

# WE DANCE

## Text Synopsis

*We Dance* is a nonfiction work written in the form of a scrapbook. On each double-page spread, the left-hand page contains a photograph of people dancing. The right-hand page contains a description of the photo, written in the first person, by a child in the photograph. These photos and descriptions touch on many different aspects of dance — the joy of expressing feelings through movement, the rewards of practice and collaboration, the pride of representing cultural traditions, and the fulfillment that comes with creativity. The book intentionally shows many different children, both male and female, engaged in dance, in order to send a simple message — dance is for everyone.

## LITERACY ELEMENTS

captions  
 punctuation: use of exclamation marks  
 proper nouns: e.g., Scotland, Josefina, Grandma, Anton  
 capitalization of proper nouns

## CONNECTIONS

MUSIC  
 communicate their response to music

VISUAL ARTS  
 use a range of independent and collaborative art-making strategies

## WORDS TO DISCOVER

butterflies  
 kites  
 kilt  
 Scotland  
 ballet  
 gracefully  
 exercises  
 Ukrainian  
 powwow  
 unfolded  
 celebration

## ESL CONSIDERATIONS

Discussions that focus on the photographs will help students understand words such as *kilt*, *Grandma*, *flower*, *party*, *ballet*, *powwow*.

## Overall Learning Opportunities

- 30
  - describe some of the basic elements of dance
  - interpret meaning using several basic dance techniques
  - create short dance pieces
- AB
  - Students will:
    - express clear responses to written materials, relating the ideas in them to their own knowledge and experience
    - organize ideas in a logical sequence
    - interpret, select, and combine information

## ACTIVITY MENU

**Exploration: Elements of Movement**, page 96

**Guided Reading**, pages 97–99

**As a Group**, pages 100–101

- 30
  - *Hello, Goodbye*: communicating through gesture and body language
  - *Animals in Motion*: creating dances that represent the movements of different animals
- AB
  - *Let's Find Out*: using a K-W-L chart to organize ideas
  - *Rhyme Time*: finding words that rhyme and creating rhyming couplets

**Independent Work**, pages 102–104

- *BLM 32*: describing movement
- *BLM 33*: distinguishing between true and false sentences
- *BLM 34*: completing a K-W-L chart



# Elements of Movement

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- identify and use some key elements of dance
- recognize and demonstrate movement sequences
- demonstrate the ability to move and control their bodies

## YOU WILL NEED

- space for movement
- a variety of music (see Grade 2 Audio CD Tracks 9, 15, and 20)

## OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- imitate your movements in a follow the leader game?
- improvise movements appropriate to verbal instructions?
- participate happily and comfortably?

## TEACHING tip

Use the proper terminology for movement (e.g., “Move with a strong energy.”) to talk about the children’s movements.

## Reading the Story

Invite the children to flip through *We Dance* and to select their favourite picture. Ask:

- What do you like about the picture you chose?
- What kind of movements can we see in the picture?

Ask children to share their own experiences (whether formal or informal) with dance.

## Starting the Exploration

Use a game of “follow the leader” as a warm-up. If space permits, have the children form a line behind you. Otherwise, you and the children should stand beside your desks and restrict your movements. Invite the children to imitate what you do. Start with simple movements using just one part of the body. As the game proceeds, use more body parts and make the movements more energetic and elaborate, such as:

- This time, let’s hop like a frog!

Ask a volunteer to be the leader for a while.

## Working on the Movement

There are elements of movement common to all dance forms: shape, energy, space, and time. **Shape** refers to the different positions that part or all of the body can take. **Energy** refers to the force of a movement — strong, soft, tentative, and so on. **Space** refers to both the level of the movement (low, medium, high) and the patterns used to move. **Time** refers to the speed of the movement — slow, medium, or fast.

Introduce the children to these elements by giving them cues, such as:

- Show me a round shape with just your hands.
- Show me a round shape with your whole body.
- Show me what a pencil looks like.
- Show me what a jelly doughnut looks like.
- Make your jelly doughnut as small as possible, as big as possible.
- Show me how your jelly doughnut tries to get away from someone who wants to eat it!
- Show me a snowflake falling.
- Show me a spider crawling up a wall.

