



Brownie Dancer Badge Activity Plan 2

Purpose: When girls have earned this badge, they'll know how to explore the world of dancing and find their inner dancer.

Planning Guides Link: Healthy Living and Creativity

Fun Patch Link: Dance

Activity Plan Length: 1.5 hours

Resources

- This activity plan has been adapted from the Brownie Skill-Building Badge Set for the *It's Your World—Change It!* Dancer Badge, which can be used for additional information and activities.

Activity #1: Let's Get Flexible! Extended

Badge Connection: Step 1—Warm up and get moving and Step 3—Take to the floor like a dancer

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- A few songs with varying tempos
- Music player

Steps:

1. Remind the girls about the importance of warming up before dancing and any other physical activities in order to prevent injuries.
2. Explain that girls will use some of the warm-up moves they learned at the last meeting and will do a few new ones as well. Ask the girls to do the following warm-ups with you. Change the tempo of the exercises as the beat changes in the music (faster and slower).
 - Neck rolls: Stand still with feet shoulder-width apart, hands to the side of the body. Then, roll the head down and around in a circle. Repeat in the opposite direction. Try to keep the rest of the body still—only move the head and neck.
 - Hip circles: Holding same stance as neck rolls, move hips to right and then left a few times while trying to keep the rest of the body still. You can also circle the hips by pushing them to the right, then back, then left, and then forward. Reverse the circle and go in the opposite direction.
 - Heel Raises: Position feet together with toes pointed straight ahead. With a straight back, lift heels off floor so you are balancing on your toes, then lower back to the floor. For an added challenge, place heels together and have toes pointed out so your feet make a "V" and then raise heels.
 - Arm Windmills: Stand with feet together or apart and extend arms out to the side at shoulder height. Move arms in small circles going forward then backward while keeping the arms extended at shoulder height. Repeat again but make the circles larger so the entire

arm rotates overhead and down. You can then do the same exercise rotating the wrists in both clockwise and counterclockwise directions.

- **Lunges and Knee Raises:** Start with feet together then push one leg straight behind you. The front knee should be bent and the back leg should be as straight as possible. Extend your back so you aren't hunched over the front knee. Keep the front knee in line with your foot and not too far forward in order to prevent injury. Then, bring the back leg up and forward so your knee is up toward your chest. Repeat several times then switch legs.
- **Step and Slides:** Stand with feet together. Bend knees and step to the left, almost at a squat height. Shift weight to left foot then slide right foot across the floor to meet the left foot. Repeat to the right. For an added challenge, slide foot across and in front or behind in a half-circle motion.

Activity #2: Performance Prep Part 1

Badge Connection: Step 3—Take to the floor like a dancer

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Heavy hardcover books or textbooks (one per girl)
- Quarters or small stuffed animals (two per girl)
- Optional: Music (may be used throughout the activity)

Steps:

1. Speak to the girls about how being a dancer is more than just learning steps. Dancers use all parts of their bodies to express music and interest their audiences in the experience. In this activity, girls will learn how to take to the floor like a dancer.
2. Instruct the girls to line up on one side of the room in a single-file line. Tell the girls that posture is very important for certain types of dances, such as ballroom dance or ballet. In this activity, girls are going to practice good posture.
3. Instruct the girls to stand up very straight and tall with their shoulders back and chin up, almost as if there were a string attached to their bellybutton and the top of their head pulling them toward the ceiling. To get their heads in the correct position, they can take one of their hands and make an "L" shape with their thumb and forefinger. They should then place the tip of their forefinger just underneath their chin bone, with their thumb pointed towards them and touching their chest. Have the girls maintain their posture and "follow the leader" around the room.
4. After a few moments, have the girls place the books on top of their heads and continue walking around, this time without their hands underneath their chins.
5. Next, remove the books and instruct the girls to extend and hold their arms out to the side, palms facing down. Place the small stuffed animals or quarters on the top of their hands and tell them they must keep their arms in this position and balance the items on top of their hands while walking about the room. If using the stuffed animals, tell the girls they should not try to hold the toy with their fingers. For an extra challenge, girls can also place the books back on top of their heads.

