

DINOLAND



Little 
Acrobats™

PART OF THE
Children's Dance
Method™

Dinoland

TODDLER: AGES 1.5 TO 3, WITH A CAREGIVER

PRESCHOOL: AGES 3 to 5 YEARS OLD

How to Begin Class

Begin your class by greeting your students. Ideally, they'll line up at your classroom door before class begins. When it's time for class, have them enter. You can give them a step to do to take their places for roll call, or simply have them walk to their places.

Next, take roll. Have a question of the day ready to ask your students. It can be something simple like, "What is your favorite color?" It can be theme-related like, "What's your favorite dinosaur?" Or it can be something more personal like, "Tell me one fun thing you did this week." The purpose of the question is to help you connect with your students.

Circle Stretch

For complete activity details, please refer to the [Little Acrobats Curriculum - Syllabus Guide](#).

Let's Blow Bubbles!

Wiggles and Wakeup

Peek-a-Boo Toes

Hamstring Stretch (Preschool Only)

Dino Egg Stretches (Give each student a plastic egg as a dino egg. Direct them where to move it for a hamstring stretch.)

Hide and Seek

Have students hold their dino egg between their knees! Don't drop it!

Rock and Roll (Preschool Only)

Continue holding the dino egg between the knees. Don't let it drop!

Butterfly

Have students place their dino eggs between their feet and look closely at it to stretch. Will it hatch soon?

Straddle Stretch (Preschool Only)

Rolling dino eggs. (Have students roll their eggs to each side and the middle to stretch.)

Hands and Wrists

Option 1: Volcano Explosions (Students use their hands and wrists to indicate a volcano erupting.)

Option 2: Prehistoric Nighttime Stars

Tabletop Bridge

What kind of dinosaur am I?

Cat/Cow Pose (Preschool Only)

Stegosaurus (contract) / Ankylosaurus (arch)

Superhero Pose (Preschool Only)

Pteranodon Soars

Seal Pose (Preschool Only)

Brachiosaurus Reaching for Treetops

Technique

For complete activity details, please refer to the [Little Acrobats Curriculum - Syllabus Guide](#).

Plié and Rises

Let's look for dinosaurs! Look low! (Plié) Look high! (Rise)

Twirls (Toddlers) / Rise and Turn (Preschool)

Pteranodon Twirls

Tendu (Preschool Only)

Brachiosaurus Tendus. (Stretch your legs long in tendu like a brachiosaurus stretching its neck long to drink water from a lake.)

Passé

Stegosaurus Passés. (Pick your leg up in passé so it's the shape of a plate on a stegosaurus back.)

Sways

T-Rex Sways. (Optional: Have students show you little T-Rex arms as they sway from side to side for added fun.)

Sautés and Échappés

Sauté and then échappé. (The sauté is for the middle horn and échappé for the two side horns.)

Directional Hops (Toddlers) / Hops with Quarter Turns (Preschoolers)

Raptor Hops.

Hops on One Foot from Side to Side (Preschool only)

A volcano erupted! Hop from side to side over the lava!

Hops on One Foot (Preschool only)

The ground is hot! Hop on one foot. Then on the other foot.

Fireworks Jumps

Volcano Jumps. (Jump like lava erupting from a volcano!)

Traveling

Please use the movement cards included at the end of this lesson plan.

Stations

Please use the station cards included at the end of this lesson.

Prop Time

For toddlers, “Prop Time” is simply a free dance with a prop of the teacher’s choice. You may also do a freeze dance to reinforce listening skills.

For preschoolers, [choose one to three “Prop Time” activities from the Little Acrobats Curriculum - Syllabus Guide](#) for additional skill work.

Goodbye

You can (optionally) end your class with a brief free dance for students while you blow bubbles for them.

Finish your class by giving each student a sticker and telling them each something they did well in class that day. Focus on complimenting good effort, listening skills, and positive attitude more than skill accomplishments. Give each student a coloring page. These are a great way for students to bring a piece of dance class home with them for the week. Hand out certificates if it’s the last week for the theme.