Give a copy of **BLM 32** to each child. Point out the incomplete caption under the empty box. On the chalkboard, show them how the caption works:



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### Thing Action

I am a ball bouncing.

I am a cat drinking milk.

Invite each child to create a caption and a movement to express it. The completed BLM becomes a scrapbook page that shows and describes the movement.

## Sharing

Have each child demonstrate her or his movement. The “audience” should try to guess what the movement represents.

## Extension

Select three very different pieces of music (see Grade 2 Audio CD Tracks 9, 15, and 20). Play each one in turn. Challenge the children to move in ways that reflect the mood and energy of the music.

This Exploration works well with Stand-Alone Activity 9: “Secret Hiding Place” on page 137.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- restate information in a short nonfiction text in their own words
- use and interpret some conventions of formal texts
- respond to questions and directions

## YOU WILL NEED

- map of the world
- chart paper and marker

## OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- use the photographs to gain information about the various dances?
- locate the answers to your questions by reading the text to find out?
- appear task-committed?
- appear able to solve any reading struggles independently?

## TEACHING tip

On a map of the world and/or a globe, locate your community, Scotland (Highland dancing), and Ukraine (Ukrainian folk dancing). Invite the children to think about how these dances made their way to Canada.

## Setting the Scene

Invite the children to talk about things they love to do. Ask:

- If someone said, “For the next hour, you may do whatever you want to do,” how would you use that time?

As they offer their responses, make a list on chart paper — read, play video games, sing, play outside, watch TV, sleep, play with my friends, build something, and so on.

With the title of the book covered, show the children the photograph. Say:

- These children love to do something. What is it? Yes, that’s right, they love to dance.
- Do any of you love to dance? What kind of dancing do you love to do?

Invite the children’s responses and then show them the title of the book. Say:

- The title of the book is *We Dance*. Who is “We” in the title? What kind of dances do you think we’ll learn about in this book?

## Reading the Text

Hand out copies of the book as you say:

- The authors of the book are Lalie Harcourt and Ricki Wortzman. But there’s no illustrator. Do you know why? Yes, that’s right. This book has photographs. Someone took the photographs for this book with a camera.

Have the children turn to page 2 and look at the photograph. Say:

- Read the caption to find out who Kerris is dancing with.

➤ On page 3 we find out that Kerris and Josefina like to make up dances together. They dance to quiet music and pretend they are butterflies or kites. Sometimes they dance to loud music and pretend they’re wild animals. Sometimes they make up a story and put on a show for their families. Read this page to find out how dancing makes them feel.

➤ Turn to page 4. This boy’s name is Cameron. Do you know the name of the dance he’s doing? Read the caption to find out.

➤ Does the Highland dance look easy or hard to do? Why do you think so?

➤ On page 5, Cameron tells us that the Highland dance is from Scotland. He also tells us that there’s a lot to remember. Read to find out what you have to remember when you do this dance.

Turn to page 6. Say:

➤ In the photograph, Tony is at his dance class. Do you know what kind of dancing he’s doing? Read the caption to find out.

Ask:

- What do you know about ballet dancing? What can you learn about it from looking at the photograph?
- On page 7, Tony says, “Our teacher, Sandy, shows us how to keep our bodies straight and move gracefully to the music.”

What does moving *gracefully* mean?

- Tony says that they start every class “by doing stretching and warm-up exercises.” Why do you think Sandy has them start each class that way?
- Read the rest of the page to find out what part of the class is Tony’s favourite part.

Have the children turn to page 8. Say:

- Anton is the middle child in the front row. In the caption, Anton says, “I’m doing a Ukrainian dance.” Does anyone know what country a Ukrainian dance comes from? That’s right — Ukraine. And here’s where Ukraine is on the map.
- From the photograph, what do we know about doing a Ukrainian dance?
- Read Anton’s story on page 9 to find out: how old he was when he started dancing; where he and his dance group travel to put on shows; and why travelling is fun for Anton.

