

**FALL IN LOVE WITH BALLET**

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# MY CHOREOGRAPHY WORKBOOK

MOBKBOOK



This choreography workbook belongs to:

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# Getting Started



This workbook will take you through a series of activities that will help you create your very own dance production at home!

Work your way through the activities in sequence or decide the order yourself. Creative works are always evolving, and we encourage you to print and fill-out the pages as many times as you like as you progress in your creative process.

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## Setting up your Space

Use the check-list below to select a rehearsal space and get ready to dance:

- The floor is clean, even and clear of obstacles
- There is enough room to move freely without bumping into objects
- I can easily play music on a device close by
- My clothes let me move freely and don't get in my way (tights, leggings, sweatpants)
- My footwear isn't too sticky or slippery (e.g. dance shoes, indoor sneakers, socks, barefoot)

## Roles and Responsibilities

Creating a dance production requires a team of professionals with different kinds of expertise. For your production you can share the roles amongst your family or take them on yourself. Here are some of the roles you may need to fill as you design your production.

- Choreographer: Creates the structure and movements of the dance
- Dancer/dancers: Learns and performs the choreography
- Composer/Musician/Orchestra: Compose or play music for the work
- Costume Designer: Designs the different costumes each dancer will wear
- Set Designer: Designs the scenery or set as well as the props
- Lighting Designer: Designs the lighting scheme and effects

# Selecting Music



## *Shape, Tempo, Musical Qualities, Counts, Volume, Mood, Lyrics*

Choreography is sometimes described as the process of taking music and making it visible. Your choice of music will be one of the most important ones in this process. Here are a few tips that might help you select music for your dance.

- Stand-up and move to the music. Does it inspire you to create?
- Listen closely through the full piece and notice its shape.

***Does it change quality or mood?***

***Does the tempo (speed) of the music change?***

***Does it have musical highlights or an intense or exciting moment (called a climax)?***

- Can you hear a consistent pulse or beat in the music? Like a heartbeat?
- Listen to the music and count aloud. Are you able to count the musical phrase? (e.g. the phrase has 8 beats)
- Are there lyrics? What story or emotions is the singer expressing?



Sometimes it can be hard to make a choice. Remember you can always change your mind, use multiple pieces or no music at all!

## Music for my Choreography

The title of the music is: \_\_\_\_\_

The composer of the music is: \_\_\_\_\_

The music makes me feel: \_\_\_\_\_

My notes on the music: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Exploring Energy



In dance, the element of energy has a deep relationship with quality of movement, intention and emotion.

Each of the natural elements below has a different energetic quality. Beside each image, write one or more words to describe the kind of movement you imagine. Then, in your dancing space, move your body to demonstrate each. Experiment with different body parts. For example, a snowflake arm with a tornado leg.



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# Choreography Notes



*Strong, Light, Vibrating, Forceful, Gentle, Smooth, Sharp, Fluid, Wiggling, Waving*

Many choreographers create movement through **improvisation**, which means exploring movement that is inspired in the moment rather than planned. In your dancing space, put on your music, experiment and explore! Play the music as many times as you need and try many ways of moving. As you dance, consider the **energetic qualities** your body creates.

Today I created and experimented for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

The energetic qualities I used most were \_\_\_\_\_

Use the space below to write notes or draw pictures that will help you remember your work:

# Narrative and Abstract



Many ballets can be described as ‘story ballets.’ That includes traditional favourites like Marius Petipa’s *Swan Lake* and Christopher Wheeldon’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. In these choreographies, there is a narrative or storyline that drives the action forward.

Some ballets are abstract or without a plot like George Balanchine’s *Serenade* and Michel Fokine’s *Les Sylphide*. These ballets don’t follow a story but instead use the dancers to express ideas, create images and elicit emotion from the audience. Often these works have a central theme or inspiration that the choreography explores through movement.

**Does your choreography have a story or is it an exploration of a theme or idea?**

**Fill out one or both of the charts below:**

## **Narrative Choreography**

Write your story in the space below.  
Does your story have a clear beginning,  
climax and ending?

## **Abstract Choreography**

Write your central theme in the centre  
circle and add connecting ideas and  
images in the smaller circles.

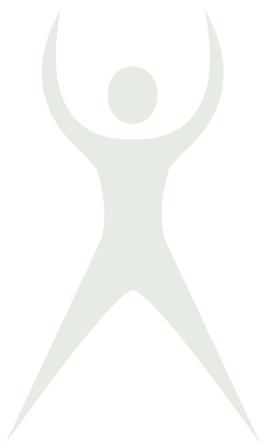
# Exploring Space



Space is the canvas on which a dancer creates. This refers both to your personal space (the area your body takes up) and the total space available for movement (your dancing space).

