Dance KS1: Let's Move Nutcracker



Cat Sandion presents this unit of Dance KS1: Let's Move

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Introduction

Dance KS1: Let's Move provides movement content for schoolchildren aged 5 to 7 that can be used to fulfil the dance element of the PE curriculum at Key Stage 1 and Expressive Arts element of the Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland.

At the heart of each dance session is the audio file which can be downloaded from the School Radio pages of the BBC Teach website. Browse the pages online to explore the range of content on offer - you'll find units linking to popular infant topics, well-known picture book stories and important calendar events throughout the year.

The content is simple to download from the webpages - click on the download link and the audio file will download to your device in mp3 file format.

Look for the download icon on each of the webpages or in these Notes to download an mp3 of each dance session



The audio of each session can also be downloaded directly from from the Teachers' Notes that accompany each unit.

The Teachers' Notes are a vital resource for delivering each dance session - you'll need to acquire both the audio and the notes and then be ready to mediate the use of the audio by referring to the notes.

Using Let's Move

Let's Move needs plenty of space. The hall or a cleared and swept classroom or similar large space is ideal.

Once you have downloaded a dance session, connect your device to an audio sound system, so that it can be shared with your group.

Make sure the children dance in gym shoes or bare feet. Bare feet give a good sense of contact with the floor, if your floor is safe. The children should be in PE kit to allow easy movement and to ensure that they do not become too hot.

Teaching points

Some tips to help you get the best out of the dance sessions:

- · always encourage careful listening
- reinforce the importance of safety eg awareness of others to avoid collisions, spacing, sensible landings (with the whole foot, flexing as it comes down and knees bending)





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- help the children to observe each other's movement in a positive light and to learn from their observations.
- give the children a sense of your own enthusiasm

Using these Teachers' Notes

These notes are a vital part of the *Let's Move* provision and you will need to refer to them both before and during each dance session.

The notes for each session include a short summary of the content and a description of the movement. There is also a more detailed content table, which uses the following headings:

- **Content** a guide to the movement activities in the programmes
- Guidance / Teacher Guidance any special points such as groupings and things to watch out for such as safety points and ways of helping the children to improve their performance
- Evaluation a series of questions which help to focus on the teaching points from the lesson, the National Curriculum objectives for dance and the children's learning and progression in dance

Before using a session make sure you familiarise yourself with the content by reading the Teachers' Notes.

We would also recommend that you listen to the audio beforehand to become familiar with any 'pause points' and to assess how best to mediate the playback.

You may also wish to mark the content tables with timings taking from the audio to enable convenient navigation of the audio content.

During playback

Each *Let's Move* dance session brings together instructions from a presenter - Justin Fletcher, Cat Sandion and others - with sequences of music, much of it specially composed for the series.

The children will need to listen very carefully to the instructions and then be ready to move with the music.

Throughout each session the presenter will give instructions for groupings - as the children will be moving either alone or in pairs and sometimes in larger groups as well.

At these moments you will need to be ready to pause the playback to allow children to organise in the approprirate groupings. Make sure you 'pause' the playback rather than 'stop' it. Otherwise you will risk setting the audio back to the very beginning.

Let's Move and the curriculum

Let's Move is ideal for delivering the dance component of the PE curriculum at KS1. The National Curriculum notes the aims of PE are to ensure that all pupils:

- develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
- are physically active for sustained periods of time
- engage in competitive sports and activities
- lead healthy, active lives

To achieve these ends the National Curriculum states that children should be taught:

 to perform dances using simple movement patterns

Using *Let's Move* fulfils this simple curriculum objective while also exploring a wide range of other curriculum areas, exposing the children to a range of music and other stimuli and also helping children to explore a wide range of cultures, including those from other countries.

Feedback

Our address is: BBC Teach 3rd Floor Bridge House MediaCityUK M50 2BH

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Nutcracker

1: Christmas Eve



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A unit for Christmas based on ETA Hoffman's traditional story *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*, accompanied throughout by Tchaikovsky's music from his ballet score, *The Nutcracker*, written in 1892. In the first session the children begin their magical Christmas adventure. They decorate the Christmas tree, meet the toy maker, and find out about the presents he brings - including the hobby-horse, clockwork doll, musical monkey and the nutcracker doll.