Turn to page 10 and look at the photograph. Say:

- This is Daniel. He’s dancing at a powwow. Do you know what a powwow is?
- The caption reads, “I’m dancing so fast!” How can you tell from the photograph that Daniel is dancing fast?
- Read Daniel’s story on page 11 to find out: who did the same kind of dancing a long time ago; how Daniel knows when to start dancing; and what he does to get started with his dance.

Say:

- On page 12, Rachel says, “I’m dancing in a show.” Look at the photograph to find out what part she played. That’s right, she danced the part of a flower.
- Read Rachael’s story on page 13 to find out how she made herself into a tiny seed in the ground and how she became a flower growing in the sun.

Turn to page 14 to see Maria dancing at a party. Ask:

- Who do you think Maria is dancing with?
- Read page 15 to find out why there was a big party at Maria’s aunt and uncle’s house and what made it a great celebration.

Say:

- Turn your books over and look at the cover. Try to think of a good caption for the photograph on the cover.

Encourage the children’s suggestions and then say:

- Open the book at the last page. Yes, it’s the same picture as on the cover. Let’s read the caption together. Ready, one, two, three, “We — love — to — dance!” Good for you!

## Independent Reading

Invite the children to reread the selection independently and to think about something new they’ve learned from the book.

## After Reading

Ask:

- What was something new you learned from reading this book?
- Do you think anyone can dance or do you need special talents? Why do you think so?

## Revisit the Text

Engage the children in thinking about the content of the book by using open-ended prompts, such as:

- Why is it good for people to dance?
- All of the children in the photographs look happy. Why?
- After reading the story, do you think you'd like to try learning how to do some different kinds of dances?
- Which one(s) would you like to learn more about? Why is that your choice?

Have the children recall specific information. Ask:

- Which of the dances comes from Scotland? Who can show us the photograph of that dance?
- In which dance would you see a lot of feathers? Who can show us the photograph of someone doing that dance?

## Reinforce the Text

To consolidate some of the content, have the children complete **BLM 33**.



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# As a Group

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- identify the parts of the body and describe the variety of movements that can be done by each of them
- use non-verbal means of communication effectively

## YOU WILL NEED

- room for movement
- chart paper and marker

## OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- use different parts of her or his body to gesture?
- use gestures effectively to communicate a specific meaning?

## Activity: Hello, Goodbye

Write the following conversation on the chalkboard or on chart paper before the activity begins:

**Person 1**

“Hello.”

“How are you?”

“Goodbye.”

**Person 2**

“Hello.”

“I’m fine.”  
[“I’m not well.”]

“Goodbye.”

Explain to the children that you are going to have a conversation with them that consists of three things: a greeting, a question, and a farewell. They will participate by returning the greeting, answering the question, and returning the farewell. Use the conversation you wrote down to clarify the explanation.

Try the conversation using words, with the children speaking in unison. (First, agree on Person 2’s response to “How are you?”)

Now tell them that you are going to have the same conversation with your hands. No words will be allowed. Use your hands to gesture “hello.” Wait for them to mimic your gesture. Ask the question with your hands (any way you wish!). They must gesture back with their hands to indicate whether or not they are well. Gesture farewell and they will gesture back to you. Try the conversation with elbows, feet, heads, shoulders, and so on.

## Extension

Brainstorm some other brief conversations as a class. Challenge groups of children to express the conversations through body language.

This Extension works well with Stand-Alone Activity 8: “You Can Do It!” on page 136.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- recognize and demonstrate movement sequences found in their natural surroundings
- identify specific aspects of their work and that of others that were effective

## YOU WILL NEED

- space for movement
- a slide projector or overhead projector (optional)
- a variety of art materials (optional)
- a variety of music (optional)

## Activity: Animals in Motion

As a group, have the children choose one animal habitat (e.g., the sea, the jungle, the forest). Together discuss and select three animals living in the habitat that move quite differently from one another. Invite the children to draw pictures of these animals. If you wish, convert the children’s pictures into slides or overheads; you can project them behind the children as they dance.