**Shape** is what we call the design a body makes in space. This can be both in stillness (like a frozen curved statue) or in motion (walk through the space with your body making angular shapes).

For each of the shapes below, select a word that best describes what you see. When you are finished, stand up and try to re-create these shapes with your body.



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# Choreography Journal



*Circular, Curved, Angular, Twisted, Square, Linear, Triangular, Sharp, Wavy*

As you experiment and explore, consider the different **shapes** you are including in your choreography. Some shapes might be still, like a still pose, others might move through space, like a flying leap. Does changing a shape change the way you feel? Does changing a shape impact the way the audience feels?

Today I created and experimented for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

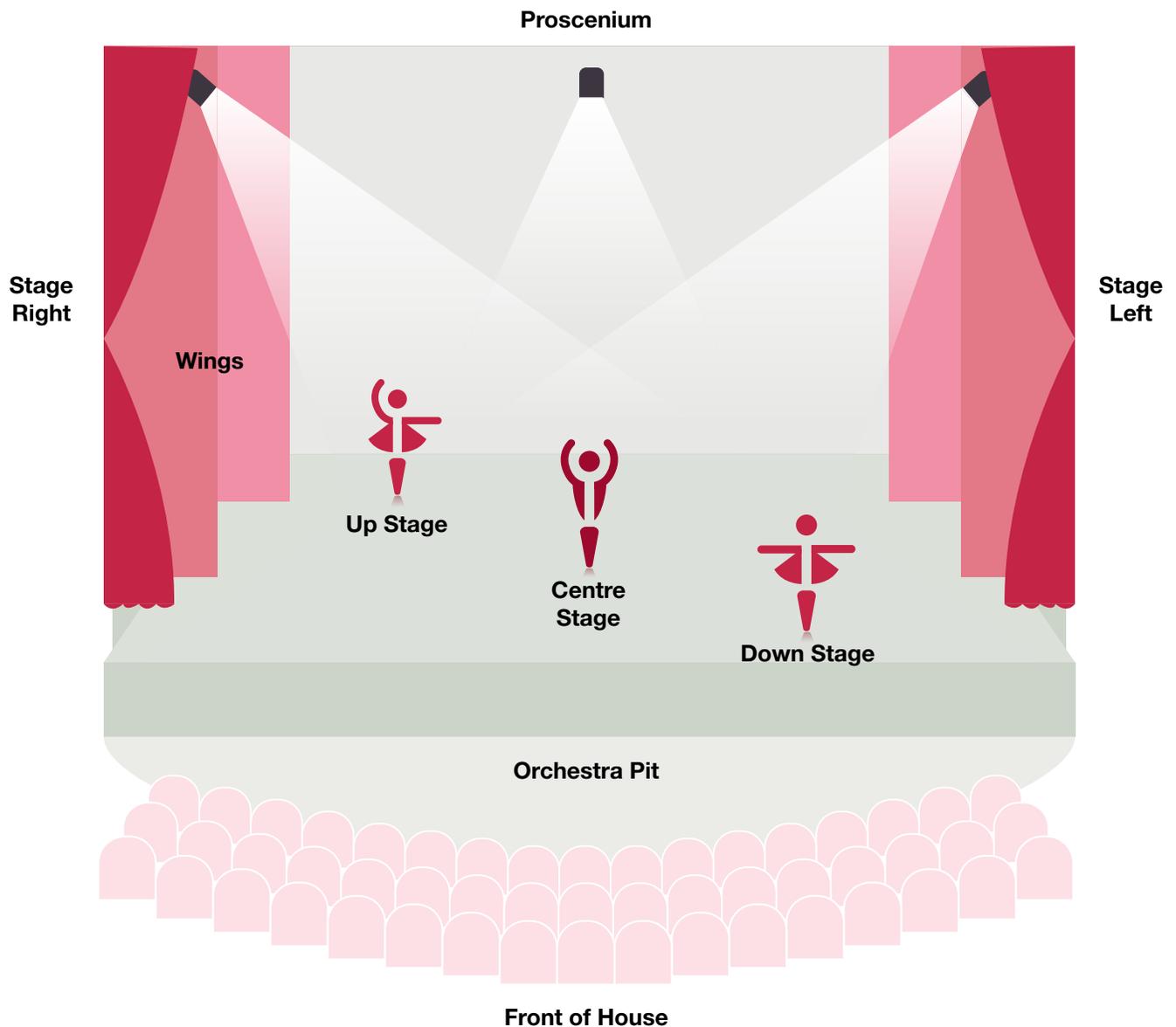
Draw an image of one of the shapes or poses that are included in your work:

