

# Dance well: take away

## Dance and movement

**30 minutes**

(if all done together)

### You will need:

Selected music,  
such as *Air* by Midival Punditz,  
*Kesariya Baalam* by Midival  
Punditz, *Alap* by Four Tet

An audio device

### Optional:

A selection of props,  
such as light scarves  
and feathers

## Large groups



Fun  
Energising  
Physical

These simple dance activities work well together but are equally effective if they are tried on their own. They are a great way to get a group stretching and moving and a lovely way to support a group to have some fun together. They work well seated, but some groups may like to try some of them standing up.

### To begin – Namaskar:

This traditional Indian greeting is done at the beginning and end of every dance. It is the dancer's way of showing gratitude to the stage, their teachers and to dance. To begin, your group will need to let their hands drop down by their sides with the palms facing away from the body. From this position they should slowly move their hands upwards with their palms facing the ceiling, then bring the hands over so that the palms can come together in the middle of the breastbone. Keeping your palms together and your lower arms parallel to the ground, pause like this for a moment before moving on to the next activity.

### One – time to introduce yourself:

Explain that you are going to write your names in the air using your hand. *Air* by Midival Punditz works well as backing music.

As a group try writing your names at your own pace. When you have tried this a couple of times, invite your participants to try writing it again but as small as you can, then get bigger and bigger with each repetition until you are writing it the biggest that you can. *Can you also try repeating this sequence but with the other hand? Or writing your names backwards?* You could also try the sequence holding things like feathers or light silky scarves.

### Two – reach and repeat:

The next movement works well accompanied by more upbeat music: *Kesariya Baalam* by Midival Punditz works well here.

To begin, invite your group to put their feet flat on the floor about shoulder width apart. Then as a group march your feet on the spot in time to the music to get into a bit of rhythm. Next, stretch your arms out in front of you and clasp your hands together. Twist from the waist, moving your arms from side to side looking in the direction of your hands as you move them.

Swap sides eight times, trying to follow the rhythm of the music, and then bring your hands back to a comfortable resting position, keeping them clasped. Now reach your clasped hands up to the ceiling, and back to your lap – repeat this eight times in time to the music.



**Credit:**

Akademi.



Finally, bring your hands to your chest and unclasp them. Extend one hand forward, then bring it back to your chest and swap hands. Repeat eight times.

If you want you could get your legs involved too by tapping each foot forward at the same time as the arm. Once you have tried the whole sequence, you could repeat it if you feel that your group are able to.

### **Three – seated stretch:**

This final movement is really lovely with a gentle, relaxing musical accompaniment: *Alap* by Four Tet is a good piece to use.

To begin, invite your group to take three deep breaths in through their noses and out through their mouths. Then take three more but adding movements to the breath – first they should stretch their arms as far to the ceiling as they can with each breath in, then bring them back to their knees with each breath out, doing this for three breaths in and three breaths out. Next, lift the hands up on the in breath and bring down so they stretch out to the side on the out breath – hold in this position for two more breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth, wiggling their fingers as they stretch their arms.

To finish the sequence, the group should bring their arms around themselves and give themselves a hug, which is held for three further breaths. This will give a nice stretch across the top of the back. Do it again but switching the arm that goes on top.

Repeat three times.

### **To finish:**

To end your movements, invite your group to repeat their Namaskar greeting one final time.