Lesson summary:

Warm-up: Weaving in and out of all the spaces with excited skipping steps in time to the music.

Sequence 1: Decorating the Christmas Tree. Choose 4 or 5 children to skip through the spaces, touching the shoulder or back of whoever they pass, to form 4 or follow-the-leader 'tinsel' lines. These lines weave in and out along curving, twisting or spiraling pathways, like tinsel being wrapped around an enormous Christmas tree.

'It's Christmas Eve and everyone in the Stahlbaum house is very busy! Mother, father and the two children – Fritz and Clara – have invited their friends to help decorate the enormous Christmas tree! Together, they wrap long strings of shiny tinsel round and round the tree until it sparkles and shines from top to bottom!'

Sequence 2: The Toymaker. Walk proudly round the room with large, extravagant steps while twirling your imaginary magician's cloak.

- A hobby-horse. The children gallop energetically through the spaces, lifting their knees high and holding imaginary reins.
- A clockwork-doll. Sharp, robotic movements of head, hands, feet and body on the spot and then travelling.
- A musical monkey. Standing up straight with their hands and feet turned out symmetrically
 to the sides, the children keep their legs completely straight so their body rocks from side to
 side as they step from one foot to the other. They take 4 steps forward then stop to clap their
 'cymbal' hands together and swing them back out again (x4). Repeat.

'When the tree had been decorated, a mysterious guest dressed in a large magician's cloak arrived. At first, the children were frightened of the man but soon Clara recognised him as her Godfather Drosselmeyer, the talented toymaker.'

Sequence 3: Clara and The Nutcracker. In pairs, taking turns to be Clara or The Nutcracker. When Clara lifts The Nutcracker's arm, he opens his mouth wide and when she lowers his arm, he shuts it again. Clara dances happily around the tall, rigid Nutcracker – stopping every now and then to open and shut his nut-cracking mouth. Swap roles and repeat.



Sequence 3 continued.

'But Drosselmeyer had saved the best toy until last! He gave his god-daughter Clara a wooden nutcracker carved in the shape of a soldier. When you lifted the nutcracker's wooden arm up above his head, he opened his mouth wide. And when you lowered his arm back down, he closed his mouth shut again – cracking any nut that had been placed there!'

Cool down: Tired sleepy steps to a space. Stretch tall and wide before curling up small to imagine what might happen next in the story of The Nutcracker.



Session 1 structure: Christmas Eve

Content	Guidance	Evaluation
Warm up Weaving in and out of all the spaces with excited skipping steps in time to the music.	Look where you're going and use all the space. Skip with light, energetic steps.	The class should feel warmed up and ready to dance.
Sequence 1	Decorating the Christmas Tree	
Choose 4 or 5 confident children to skip through the spaces, touching the shoulder or back of whoever they pass to form 4 or 5 follow-the-leader 'tinsel' lines.	The children may need guidance to use the space well and avoid collisions with other group lines. Encourage the children to join onto the back of their line quickly to	Did the group lines use the space well, showing an awareness of each other? Did the sequence look smooth and fluid?
The children take turns to lead their line along curving, looping or spiralling pathways, like tinsel being wrapped around an enormous Christmas Tree.	maintain the skipping rhythm. Look for equal spacing along each group line. When confident, encourage the line leaders to explore different floor patterns – curving, looping or spiraling.	Did they maintain the light, skipping rhythm throughout? Did they successfully explore different floor patterns?
Sequence 2	The Toymaker	
Walk proudly round the room with large, extravagant steps while twirling your imaginary magician's cloak.	Stand straight and tall with your head high. Hold your arms out to the sides as if holding out your large magician's cloak.	Do the children use body shape and movement quality to convey the proud, extravagant nature of the Toymaker?
A hobby-horse. The children gallop energetically through the spaces, lifting their knees high and holding imaginary reins.	Hold your imaginary reins tightly out in front of you. Lift your knees high and gallop in time with the music.	This part of the sequence should look free and energetic.
A clockwork-doll. Sharp, robotic movements of head, hands, feet and body – on the spot and then travelling.	Make your body tense and stiff like a robot. Move individual parts of your body in a stiff, jerky way.	In contrast, this should look contained with stiff and jerky, robotic movements.
A musical monkey. Standing up straight with their hands and feet turned out symmetrically to the sides, the children keep their legs completely straight so that their body rocks from side to side as they step from one foot to the other. They take 4 steps forward, then	Keep your hands and feet turned out to the sides and your body straight and stiff so you wobble comically from side to side as you walk. Stop with the music and clap your hands stiffly together in time with	Do the children maintain their symmetrical turned out body shape throughout? Can they keep their legs stiff and straight to wobble from one foot to the other?
stop to clap their 'cymbal' hands stiffly together and swing them back out again (x4).Repeat.	the cymbals.	Do they use the music well and clap their hands in time with the cymbals?

