



An Outreach of Glory of Zion International Ministries at the Global Spheres Center

Dance Pathways at Illuminate!

A guide to the various paths and classes your dancer can take here at Illuminate! Creative Arts Studio to reach their personal dance goals.

Purpose of this Guide

We realize that people begin pursuing a dance education for many different reasons. For some kids it's as simple as the opportunity to be involved in an extracurricular activity with friends and for others their drive is to dance professionally or dance at the collegiate level. Our goal is to help each dancer along the way to reach their goals. We've included various questions we've received over the years as well as recommendations from our staff regarding various goals with dance. As always, if you still have questions or further concerns please let us know!

Progression of Our Program from Age 2-18

Age 2: We offer a "Stretch, Move, & Express" class for 2&3 year olds to experience with a parent or adult. This class is focused on helping children reach developmental milestones and experiencing the benefits and joys that movement brings. *This class is typically 30min a week.

Ages 3&4: *Creative movement* is a great foundational class at this age. We spend time working on motor skills and movement in general. This class is not focused on any particular technique, but instead begins working on developing spatial awareness, musicality, basic stretching, rhythm, and classroom etiquette which are all taught through imaginative games and exercises. *This class is typically 45min.

We also offer Tap/Percussion at this age which is great for developing rhythm and coordination which is needed with any dance style. *This class is typically 30min.

Ages 5&6: Beginning at the age of 5 your student will have the option to join our pre technique classes. At this point, students can choose technique specific classes. We move beyond the imaginative games we used in the younger age groups to teach various concepts and begin transitioning students into a more traditional method of teaching each technique. In this category we offer Pre Ballet, Delivered Through Movement (worship dance), Hula, Jazz, Worship, Modern, and Hip Hop. These classes all work on teaching your student the fundamentals of these styles; as well as preparing them for what the format of a higher level class would be like in each style. *These classes are typically 30-45min. We do not recommend students take more than two classes in one day. For some of our young five year olds it is best to start with just one class a day.

Ages 7-9: Age 7 is when we consider our dancer's formal education to begin in whatever technique they decide to pursue. We offer ballet, tap/percussion, jazz, hip hop, Delivered Through Movement (worship dance), modern and hula. We recommend during this age group to begin taking multiple classes a week if dance is something that you are going to pursue.

*The classes are typically 1hr to 1.5hrs

Ages 10+: Once a student reaches age 10, their class placement is based on skill level and no longer just age. We have multiple levels for this age group. Your child will be evaluated multiple times, by their teacher, throughout the year to determine that they are making progress at the expected rate. *These classes are typically 1 to 1.5 hours in length.

Jr. Company: The Jr. Company also becomes an option at the age of 10. The company requires that the student be enrolled in ballet, modern, hip hop, company class, company choreography camp, and performance participation. Please see the company section below if you have questions on why your student should consider company.

Jr. Company Q & A

Q: Why should my student participate in company and what does it require?

A: Our Company mission, "An avenue for our students to grow through the experience of performing while sharing a message of hope through dance to our local community."

Why: While much of a dancer's training happens in the studio, there is an element that can only come from the valuable time spent in the rehearsals and performances. Our goal is to provide this opportunity for our dance students through the Jr. Company. Technical improvement will come during these times, as well as, a sense of being part of a team and working towards a common goal.

Requirements: Our Jr. Company is available for students ages 10-15. Any dancer participating in the company is required to take all of the following classes- ballet, modern, hip hop, and company class for a 9 month period on a weekly basis.

Our company participants are also required to take to Jr. Company Choreography camp in the summer. This is a vital time to learn all of the company performance pieces that will be performed throughout the year at various required performance times throughout the DFW metroplex.

All of our dancers in company will have a "contract" to sign along with the director, their parent's signatures and are expected to uphold each element with a spirit of excellence.

Continued Dance Q & As

Q: I am completely new to dance what should my child take?

A: Before answering this, we recommend asking yourself/child a couple of questions:

(1) What is my child most interested in/what caused them to want to dance?

Seeing a Nutcracker performance: If your child saw a ballet performance and fell in love with the art form then ballet may be a good fit for them; however, ballet is a slower class and the work is more meticulous than jazz or hip hop, so please take into account the next two questions as well.

Seeing a drill team/pom squad performance: We recommend Jazz and/or Hip Hop for students who have an interest in this type of dance.

Seeing a dance in a worship/church setting: Our Delivered Through Movement classes are to fulfill that desire to express through dance. These classes work with students on improvisation techniques and bringing freedom to movement, but are not a replacement for technique classes. We typically recommend that students who are enrolled in our DTM classes also enroll in a Jazz, Ballet, or a Modern class.

My child just starts dancing every time they hear music: What kinds of music are they most drawn to? Is it slow music or fast music? Is their movement slower or faster? Ballet is typically seen as a slower moving class while Jazz, Hip Hop, Tap/Percussion are faster.

