

It's Ballet!!!!



Image from Kidzworld.com

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Eat, Sleep, DANCE!!!

What do you do to relieve stress? I dance! I enjoy dancing in general, but my favorite dance style is ballet. Throughout this book, I will discuss some key components of a ballet class. I will walk you through barre work, jumps, and turns. There is of course, much more to ballet than what I'm about to tell you, but this is just a taste of the wonderful art form. Please join me on a journey through a ballet class.



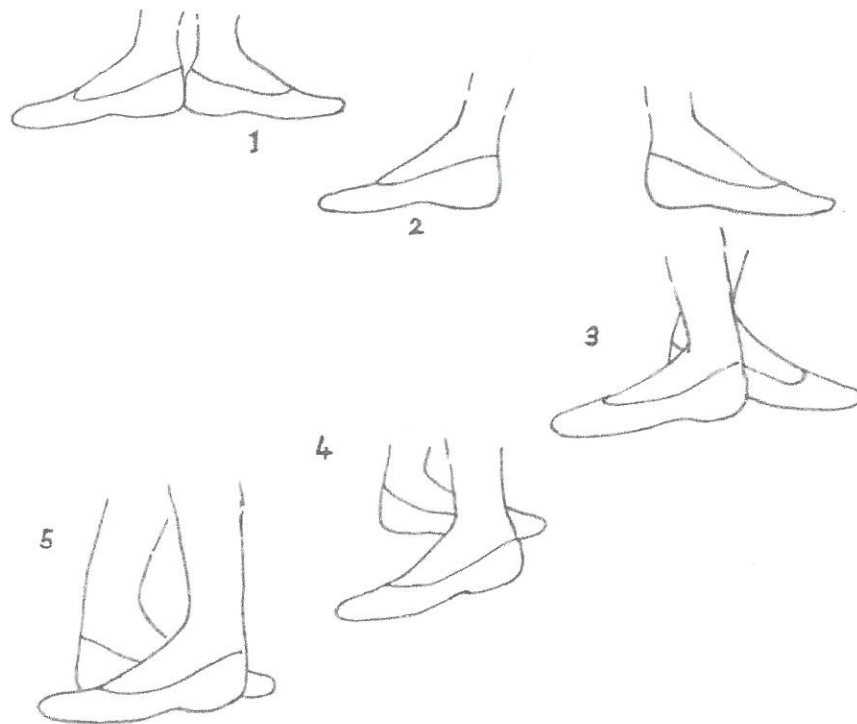
Image from manne-ballet.blogspot.com

Chapter 2: Barre Work

Ballerina and *ballerino* (male) dancers start every ballet class at the barre. The *barre* is where a dancer builds their technique and begins to warm up. The problem? Many young dancers are turned off by barre work because of its slow, complex and somewhat tedious style. As teachers, we must continue to stress the importance of barre work and the value it has for the craft. Three very common barre exercises are: plies, tendus and degages.

Plies

We always start with plies. To *plié* means to bend. The dancers bend their legs then straighten them while their feet are in different positions. The positions commonly covered during barre exercises are: first, second, fourth and fifth. We do both *demi* and *grand* plies. Demi plies are small, petite plies, while grand plies are larger and lower to the ground. When you grand plié in first, fourth and fifth positions, your heels come up from the ground. When in second, they do not.



These are the positions of the feet, 1st-5th from funfactballet.blogspot.com

Demi Plié



Image from balletinyou.com

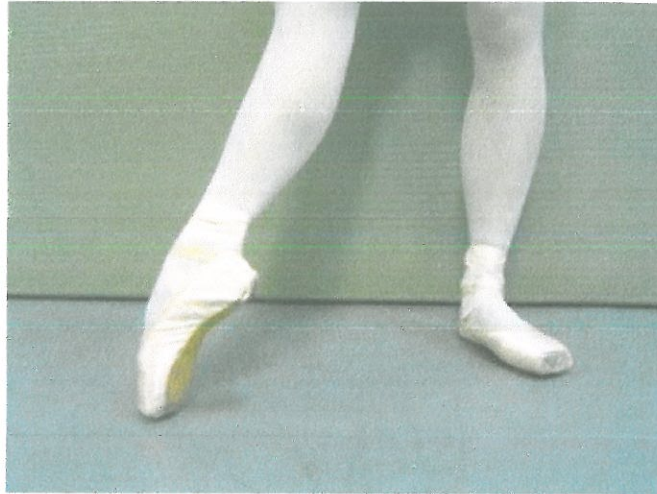
Grand Plié



Image from mariadoval.wordpress.com

Tendus

Tendus are the next exercise that we complete. A *tendu* is a stretching of the foot. The dancer will start in their desired position then slide and point to the front, side or back of their body until their leg is straight. Once straight, the dancer will slide the foot back into the desired position. This is repeated several times and warms up the ankles and the foot itself. While in class, you learn the proper way to turn out from the hip, which you must do during every ballet move.



