

Hello!

The content here is for the third and ninth month of our Contemporary Lesson Plan Sets that go along with our Once Upon a Ballet Story Ballet Curriculum for ages 7 to 12 years old. In the first month you teach these materials, you'll want to introduce the material to your students. The goal here is exposure. In the second month you teach them, you'll be revisiting these same materials. You'll want to further refine your students' technique and their grasp of the concepts taught the second time around.

The ballet side of this curriculum is all about teaching ballet through the stories of classical ballet. When we decided to add a contemporary element to the curriculum, it seemed fitting to continue our historical approach and follow the pioneering artists of modern and contemporary dance.

This curriculum follows six artists in total. This month's artist is Doris Humphrey. For Doris Humphrey, it was important that the dances she created reflected her own individuality. In part, her movement focused on balance and controlled falling. She recognized the importance of a dancer's center of gravity and explored that in her movement. She also explored our natural desire for security (balance) in contrast with our desire for progress and adventure (imbalance).

Doris Humphrey was a pioneer in early modern dance and helped to shape a path for future modern and contemporary artists. The following lesson plans have been inspired by her work and adapted to younger, beginning age groups. We hope you and your dancers enjoy this introduction to contemporary dance. If you'd like to share more resources with students, you'll find them below. You'll also find recommended music links and class lesson plans. Contemporary A is designed for ages 7 to 10 (correlating with our Ballet 1A and Ballet 1B levels). Contemporary B is designed for ages 9 to 12 (correlating with our Ballet 2 and Ballet 3 levels).

Rooting for you, friend!

*Ashley*

Ashley Hartford, Director of Once Upon a Ballet

## Resources + References

[Doris Humphrey \(Wikipedia\)](#)

## Recommended Music

**Doris Humphrey Music Playlist**

[Spotify](#)

## Videos

[Doris Humphrey Video Playlist for Inspiration](#)

[OUB Contemporary Lesson Plans Videos: Months 3 and 9 - Doris Humphrey-Inspired](#)

## Warmup (Ages 7 to 10)

### SEATED RELEASE AND RECOVER

[Warmup Video](#)

- Seated with arms out straight and legs straight pull in arms and bend knees upward 4x pulling in, stretching out
- Roll on behind to kneel and then fall to other side to stretch up in a kneel
- Repeat pull/stretch 4x
- Roll all the way over with hands (knees not touching the ground both directions.
- Repeat pull/stretch 4x
- Roll all the way up stretch, tuck and roll, stretch to the other side
- Repeat pull/stretch 4x

### STANDING RELEASE/RECOVER ARM SWINGS

[Arm Swings Video](#)

- Chasse with windmill arms right, point left toe
- Chasse with windmill arms left, point right toe
- Plie down swinging arms back and front back looking down
- Plie down swinging arms front back front looking up
- Repeat chasse with a lean right and left
- Plie down with concave back swinging arms back, front, back, looking down
- Plie down with arched back swinging arms front, back, front looking at sky

### SUCCESSION/OPPOSITION ISOLATIONS UPPER BODY

[Succession/Opposition Video](#)

- Head - down 4x up 4x down up 4x
- Shoulders - forward 4x, back 4x, forward and back 4x
- Arm stretch overhead right over left 4x, left over right 4x, right/left 4x
- Spine curved 4x, arched 4x, curved/arched 4x

## Traveling (Ages 7 to 10)

[Traveling Video](#)

- Run 4 runs, release and recover
- Run 2 runs with left arms up release and recover, run with right arm up., release and recover, run with both release recover, run with both, release recover jump
- Chasse in fourth and lunge left back leg up and stretch 2 x
- Come back backwards
- 4 walks, standing split to stand back up
- Slide out to second with head and body leaning, come up fast, repeat 1x go back down lay down on floor battement leg to come up
- Chasse saute chasse saute chassse saute tuck and roll
- Start concave with fan arms, drag touch, drag touch, drag tuck and roll, roll other direction
- Chasse passe jump collapse, chasse passe jump collapse

## Humphrey Exercises (Ages 7 to 10)

### EXERCISE 1: WALKING WITH HEADPHONES

[Exercise 1 Video](#)

Two people walk across room from opposite sides and stop and try and communicate, but keep walking:

- Social demand gestures
- Listen to me!
- Stop!
- What?!
- Forget it!
- Hi!
- Goodbye...
- Come here
- Hug me
- Let's go
- Be quiet

### EXERCISE 2: SCENARIOS

[Exercise 2 Video](#)

Acting/Freeze

- You seeing your best friend after 3 months
- You're all glammed up and feeling confident
- A spider falls into your lap
- Someone picks on you
- Your teacher gives you a ton of homework
- You win the lottery
- The pool you just jumped into is freezing
- You didn't use potholders

### RETURNING TO PATTERNS IN DORIS HUMPHREY

[Video Guide to Returning to Patterns in Doris Humphrey](#)

Week 1: Introduce pioneer: warmup, exercise 1 and 2, introduce fall/release pick groups, start brainstorming.

Week 2: Whole class acts and freezes to the next scenario.

Week 3: Pick one and dance it out and they have to guess.

## Warmup (Ages 9 to 12)

### SEATED RELEASE AND RECOVER

[Warmup Video](#)

- Seated with arms out straight and legs straight pull in arms and bend knees upward 4x pulling in, stretching out
- Roll on behind to kneel and then fall to other side to stretch up in a kneel
- Repeat pull/stretch 4x
- Roll all the way over with hands (knees not touching the ground both directions.
- Repeat pull/stretch 4x
- Roll all the way up stretch, tuck and roll, stretch to the other side
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- Plie down with concave back swinging arms back, front, back, looking down
- Plie down with arched back swinging arms front, back, front looking at sky

(9-12) start with concave and add in jumps in both chasses and in plie arm swings

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## Traveling (9-12 Years Old)

[Traveling Video](#)

Run 4 runs, release and recover

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Chasse in fourth and lunge left back leg up and stretch 2x, come back backwards

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Chasse passe jump collapse, chasse passe jump collapse

## Humphrey Exercises (Ages 9 to 12)

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[Exercise 1 Video](#)

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- Listen to me!
- Stop!
- What?!
- Forget it!
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