(2) What are their goals/purpose with dance?

My child just wants to dance because their friends are taking classes.

If this is a student's sole purpose for dancing then there is nothing wrong with choosing a class to participate in with a friend; however with our students over the age of 8, please be aware that many students will begin taking more than just one class a week in various styles. If this is the case of your child's friend they will most likely be excelling at a greater rate than your child who is only taking one class a week. There will likely come a point when the friends can no longer stay together as they continue to grow and advance individually. We never want to pressure students to take on more than they are interested in, however, want parents and students to be aware this type of separation is likely to happen between one friend who remains in dance as a hobby and for recreation and one who transitions to competitions,

multiple hours in studio, and looking for a lasting dance experience through high school and even possibly college.

My child's dream is to be on the high school pom squad, what classes should we enroll in?

We typically recommend Jazz and Hip Hop if this is your child's dream. Also, while we do not have specific courses that serve as prep (at this time), there are other studios that offer mini courses leading up to try out times that many students find helpful.

Our church has a worship dance team and my daughter wants to be a part of their team. What will help her with that?

This obviously depends on your church and the style of movement they gravitate towards, but for most of the worship dance teams that we have been involved with, we recommend ballet to teach them technique and our Delivered Through Movement classes to teach them the necessary aspects of improvisation, leading and following, and worshipful movements.

My student has expressed interest in pursuing dance in college?

If this is your goal we recommend fully committing to modern and ballet as well as auditioning for Jr. Company at the bare minimum. We also highly recommend being involved in Jazz as well.

While our Delivered Through Movement classes are designed to prepare a student to use movement as a form of worship, they are modeled after college improv courses which are required in most schools. It is not necessary that a student is fully proficient with improv skills before entering most colleges, but this is a class that is beneficial for those intending to pursue this route with dance.

(3) Is your child a focused child who enjoys more meticulous work or more high energy who needs a faster paced class? Not all dance classes are the same and depending on your child's temperament one style might fit their interest more than another.

-Jazz and hip hop are definitely more upbeat styles of dance and classes move a little faster. While jazz has a common thread with ballet, and many studios require a student who wants to participate in Jazz begin in ballet, it has grown to a stand alone style of its own.

-Hip hop has come to stand alone in the dance world as well with multiple styles and techniques of its own. Hip hop classes are great to build up student's confidence with freestyle times and the ability to pick up choreography better with dance combinations frequently in classes.

-For our worship classes at Illuminate these are fantastic if your child is looking for an avenue to use their dance as worship and to learn how to express them self through movement. These classes incorporate teamwork through theatre exercises as well as moving in worship with a group of people and individuals.

-Hula dance is also an option for your student at Illuminate. Hula is also very fast paced but very detailed similar to ballet each year and level is vital. This style of dance very much builds as your student gets older. By learning hula, your child will grow in work ethic in this fun dance class while learning about the island cultures.

-Tap, at Illuminate, is combined with the element of percussion. These two are combined to help the growth of the student in using multiple appendages at the same time, over time, without effort; a key aspect in both tap and percussion. With this combination your child will grow not only in creating patterns and rhythm in tap but also in percussion.

-For 3-4 year olds, our only class option other than our homeschool time frame options is Creative Movement. Creative movement is a great foundation at this age working on motor skills and moving in general.

Q: I am an adult looking for classes- what are my options at this studio?

A: As of this year we have an Adult general technique class that meets on a weekly basis for those who have had limited exposure to dance and/or those who have previously danced and want to get back in the studio.

Then we have adult mini session courses. This are great to just get moving again! Right now in this category we offer Hula, West African, and Salsa styles of dance but always keep an eye out for new session class schedules.

Q: What if my child is older than 10 and wants to start dance? Is it too late for them to join at that age?

A: It's never too late! We offer multiple avenues for kids at any level to express and grow through movement. For ages 10+ we offer various levels in all of our styles to ensure that everyone has a chance to move with us.

Q: What if I see that my student just wants to do dance as a hobby or wants to take a year off of dance?

A: It is perfectly fine to have dance as a hobby alone or used to impact another sport/ hobby. We, at Illuminate, want to reach all demographics of dancers whether your child wants to take a year then move to sports or take dance all the way to a college. We have our levels, styles, and classes set up in a way to reach either of these goals.

As stated above in most styles after the age of 7 it is hard- while not impossible- to leave dance for a couple of years then decide to come back and not have to start over. Similar to how each year in school is important- in dance - levels progress, techniques progress, flexibility increases, new steps are learned- much like building blocks in each class.

How can you avoid missing this growth if your student wants to try something along with dance? We suggest keep at least one core class during that time period of trying new things. In keeping a core dance class they will be able to continue to progress and keep muscle memory up while still learning new things in other areas.

We hope this guide helped answer some of your questions, but if you still have more, please remember you can call us at 940.208.1351 or email us at info@illuminatecreativearts.com to ask any further questions you may have about your child's dance education.