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Sequence 3	Clara and the Nutcracker	
In pairs, taking turns to be Clara or The Nutcracker. When Clara lifts The Nutcracker's arm he opens his mouth wide. And when she lowers his arm he shuts it again. Clara dances happily around the tall, rigid Nutcracker – stopping every now and then to open and shut his nut-cracking mouth. Swap roles and repeat.	Encourage a clear contrast between the stiff, jerky movements of the Nutcracker and the light, happy movements and skipping steps of Clara. Pairs need to co-ordinate the timing of the arm lifting / lowering with the mouth opening / closing.	Do partners work well together to create a humorous and effective sequence?
Cool down Tired sleepy steps to a space. Stretch tall and wide before curling up small to imagine what might happen next in the story of <i>The Nutcracker</i> .	Walk slowly and in time with the music. Stretch tall, up on tiptoe. Stretch wide with arms straight out to the sides and legs apart.	Could the children demonstrate different symmetrical body shapes? The class should feel relaxed and ready to return to the classroom.

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2: Battle with the Mouse King



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In the second session Clara falls asleep under the Christmas tree only to wake up and find herself in a new, magical world. The children scurry around as the mouse army, march as the tin soldiers and dance gracefully as the snowflakes.

Lesson summary:

Warm-up: Small, scurrying mouse steps through all the spaces, stopping now and then with the music to twitch your mouse nose and wriggle your mouse whiskers.

Sequence 1: Battle with the Mouse King.

- **Marching tin soldiers.** In pairs. Stiff, upright marching steps forwards; stopping to change direction each time you get close to another marching pair or to the edge of the room.
- **Scurrying mice.** Small but fast scurrying steps; stopping now and then to twitch your mouse nose and show off your sharp mouse claws.
- Marching tin soldiers and scurrying mice. Following the music, half the class (in pairs)
 march through the spaces in the middle of the room and then stand still while the other half
 scurry and twitch around them!

'After the excitement of the party, Clara fell asleep under the Christmas tree with the wooden Nutcracker soldier in her arms. But in the middle of the night, she woke up to a frightening scene! Out of nowhere, large mice dressed in army uniforms, and lead by the terrifying Mouse King, began to circle the room! Clara's brave Nutcracker grouped the toy soldiers into battle formation ready to fight the mouse army.'

Sequence 2: Dancing Snowflakes. In pairs. Stand facing your partner with enough space between to stretch arms out straight without touching one another. Stretch arms out above head in a snowflake shape and turn around slowly on the spot with light, tip-toe steps – turn one way and then the other.

Snowflake partners bend and straighten their legs in opposition – so as one sinks low, the other rises high (like a see-saw). Partners take turns to dance round one another and then back to their place with light, tip-toe steps and outstretched arms.

'With a little help from Clara, the Nutcracker and the tin soldiers win the battle and defeat the Mouse King and his army. The mice retreat and the Nutcracker is transformed from a wooden toy into a real Prince. The Prince leads Clara through the moonlit night to a pine forest in which snow-flakes dance around them.'

Sequence 3: Swap performance groups and repeat - Marching tin soldiers and scurrying mice (from sequence 1 above).

