

DAYTON PERFORMING ARTS ALLIANCE

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Ballet Opera Philharmonic

Shapes, Steps and Stories

August 3, 2020 at 10 am

Dayton Ballet



Dear Families,

Welcome to the Dayton Performing Arts Alliance's [Summer Streams](#) Family Series. We've created these materials so you can bring the performances you watch to life at home!

After watching the performance, tune into our Facebook Live to ask the dancers questions! Then, try these activities to reinforce and extend what your child learned. Tag us on [Facebook](#) in your photos of the explorations you do! We'd love to see what you create together.

To learn more about DPAA's education programming that reaches over 60,000 students each year, visit our website at www.daytonperformingarts.org/education.



Ruth

Ruth Reveal
Director of Education
Dayton Performing Arts Alliance

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Ballet and Stories

Charades

Ballet dancers tell stories through movement. They never speak on stage! Try playing a game of charades with your family to practice telling stories with movement.

Cut out the activities below, and put them in a hat. Each person chooses one of the pieces of paper and then acts out that activity. Your family tries to guess what you're acting out. Remember, you're not allowed to talk, and you can't use any props!

Opening a gift	Shoveling snow
Walking a dog	Feeding a pet fish
Eating an apple	Swinging on a swing
Doing homework	FaceTiming a friend
Seeing a spider	Getting a paper cut
Spilling your cereal	Riding a bike

Choreographing Your Own Ballet

Choose a book you have at home or a well-known story, such as a fairytale. Create your own ballet by deciding on what movements you could use to tell your story. You can even make costumes and a set and choose music for your ballet!

Perform your ballet for your family. Record your ballet with a cell phone camera, and don't forget to tag [Dayton Ballet](#) in the finished product!

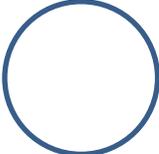
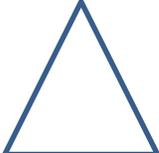
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Ballet and Shapes

Shape Scavenger Hunt

Ballet dancers are constantly creating shapes with their bodies while they dance. While you were watching Shapes, Steps and Stories, you saw the dancers create circles with their arms and legs. They also made triangles and diamond shapes! We can spot shapes all around us. Look around your house or neighborhood to find the shapes below. Then try to make those shapes with your body, just like the ballet dancers!

Shape	I found it!	I made it!
 Circle		
 Triangle		
 Square		
 Rectangle		
 Rhombus		

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Ballet and Science

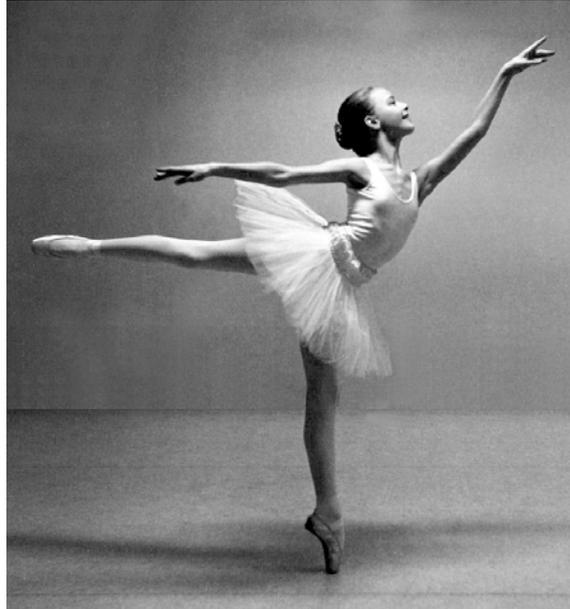


Image via [Wikipedia](#)

Balance Experiment

Balance is an incredibly important part of ballet. It takes a lot of strength and practice for dancers to maintain their balance while they are *en pointe* (balancing on the top of their pointe shoe), doing leaps, turns, and holding certain positions. To explore how dancers keep their balance, try this fun experiment (adapted from [education.com](#)).

Before you start, ask yourself:

1. Why does a person stick out their arms if they think they are going to fall?
2. Do any animals use parts of their body to help them keep their balance?
3. What does it mean to have a center of balance?

Materials

- A long stick or yardstick
- A stopwatch or stopwatch app on a phone
- A pencil and the chart below
- A friend or family member to help

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Methods

1. Go outside and find something narrow you can walk along that requires balance. This could be a curb, a balance beam on a playground, or the edge of a sidewalk.
2. Choose a starting and ending location on the curb. You can mark this with chalk.
3. Have your friend count off "3-2-1-go!" and then walk as quickly as you can along the curb. Say "stop" when you reach the end. Your friend should record the time it took you to get from the starting location to the end. You will do this a few times in different ways.
 - a. Walk with your arms crossed across your chest.
 - b. Walk with your arms out straight.
 - c. Walk while holding the long stick or yardstick.

	Time (seconds)	Number of falls
Arms crossed across chest		
Arms out straight		
Holding yardstick		

4. For an extra challenge, repeat each trial a few times and then calculate the average for each!
5. Talk about your results:
 - a. For which trial did you walk the fastest?
 - b. For which trial did you walk the slowest?
 - c. How did your balance change?
 - d. When you watch a ballerina turn or stand *en pointe*, how is she keeping her balance?

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Ballet Facts Using Math

Solve these word problems to learn a little bit more about ballet.

1. A male dancer lifts over 1.5 tons of the weight of other dancers during a performance. If 1 ton is equal to 2,000 pounds, how many pounds does a male dancer lift during a performance? _____
2. A tutu requires 60-90 hours of labor and over 10 meters of netting. There are 3.38 feet in 1 meter. How many feet of netting are required to make 1 tutu? _____
3. Every time a dancer jumps *en pointe*, three times her body weight is carried on the tip of her big toe. An average African bush elephant weighs 13,000 pounds. If an elephant tried to jump *en pointe*, how much weight would be on the elephant's toe? _____
4. Ballet began in Paris, France, in 1661. From France, it traveled to Italy and Russia. How long ago did ballet first begin? _____



Ballet Vocabulary

Since ballet started in France, the words used to describe the steps and positions are all in French! After watching the Shapes, Steps, and Stories program, can you remember what all the words mean? Match the vocabulary while the dancers were at the barre to the definitions.

rond de jambe à terre	Striking the foot on the floor
tendu	Leg makes circles on the floor
frappé	Bending of the knees
dégagé	Large kick
grand battement	Arm positions
plié	Stretching the leg on the floor
port de bras	Foot rises of the floor slightly

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Resources Referenced

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabesque_\(ballet_position\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabesque_(ballet_position))

<https://www.education.com/science-fair/article/center-of-balance/>

<https://grammar.yourdictionary.com/games-puzzles-and-worksheets/charades-word-lists-kids.html>

<https://www.abt.org/explore/learn/ballet-dictionary/>