Music Playlist

You can find a music playlist with theme-inspired music for your acro dance class here:

[Dinoland Music Playlist in Spotify](#)



DINOLAND - MOVEMENT CARDS

There are SO MANY ways you can use movement cards in your dance classes. For toddlers, we typically do use movement cards for traveling across the room and occasionally the merry go round option. For preschoolers, we like to incorporate all of the following ways with traveling across the room and the merry go round option as the most common. You may incorporate any of these ways during the "traveling" portion of class.

Traveling Across the Room

This is what we typically design our movement cards for. (Although they certainly don't have to be limited to this!) Choose a movement card like you're picking a card from a deck of cards. Or, let one of your students pick the card. The anticipation of what the next card and movement will be will help to keep your students' attention during the traveling portion of class. Plus, they always like seeing what cute animal or picture is on the card chosen!

Merry Go Round

Place your movement cards in a pile face-down in the center of the room. Have your students make a large circle. Call on one student to pick a card from the center. They pick a card from the pile. Play music as all students do the chosen movement in a large circle around the room. Pause the music and your students freeze (like in freeze dance!). Call on another student to pick a card next. Repeat until all students have had a turn or all movement cards have been used.

Add-On

This is one of my favorite pre-choreography activities. Make a dance by playing "Add-On", but with movement cards! Hold the cards out face-down, like a deck of cards, for a student to pick one. Have all students do the movement in place a certain number of times. (For example, 3 hops in place.) Have another student pick a card. Add that movement to the choreography. (For example, if the second card chosen was twirls, you might have your students do 3 hops then a twirl.) Continue until all students have had a turn. By the end, you'll have a little dance your students helped to make up!

Free-Dance

Let your students free dance, and choose movements from the movement cards!

NOTES FOR CARTWHEEL PREPARATION:

Most Likely for Toddlers. Cartwheel Preparation 1: Tummy-Hand-Hand-Jump-Tummy. The student should begin with their tummy facing the front. They place one hand on the mat stack, then the other hand on the mat stack. Then they jump over the mat stack and stand so their tummy faces front again.

Most Likely for Preschoolers. Cartwheel Preparation 2: Tummy-Hand-Hand-Foot-Foot-Tummy. The student should begin with their tummy facing front. They place one hand on the mat stack, then the other hand on the mat stack. Then they hop over the mat stack to land on one foot then the other foot. They should finish standing so their tummy faces front again.

More Advanced Option for Preschoolers. Cartwheel Preparation 3: Cartwheel Coordination Over the Mat Stack. In this version, students have the coordination of hands and feet. They still begin and end standing with their tummies facing front, but they do a smoother, more coordinated cartwheel over the mat stack. They should work on their torso being more up and down, perpendicular to the floor. Their legs may not quite be perpendicular—they may still be at an angle as the student does the cartwheel, but the student is working on stretched legs during the cartwheel.

Little Acrobats™



BIG WALKS

TODDLER

Little Acrobats™



LOG ROLL

TODDLER

Little Acrobats™



LITTLE WALKS

TODDLER

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JUMPS

TODDLER

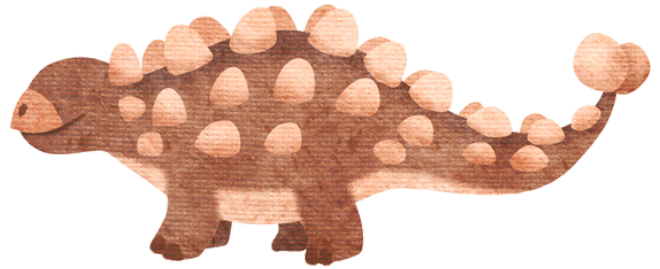
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HOPS OR STEPS
(ACROSS SPOT MARKERS)