Images from atimetodanceblog.blogspot.com

Degages

Degages are much like tendus. A *degage* is also a pointing of the foot. The dancer will start in their desired position then slide and point, slightly lifting their foot off the ground a couple of inches to the front, side or back of their body with their leg straight. Once straight, the dancer will slide the foot back into the desired position. This is repeated several times.



Chapter 3: Jumps

After barre work is complete, we move onto jumps. Just like with plies, jumps can be petite or grand. Jumps warm up the dancer's larger muscles and help prevent injury. As said previously, it is important to turn out correctly from your hip in every step that you complete in ballet. This is something that you cover in class. Barre work and jumps are arguably the most important exercises in class. We will discuss different types of saute jumps, but first let's discuss why barre work and jumps are so important.

The Importance of Barre Work and Jumps

Cause	Effect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barre work teaches how to properly turn out from the hip. • Barre work and jumps warm up the body. • Barre work builds balance. • Jumps train the dancers to soar high, as well as teach them how to begin and complete a jump. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dancers carry the knowledge over into other moves and genres of dance. • Injuries are prevented. • This balance carries over into other components of dance, and helps even when participating in other sports. • Dancers develop higher leaps and more skilled petite jumps.

What is a Sauté Jump?

A *sauté* jump can be done from any of the positions. The dancer will always start in a plié. They will then jump straight up, straightening their knees and pointing their toes in the air. When they come down they will return to the position that they started in and always land in a plié. ALL jumps must land in a plié to ensure that the dancers do not injure their knees.

Petite and Grand

Sautés can be petite or grand. Petite sautés only come off the ground far enough to point the toes. Grand sautés come several inches off of the floor. The more the dancer plies prior to their jump, the higher they will go. Toes must be pointed, and legs must be straight in the air, but bent in a plié upon landing.

Eschappe Sauté

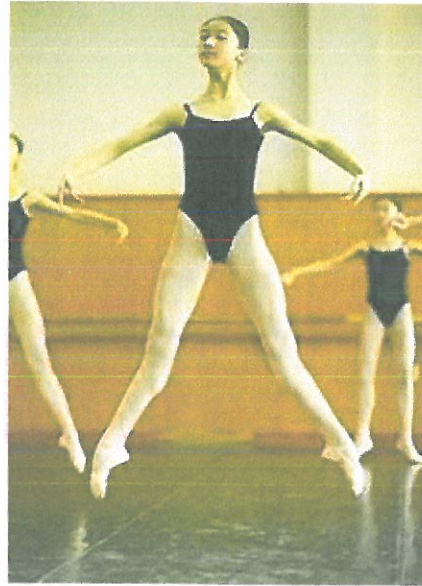
An *eschappe sauté* has all of the same rules as a regular sauté with one slight difference. Instead of the jump starting and finishing in the same position, the dancer will jump up, then out to second position. They will land in second position with their feet turned out and in a plié. An *eschappe sauté* can start in any position other than second, but ends in

second position. Feet will still be turned out upon completion and feet will be pointed with straight legs in the air.

Sauté



Eschappe Sauté

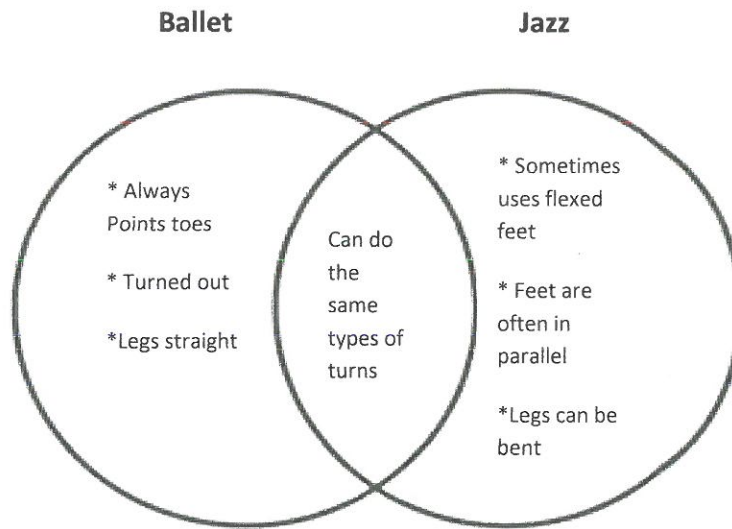


Images from studyblue.com

Chapter 4: Turns

There are several turns executed in dance. Turns are done in various genres, in various ways. For this text, we will discuss chaine, soutenu, and pirouette turns. These are the turns most commonly seen in ballet. Turns in ballet often vary from turns seen in other genres of dance.

Difference in Turns



Chaine Turns

A *chaine* turn is a turn where the dancer executes half of a turn on each foot. The dancer starts in first position. They then step out into second while on the ball of their foot. After, they take a half a turn to face the back staying in first position on the ball of the foot. They repeat this all the way across the floor. Every two steps is one full turn.



Image from dancespirit.com

Soutenu Turns

A soutenu turn is a turn that is most commonly seen in ballet. It is not typically seen in the faster genres of jazz or hip hop. When executing a *soutenu turn*, the dancer begins in a fifth position. They then step out onto the ball of one foot to the side. As the step out they draw their other foot into the one on the ball of the foot. Their feet are now in a fifth position, but up on the ball of their feet. They complete their turn with their feet in fifth position and land in a fifth plié.

