beats do-si-do (partners going around each other)
1 x 8 beats	Sydney Harbour Bridge/bridge (make a bridge shape with a friend and give it a bridge name)
1 x 8 beats	Swing the gate/friend around in a circle.
1 x 4 beats	Freeze in your 'hi' body shape.
1 x 4 beats	Add final word stimulus such as 'pop!'
Repeat by travelling to a new friend and continue to repeat meeting everyone in the space.	

## Ideas to add variation to the Howdy Partner dance

- Change the theme of the meet-n-greet dance – for example, a bush dance or insect dance.
- Change the music.
- Change the tempo.
- Change the formation to have 2 lines facing each other.

## Recap

- Remember, this is just a template to explore the space, time and dynamics of the room with other people.
- The style can be adapted or changed to suit students' abilities and responses. It is also very friendly and fun, and students respond very quickly, particularly when you use appropriate music with a clear beat or fun words.
- As the dance is very repetitive, the students can feel comfortable that they can pick it up each time it comes around again. For some students, doing the same dance each week as a warm-up or introduction can be comforting and rewarding when they remember the dance.

## Resources

Download *Howdy Partner* audio track by Pee Wee Ferris.

### Other music suggestions

- Wild Wild West (American cowboy feel)
- Along the Road to Gundagai
- Bush Dance – Willydidj Djaykun (as an indigenous twist to a barn dance)
- Turkey in the Straw – American Square Dance Band
- Cotton Eye Joe – Rednex mix

### Other resources

- [Seven Brides for Seven Brothers](https://youtu.be/TygmMPbwfjA): [youtu.be/TygmMPbwfjA](https://youtu.be/TygmMPbwfjA)
- [Contra Dance Choreography, A Reflection of Social Change](https://cdss.org/elibrary/dart), by Mary McNab Dart: [cdss.org/elibrary/dart](https://cdss.org/elibrary/dart)

## Session 3: Sequences and dance blocks – disco dance

Encourage students to research the disco dance era of the 1970s. Use references such as John Travolta from the film *Saturday Night Fever* or an image of people going to a party. Tell the students about what people may have worn to the disco, such as flares, shiny outfits or cool suits. Have fun with this description; even if the students are not aware of this era, your energy about this era and the style will be interpreted in their movements.

Using the stimulus of the Howdy Partner dance from the previous session, we can now build on this to create a more formal dance. We can extend the Howdy Partner dance by creating a story through dance about going to a disco to meet a friend.

### Disco dance

Time	Movement
To start	Group students at an imaginary disco door. Use 4 shapes/poses to say 'let me in' so the imaginary bouncer at the door can say 'Yes, you can come in.' A carer or student may act as the bouncer deciding if the shapes or poses are fabulous enough to allow them to come into the disco. Remember to suggest different level shapes and qualities such as a smooth shape, sharp shape or cool shape. These shapes can be based on a visual stimulus, such as an image of John Travolta from the film <i>Saturday Night Fever</i> or an image of people going to a party.
2 x 8 beats	Travelling locomotor movement: enter the imaginary disco with attitude by way of using a head movement or a strut or a move that looks like John Travolta from <i>Saturday Night Fever</i> (or choose someone more current).
4 x 8 beats	Disco sequence: create a sequence with students with disco-style movements or use the 'hi' body shapes created in the warm-up session. Note: this sequence can then be repeated again at any stage during the dance.
4 x 8 beats	Add a transition, such as a conga line or follow the leader to a new formation in the space.
8 x 8 beats	Add the Howdy Partner dance sequence, but this time change the formation by facing 2 lines opposite each other as in a contra line or maybe a line dance.
4 x 8 beats	Add a final transition, such as a turn or spin, before travelling back to the imaginary disco doors to finish in a group shape.
Hold to end	Group shape finish – imagine posing for a photo finish.

## Recap

- This is a short dance, which can be created quite quickly in one session with the students.
- Remember to cater to who is in your classroom. The suggested durations may be either too fast or too slow for your students. A student in a wheelchair may need more time to do a 'do-si-do', so perhaps suggest that the other students do 2 'do-si-dos' to their one movement.
- Adding a finishing position to your short dance can suggest accomplishment for the students. It also gives the composition a strong format with a definite ending.
- Add variations such as different directions, maybe introduce a cannon movement (like a Mexican wave) or change the tempo to the existing Howdy Partner dance.
- Other sequences can be added to this dance to continue building and extending the dance, such as the Bus Stop dance. Adding another dance sequence each week will help you to build a performance piece for the next assembly or school concert.
- Allowing students to create their moves or shapes gives them not only ownership over the dance but is an excellent way to help them remember their moves.
- Costumes and props can also be added for dynamics.