TODDLER

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DINOSAUR WALKS
(SAME AS BEAR WALKS)

TODDLER

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WALKS
(AROUND PLASTIC EGGS)

TODDLER

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RUN AND LEAP

TODDLER

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DINOSAUR MARCHES

PRESCHOOL

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FORWARD ROLL

PRESCHOOL

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TUCK JUMPS

PRESCHOOL

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FROG JUMPS

PRESCHOOL

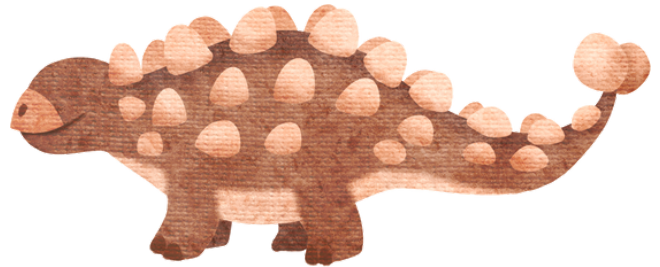
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**HOPS ON TWO FEET WITH
ARMS REACHING UP**

PRESCHOOL

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DINOSAUR WALKS
(SAME AS BEAR WALKS)

PRESCHOOL

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WALKS EN DEMI POINTE
(AROUND PLASTIC EGGS)

PRESCHOOL

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FIREWORKS JUMPS

PRESCHOOL



DINOLAND - STATION CARDS

Card 1

Toddlers and Preschoolers. Marches.

Card 2

Toddlers. Log rolls. Optional: on a flat or incline mat.

Preschoolers. Forward roll on an incline mat or mat stack.

Card 3

Toddlers and Preschoolers. Frog jumps.

Card 4

Toddlers. Fireworks jumps.

Preschoolers. Tuck jumps.

Card 5

Toddlers. Step or hop across spot markers with the arms reaching up.

Preschoolers. Hop across spot markers on two feet with the arms reaching up.

Card 6

Toddlers and Preschoolers. Downward dinosaur walks (same as bear walks).

Card 7

Toddlers. Pose like an egg. (Same as ball pose.)

Preschoolers. Pose like an egg (same as ball pose), then rock and roll.

Card 8

Toddlers and Preschoolers. Pike position / tuck position. (Same as Hide and Seek.)