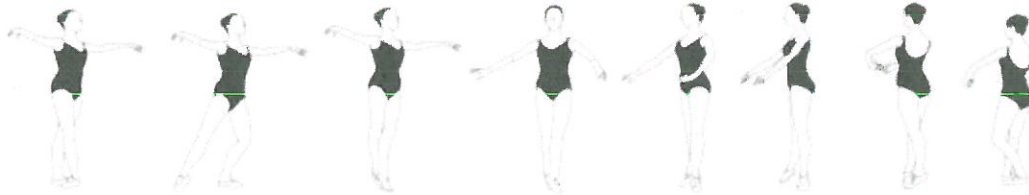


Image from i-l-fitness-jp.com

Pirouette Turns

Pirouette turns are difficult, but probably the most common turn. It is seen in all genres of dance. A *pirouette turn* is when you turn on one foot with the other up to the knee. The dancer starts in fourth position. They then, spring up on the front foot, straightening the knee. As they straighten, they draw the back leg up to the knee and spin. They then land most commonly in a fifth position. In ballet, the legs are turned out, where in jazz they are in parallel.

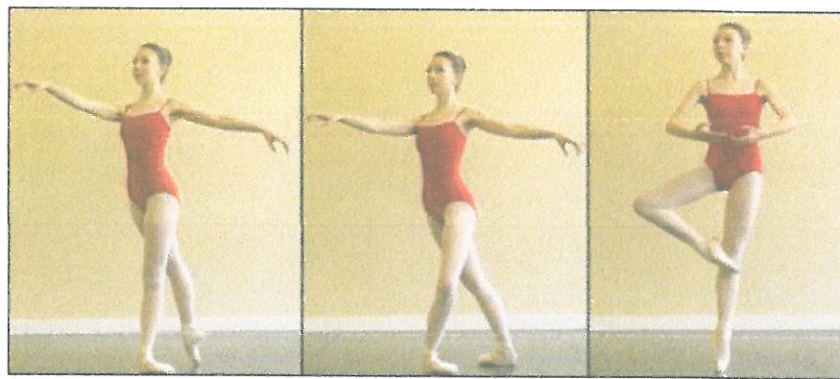


Image from nklein99.wordpress.com

Chapter 5: Conclusion

When I was younger, I remember disliking ballet. It was slow, it was hard, and it was exhausting. However, I learned that it is also very important. It is now my favorite. Ballet is where dancers get their technique and balance. As a youth, ballet and dance in general kept me out of trouble. I only scratched the surface of what ballet is, however I hope that it triggered something in you. Hopefully it made you think of a love for a hobby/sport/activity, one that will keep you active for years to come. Here is what dance has personally done for me. What can your hobby or sport do for you?

Pros of Ballet	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourages a healthy lifestyle• Builds technique• Builds balance• Builds grace• Builds social skills• Relies on teamwork• Keeps you active and fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time consuming• Can be costly• Slow• Difficult

Glossary

Ballerina- a female ballet dancer.

Ballerino- a male ballet dancer.

Barre- a wooden bar mounted to the wall that a dancer holds onto to begin their warm up exercises.

Chaine- a turn where the dancer executes half a turn on each foot.

Degages- pointing of the foot to an open position.

Eschappe Sauté- a jump opening out to the side.

Grand- large

Petite- small

Plié- to bend your knees and straighten them again.

Pirouette turn- turning on one leg while the other leg is up to the knee.

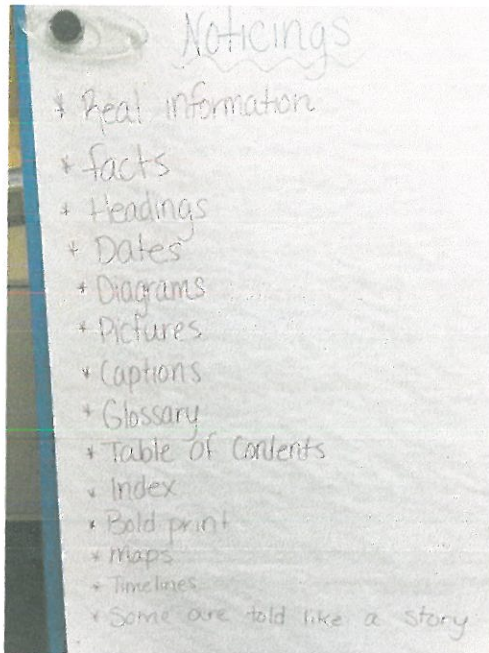
Sauté- a jump straight into the air.

Soutenu Turn- a turn where one leg is drawn into the other.

Tendu- to point in a stretched position.

5. Student Sample sent separately

6.



Ideas:

Places:

- Savannah, Georgia
- Miami
- California
- Disney World
- Laser Tag
- Cedar Point
- Sky Zone
- Air Time
- Virginia Beach
- Florida
- Vacation

Things

- School
- Sentimental Items