## Resources

Download *Howdy Partner* or *Party Time* audio tracks by Pee Wee Ferris.

### Other music suggestions

- Stayin Alive – Bee Gees
- Disco Inferno – The Trammps
- Play that Funky Music – Wild Cherry
- YMCA – Village People
- Rock This Party (Everybody Dance Now) – Bob Sinclair

### Video resources

- Saturday Night Fever: [youtu.be/sT2daisxdvA](https://youtu.be/sT2daisxdvA)
- YMCA music video: [youtu.be/CS9O00S5w2k](https://youtu.be/CS9O00S5w2k)



## Session 4: Sequences and dance blocks – green fingernails

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### Overview

This session is about creating simple dance sequences, using verbal cues to engage students. Using everyday words, you can trigger ideas of shapes or movements for the students to respond to. For example, the word 'throw' as in 'throw the money' is an evocative phrase that guides the students' movement.

Another fun phrase to use is 'green fingernails'. Using a descriptive and exaggerated voice also reinforces the experience of this movement. Verbal cues also enable low-vision or vision-impaired students to react to a word command instead of a step-based sequence.

### Green Fingernail dance

This sequence can be done in unison as a group.

Time	Movement
Start	Arrange the students to face the teacher to mirror the moves.
1 x 4 beats	'Green fingernails' and cross – show your green fingernails, then cross, then over.
1 x 4 beats	'Feel a fat cow' and close – extend 2 arms sideways to feel imaginary cows, then bring them down.
1 x 4 beats	'Squish a cockroach' – use your feet or body part to squish an imaginary cockroach.
1 x 4 beats	Repeat 'squish a cockroach' maybe with another body part.
1 x 2 beats	'Throw the money' – 2 arms throwing imaginary money forward.
1 x 2 beats	'Hands in your pockets' – put your hands in your imaginary pockets.
1 x 2 beats	'Beats pop' – pop your shoulders, head or any body part.
1 x 2 beats	'Freeze' or 'I don't care' arm gesture.

## Sequence variations

- Use different directions or create a different formation. Perhaps arrange rows of students facing alternate directions.
- Use different tempo (speed of the movement) – perform the dance at a regular tempo, then repeat the dance in double time.
- Use a cannon or staggered start with different lines of students starting at different times.
- The students can create their own dance by linking word patterns. Encourage students to come up with a crazy word for the teacher or students to respond with a dance movement.
- The dance can take on many different formats and styles by changing the music, creating a new yet familiar experience.

## Recap

- Get creative with imaginative visual and word stimuli as a starting point to create a sequence. Reinforce what the students are learning through repetition.
- Build on existing material by adding new moves called 'dance blocks' to sequences.
- Feel free to adapt any movements to suit the abilities of individual students.
- Allow the students a sense of ownership in the creative process.
- Remember, adding some short dance sequences together each week allows you to create a performance piece for the next assembly or school concert.

## Resources

Download *Party Time* audio track by Pee Wee Ferris.

### Other music suggestions

- Students can choose the latest popular dance track. This gives them ownership and makes them more engaged.
- Use a current movie soundtrack theme.

### Other resources

- [Sample work Creative Arts K–6 Stage 3: Dance: Shape Dance:](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/resource-finder/sample-work/creative-arts/sample-work-creative-arts-k-6-st3-dance-shape-dance)  
[educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/resource-finder/sample-work/creative-arts/sample-work-creative-arts-k-6-st3-dance-shape-dance](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/resource-finder/sample-work/creative-arts/sample-work-creative-arts-k-6-st3-dance-shape-dance)
- [Sample work Creative Arts K–6 Stage 3: Dance: Rainbow Serpent:](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/resource-finder/sample-work/creative-arts/sample-work-creative-arts-k-6-st3-dance-rainbow-serpent)  
[educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/resource-finder/sample-work/creative-arts/sample-work-creative-arts-k-6-st3-dance-rainbow-serpent](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/resource-finder/sample-work/creative-arts/sample-work-creative-arts-k-6-st3-dance-rainbow-serpent)
- [PBS learning media – dance:](http://pbslearningmedia.org/subjects/the-arts/dance) [pbslearningmedia.org/subjects/the-arts/dance](http://pbslearningmedia.org/subjects/the-arts/dance)