DINO MARCHES



LOG ROLL



FORWARD ROLL



FROG JUMPS



FIREWORKS JUMPS



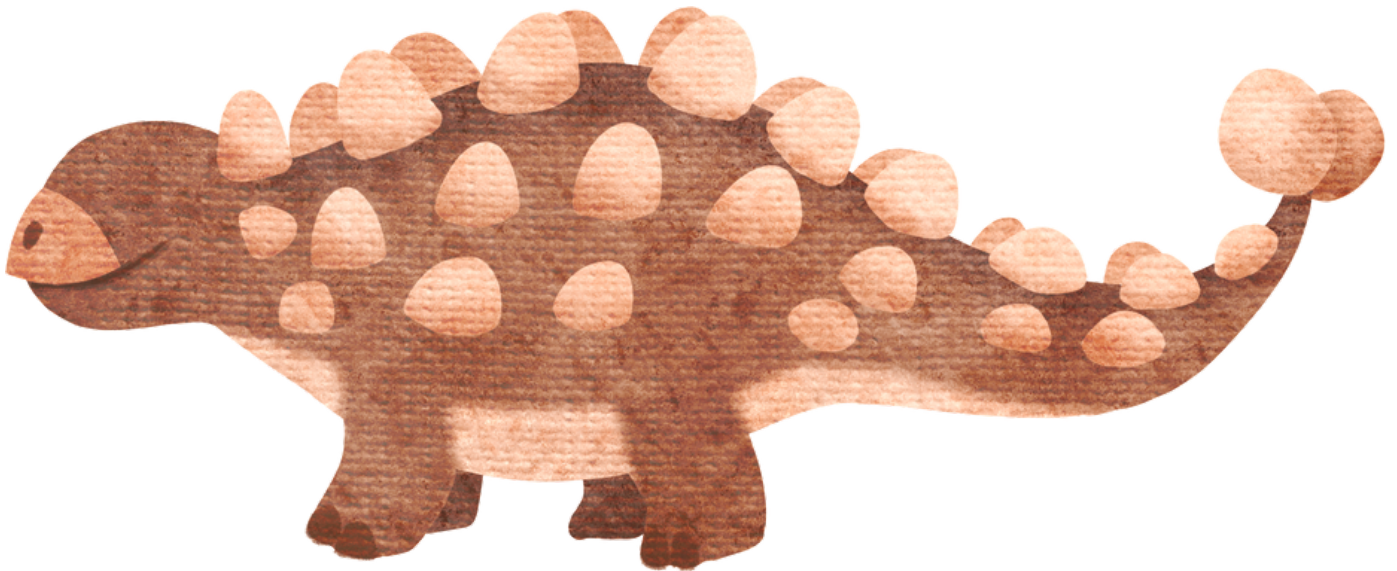
TUCK JUMPS



**STEP OR HOP ACROSS WITH
ARMS REACHING UP**



**HOPS ON TWO FEET WITH
ARMS REACHING UP**



**DOWNWARD DINOSAUR WALKS
(SAME AS BEAR WALKS)**



EGG POSE

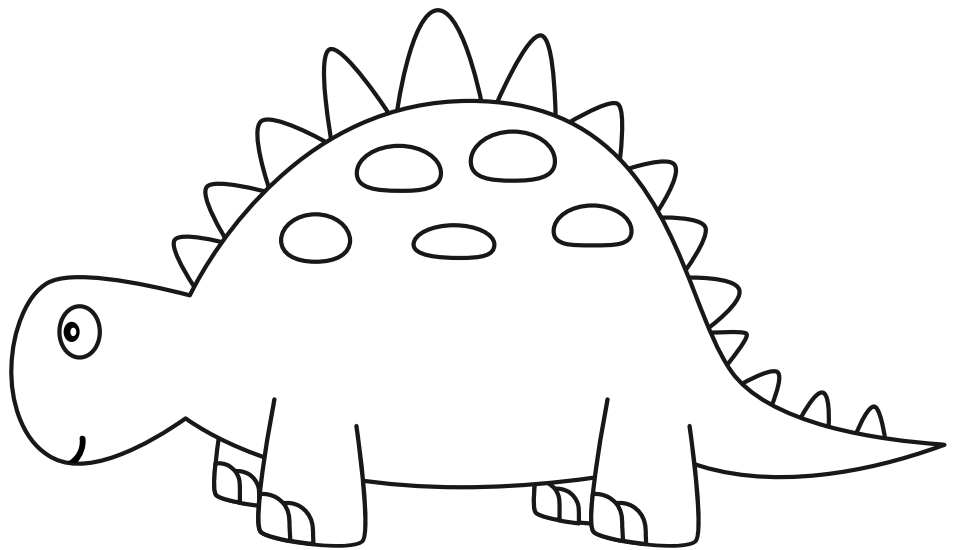
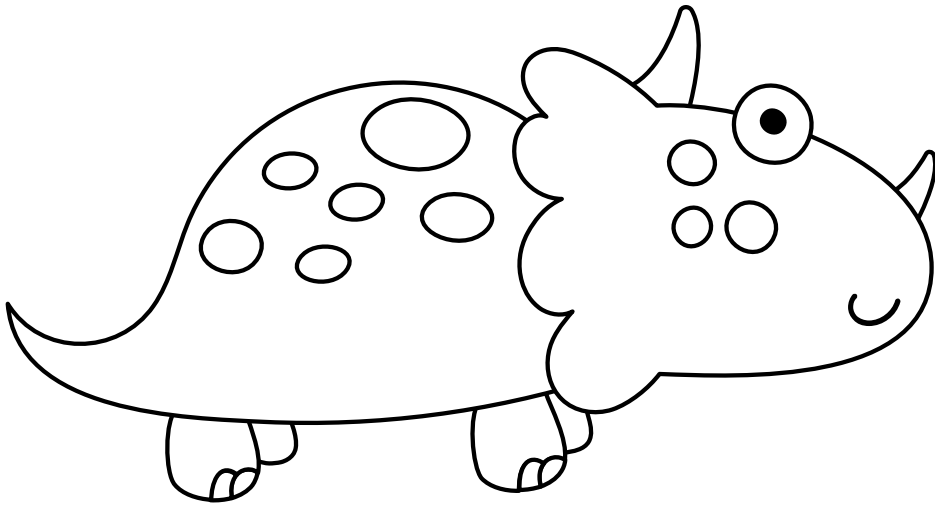


