

Introduction

The SPARK Dance Unit contains a variety of dances including folk, line, ballroom/social, Hip Hop, and Poco Loco. There are also opportunities for students to work in groups and create their own dances.

Dance engages students mentally, physically, and socially. Few other sports or movement disciplines address the developmental needs of adolescents as well as dance. It may be used to enhance rhythm and timing, foster creative expression, and develop fitness. Dances in this unit were selected for their “high energy,” serving as mood enhancers and cardio-booster. Utilization of partner and group activities may improve social and personal skills. Furthermore, dance promotes the understanding of diverse cultures and may be used to develop cultural awareness.

While many students will enjoy dance from the start, others may be slower to conform. Creating a positive learning environment is a critical first step. Therefore, make time to review teaching and safety tips before beginning instruction. Be careful to position students so they are not “spotlighted” (without first obtaining permission), and provide movement options (e.g., beginner, intermediate, advanced) allowing individuals to choose a level of participation. Consider using Dance ASAPs often. This demonstrates that you value dance. It also helps to reduce student fear and apprehension. Additional dance resources and activities may be found at SPARKfamily.org.

What You Have

SPARK Manual

- **ASAPs**
 - Four Dance ASAPs used for warm-ups prior to activities in this unit.
- **Dances**
 - 26 Dance Activities sequenced by level of difficulty.
- **SPARK Event Experience**
 - The SPARK Dance Event is a 1-day experience designed to extend student learning opportunities through enjoyable and meaningful context.
- **Inclusive Strategies**
 - Instructional tips and equipment suggestions to help meet the needs of all students.
- **Supplemental Lesson Content**
 - **Reflection Questions:** discussion questions are provided to reflect on what students have learned.
 - **Teaching Suggestions:** instructional hints from SPARK PE specialists who have instructed the activity before. Read prior to teaching for the “inside scoop.”
 - **SPARK It Up!:** variations provide extensions to address the developmental needs of students.
 - **Integrations:** ideas to connect PE to academic content, wellness concepts and promotion of physical activity outside of school. Can be read to students during warm-up, transitions, or cool-down.
 - **Standards:** indicates which national PE standards and grade level outcomes are addressed.
 - **SEL Competencies:** Shows the lesson’s alignment with CASEL’s SEL competencies and related skills.
 - **Vocabulary:** a list of words used to highlight academic content during the lesson.
 - **Teacher Reflection:** space to share how the lesson went & what modifications could be made next time.

SPARK Instructional Media

- **Sample Unit Plan**
 - A grade level specific 10-day sample Unit Plan is provided for 6th, 7th, and 8th grades and can be used as written or modified to suit your needs.
- **Task Cards**
 - These include Jigsaw Cards with dance steps and instructions for Create a Dance.
- **Leveled Assessment Choices**
 - Assessment options include both cognitive and skill-based assessments along with suggestions for individual student portfolio development.
- **Limited Equipment/Large Class Ideas**
 - Dance activities tend to work well with large classes because very little to no equipment is needed.