## Session 5: Creating a dance program – Who are we?

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### Where to start

- **Stimulus** – start with finding stimuli for the dance program, which can trigger off movement or a creative idea. Examples include music, stories, words, thoughts, feelings, what's happening in your students' lives, or the environment.
- **Discussion** – often, students have a fascination or passion for something – maybe a cartoon character, video game, TV show or movie. A story dance can be developed from some history, for example, 'The Dinosaur Age'. Gather as many references as you can from the students – these can be drawings, cut-outs, images or internet references about the dance project.
- **Music** – usually, soundtracks are the best source when creating a dance piece for class or performance. Sometimes students have their own music they really respond to, and it's good to start with this as an accessible way in but then add other music for variety or dynamics.
- **Using elements of composition** – space, time, relationship and dynamics as a checklist.
- **Limitation of time** – combining grabs of choreography such as known dance blocks or sequences for your performance or final project.
- **Constantly reviewing/analysing** and appreciating the work from week to week.

### Effective choreography includes:

- dynamics – contrast, light and shade
- patterns, shapes/formations
- locomotive movement
- frozen moments
- relationship with music/others and the space.
- props/costumes
- refined and rehearsed choreography
- performers' enjoyment and commitment to the performance.

### Structuring each session

#### Warm-up

In every session, use a warm-up to engage and stimulate students and warm up the body in preparation for more creative tasks. Use a game from the previous units to build focus and concentration. Warming up is important for reintroducing movement memory to students and bringing awareness of the space in which you are dancing.

### Choose music/story/theme

Let's say our theme is 'dinosaurs'. Research the word and find some visual or movie stimulus, for example, a story about dinosaur bones at Lighting Ridge. Choose a variety of music tracks, some slow and chill-out styles, as well as upbeat and popular songs to explore each week. Remember, dance and other arts activities can trigger different reactions for students with and without a disability.

### Each week – planning/creating

Revisit a previously learnt creative task to engage the students before introducing new content. Allow time for discussion with students, brainstorming ideas on how to evolve the dance and incorporate props and costumes. As a general guide, approximately 4 different themes could be covered within a 10-week term.

### Performance/evaluation

The best advice is to allow more time than you think to prepare for the performance. Create an opportunity to familiarise students with performing by having a preview show to a small group of friends of other students. After the performance, gather together to evaluate and reflect on the performance with the students and staff.

If possible, video or photograph the rehearsal/performance to play back to the students.

### Creating a Who are we? dance

Often people with a disability have others helping them communicate by voicing for them or assisting when they are struggling. Sometimes students with a disability want to have their own voice – which ironically can be told through mime and movements with this task.

Steps	Movement
1	Choose a body part to communicate your name on a low level.
2	Follow this by using a body part to describe where you live by making some simple shapes to suggest a house, or unit block, with a door or roof.
3	Choose another body part or the whole body to imitate a favourite animal. You may choose to add more options, such as a favourite hobby.
4	Repeat this sequence again but on another level (perhaps standing).
5	Link the dance elements and levels together to create a dance phrase.
6	Then on another level – either vertical or travelling the movement or standing up.
7	Perform this dance with music. Or choose for everyone to perform one student's routine.

## Resources

Download *The Theme* audio track by Pee Wee Ferris.

### Dance resources

- [Bangarra Dance Theatre: bangarra.com.au](http://bangarra.com.au)
- [Ausdance NSW: ausdancensw.com.au](http://ausdancensw.com.au)
- [Accessible Arts: aarts.net.au](http://aarts.net.au)
- [DirtyFeet: dirtyfeet.com.au](http://dirtyfeet.com.au)
- [The Australian Ballet: australianballet.com.au](http://australianballet.com.au)
- [Restless Dance Theatre: restlessdance.org](http://restlessdance.org)
- [DV8 Physical Theatre: dv8.co.uk](http://dv8.co.uk)
- [Candoco Dance Company: candoco.co.uk](http://candoco.co.uk)
- [Candoco Dance Company – Unlimited Commissions:youtu.be/Utpg6A5fnWo](https://youtu.be/Utpg6A5fnWo)
- [AXIS Dance Company: axisdance.org](http://axisdance.org)

## Session 6: Creating a dance program – Mirror Mirror

Students can learn about dance in so many ways. They can experience dance just by moving to a beat or music; they can model a teacher or learn formal dance styles such as tap, jazz, ballet, and so on.

In this task, the tutor improvises movements for the students to follow, such as abstract body shapes, locomotive movements or arm gestures and expressions.

