

Ashley Johnson

Dancer and Educator

DANCE IS EXPRESSION THROUGH CREATIVE MOVEMENT.
BUILD HEALTHY ATTITUDES & HEALTHY BODIES FOR LIFE.



Benefits of Dance Education:

Artistic expression allows students to be creative through non-verbal communication.

Increased energy and blood flow to the brain and muscular system.

Calming effect of endorphin release from increased body movement aids in concentration, attention span and overall sense of well-being.

Development of the kinesthetic sense increases memory recall, co-ordination and the ability to participate in hands on learning.

Students trained in dance have a greater understanding of social cues in relation to space, touch and relationships.

Increase in confidence and comfort surrounding body image.

Students are often required to work as a group, developing skills in teamwork, leadership and compromise.

Through repetition and completion students learn the value of discipline.

Workshops

1 hour to full day sessions, suited to your needs, applicable for all ages.

1. Brain Dance

Research has shown that movement is crucial to the wiring of our central nervous system. It can be done at the beginning of class; before tests, performances; and during computer work for brain reorganization, oxygenation, and recuperation. (Developed by Anne Green Gilbert)

2. Poetry in Motion

This workshop combines expression of words with expression of the body. Movement themes can be connected to motifs in poetry and explored through various ways of moving and creating dance.

3. Dance and the Body

Development of somatic awareness of body specific concepts such as: movement initiated from the bones, muscles, organs and senses; the spine in relation to posture; the body is 3D; and movement of joints and efficiency.

4. The Language of Dance

Using the language of dance, students understand the elements of composition. They develop choreography through strategies such as theme & variation, and “dance by chance”. Student’s benefit from the opportunity to share their dances and to reflect on the creative process.

5. Teacher Professional Development

A) Planning a Dance Unit:

This workshop helps teachers understand the Big Ideas in Creative Dance (SK curriculum) and how dance is built. Unit development becomes easy once you apply this learning to outcomes in the curriculum. Includes an inquiry based, interdisciplinary approach to integrating learning in ELA, Science, Arts and other subjects.

B) Tools Toward a Pain Free Classroom:

Using the Mitzvah Technique and Itcush Method, teachers will be given a variety of exercises and creative dance tools that target common postural faults. Teachers will learn to identify the problem causing pain and how to develop a lesson plan to target and release the movement pattern causing the pain. Methods for working with students with special needs and/or physical disabilities and discovering methods to make your classroom “movement friendly” and building regular/routine time in the schedule to be active.

Past Participant Reflections:

“Ashley consistently demonstrated and applied *learning outcomes* with the various grades she worked with. Adaptations were used in response to particular levels of student need, which allowed each student to take risks and experience personal success (*Differentiated Instruction*).

“Ashley stressed healthy body practice in every class she held. She continuously built upon the previous day's lesson. Repetition and demonstrations helped students to be comfortable and be aware of body safety. Ashley persevered to develop a repertoire with initially reluctant dancers. Students advanced from "I am not participating" to performing for school and public performances.”

(Michelle Ramsay & Lee Luyben Switzer, *Artist in Residence* teacher committee)

“Ashley’s comments about performance (“the risks we are taking aren’t all that risky”) helped me to find a way to reframe dance for my students. Her notes are very helpful.”

(Teacher, workshop participant)

“I really enjoyed the day! I felt that it was beneficial and will definitely incorporate ideas into my daily teaching.”

(Principal, workshop participant)

“Ashley was energetic, inviting and made everyone feel welcome and competent!”

(Teacher, workshop participant)

“Presentation of dance “tool box” makes Dance seem much more accessible. Can’t wait to start!”

(Teacher, workshop participant)

“I loved the combination of the Mitzvah Technique, modern dance, salsa and the twist. The classes are wonderfully paced so that you are building the momentum to final crescendo, but never feeling as if your body has been over extended.”

(Nissa Shiell, community dance class participant)



Background Information

Experience & Training:



Ashley has worked as a guest artist in both elementary and secondary schools through ArtsSmart projects (PreK – grade 12) and as an Artist in Residence in Living Sky School Division for the past four years. Her familiarity with curriculum assists teachers with planning and instills greater

confidence in building a program of their own. Ashley has facilitated programming using dance as a tool for community building for all ages and has a special interest in site-specific dance and collaboration. She has a BA (University of Calgary) & Diploma in Dance (Grant MacEwan) and additional training in Brain Dance (Seattle), Kinesiology (U of C), Sport Science (Hong Kong) and is certified in the Mitzvah Technique & Itcush Method. Ashley currently makes her home in Regina, SK.

Fees: \$ 250 ½ day \$ 450 full day, plus travel (longer residencies can be negotiated)

Requirements for workshop:

Classroom is acceptable but an open space such as a multi-purpose room, stage or gym is preferred for a large workshop.

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