

Twinkle Star Dance™

ShowSTARS™ Tap

Curriculum and Sample Lesson Plan 6-8 & 7-10

*Tiffany Henderson with LoRee Kenagy
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Tap Syllabus

Core Curriculum and Terminology: Tap

Ages: 5-7 or 7-10 years old

Class Length: 45 – 60 minutes

The class is broken into 6 sections (10 minutes per section). Try to do 1 to 3 skills from each section per class. Repeating exercises is encouraged, as it gives the student a sense of accomplishment and, a time to rest the connection. New exercises are also encouraged to keep the focus of the young dancer. Keeping it alive for you will keep it alive for them.

Uploaded to the TSD teacher galleries are exercises that can be used to construct combinations with all aforementioned steps. Use “take the base and replace” to substitute any “step” with the “step” used in the exercise.

Remember, a wide and strong understanding of basic technique is more important than the quantity of steps learned. Agility, repetition, articulation, control of volume, and mechanical use of feet are the goals.

This is just a general outline. Steps can be made simpler or more complicated as necessary.

Section 1- Center Warm-Up

SST01 Muscle Building: Burning Ankles (any age)

SST02 Coordination: Popcorn (6-8), Around the World (7-10), Around the World with Claps (7-10)

Taps front side back, alternating, varied rhythms

Heel Digs front side back, alternating, varied rhythms

Toe Digs front side back, alternating, varied rhythms

Ball Drops Right, Left, alternating, varied rhythms

Heel Drops Right, Left, alternating, varied rhythms

Clapping exercise:

Clap on 1 of the 8-count 4-8 times

Clap on 1 and 5 of the 8-count 4-8 times

Clap on 1,3,5, and 7 of the 8-count 4-8 times

Clap on 2 and 6 of the 8-count 4-8 times

Clap on 2,4,6, and 8 of the 8-count 4-8 times

***SST09* Comprehension: Side By Side (6-8), Rock Me (7-10)**

For younger beginners, a choreographed warm up gets blood flow going, and increases interest and excitement. Use to “wake up” a class before more concentrated technical work.

Section II - Barre (face bar for balance if necessary)

***SST03* Agility: Einee Meinee (7-10)**

***SST05* Weight Placement: Tap Placement Exercise (all ages),**

***SST06* Patterning: 3-2-1 Shuffles (6-8)**

Ball Drops	Front, side. Lift the leg straight up from the hip, not back from the knee.
Heel Digs	Front, side. Emphasize bounce.
Toe Pops	Back. Emphasize bounce.
Brush	Front, side. Make sure to use only the ball of the foot.
Flap	Front, side.
Spank	Back. Only use ball of the foot. Don't let foot swing back past the standing leg
Shuffle	Start slow and build speed gradually. Front-Side-Back and Crossing
Shuffle hop	Front, side
Digfle	Dig spank. Lift the knee, don't swing the leg. Front-Side-Back and Crossing
Digfle hop	Front, side
Stomp	Full foot drop. Takes no weight
Stamp	Full foot drop; Rebounds off the ground.
Up/Up	Two steps on the balls of feet

Down/Down Two stomps on the full foot

Hints:

-Create combinations that build and add on to the same song each week. Repeat these combos each week and add new exercises as they get stronger. "Choreography" will keep their attention, while also allowing you to turn around and watch them once they have it. It also saves time to maintain combinations weekly, rather than create them anew. Change music, speed, facing to keep it "new."

-Be creative with rests. Use their voices during rests to emphasize rhythm.

-Create one 'a cappella' exercise that uses rhythms found in nursery rhymes or other recognizable material.

Section III - Center Barre

SST03 Agility: Einee Meinee (7-10)

SST05 Weight Placement: Tap Change (all ages)

SST06 Patterning: 3-2-1 Shuffles (6-8)

Ball heel Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Heel toe Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Ball Change Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Flap Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Flap Heel Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Shuffle on one leg Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Shuffle hop Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Shuffle step Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Diggle on one leg Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Diggle hop Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Digfle step Vary rhythms, speeds, and directions.

Hints:

-Only do movement in the center that has been done at the barre - i.e. Don't do digfles in the center, if you haven't done them at barre that day.

-Mix up skills to challenge.

-Keep combinations even (i.e., 8R 8L 4R 4L 2R 2L and a break) before changing the pattern to 3s, 5s and 7s with rests.

-Create combos that remain the same to take advantage of time.

-Change up the way you show a combo. Try using your hands against the floor, clapping it with them, saying the counts, call and response, having them count and tap at the same time, one group taps the other group counts etc. The more methods, the more engaged they are through the class.

Section IV - Across the Floor

SST10 Improv: Basic 1 with Improv (all ages)

Steps	Staying on the music
Stomps	Staying on the music
Ball Heel	Separated sounds. Vary the rhythms
Heel Toe	Separated sounds. Vary the rhythms
Flap	Stretch the leg in eleve and lean forward
Flap Heel	Clear Heels
Flap Heel/Heel	Teach back/front, then front/back. Then travel it sideways and backwards
Running Flaps	Keep their heads from bobbing up and down.
Buffalo	Teach as step/shuffle/change. Do several versions, change the rhythm, placement, and replacing shuffle with digfle or stamp
Waltz Clog	Use to discuss time signature and counting in 3s and 4s

Hints:

-find positions for the arms that help with alignment of upper body, ie. hands on hips, arms flexed in second, hands reaching and clasped above head. Then allow them to move freely once they have the step. Encourage Mike Minery's "tap rules":

- 1. Get all the sounds*
- 2. Play the right rhythm*
- 3. Stay with the music*
- 4. Make it look cool!*

-emphasize across-the-floor etiquette -waiting 8-counts or 1 combo in between groups.

-Have waiting students keep the beat with hands, voice, etc. so they remain engaged.

-Be sure to choose music that clearly supports the steps.

-Do at an achievable tempo to begin. Then repeat the progression from the beginning at a faster tempo. You can also use Metronome Plus or IRealBook instead of music tracks.

Section V - New Skills (Center or Across the Floor)

(see Tap Dictionary for explanation and more options)

Flap Heel

Flap Ball Change

Shuffle Ball Change

Shuffle Hop Step (Irish)

Up Up Down Down (cramproll)

Grapevine

Stamp hop

Stamp hop change (preparation for time step)

Hints

-always draw the connections between the steps at the barre and the new skill. Be sure you understand why you are introducing the new step, or you risk the students not grasping the connectivity of technique etc.

-Vary the method you use to introduce new ideas. You can sit on the floor, write on a white board, play a game, sing, tell a story. Make the “new material” a special part of the class. Perhaps it is a reward for something that happened earlier in class. “*Your ball heels were SOOO fantastic that you are now ready for heel toe-all that hard work really pays off!*” This gives students reasons to care about their technique at the barre.

Section VI - Combination (Center)

Incorporate skills from all sections. This can be your end of the year choreography or not (i.e. at the beginning of the year, before we have a plan). As the performance approaches you can lengthen this time, but its best to teach a little each week and keep adding on rather than teach large sections of movement. This way there is more repetition.

If the students are prepared correctly, you should not have to “teach” (or breakdown) the center combination. It should be more about execution than explanation. It is here you begin to discuss performance quality HOW the step is done, not how to DO the step.

Let them perform for each other and you - Facing front/back. With the music, without. Talk about “what dancers do” and “what audiences do”.