Cool down: Silent, slow steps – as if walking through the snowy pine forest with Clara and the Nutcracker Prince.



Movement focus:

- Body: Arms, legs, hands, feet, head.
- Action: Marching, scurrying, turning on the spot, bending and straightening.
- Dynamics: Moving quickly with light footsteps, moving slowly and gracefully.
- Space: Moving in circles, on the spot, taking it in turns to travel around the space.
- **Relationships:** Working with a partner, working alone, dividing the class in half each half taking it in turns to move, then freeze.



Content	Guidance	Evaluation
Warm-up: Small, scurrying mouse steps through all the spaces, stopping now and then with the music to twitch your mouse nose and wriggle your mouse whiskers.	Hold up your mouse-claw hands and wriggle your sharp, scratchy mouse-claw fingers. Wriggle and twitch your mousey nose. Scurry quickly through the spaces with the music.	Did the movements have a scurrying mousey feel? Did the children listen well and respond quickly to the music?
Sequence 1	Battle with the Mouse King	
Marching tin soldiers. In pairs. Stiff, upright marching steps forwards; stopping to change direction each time they get close to another marching pair or to the edge of the room.	Stand up straight, next to your partner, and march forwards together with the music. Partners might want to take turns to decide which direction to march in.	Did the group lines use the space? Did partners march together with the music and turn at the same time to change direction?
Scurrying mice. Small but fast scurrying steps around the edge of the room, stopping now and then to twitch your mouse nose and show off your sharp mouse claws. Turn to face the opposite direction and repeat.	Encourage a contrasting hunched over mouse-like body shape with quick, scurrying steps and gestures. Encourage even spacing as they scurry around the edge of the room.	Was there a clear contrast between the stiff, upright marching steps of the tin soldiers and the small, hunched over, scurrying steps and gestures of the mice?
Marching tin soldiers and scurrying mice. Following the music, half the class (in pairs) march through the spaces in the middle of the room and then stand still while the other half scurry and twitch around them!	Half the class stand in their tin soldier pairs in the middle of the room while the other half spread out around the edge of the room in a hunched over mouse-like shape. Keep really still while the other group is performing. Listen carefully and respond quickly to the music	Is there a strong contrast in the body shape and movement quality of the two performance groups?
Sequence 2	Dancing Snowflakes	
In pairs. Stand facing your partner with enough space between to stretch arms out straight without touching one another. Stretch arms out above head in a snowflake shape and turn around slowly on the spot with light, tiptoe steps - turn one way and then the other.	Partners need to agree who is rising/sinking first. Partners should work together to perfect the timing. When confident, add wiggling, snowflake fingers.	Do partners perfect the timing of this seesaw action? Can they add wiggling snowflake fingers without loosing the timing of the seesaw action?



Content	Guidance	Evaluation		
Partners take turns to dance round one another and then back to their place with light, tiptoe steps and outstretched arms with wriggling snowflake fingers.	Partners need to decide who is dancing first. Keep your tiptoe steps small, light and silent. Keep the sequence going, so as the first person returns to their place, the second person starts dancing.	Do partners co-operate to create a smooth, continuous and flowing sequence?		
Partners use all three snowflake moves just practised to create their own dance together.	Partners should take plenty of time to listen to each other's ideas and practise their sequence together.	Did partners create, practise and polish an effective sequence that they could perform again and again?		
Repeat - Marching tin soldiers and scurrying mice (from sequence 1 above)				
Cool down: Silent, slow steps – as if walking through the snowy pine forest with Clara and the Nutcracker Prince.	Everyone walks slowly and quietly away from their groups to a space of their own. Carefully sit down and gently stretch your legs and back muscles.	The children should feel calm and relaxed.		



3: The Land of Sweets



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In the third session Clara finds herself in *The Land of Sweets*. The children move around as the gingerbread children, the Arabian Coffee dancers and the Russian Cossack dancers. They put all their moves together to make a complete performance of *The Nutcracker*.

Lesson summary:

Warm-up: Stand up straight with your hands on your hips and kick alternate feet straight out in front of you like a Russian Cossack dancer. Practise slowly at first, on the spot, and then faster, travelling around the room.