Next, develop shapes and movements for each of the three animals. Groups of children can work together on one particular animal or the entire class can work on all the animals. Encourage the children to use the full movement “vocabulary” they have developed — experimenting with different shapes, levels, energy, and time. Their movements don’t

have to be realistic. For example, if they are showing a yawning hippopotamus, they can yawn with their mouths but can also explore the movement of “yawning” with a variety of body parts, at several speeds, at different levels, and so on.

Combine all of the children’s shapes and movements to create one dance for each animal. Next, develop one tableau to begin and end each animal dance. Then, decide as a class whether small groups or everyone will present each dance. Practise each entire dance until the children are comfortable with it.

## Extension

The children might like to dance for an audience. If so, together listen to a variety of music and select the most appropriate accompaniment for each dance.



# As a Group

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- restate information in a short nonfiction text in their own words
- answer questions by seeking information from a variety of texts
- explore, with assistance, ways for making their own notes

## YOU WILL NEED

- a variety of reference materials about dance (e.g., picture books, Web sites)

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students will:

- experiment with rhyme, rhythm, and word play to create humorous effects
- print legibly
- create written texts using a variety of forms

## YOU WILL NEED

- chart paper and marker

## OBSERVING FOR ASSESSMENT

Does the student:

- demonstrate the ability to rhyme words?
- catch the energy of the activity by participating enthusiastically?

## Activity: Let's Find Out

Using a separate sheet of chart paper for each dance and a K-W-L (Know, Want to Know, Learned) organizer to frame the children's responses, talk about each of the dances. Ask:

- What do you know about the dance?
- What do you want to know?

As the children identify what they know, record the information in the first column (K). As they identify what they want to know, record their questions in the second column (W). The third column (L) can be filled in when the research is complete.

If the children have had research experience, you may wish to have them work in groups to complete this activity.

If their researching experience is limited, you may want to use this opportunity to demonstrate how to undertake a research task, by working together through the research of each dance.

Have the children complete **BLM 34** for one of the dances they have researched.



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## Extension

Some children could research other dance forms with which they are familiar, e.g., tap, line dancing, or dances that have their origins in countries represented by the ethnicities of the children in the class.

## Activity: Rhyme Time

Have the children "rhyme" several of the words in the selection. For example:

*ballet*: hay, day, stay, ray, may, pay, play

*kilt*: tilt, built, lilt, quilt, stilt, wilt

*dance*: pants, ants, aunts

*powwow*: cow, bow, how, now, wow

Following an oral "gush" of rhyme, record the words on chart paper. Be sure to direct the children's attention to the fact that words rhyme because of how they sound, not because of how they're spelled, e.g., dance/pants.

Have the children in play with the words to arrive at some rhyming couplets, e.g.:

I made a quilt  
From my old kilt.

I'm going to dance now  
At my grandpa's powwow.

The couplets can be augmented into verses of three or more lines, e.g.:

One day  
I did ballet  
But I wanted to stay  
At the end of the day  
To play.

Some children's experience in putting words together to make poetry may be limited. If so, you may wish to chart some couplets, leaving out the rhyming words, which you list at the bottom of the couplets. Invite the children to orally fill in the blanks and record them, e.g.:

I \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_  
From my old \_\_\_\_\_  
wilt      built      kilt      quilt

