# Do You Want to Dance?



From babies to ballet to Bai dance

Sharon Parsons

Nelson Literacy Directions

# Do You Want to DANCE?

For teachers' inspection ONLY



My sincere thanks to the following people for their time, information, images and enthusiasm for this book:

Amy Lei and students, Adelaide Chinese Dance Academy, Australia

AXIS Dance Company, California, the USA

Bangarra Dance Theatre, Sydney, Australia

Marcel Zentner, The University of York, the UK

Dear Reader

Do you like to dance? Many people would answer "YES!" Whether you create your own dance, join in the latest dance craze or perform in a dance genre like ballet, it's important that you have fun!

Dance unites audiences in the universal language of movement, no matter where they live. In this book, we showcase different dances and dance companies from around the world. In Chapter 4 you'll find out about the AXIS Dance Company in the USA, whose dancers use wheelchairs in creative ways to present stunning stories through dance. And, in the final chapter, your eyes will light up when you see Amy Lei's students in their spectacular costumes performing traditional Chinese dances.

> "A RESEARCH TEAM DISCOVERED THAT BABIES AS YOUNG AS FIVE MONTHS OLD CAN DANCE!"

I thoroughly enjoyed writing about every dance for this book, and I hope you enjoy learning about them. If you start dancing in your classroom, blame the book!