Sequence 1: The Land of Sweets.

- The Gingerbread children. Stand with your legs apart and your feet pointing out to the sides.
 Next, stretch your arms out to the sides to make a symmetrical gingerbread-man shape. Stay
 in that gingerbread shape with your legs really straight, as you walk stiffly through the spaces.
 Stop every now and then with the music to bend the top half of your body stiffly forwards from
 the waist to bow to someone nearby.
- The Arabian Coffee dancers. Keep your body loose and relaxed as you twist and twirl freely through the spaces like steam rising up from hot coffee. Slowly bend and straighten your legs as you gracefully twist and twirl your arms high, low and all around you.
- The Russian Cossack dancers. Stand tall with your hands on your hips and kick alternate legs straight out in front of you (just like you did in the warm-up).

'After their journey through the pine forest where snowflakes danced around them, Clara and the Nutcracker Prince arrived in the Land of Sweets where the Sugar Plum Fairy, impressed by their bravery, arranged a lavish celebration with magical dancing sweets from around the World!'

Sequence 2: Clara and the Nutcracker Prince are crowned rulers of The Land of Sweets. Stand side by side with a partner. Walk majestically together through the spaces, stopping now and then to wave or smile at the cheering crowds.

Complete performance:

- · Decorating the Christmas tree
- The Toymaker
- Clara and The Nutcracker
- · Battle with the Mouse King
- Dancing Snowflakes
- The Land of Sweets
- Clara and the Nutcracker Prince crowned rulers of the Land of Sweets.

Cool down: Sit down on the floor and relax as you listen to the end of the story.

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Content	Guidance	Evaluation		
Warm-up: Practise Russian-style Cossack dancing by kicking alternate feet straight out in front of you. Practise it slowly first on the spot, and then faster, travelling round the room.	Make sure that you've got plenty of space in front of you. Stand up straight with your hands on your hips. Look where you're going and don't get too close to anyone!	Did the children perform the kicking actions with accurate timing and energy?		
S	equence 1: The Land of Sweet	s		
The Gingerbread children. Stand with your legs apart and your feet pointing out to the sides. Next, stretch your arms out to the sides to make a symmetrical gingerbread-man shape. Stay in that gingerbread shape with your legs really straight as you walk stiffly through the spaces. Stop every now and then with the music to bend the top half of your body stiffly forwards from the waist to bow to someone nearby.	Stay in that symmetrical ginger- bread shape with your muscles tensed as you walk stiffly forwards. Listen carefully and follow the music cues and sound effects.	Can the children maintain the gingerbread shape as they walk stiffly through the spaces and as they bow stiffly forwards from the waist?		
The Arabian Coffee dancers. Keep your body loose and relaxed as you twist and twirl freely through the spaces like steam rising up from hot coffee. Slowly bend and straighten your legs as you gracefully twist and twirl your arms high, low and all around you.	Show a clear contrast with the previous sequence by relaxing your body and keeping your movements loose and free. Slowly and smoothly explore different levels and directions as you twist and twirl your arms all around you.	Are the twisting and twirling movements smooth, graceful and continuous?		
The Russian Cossack dancers. Stand tall with your hands on your hips and kick alternate legs straight out in front of you (just like you did in the warm-up).	Look where you're going and make sure that you've got plenty of space around you. Keep the Cossack kicking actions light and energetic.	This part of the sequence should look lively and energetic.		
Complete performance				
Decorating the Christmas Tree ~ The Toymaker ~ Clara and The Nutcracker ~ Battle with the Mouse King ~ Dancing Snowflakes ~ The Land of Sweets ~ Clara and the Nutcracker Prince crowned rulers of the Land of Sweets	Listen out and really concentrate as you move from one sequence to the next. Take as much time as you need to practise and perfect your performance.	Were the children able to give a smooth, continuous and polished performance of the complete Nutcracker dance?		
Cool down Sit down on the floor and relax as you listen to the end of the story.	Sit still, close your eyes, and listen carefully.	The children should feel calm and relaxed.		