Explain to the students they are to copy movements as closely as possible as if they are looking in a mirror. This can be a silent exercise, or perhaps use a trigger word every now and again.

### Mirror Mirror warm-up

Steps	Movement
Start	Choose a mix of slow, medium and fast music. The movement doesn't need to be complex, just sincere. Begin the dance by sitting on the floor or on a low level.
1	Move only isolated body parts, for example, fingers first. The students will follow, imitating the mirror image.
2	Tap fingers over the head.
3	Shoulder rolls
4	Different facial expression
5	Hiding the face with elbows
6	Do these improvised body parts using different tempos and use frozen moments.
7	Now add lower body movements.
8	Change to different levels and, depending on the students' ability, more complex movements can be explored.

### Variation

- Alternatively, instead of music, the teacher can use a verbal story while creating a movement for the students to follow or create.
- Students can work in pairs or small groups taking turns to be the creator or the mirror.
- Watch the students as they create their own movement – there may be something to draw on for the performance.

## Mirror Mirror dance

Steps	Movement
Start	Choose 4 different mirror shapes, including expression and different levels – this can be chosen from the warm-up task.
1	Ask the students to create the movement in between the shapes. This is called the 'transitional' movement, or you can call it the 'liquid' movement in-between.
2	One student is the leader, and the others follow, creating a mirror image.
3	Add a locomotive movement. This can be a single travelling movement from the starting shape to another space on the floor. For example, it could be a slither or a sharp robot movement.
4	Now swap leaders, starting again with the 4 shapes and liquid movement in between.
5	Finish by making a locomotive movement to a freeze position.

## Variation

- This exercise can be adapted to suit vision-impaired students to feel and copy the mirror shape.
- Use descriptive words for liquid movement stimuli such as 'slither' or 'robotic movement'. This will give the students a descriptive way of moving rather than a physical right or wrong way.

## Recap

- Allow the students ownership to create the movements, as this will build confidence – remember, nothing is incorrect!
- This task is user-friendly. It's fascinating to watch how each student creates movement in 'mirror mirror' style and how each student interprets the movements of others.

## Resources

Download *Water Music* audio track by Pee Wee Ferris.

### Other music suggestions

- Man in the Mirror – Michael Jackson
- Mirror Mirror – Hi-5
- Mirror Mirror motion picture soundtrack – Alan Menken

## Session 7: Creating a dance program – props and stuff

Props can be a good way to add dynamics to a dance performance while giving students confidence.

Adding a shiny, coloured or textured piece of fabric can be exciting to use. Ensure you have enough different pieces of fabric to share between 2 or 3 students.

Hats and other character props can add depth to a performance – however, they can also hide students, so take care. Using props such as ribbon sticks, canes and glow-in-the-dark batons can be effective, particularly if done in synchronisation.

### Creative task – fabric dance

Steps	Movement
Start	Choose a piece of fabric about 2.5 metres in length.
1	Create a circle with the fabric stretched between people in the circle – this can be broken down into a few circles if needed.
2	One or 2 students can be in the middle of the circle underneath the fabric.
3	Create different shapes by leaning in different directions and using levels. The person(s) underneath can use arms/body parts to create further shapes and abstract movement.
4	Add a variation of slow motion and sharp, quick actions with the fabric.
5	Now travel around the space but keep everyone together in their group. As the group travels, explore different levels and tempos.
6	Choose a finishing position, such as a dinosaur shape or a mountain shape.

### Recap

Although this is a simple task, it engages everyone in the class. This can be very helpful for certain students who don't want to be creative or dance leaders but can happily follow around and want to be part of the crowd.

It also can make some very interesting shapes and abstract movements. To add variation, it can be part of the beginning of a story or a way to add dynamics to a dance piece.



## Creative task – paper dance

Steps	Movement
Start	Scatter pieces of coloured paper on the floor around the room.
1	Students can use a simple locomotive movement to pick up 2 different pieces of coloured paper, each from a different part of the room, within a certain time frame.
2	As they travel to collect the paper, the teacher directs them to move at different tempos.
3	The teacher then adds abstract words such as 'move like a super person', move using silly gestures' or 'freeze like a snowflake'.
4	Once the students have both papers, they can perform with them, creating different shapes on the spot as supermodels or super shapes.
5	Create a dance sequence using the paper as a prop and add locomotive movements. Perform to music.

## Variation using 2 groups

**Group 1:** Ask the students to create a large shape on the floor, such as a square, circle or triangle. See if they can arrange themselves into this shape without assistance and then freeze in position.

