

Teaching Ballet for Grades 5-8 and 9-12

This material is designed for use in public and private academic schools.

All exercises may be performed without barres, dance flooring, or mirrors.

There are 10 lesson plans similar in structure to the sample page. Each lesson plan would be used for more than one class period as repetition is important to the development of proper skill.

There is a section of background information including terminology, body positions, historical timeline, additional resources, national arts standards in education and progress tracking sheets.

Exercises are laid out in a similar manner to the samples included. The exercises are broken down into 3 sets and each set contains a beginner, intermediate and advanced version of the exercise. The three levels are set in a way that they can be taught concurrently if there are 3 levels present in the same class.

Exercises cover barre, center, and across the floor work.

Terminology is based on the Vaganova Ballet style, alternate terminology is included.

Lesson Plan 1 – Grades 5-8

Beginner

1. Feet Positions and Stretch 1A/B/C
2. Plie' 1A
3. Tendu 1A
4. Tendu Jete' 1A
5. Ronds de Jambe 1A
6. Sur le cou de pied 1A
7. Port des bras 1A/B/C

Intermediate

1. Feet Positions and Stretch 1 A/B/C
2. Plie' 1B
3. Tendu 1B
4. Tendu Jete' 1B
5. Ronds de Jambe 1B
6. Sur le cou de pied 1B
7. Port des bras 1 A/B/C

Advanced

1. Feet Positions and Stretch 1A/B/C
2. Plie' 1C
3. Tendu 1C
4. Tendu Jete' 1C
5. Ronds de Jambe 1C
6. Sur le cou de pied 1C
7. Port des bras 1A/B/C

At the conclusion of the first lesson ask all the students to write their name and 3 dance goals on a piece of paper. Collect the papers and hold them until the beginning of Lesson Plan 4.

Covers NSAE 1a, 1b, 1f, 1g, 5b, 6a

Lesson Plan 2 – Grades 9-12

Begin the movement exercises for Lesson Plan 2 when the exercises in Lesson Plan 1 can be executed cleanly, with a minimum of verbal cuing to remember the sequence. The concentration on the exercises from Lesson Plan 1 should now be switched to performance qualities such as: musicality, projection of expression – even if the expression is simply a strong expression of composure and poise, use of appropriate dynamics for the step, an increased use of energy in the execution – there should be more confidence and command of the movements.

As the material from Lesson Plan 1 is repeated, ask the students to explain the following information to you:

1. Dynamics of the step
 2. Qualities of movement that step has
 3. The action of the step
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1. Ask each student to write down 7 single words that describe ballet to them. Discuss the use of ballet and ballet dancers in the media in mainstream America. Some references that can be discussed are: the sumo wrestler in pointe shoes advertising Merit Cigarettes, watch advertisements using ballerinas, laundry detergent ads with dancers leaping to throw in the product, perfume named after Baryshnikov, the ballet dancer in Will and Grace, etc. Discuss why ballet dancers are selected by these companies. Discuss what the difference is between a stereotype and an image. Does the media project images, stereotypes or both? How accurate is the portrayal of ballet in the media? What would students do to change that image?

NSAE Standards 5d

Beginner

- 1-7. Numbers 1-7 from Lesson Plan 1 - Beginner
8. Eleve' / calf stretch 1 A
9. Temps Leve' 1A
10. Ballet Walks 1A

Intermediate

- 1-7. Numbers 1-7 from Lesson Plan 1 - Intermediate
8. Eleve' / Calf Stretch 1B
9. Temps leve' 1B
10. Pas Marche' 1 B

Advanced

- 1-7. Numbers 1-7 From Lesson Plan 1 - Advanced
8. Eleve' / Calf stretch 1 C
9. Temps leve' 1 C
10. Pas Marche' pique 1 C

Adds NSAE 1e, 1h (advanced)

Music for Tendu Jete' 1A / 1B / 1C

64 counts per exercise

Meter 4/4

Tempo Moderate

Tendu Jete' 1A

Starting position – feet turned out 1st, hands on hips. As alignment and balance improve the arms move to 2nd position.

Counts	Movement
1	Right foot tendu front.
2	Extend leg so foot leaves floor.
3	Return to tendu.
4	Close 1st position.
1-4 , 1-4, 1-4	Repeat 3 more times. Switch weight to right side as you close the final tendu jete'.
1 -4, 1-4, 1-4, 1-4	Repeat all with the left foot. Switch weight to the left side as you close the final tendu jete'.
1	Right foot tendu side.
2	Extend leg so foot leaves floor.
3	Return to tendu.
4	Close 1st position.
1-4 , 1-4, 1-4	Repeat 3 more times. Switch weight to the right side as you close the final tendu jete'.
1 -4, 1-4, 1-4, 1-4	Repeat the side tendu jete's with the left foot working. As you close the final one, switch the weight so you are centered on two feet.

General Notes and Corrections

1. Apply the notes discussed in tendus.
2. As the foot leaves the floor the toes should remain extended down towards the floor so that the heel is leading the lift.
3. The leg should feel as if it is lengthening away from the body and the foot leaves the floor because it has gone farther than it can keep contact. Try to avoid having the students 'lift" their leg, as that generally implies a different muscular energy.
4. At this level there is no accent to the movement. Each piece of the exercise is given the same amount of time.
5. Use the resistance of the floor to close the feet so that the ankles don't hit each other.

Tendu Jete' 1B

Starting position – feet 3rd position right foot front, arms in 2nd.

Counts	Movement
1	Right foot tendu front.
2	Continue to stretch foot so that it leaves the floor.
3	Return to tendu.
4	Close 3rd position.
1-4 , 1-4	Repeat 2 more times closing in 3 rd position
1-4	Repeat, closing to 1st position and switch weight to right side.
1-4, 1-4, 1-4, 1-4	Repeat all the tendu jete's to the front with the left foot closing in 3 rd position front. On the final tendu jete' the foot closes in 1 st position and the weight shifts to the left.
1	Right foot tendu side.
2	Continue to stretch foot so that it leaves the floor.
3	Return to tendu.
4	Close 3rd position front.
1-4	Repeat, closing 3rd position back.
1-4	Repeat closing 3rd position front.
1-4	Repeat closing 1st position back and switch weight to right side.
1-4, 1-4, 1-4, 1-4	Repeat the tendu jete' combination to the left side. On the final tendu jete' the foot closes in 1 st position and the weights centers over both feet.

Tendu Jete' 1C

The combination for 1C is the same pattern as 1B however the feet are in 5th position instead of 3rd. If the entire class is performing exercise **Tendu Jete' 1C** have them use Croisee' or Effacee' body positions on the tendus to the front and turn back to a la seconde for the tendus side.

Another variation on the exercise is to replace the lift off the floor with flexing the ankle and foot. This increases the balance needed and lengthens the back of the leg.

The third variation would be to have the students go directly to the tendu jete' on count 1, pique the foot on 2 (touch the toe to the floor and lift it right back up), pique the foot on 3, and close on 4.

General Notes and Corrections

1. Apply all the notes from the Tendu exercises and Tendu Jete' IA.
2. When closing 3rd and 5th positions it is important to remember to close the thighs and not the feet.
3. Encourage the lengthening of the inner thigh and back of the leg throughout the entire movement.
4. When flexing the foot, the action is at the ankle and not the toes. The back of the leg should feel even longer, try to keep that length as the foot points again.
5. You can describe the action of flexing the foot as "pointing the heel".
6. When executing the pique, the accent of the movement should be up. It is as if the toes touch something sharp or hot and recoil from it. This is a movement from the hip joint. There should be no changes in the knee or ankle joints.