EGG POSE
ROCK + ROLL

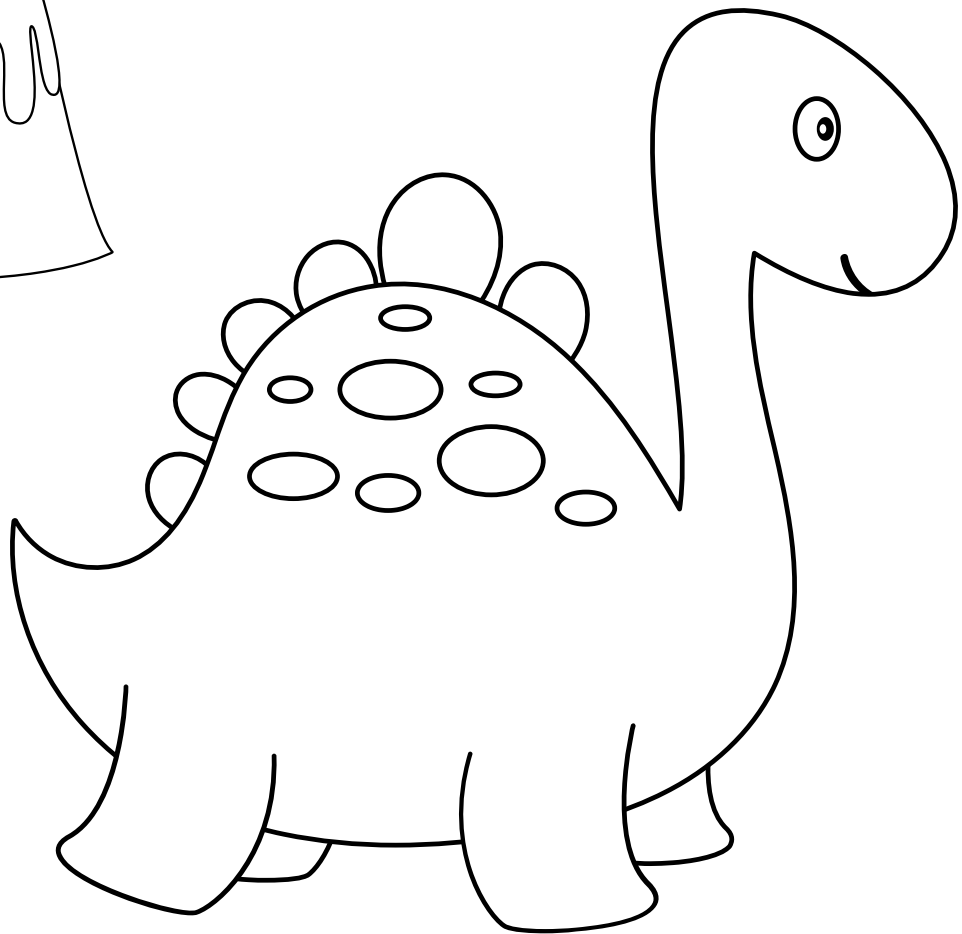
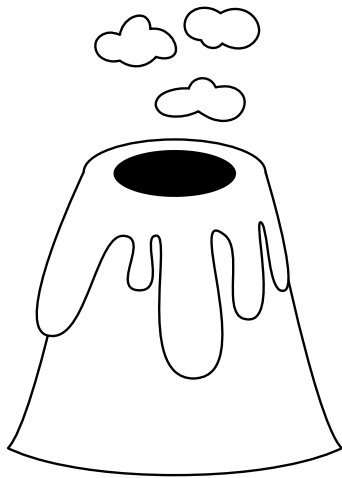