**Group 2:** Once the triangle shape is ready, the other group can step in, out and around the shape whilst collecting the paper off the ground.

Swap groups and repeat.

As a finishing statement, create a volcano shape, then explode the volcano by throwing the paper in the air on cue.

### Resources

Download *Water Music* audio track by Pee Wee Ferris.

### Other prop ideas

- Use noisy props such as drums, shakers and rhythm sticks – these can be created from recycle bottles, ice cream tubs, paddle pop sticks, rice inside a container as a shaker, and so on.
- Scarves, gloves, hats
- LED light sticks or glow sticks
- Chinese/Japanese fans or umbrellas

## Session 8: Performance and outcomes – Dinosaur Dig dance

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### 1. Find the stimulus

This can be a story, word, shape, history, video game, visual images or TV series. Continuing with our dinosaur theme, a show such as *Walking with Dinosaurs* or a movie like *Night at the Museum* may provide a jumping point for this dance.

### 2. Research

Research the topic as a group to find stories and ideas that encourage discussion to enhance the creative process.

### 3. Analyse

Look at some images of dinosaurs, particularly the stance and the movement of a dinosaur and how they interact with each other. Also, look at fossils and maybe dinosaur bones exposed to wind and erosion.

### 4. Discussion

Ask students what they think happened to dinosaurs. Why did they die? Extinction? Climate change? Asteroid impact? Volcano?

### 5. Start creating a dinosaur dance

Start with as many different dinosaur shapes alone on different levels. Join the shape with a friend – link up to form one dinosaur. Add locomotive movement, moving like a slow dinosaur.

Now change the levels, the movement tempo, frozen shapes, and transition into the locomotive movement.

### 6. Creative task

Look at a picture of the landscape where dinosaurs used to roam. Create an abstract landscape shape with or without a friend. Use words to stimulate movement and shapes, such as rocks, cold and shake. Travel like an explorer looking for fossils or the spirit of the dinosaur. Create a fossil shape or travel around the fossil shape.

### 7. Tell a story

Compose a story to tell through dance based on what you learned about dinosaurs. This gives the dance a strong structure, making it easier for students to remember. Collate a string of dance sequences together to form a story through dance.

## Dinosaur Dig dance

Steps	Movement
Start	Allocate students to be either dinosaurs or explorers. Then ask the dinosaur to freeze in a fossil or a rock shape on the ground in the performance space.
1	The explorers then enter the space using a travelling locomotive movement, with an expression of looking around and carefully stepping over the fossils and rocks. Maybe they can jump or leap or balance.
2	Explorers find a fossil shape, travel around the shape on the ground and then freeze.
3	In slow motion, the fossil shapes suddenly morph into live dinosaurs! Dinosaurs wake up and begin coming to life using different body parts. They can start this on a lower level and grow into a higher level.
4	The explorers unfreeze to create 3 shapes with the dinosaurs, thus creating a relationship between the 2. The stimulus for this can be words chosen at the beginning of the session.
5	Linking up in pairs, the students travel in slow motion around the space, passing other pairs. This locomotive movement can include using different levels, slow motion tempo and pauses.
6	Using simple dance blocks, the group can travel in and out of the circle, travelling clockwise or anti-clockwise. Many patterns could be created by using 2 circles.
7	Finally, the entire group travels to the centre to form a rock shape together. Create an explosion by throwing the paper in the air (this could also be streamers) and a final meltdown to the ground.

### Resources

Download *The Theme* audio track by Pee Wee Ferris.

#### Other music ideas

- Walk the Dinosaur
- Jurassic Park
- Rango (movie soundtrack)

#### Other dance story ideas

- Happy Feet – penguin story
- Night at the Museum
- Time travel
- The archaeologist
- The fossil

## Session 9: Performance and outcomes – Two Tribes dance

This session is designed for high school students, though it could easily be adapted to cater to a younger group. The stimulus draws on the topic of bullying, telling a story about 2 different groups who each think they are right. In this task, we tell a story through performance, facial and body expression, timing and energy.

After asking a question to the students about what a tribe of people is, the students came up with hip-hop tribes, insect tribes, fashion model tribes, and people who ate chocolate tribes. Essentially, a tribe is a collection of people interested in the same thing.

The stimulus could also be after watching or discussing the film *West Side Story* (1961) with choreography by Jerome Robbins or looking at Michael Jackson's *Bad* video clip.

