

Seaside shenanigans

Dance and movement

20 minutes

You will need:

Selected music

The following work well:

Don't Worry Be Happy
by Bobby McFerrin

Everybody Loves The Sunshine
by Roy Ayers

Beyond The Sea
by Bobby Darin

An audio device

Large groups



Fun
Energetic
Upbeat

A fun and lively dance activity encouraging movement, dancing and physical exercise. There is no wrong or right way to participate – just move to the music, feel energised and remember the sights and sounds of the seaside.

To prepare:

Set out a circle of chairs for your group. A hard back dining chair with no arms is preferable, but the activity is also possible in an upright armchair.

To begin:

When your group is comfortable in their seats, put on your music – *Don't Worry Be Happy* by Bobby McFerrin works well here. Explain to your group that you are going to try a range of movements inspired by the seaside starting with the sand on the beach.

Ask your group to imagine that they are handling sand on the beach. Start at the hands and do fine finger work by touching the thumb from one finger to another on the same hand, and then repeat with the other hand. Next twinkle the fingers in the space in front and then move your twinkling fingers over your hands and up the arms.

Use the same twinkling fingers to encourage participants to give themselves a body massage. Start at the top of the body, 'pattering' the fingers on the head and face, then making way down the body – behind the neck, chest, along the arms, to the hands, then to the stomach, finishing down the front and backs of the legs.

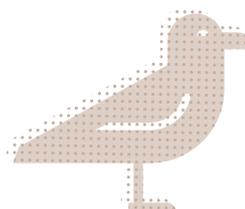
Repeat this pattern but change the quality: you could try a stroking action with fingers, or squeezing and moulding the body like sand, for example.

Then ask participants to imagine the chair is made of sand and to make an imprint in the chair by wiggling and pushing the body into different areas. Encourage them to try pushing different areas of the back, arms, legs or to make 'sand angels.'

Invite participants to 'wiggle toes' in the sand – if wearing shoes, they can wiggle their toes inside the shoe. Develop this movement to wiggle each foot, moving one foot at a time. People can lift one leg up at a time and wiggle and shake the leg. This action can be made easier by using their hands and arms to lift and support each leg.

Credit:

Yorkshire Dance / Ellen Turner, Rachel Clarke & Musician, Will Fletcher. Developed in partnership with The Grove and Red Court Care Home.



**Next:**

Next you are going to think about the sunshine – *Everybody Loves The Sunshine* by Roy Ayers works well as music to use here.

Start by closing and opening the hands and then grow the movement into the arms. Pull your hands as close as you can into your body as you can then stretch them out towards the floor, and then pull them back in again. Repeat this closing and stretching action to the sides, to the ceiling and finally to the centre of the room. This can develop into closing and stretching in any direction, reaching the arms in opposite directions and it can finally progress on to reaching towards different people in the room.

You could also call out a participant's name and then everyone can individually reach out to that person.

Now, invite participants to imagine that the sun is filling the room and they are sunbathing. Present different body parts to the 'sun' – this could be their face, arms, legs, or feet. Remember you can also sun different areas of each body part, for example the inside and then the outside of the arms.

Introduce breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth. Start small and then get bigger, taking the breath into the shoulders by raising them up to the ears and then releasing again. You can use verbal imagery of waves or use wave sound effects to help the group with the breathing. This breathing can go into the arms, opening the arms out wide and reaching upwards on the in-breath and then relaxing everything down on the out-breath.

Then:

Move on to think about the sea. *Beyond The Sea* by Bobby Darin is a good choice to play here.

Invite participants to start by letting the 'waves' wash over their legs. Use the palms of the hand to push over the thighs towards the knees and release forward, and then reverse the action pulling the hands back over the legs and towards the body. These waves can start small, and then as the seas get 'stormy', the actions can get bigger and quicker. With the bigger 'waves', legs can be released off the floor. Let the waves become smaller again, so it becomes more gentle and easier to move on to the next action.

Then pass a wave around. This can be done like a traditional Mexican wave: releasing two arms up to the ceiling and releasing them down one participant at a time.

To finish:

To end the activity, you can repeat the breathing section from the 'sun' section to help bring heart rate down and everyone to relax.

