

# DANCING THROUGH ADHD: A LEARNING PLAN

*Lesson Plan for Dance I (Grade 9)*

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## Gordy the Rabbit has **ADHD**



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### OVERVIEW

In this unit, Dance I students will explore three major topics: understanding and accepting diversity among peers (specifically those on the ADHD spectrum), creating original choreography based on a theme, and devising formations using the number of dancers in their groups.

## EDUCATION STANDARDS

TEKS 117.306 Dance, Level I (Section C)

1. Identify images found in the environment through movement;
2. Explore, improvise, and demonstrate original movement during the creative process;
3. Create basic compositional forms using fundamental dance elements for choreographic processes;
4. Express ideas and emotions through movement.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. Know and understand the different ways ADHD manifests.
2. Create choreography based on themes and concepts they identify from a book.
3. Choreograph both individually and collaboratively in groups.
4. Create different formations within groups of four.
5. Devise methods for creating an inclusive environment among their peers.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Book: *Gordy the Rabbit has ADHD* by *Jessie Shepherd*
2. 4 different, randomized lists of 20 unrelated words (Day 1)

## VERIFICATION

*Steps to check for student understanding*

1. Teacher will check in with each group to assess progress and understanding.
2. Students will answer a set of discussion questions first in groups, then with the class.
3. Teacher will assess understanding via a culminating choreography combination that each group will perform.

## DAY 1:

*Pages 4-8*

*Engagement:*

Teacher reads pages 4-8 to the class.

Think Pair Share in assigned groups of 4:

- Why was a rabbit used as the main character?
- How do rabbits move?
- What difficulties might someone with ADHD have in our class?

*Exploration:*

- *Activity:* One volunteer from each group stands up and listens as the teacher reads a list of 20 random words that the volunteers will have to recite back to the teacher. At the same time, the other three members of each group are trying to distract the volunteer by being noisy, making jokes, asking questions, etc. After the volunteer from each group attempts to repeat the words, a new volunteer from each group stands up and the process repeats until everyone has had the chance to be the volunteer.
- Explain the choreography project:
  - In their current groups of 4, they will choreograph a routine that reflects the ADHD experience and perform it in front of the class on Day 5.
- Everyone will have the chance to participate as the person with simulated ADHD. This person will change each day. Groups randomly select the order of the volunteers (i.e. rock paper scissors, drawing names out of a hat).
- Everyone individually choreographs a two 8-count sequence that can be repeated over and over again.

## DAY 2:

*Pages 9-13*

*Exploration:*

Teacher reads pages 9-13 to the class.

- A) Volunteer A reads a short excerpt about how a person with ADHD writes, and alters their two 8-counts to reflect the varied phrasing [Appendix 1].
- B) The rest of the team choreographs six 8-counts without Volunteer A.
- C) Volunteer A and the other teammates meet together and perform their sequences simultaneously.

*Engagement:*

Think Pair Share in assigned groups of 4:

- Did the dance look good? Why or why not?
- Which parts of the choreographic process worked/ did not work?
- What changes might need to happen in order to improve the group's choreographic process?

### **DAY 3:**

*Pages 14-18*

*Exploration:*

Teacher reads pages 14-18 to the class.

- A) Choreograph five 8-counts around Volunteer B's two 8-count sequence.
  - a) Without telling Volunteer B, the team selects one 8-count to improvise.
  - b) Include distractions for Volunteer B.
- B) Practice all choreography.

*Engagement:*

Think Pair Share in assigned groups of 4:

- Which parts of the choreographic process worked/ did not work?
- Were there any challenges?
- What changes might need to happen in order to improve the group's choreographic process?

### **DAY 4:**

*Pages 19-21*

*Exploration:*

Teacher reads pages 19-21 to the class.

- A) Choreograph three 8-counts while working with Volunteer C's sequence and set formations.
  - a) Volunteer C will step out at some point to view formation changes and alter anything that looks murky.
- B) Practice all choreography.

*Engagement:*

Think Pair Share in assigned groups of 4:

- Which parts of the choreographic process worked/ did not work?
- How did playing to Volunteer C's strengths benefit the group as a whole?
- What might need to be done in order to create harmony between tomorrow's Volunteer and their teammates?

## **DAY 5:**

*Pages 22-25*

*Exploration:*

Teacher reads pages 22-25 to the class.

- A) Choreograph four 8-counts all together in harmony with Volunteer D's sequence.
- B) Practice the whole dance.
- C) Perform choreography about the ADHD experience.

*Engagement:*

Think Pair Share in assigned groups of 4:

- What were some challenges the person with simulated ADHD faced throughout this process?
- What were some challenges the rest of the team faced throughout this process?
- How was this experience different for each person with simulated ADHD?
- How can we help our friends with ADHD feel included in our class?

## Appendix 1:

ADHD people write differently. It's amazing. Frenetic.

See, when we communicate, there's not really a barrier between how we'd write something down - or how we'd talk naturally.

We use punctuation wildly. Putting full stops in places where commas should be.

Commas, are everywhere, they shouldn't be, and good luck to you if we get so excited about something that we really need to tell you everything about it immediately because at that point really there are no rules. .

But... That means when you read us - you hear us.

Not our exact voice, not exactly.

Not unless you know us.

But how we ebb, and flow. The rhythm of it.

As a writer (and an editor), the saddest thing about my life is that my first job, after finishing a piece, is to silence myself.

But it's fun getting there.

**@GeraintWorks**