### Two Tribes dance

Steps	Movement
Start	Have 2 or 3 student groups in formations at either end of the dance space or in groups facing different directions. Ask them to form a tribe pose that reflects their group and includes different levels. Make it a photographic moment – a frozen picture! Ask each group to create a tribe name.
1	Then create 4 strong poses, using prior discussion as the stimulus. Each pose needs to be in a contrasting shape.
2	Use the 'green fingernails' dance sequence as a non-locomotive movement in the tribe formation.
3	For variation, use a cannon or a staggered start with each group. Start each group after 8 beats – this will extend the timing for this dance.
4	Then use the same 'green fingernails' sequence as a locomotive movement, performing as they travel across the room.
5	Repeat the same sequence, but this time, perform as a unison group while facing the front.
6	Add the 'howdy partner' sequence, but perhaps change the tempo for impact.
7	Freeze in a shape that conveys a tribal stance.
8	Now add a locomotive movement, with the tribes moving as a group to face the other tribe, ready to battle.
9	Today, just the 2 leaders created their own battle and conclusion, while the rest of the group held a shape. This was a creative decision based on who was in the class that day. You can choose to create a finishing formation depending on how your students choose to end the story!

### Resources

Download *Mass Confusion* audio track by Pee Wee Ferris.

#### Other music ideas

- West Side Story opening prologue
- Hip-hop rap music
- Two Tribes – Frankie Goes to Hollywood
- Warrior – Havana Brown
- Tribe – Tunnidge

#### Video ideas

- Beat Street (1984) – Rock Steady Crew
- Bad – Michael Jackson

## Session 10: Performance opportunities and recap

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Remember, these tasks are templates – each can be adapted to suit your students.

As in many art forms, dance has its fashions and fads. So, don't be afraid to use your students to generate your ideas. Keep up with the latest movies, video games and internet sites to use references they'll respond to.

Don't be afraid to try new ideas and throw yourself into the deep end. You and your students can afford to take creative risks.

Enjoy your dance sessions – it will keep you creative and alive!

### Resources

- The Arts Unit – inclusive opportunities: [artsunit.nsw.edu.au/digital-resources/inclusive-opportunities](https://artsunit.nsw.edu.au/digital-resources/inclusive-opportunities)
- Schools Spectacular: [schoolsspectacular.com.au](https://schoolsspectacular.com.au)
- Combined Schools Signing Choir: [artsunit.nsw.edu.au/local-arts-programs/combined-schools-signing-choir](https://artsunit.nsw.edu.au/local-arts-programs/combined-schools-signing-choir)
- Accessible Arts: [aarts.net.au](https://aarts.net.au)
- Accessible Arts: Engaging Students with Disability Forum: [aarts.net.au/news/engaging-students-with-disability-forum](https://aarts.net.au/news/engaging-students-with-disability-forum)
- Creative Arts K–6 Syllabus (2006): [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/creative-arts-k-6-syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/creative-arts-k-6-syllabus)
- Dance 7–10 Syllabus (2003): [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/dance-7-10](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/dance-7-10)
- Dance Life Skills Stage 6 Syllabus (2009): [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-creative-arts/dance-life-skills](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-creative-arts/dance-life-skills)

## Safety, inclusion and other forms of dance

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As you start to explore movement on a more complex level, you must remember to be safe. Many dance styles are not safe for everyone, such as the popular hip-hop style of break dance. Dance means you can still push the boundaries but do it slowly and build up to more risky movement when the body becomes secure.

Include a mix of students in the creative process. Other students at school will value the experience of working with students with disability. It allows more creative thought and explores the notion of who can and what is dance. Often very creative outcomes come from a mixed-student approach.

Don't be afraid to explore all types of movement, from cultural to popular dance. Using different styles of movement students can relate to, such as hip hop or popular culture movements, gives the students a sense of achievement and helps them to feel they are like their peers.

Use beatboxing vocal techniques to create sounds and rhythms to form the soundtrack to the dance. Use words or phrases helps to trigger movement memory, such as 'heart pop' or 'break it down'.

### Resources

- [Ausdance – safe dance](https://ausdance.org.au/topics/details/safe-dance): [ausdance.org.au/topics/details/safe-dance](https://ausdance.org.au/topics/details/safe-dance)
- [Ausdance – safe dance practice article](https://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/safe-dance-practice): [ausdance.org.au/articles/details/safe-dance-practice](https://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/safe-dance-practice)
- [Restless Dance Theatre](https://restlessdance.org): [restlessdance.org](https://restlessdance.org)