

# Exploring the Elements of Dance Series

## Introducing the Elements of Dance - Part 2 – Grades 6-12

**Instructions:** In this activity, students will learn about the 5 elements of dance and their definitions. When introducing each concept share the definition first.

**1. Body-** the instrument used in dance. You can use main parts of the body such as legs, arms, feet, fingers, head etc. to create different shapes and express the feelings of your dance.

**Exercise:** Take this time to move the different parts of your body. We'll start with the head, shoulders, fingers, hands, arms, torso, hips, knees, entire leg, and feet. Work your way all the way down from your head to your feet.

**2. Action-** is any human movement included in the act of dancing— it can include dance steps, facial movements, partner lifts, gestures, and even everyday movements such as walking.

**Exercise:** Turn on music and begin to move your body parts to the rhythm. You can walk, skip, jump, leap, spin, toe tap, clap your hands, shake your head, wiggle your fingers, or move arms up and down.

**3. Space-** is the area and place that dance is performed in. Dancers can stay in one place or travel from one place to another. They may alter the direction, level, size, and pathways of their movements. **Exercise:** Instruct the students to move in place, then they can move to one spot in the classroom (for example, near the chalk board) and then to another spot. Next instruct the students to dance in every space of the room. When you give the signal, tell them to stop and dance in their space.

**4. Time-** is the rhythm and repetition patterns of a dance. Time dictates not only the duration of a dance, but the speed in the execution of its steps.

**Exercise:** To practice this element, play different tempos of music such as classical, jazz, hip hop, or a love song from Disney. Encourage the students to move to the tempo of the music.

**5. Energy-** is how the body movement happens. Energy can include variations in movement flow and the use of force, tension, and weight. For example, the arms can move flowy, sharp, heavy, light, smooth, tight or loose. Energy also deals with the emotions of the dance.

**Exercise:** Call out a few words such as Punch, Stretch, poke, wind, bricks, rubber band, etc. and instruct the students to move the way they think the words mean.

**Next: The Elements of Dance: BODY – Part 3**