**PIKE / TUCK POSITION
(ALSO CALLED HIDE AND SEEK)**

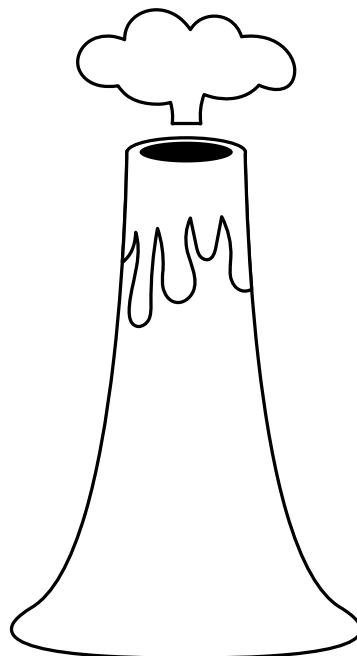
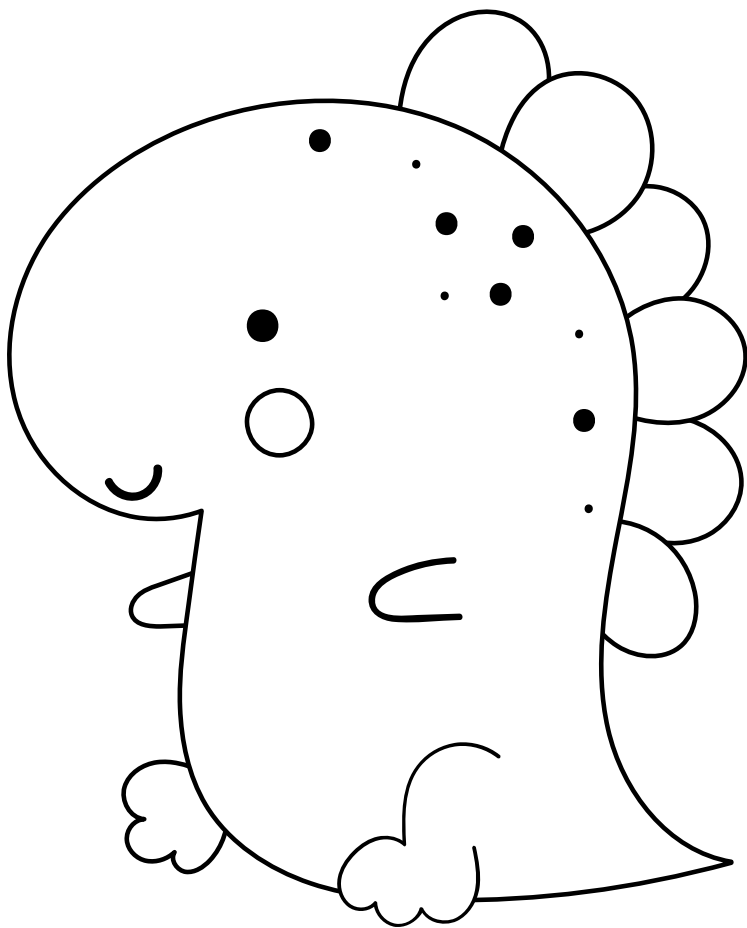
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