

How to Use It

- Choose a dance based on the level of most of your students. As you teach, assess their comfort, interest, and capacity to perform the dance, and adjust accordingly. If a dance has already been learned by most of your students, jump to the SPARK It Up! variations to add a twist to it. If a dance is too difficult, decrease the moves, simplify, and slow down.
- Each dance has an accompanying Prompt Page (SPARKfamily.org) you may wish to use during instruction. It is a simplified and magnified version of just the dance moves. Use the original activity card when first teaching, and then use the Prompt Pages for reviewing the dance next time, or to give to students to lead the dance, if needed.
- Integrate the PACE Activities throughout the unit. Make copies prior to teaching. Since PACE Activities engage students in self-directed learning, they give you opportunities for assessing.
- Review the assessment samples on the SPARKfamily.org website. The Self-Check is a student self-assessment that can be administered toward the end of the unit. The Create a Dance Performance Rubric is an observational assessment you can use to collect skill development data. This rubric is connected with students' dance creations and should also be used toward the end of the unit.
- There are 3 sample unit plans (3rd, 4th, and 5th/6th grades) on SPARKfamily.org, built on a 3 PE classes-per-week model. Use these as guides to adjust and create unit plans that meet your particular instructional requirements.
- Make copies of the Home Play Activity (SPARKfamily.org) and distribute 1 to each student after the first class.
- Remember to use a short 5-7 minute ASAP activity before the main activity in your lesson. Choose several from the ASAP sections to rotate throughout the unit.

Dance Teaching Tips

- Use a 2-step approach to instruction; teach the footwork first without music, then repeat footwork with the music. For longer dances, teach using the "part-to-whole" method. Teach 1 part; add the music. Teach another; add the music and so on, until the entire dance is learned.
- Because dances require memorization, the old adage, "If you don't use it, you lose it" applies. Use familiar dances as a warmup and to reinforce what they have learned. Use Prompt Pages where needed.
- If possible, face a mirror when teaching students. This makes it easier for students to mimic your moves and allows you to see them. If not available, face your students, and use mirroring techniques.
- Say "joining hands," rather than "holding hands."
- Most line dances can be made more complex by changing the formation from scattered, to pairs, to groups, and so on.

Music

- Use the SPARK Grades 3-6 Music that includes all the songs you need to teach every dance in this unit (SPARKfamily.org).
- Ensure your music source is loud enough to be heard by all. Using a wireless microphone helps students hear your cues over the music.
- Use a remote for starting/stopping music.