Activity #3: Performance Prep Part 2

Badge Connection: Step 3—Take to the floor like a dancer and Step 5—Show your moves!

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Optional: Music

Steps:

1. Now that the girls have practiced good posture, it's time for them to work on body movements and facial expressions that will enhance their presentation skills.
2. Call out different emotions and tell the girls to make a face that shows that emotion.
3. Next, instruct the girls to spread out around the room and ask them to individually use their facial expressions and body movements to interpret what you are describing. Use the following examples for girls to interpret:
 - Pretend to be a willow tree as the wind blows softly, then harder, then calms.
 - Pretend to be a bird learning to fly as it uses its little wings and drops up and down in the sky.
 - Pretend to be a kernel of popcorn cooking and the pan is getting hotter and hotter, then pops!
 - Pretend to be someone lost in the woods at nighttime trying to find their way home.
 - Pretend to be an astronaut launching into space then landing on the moon.
 - Pretend to be a robot walking outside. It begins to rain and becomes harder to move.
4. Next, instruct the girls to partner up and face one another. Tell the girls that they will take turns mimicking their partners' movements and expressions, as if they were mirror images of their partners. If desired, call out some of the above emotions or actions.
5. After practicing how to use their facial expressions and body movements, have each pair of girls create a short dance, where one girl is the leader and the other copies everything that her partner does. Girls will "follow the leader" or pretend to be the mirror image of their partners. Girls can then switch roles.
6. After the girls have a few minutes to create their dances, play some music and have the girls perform their dances together as a group. Have a dance party!

Activity #4: Snack Chat

Badge Connection: Questions link to multiple badge steps

Time Allotment: 15 minutes

While enjoying a snack, here are some things for girls to discuss:

- Why is it important to warm up before dancing?
- How do you think the speed of music affects a dance?
- What are some things that dancers do before a performance?
- If you could perform any type of dance on stage, what would it be?
- What are some moves that you could teach your friends and family?
- How do dancers express their emotions during a dance?

More to Explore

- Field Trip Ideas:
 - Visit a local dance studio.
 - Attend a music or dance performance.
 - Attend a community dance event.
- Speaker Ideas:
 - Invite a dance instructor to your meeting to teach the group how to prepare for a performance.
 - Invite a dancer to your meeting to teach the group about performing.

Customize It!: If your group wants to expand work on this badge or simply try different activities, go for it! There are many ways to earn this award, including: Completing the activities as listed in the Brownie Skill-Building Badge Set for *It's Your World—Change It!*, completing two of these activity plans, attending a council- sponsored even or customizing activities. Pick the one(s) that work best for your group. Girls will know they have earned the award if:

- They know how to warm up their body to dance
- They can name different types of dance
- They can make up their own dance and share it with others

Family Follow-Up Email

Use the email below as a template to let families know what girls did at the meeting today. Feel free to add additional information, including:

- When and where you will be meeting next
- What activities you will do at the next meeting
- Family help or assistance that is needed
- Supplies or materials that girls will need to bring to the next meeting
- Reminders about important dates and upcoming activities

Hello Girl Scout Families:

We had a wonderful time today learning about the world of dance and we earned the Dancer Badge.

We had fun:

- Preparing our bodies for dancing through warm ups.
- Discovering how to take to the floor like a dancer.
- Learning how to use our facial expressions and body movements to express emotions through dance.

Continue the fun at home:

- Have a friends and family dance party!
- Ask your Girl Scout to teach you how to warm-up properly before exercising.
- Look through the *Girl's Guide to Girl Scouting* with your Brownie to find other activities you can try at home.

Thank you for bringing your Brownie to Girl Scouts!

This activity plan was adapted from Girl Scouts River Valleys.