

# STUDY GUIDE

DISCIPLINE:  
**DANCE**

ARTIST:  
**OTTAWA DANCE DIRECTIVE**

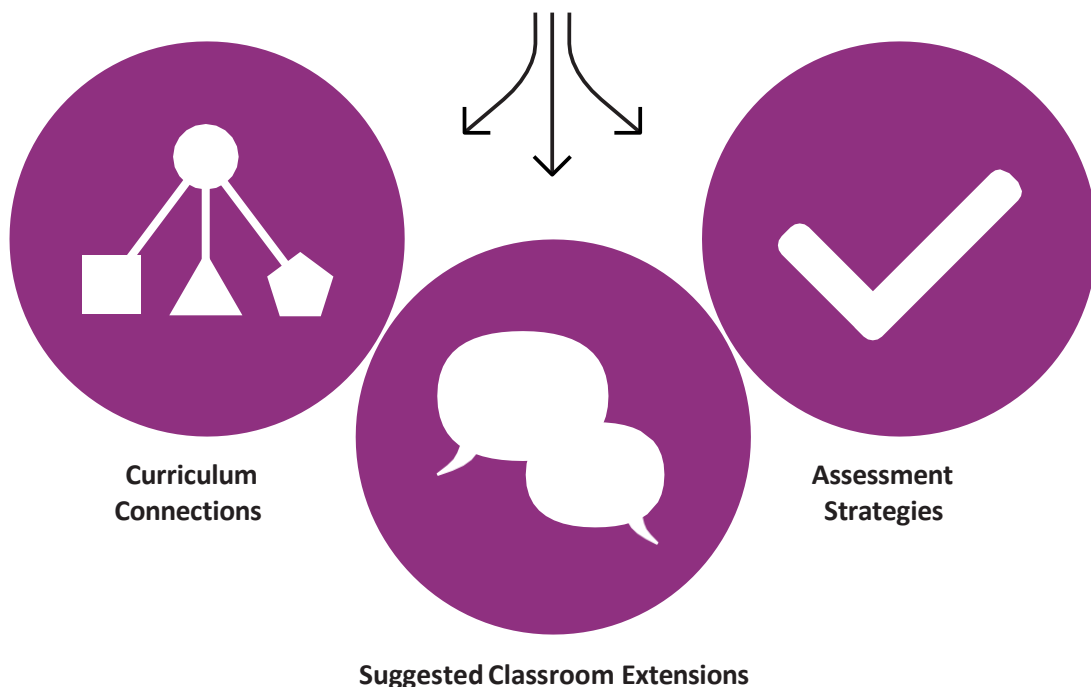


**The following package is provided as a supplemental resource to enhance and support the artist’s visit.**

It includes curricular connections, assessment strategies, and suggested classroom extensions. All materials are intended for use at the teacher’s discretion and may be adapted as necessary to suit the specific needs of the students.

## THIS STUDY GUIDE

Discipline / Artist Example:



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# STUDY GUIDE: DANCE

## READ TO MOVE

### Program Overview

**Artist Name:** Ottawa Dance Directive

**Artist Bio:** Ottawa Dance Directive is a professional contemporary dance centre located on the second floor of Arts Court. The centre opened its doors on September 1, 2010. ODD houses four tiers of dance programming; Compagnie Odd, Series Dance 10, training, and inclusive resource sharing. Ottawa Dance Directive was founded by four local artists of distinction: Natasha Bakht, Yvonne Coutts, Sylvie Desrosiers and Lana Morton.

**Program Description:** Inventive warm up and physical activities challenge both body and mind using stationary and locomotor movement. The students will dig into the creative process of making a dance through a connection with literacy. By using a book as the departure point, the group uses similar themes to investigate dance qualities, individual vocabulary and basic choreography. Inspired by the books “Outside In” by Deborah Underwood (Grades 1-3), “ish” by Peter H. Reynolds (Grades 4-6) and “Dreams of Freedom” by Michael Morpurgo (Grades 7 - 8/sec I - II), students will learn to express themselves through dance with confidence and excitement. Each workshop creates a welcoming and inventive environment for creative dance. The workshop begins with a short performance by professional dancers. With a focus on dance



creation, these interactive workshops promote positive self-esteem and compassion with some time for individual reflection.

