



## Dance Warm-up Ideas

Below are a range of activities that could be used as warm-ups in dance lessons:

### Stretches

- Ask each of the children to find a space - give them a count of 16 to be in a space and ready.
- Show the children a stretch they must copy. Start at the top of the body and work all the way down stretching the major body parts - arms and legs.
- Ensure the children also mobilise their wrists as they will be using them throughout the lesson.

Also include actions such as:

- Shoulder rolls; forwards and backwards
- Arm circles of varying sizes; forwards and backwards
- Hip circles; both ways
- Wrist circles; both ways
- Ankle circles; both ways
- After performing the stretches ask the children to 'shake out their body'

### Let's Get Loose

The aim of the following activities is to mobilise the joints and get them ready for exercise. The children need be in a space to perform the actions.

Twister: to warm up hips

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart
- Raise arms to shoulder height, holding them straight out at the side of the body
- Keeping feet still, twist the top half of the body from one side to the other
- Keep twisting the body at hips from one side to the other

Side Lean: to warm up the back and sides

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart
- Place hands on hips
- Keeping the back straight, without leaning forwards or backwards, bend to one side, hold for a count of 4 then move to lean to the other side holding for a count of 4
- Repeat the actions a few times

Shoulder Rotation: to warm up shoulders

- Hold arms straight out at side of body at shoulder height
- Rotate arms in a large circular motion with the arm brushing the ears and hips as they move past them
- Variations include - moving one arm at a time; both arms together; arms forwards; arms backwards

Knees-Up: to warm up legs

- Stand up tall with the back straight, looking forwards
- Start walking on the spot lifting knees up high in front of the body - knees should raise up to hip height
- Gradually increase speed of the action so it is performed jogging and then running



## **High, Medium and Low**

- Ask the children to move around the area in different ways (e.g. leaping, jumping, skipping).
- As they move around keep asking the children to "Freeze" in a high, medium or low position.
- Keep repeating the activity with the children moving in different ways and freezing at different levels

Progression:

Ask the children to freeze in different positions e.g. 'funky' shapes

## **For the Count**

Ask the children to find a space to work in.

The children should perform the following actions, one after another, on the spot for a count of 16:

- Jogging
- Star Jumps
- High Knees
- Heel Flicks

The children should count out loud as they perform the actions. Repeat each of these movements on the spot for counts of 8, 4 and 2

## **Get Mobile**

Ask the children to find a space to work in.

The children should perform the following actions:

- Shoulder Rolls - Roll the shoulders forwards and backwards x8 each way
- Arm Circles - Put arms straight out to the side and make little circles forwards x8 then backwards x8
- Arm Circles - Repeat arm circles making bigger circles forwards x8 then backwards x8
- Hip Circles - Put hands on hips and circle x8 repeat both ways
- Ankle Circles - Slightly raising one leg off the ground, circle one foot x8 both ways. Repeat with other ankle
- Shake it Out - Finally ask the children to give their body a good shake out

## **The Object Game**

- Ask the children to find a space to play in.
- Call out different objects e.g. characters, objects, animals.
- The children must get into a position / shape that reflects that object

Progression:

Call out different objects as described above but this time the children must move around the area in the way the object would

## **Freeze Dance**

- Ask the children to move around the room, when you say "freeze" the children must freeze in an unusual position.
- Ask the children to move in different ways and at different speeds



## Pass the Dance

- All stand in a circle.
- Choose one child to start the dance, they can do any movement they want and the rest of the class must copy their movements.
- The dance is then passed around the circle with each child performing an action that the rest of the class must copy.

Progression:

Perform this activity to music

## Object Dance

- Spread objects around the room and ask the children to move around the room.
- When the music stops the children must pick up an object and freeze with it.
- Challenge the children to think of interesting poses where the object is not necessarily used in its traditional way

## Bean Game

Ask the children to move around the space performing the actions of different beans:

- Runner Bean – Children run around the room
- Jumping Bean – Children jump around the room
- Chilli Bean – Children act like they are freezing cold
- French Bean – Children say “oo la la”
- Baked Bean – children curl up in a ball on the floor
- Beans on Toast – children get with a partner, one lays straight out on the floor and the other curled up like the bean next to them

You can create and introduce your own beans to the game

## Musical Cones

- Lay out enough cones so there is one for each child to stand next to.
- Ask the children to move around the area in different ways when the music starts.
- When the music stops they must find a cone to stand next to as quickly as possible.
- Keep repeating the activity but removing a number of cones each time until you have a winner/group of winners

## Stop, Go

- Ask the children to walk around the area.
- As they move around the space, call out pairs of instructions such as “Stop and Go” or “Jump and Clap”.
- The children must perform these actions and then continue to move around the area.
- Keep calling out pairs of actions and varying the way the children move around the area

Progression:

Reverse the instructions so “Jump and Clap” actually means “Clap and Jump”