

ALADDIN KS3 DANCE RESOURCE

SECONDARY RESOURCE: KS3

AN INTRODUCTION TO MUSICAL THEATRE AND VAUDEVILLE

Musical theatre can be influenced and inspired by a wide range of dance styles including Cabaret, Contemporary, Busby Berkeley, Street, Jazz, Ballet, Ballroom, Bollywood, Tap and Capoeira. Some shows focus on just one or two styles whilst in others, including *Aladdin*, the performance contains influences from a variety of dance styles. This type of musical theatre has its roots in a form of travelling stage show called Vaudeville.

Vaudeville was a popular type of light or variety entertainment in America from the mid-1890s until the early 1930s. A show normally consisted of 10 to 15 individual acts such as magicians, acrobats, comedians, jugglers, singers, and dancers, with each act on stage for a relatively short time.

If an act worked, performers repeated it in front of audiences and many performers became known by their signature act. As theatres began to show films instead of live shows, vaudeville performers had to take what work they could get, often performing between film reels. By the beginning of the 20th Century many vaudeville performers were moving into the film industry and this is where famous stars such as Charlie Chaplin found their fame.

RESOURCE CONTENT

Vibrant and colourful dance routines play an important part in telling the *Aladdin* story on stage and the choreography is inspired by a wide range of different dance styles. These three activities are designed to help you bring magic into the classroom as your class research and create their own unique choreography inspired by *Aladdin*.

ACTIVITY 1 PRE-SHOW:

Set the scene by leading your class in a guided discussion about where dance comes from and their personal experiences of dance. Then listen to a selection of music clips from *Aladdin* from the show website at www.aladdinthemusical.co.uk. Ask your class to imagine the setting. What might be happening on stage and what style of dancing might be part of the scene?

ACTIVITY 2 POST-SHOW:

The class works in pairs to choreograph signature dance moves for one of the characters they have seen in *Aladdin*. To help them with ideas they can look online for examples of dance styles, including some that have inspired the choreography in *Aladdin*.

ACTIVITY 3 POST-SHOW:

A performance challenge for students working in larger dance groups as they choreograph and perform a dance that tells a simple story. They create a story with a beginning, middle and end featuring characters and a plot of they have devised themselves.

Discuss with your class how they will present their pieces to an audience e.g. classmates or a larger school audience. By developing their ideas and presenting their work to others, pupils will be building team and communication skills whilst being active and having fun.

WARM-UP AND COOL-DOWN ROUTINES

Whatever level the students are dancing at, it is important to stay hydrated and follow good warm-up and cool-down routines.



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY 1: DANCE IN CONTEXT; DISCUSSION, RESEARCH AND PREPARATION FOR DANCE

Explain to the class that they are going to see *Aladdin* and as part of the outcome of the visit they will be creating their own choreography inspired by the show.



WARM-UP: MAGIC CARPET

1. Break the class into groups of three. Each group imagines they are standing on their own magic carpet, but it will only fly when it has the correct number of contact points touching it (the floor).
2. Call out numbers e.g. 'Contact four' and the groups have five seconds on your count to assume a viable position.
3. Vary this by calling additional elements e.g. 'Contact four, no left' meaning only right hands and feet can be used.

GUIDED DISCUSSION

Start with a general guided discussion about dance with the class.

- Q** As the class will see, there is lots of dancing in *Aladdin*, but where else, and when, does dance happen? Write dance styles, events and settings on the board.
(Teacher note: You could compare formal and informal settings and consider how these affect the dance style.)
- Q** Is dance for doing or watching? Why do people dance?
(Teacher note: If appropriate you could invite class members from different backgrounds to talk about the role of dance in their cultural and storytelling tradition e.g. Irish, Bhangra, Highland, Greek and Spanish.)
- Q** Where does dance come from – how is it created? The dancers in *Aladdin* are all highly trained professionals. Is it better to learn to dance in an established style, or create your own freestyle piece?

STUDENT ACTIVITY: DANCE IN A STORYTELLING CONTEXT

- The *Aladdin* website at www.aladdinthemusical.co.uk contains short extracts of music tracks from the show.
- Students listen to these and imagine what the setting might be and what action might be taking place on the stage.
- Worksheet 1 lists some musical numbers from *Aladdin*. Students should complete the worksheet with their predictions and what the intention behind the musical number might be. They could also decide on the dance style that they think would be a good match for the music within the scene.

Depending on prior learning and differentiation, you may want to ask your class to research dance styles before moving on to the main activity.



COOL DOWN

Ask your students to lie on the floor and to focus on their breath.

4. Explain to them that it is important that performers are able to isolate areas of their bodies and that they will use this technique when creating and performing characters.
5. Ask the class to tense for 5 seconds, and relax areas of their body, working from the head to the feet. Eyes, head, shoulders, chest, upper arms, lower arms, hands, fingers, stomach, waist, thighs, calves, knees, ankles, feet and toes.
6. Once completed, ask the group to again focus on their breath for one minute before they standing up. Ensure they do this slowly.



PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY 1 WORKSHEET: THE MUSICAL NUMBERS IN ALADDIN

Listen to these extracts from musical numbers in the show at www.aladdinthemusical.co.uk and complete the table below by predicting what the setting, action and dance style might be for each one.

MUSICAL NUMBER	SETTING	INTENTION OF MUSICAL NUMBER	DANCE STYLE
OVERTURE			
ARABIAN NIGHTS			
PROUD OF YOUR BOY			
BABKAK, OMAR, ALADDIN, KASSIM			
A MILLION MILES AWAY			
A FRIEND LIKE ME			
PRINCE ALI			
SOMEBODY'S GOT YOUR BACK			