**Artistic Discipline:** Dance

**Recommended Grade Levels:** 1 - 8

**Session Logistics:** In person only

**Vocab bank/glossary:** [Click here](#)



# READ TO MOVE

## Curriculum Connections

### Learning Themes:

- Strand A – Creating and Presenting
  - Prompted movement creation in response to a word, sentence, or visual from the text.
  - To develop short movement sequences that correspond to sections of the narrative.
- Strand B – Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing
  - Discussing how movement showed character emotion or setting.
  - Relating the movement experience to personal reading comprehension.
- Strand C: Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts
  - Introducing how movement is used in oral storytelling, theatre, and cultural dances worldwide.
  - Exploring how dance and literature have been linked historically.
  - Discussing respectful representation when interpreting stories from different cultures.

# READ TO MOVE

## Extend the Learning (Discussion Prompts)

Here are optional discussion prompts to extend the artist session in the classroom. These are recommended and are not mandatory. Please use what is best for your classroom. You can also find suggested activities in the additional resources package.

### GRADES 1-3

#### Pre

- What part of the story do you want to pretend to be?
- How could you show “happy” or “sad” with your body?
- Can you make a shape that looks like the main character?

#### During

- What happens if you make your movement really big? Really small?
- Can you move like your character would move if they were in slow motion?
- How can you move beside your partner without touching them?

#### Post

- Which movement did you like the most? Why?
- How could someone watching tell what you were showing?
- Was there a part of the story that was hard to show with movement?

**GRADES**  
**4-6**

**Pre**

- What words in the story give you a strong picture in your mind?
- How could you show those words or ideas with levels, energy, or space?
- What kind of pathway (straight, curved, zig-zag) might fit the story?

**During**

- How can you connect one movement to the next smoothly?
- What happens if your group changes the energy halfway through the scene?
- Can you show the same feeling in two different ways?

**Post**

- Which movement made the story easiest to understand?
- How did you decide on your final movement choices?
- How is telling a story with movement different from telling it with words?

**GRADES**  
**7-8**

**Pre**

- What themes or messages stand out in this story?
- How could you layer movements to show more than one idea at once?
- Which movement qualities (sharp, sustained, bound, free) match the tone?

**During**

- How can you use canon, unison, or contrast to make the story more dynamic?
- What changes in body shape can help communicate character transformation?
- How could your movement reflect cultural or historical elements in the story?

**Post**

- How did you use elements of dance to support your interpretation?
- In what ways did your performance change the audience's understanding of the story?
- How does movement storytelling connect to dance traditions in other cultures?



# DANCE OVERVIEW

Dance is a powerful form of cultural expression that celebrates diversity, fosters connection, and supports healing. By exploring various dance forms, students build empathy, challenge stereotypes, and gain global awareness. Dance promotes physical literacy and mental well-being through movement, creativity, and emotional release.

**The creative and critical analysis process** helps students generate, refine, interpret movement, encourage collaboration, resilience, and emotional intelligence. When used to complement artist-led sessions, these frameworks guide students to become thoughtful creators, reflective learners, and active participants in building a more just and connected world.

Dance also supports cross-curricular learning. It brings stories to life in language arts, explores cultural traditions in social studies, and connects to science through anatomy and body mechanics. These interdisciplinary links highlight the dynamic role of dance in education and deepen student engagement across subjects.



# APPENDIX

## Vocabulary bank/glossary:

- **Level:** Height of movement: low, middle, high.
- **Pathway:** Floor or air pattern made by movement (straight, curved, zig-zag).
- **Gesture:** Small body movement showing an idea or feeling.
- **Shape:** The form your body makes (round, angular, twisted).
- **Transition:** Smooth change from one movement or shape to another.
- **Improvisation:** Making up movement on the spot.
- **Choreography:** Planned and practiced movement sequence.
- **Sequence:** A set order of movements.
- **Unison:** Everyone moving the same way at the same time.
- **Interpretation:** How you show a story or feeling through movement.
- **Expression:** Showing feelings with your body and face.
- **Feedback:** Helpful comments about a performance.
- **Observation:** Watching movement closely to understand it.
- **Body:** Parts of the body used in movement (arms, legs, head, torso).
- **Space:** Where movement happens (direction, level, pathway).
- **Time:** Speed or rhythm of movement.
- **Energy:** Quality of movement (smooth, sharp, strong, light, flowing).

# Student Health and Well-Being

## How did today's activity make you feel (body and mind)?

- Choose a colour to describe that feeling. Use one word to describe how your energy changed after the activity.

## Mini-Activity: Feelings Freeze Frame (Tableau)

- Ask students to create a freeze-frame (tableau) that shows how they're feeling right after the activity.
- Then, they can:
  - Share it with a partner or small group
  - Draw their freeze-frame in a journal
  - Write or talk about what made them feel that way

## Additional Resources

- Assessment Guide
- Cultural Protocol/Sensitivity Guide
- Evaluation Document
- Resource Database for Further Learning