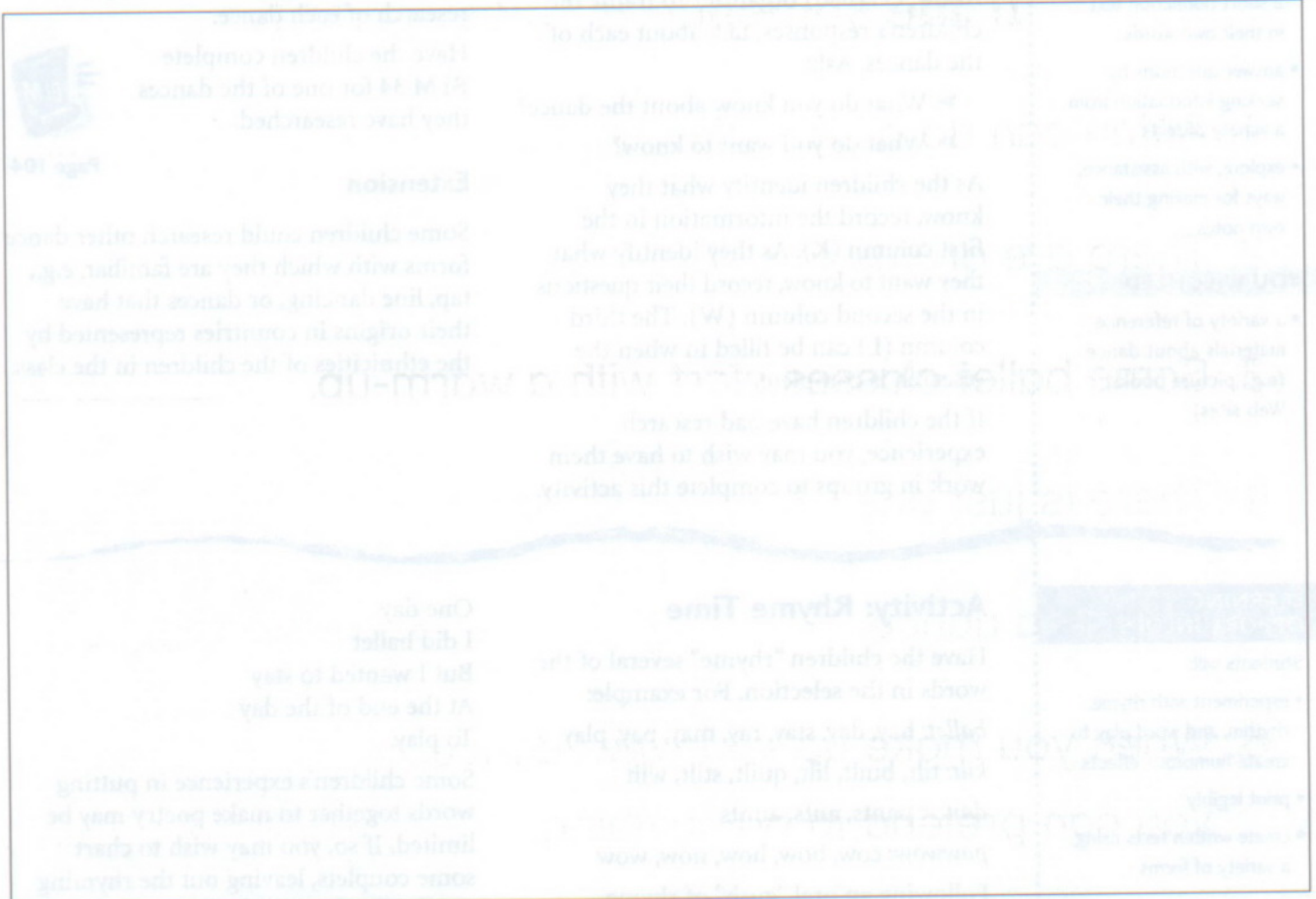
Have the children practise reading the rhymes aloud in choral unison.

## Extension

Have the children copy their favourite poem and take it home to read to their families.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## My Dance



I am a \_\_\_\_\_ .

Here I am \_\_\_\_\_

I make my dance by moving \_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**If the sentence is true, print T.**

**If the sentence is false, print F.**

1. Anton can do a Ukrainian dance. \_\_\_\_\_
2. There are drums at a powwow. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Some ballet classes start with a warm-up. \_\_\_\_\_
4. There is just one Ukrainian dance. \_\_\_\_\_
5. A kilt is a dance. \_\_\_\_\_
6. When you make up your own dance,  
you can pretend to be anything. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Highland dances came from Scotland. \_\_\_\_\_
8. A powwow has ballet dancing in it. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Only men do Highland dancing. \_\_\_\_\_
10. You can do a Highland dance in a kilt. \_\_\_\_\_

# We Dance

BLM 34

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The name of the dance is \_\_\_\_\_

## Know

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Want to Know

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

## Learned

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_