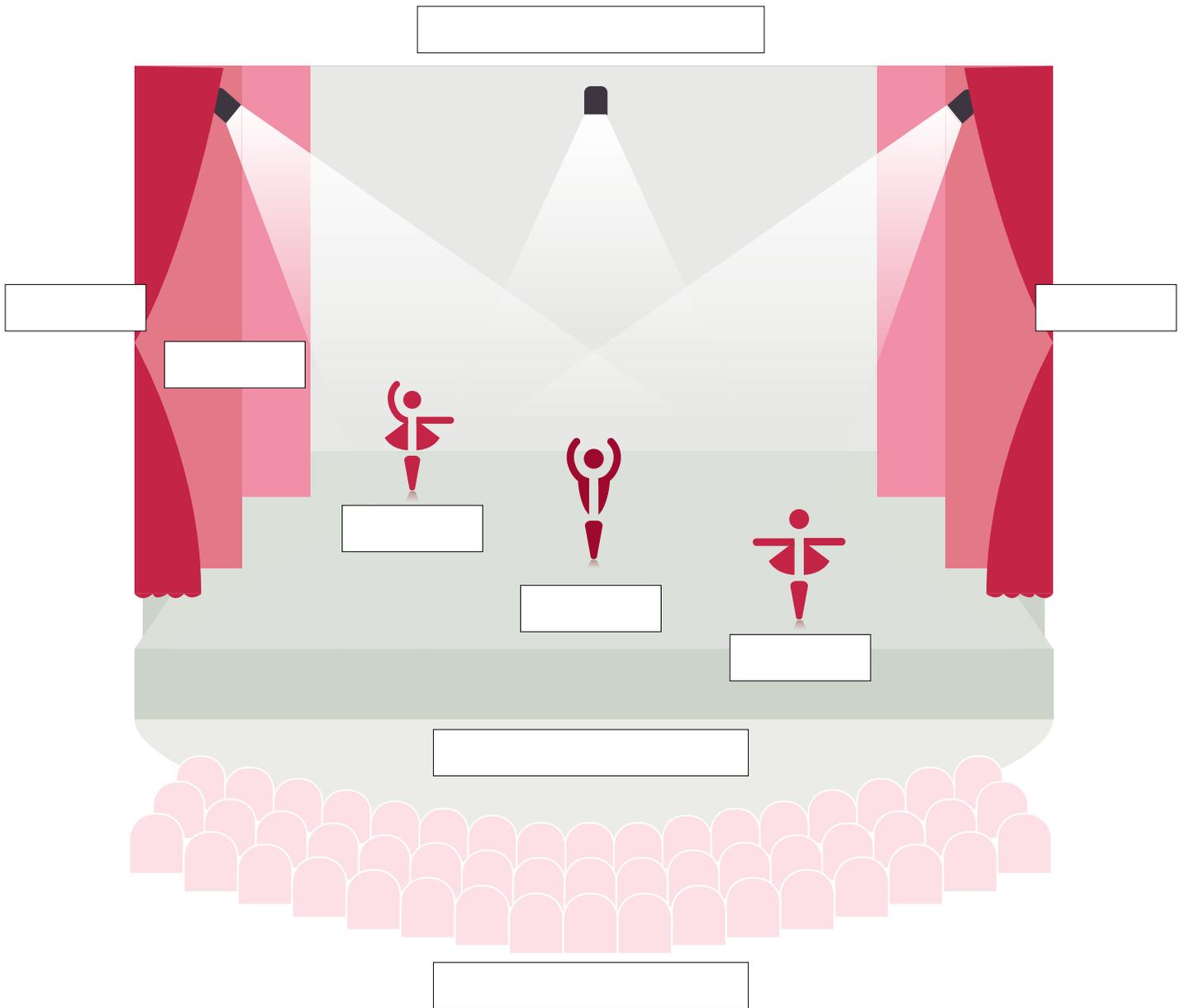
Use the space below to make notes or draw pictures that will help you remember your work:

# The Stage Space



Choreographers are creative when it comes to using the full space of the stage. Each part of the stage has a different name to help the choreographer, set designer and lighting designer work together. You can learn the different names in the image below and then test your memory on the next page!





# Choreography Journal



*Offstage, Upstage, Stage Right, Wings, Downstage, Stage Left, Centre Stage,*

As you experiment and explore, consider the **pathways** you are creating on the ground. For example, if you were dancing on sand, what pattern would your feet leave behind? Do you move in straight lines or curved lines? What parts of the stage do you dance on the most? The least?

Today I created and experimented for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes.

My current favourite part of the choreography is \_\_\_\_\_

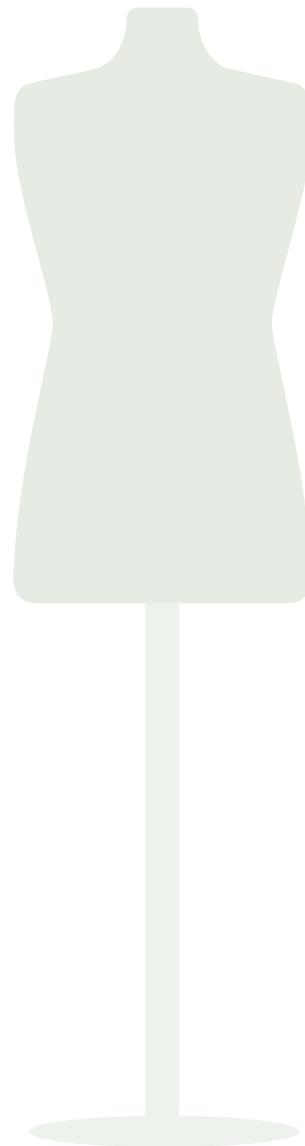
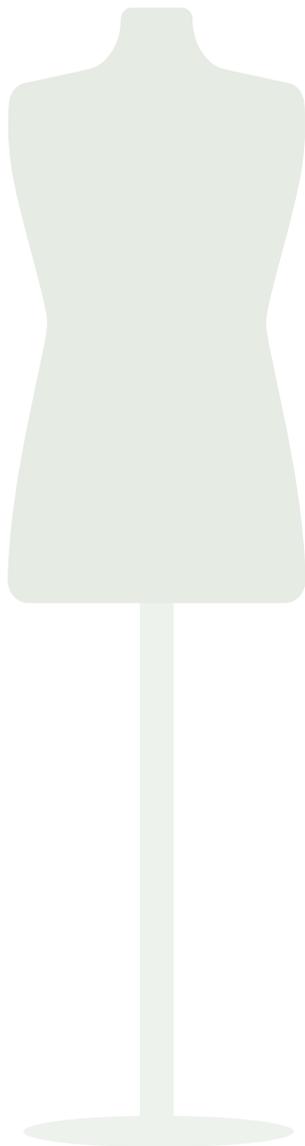
Picture your dance from above and draw a map, like a treasure map, that shows the pathways you or your dancers are making in the space. If you are representing multiple dancers, you may want to use different colours for each.

# My Costume Designs



The costume designer is in charge of creating the costumes for a work of theatre, film or ballet. They work closely with the choreographer and other creative professionals to bring characters to life and create colour and texture on stage. In the world of ballet, the costume designers also have to keep in mind the physical demands of the movement. Ballet costumes have to be able to move with the dancers!

Design the costume or costumes for your production below. Consider how you can help create your character by using different colours and shapes.



# Preparing your Performance



Once your choreography is complete, it is time to begin planning your performance. It can take many hours of rehearsal to prepare a work for its debut. Use the checklist below to see if your choreography is ready to be performed:

- My choreography has a clear beginning and ending.
- My story or theme is clear.
- I am confident in the energetic qualities, shapes and pathways in my dance.
- I am confident in my use of space. I know where each movement happens on the stage.

## Create a Curtain Call

At the end of every good performance there is a bow or curtain call where the audience can offer their appreciation to the dancers. Be sure to create and practice your curtain call in advance!

## Hold a Dress Rehearsal

It is very important for dancers to practice the elements of the production including wearing their costume, dancing on stage with lighting and set pieces, and working with props. When creating a production in your home, you also have to plan for the audience. Where do they enter? Where will they sit? Make sure your space has enough room for both the dancers and the audience members.

The dress rehearsal is your opportunity to see all the performance elements together and make any adjustments before your big opening!

# Tickets and Programs

In advance of the performance, you will want to hand out tickets for your audience. When they arrive, collect their tickets and give them a program. The program will tell them about the production and the many creative people who helped put it together.

Print and fill out the Ticket and Program pages to use for your show!

<p>★ ADMIT ONE ★</p> <p>TIME _____</p> <p>DATE _____</p>	<p>★ ADMIT ONE ★</p> <p>TIME _____</p> <p>DATE _____</p>	<p>★ ADMIT ONE ★</p> <p>TIME _____</p> <p>DATE _____</p>
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With special thanks to:

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Presents a living room production of:

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With choreography by:

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