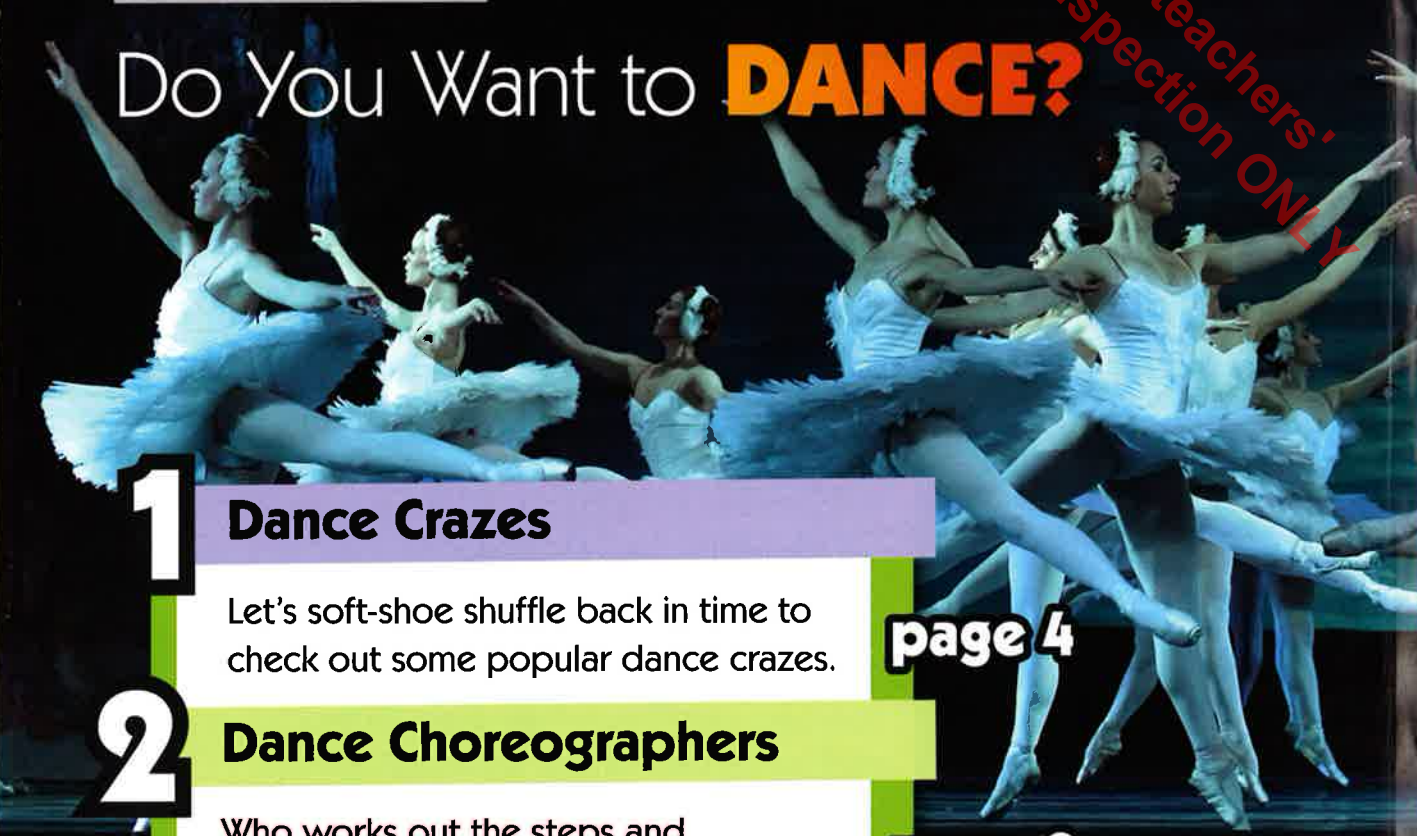
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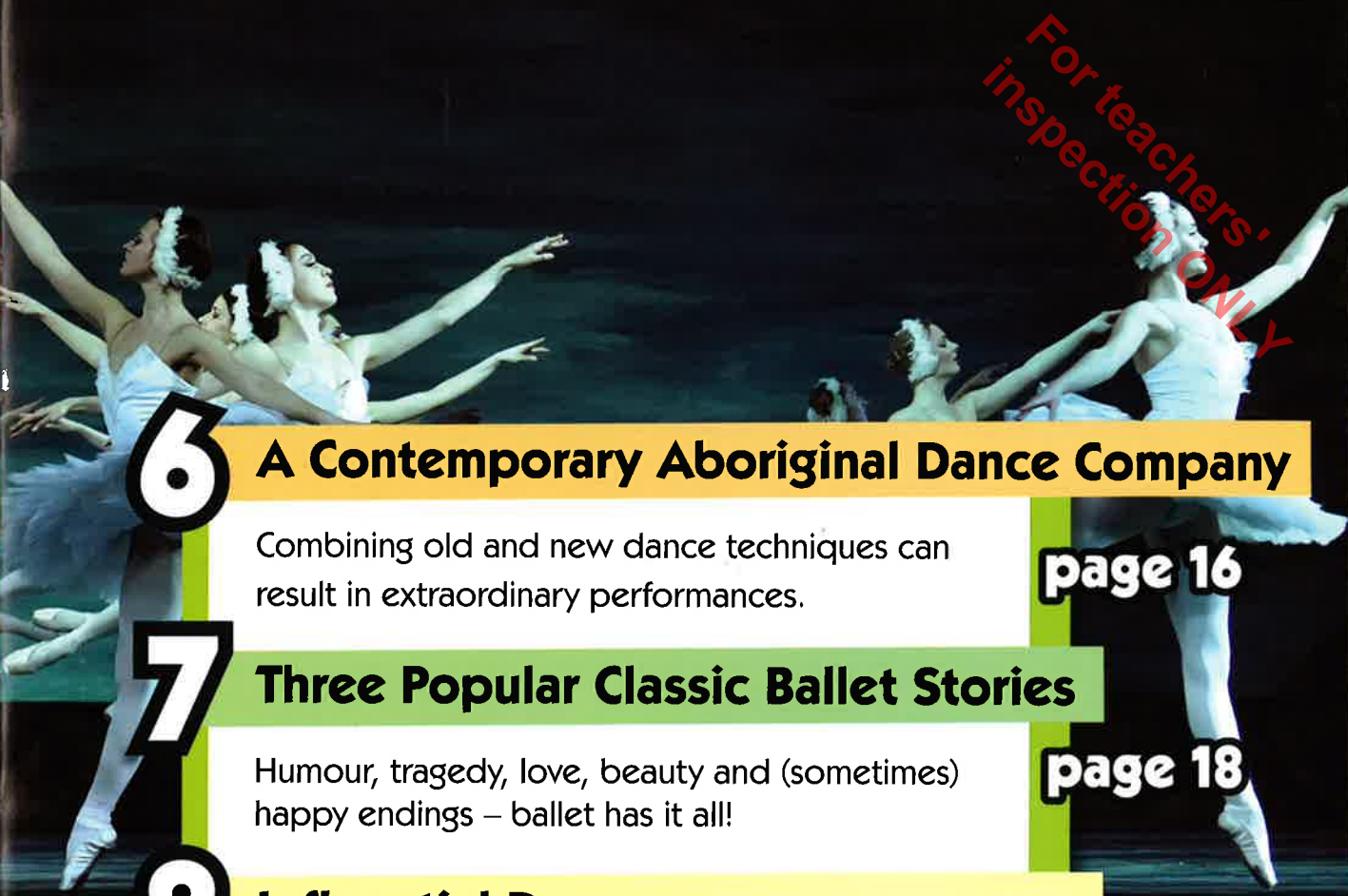
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# 1 Dance Crazes



Imagine that you're relaxing in your bedroom listening to music. Think about which song would entice you to get up and start dancing. For many people in 1996 that song would be the macarena.

## Macarena Dance Craze

The macarena was a very popular dance craze that began with a song called "Macarena" by a Spanish flamenco duo, Los del Rio. It was released in 1995, and became a hit in 1996. A flamenco dance teacher created the dance moves in 1996 and music videos helped to catapult the dance to fame in many countries around the world. The macarena became a dance craze because of its simple yet fun beat and Latin dance rhythm.

The single was the bestselling debut single of all time in the USA and, in 1996, about 50 000 people danced the macarena in New York City's Yankee Stadium.

## Dance Moves for Macarena

**The Macarena is a series of 16 dance moves that change with each beat.**

**Beat 1:** Move your right arm straight out in front of you with your palm down.

**Beat 2:** Move your left arm straight out in front of you with your palm down.

**Beat 3:** Keeping your right arm straight in front of you, turn your palm up.

**Beat 4:** Keeping your left arm straight in front of you, turn your palm up.

**Beat 5:** Place your right hand on your left shoulder and hold.

**Beat 6:** Place your left hand on your right shoulder and hold (arms are criss-crossed).

**Beat 7:** Put your right hand behind your head.

**Beat 8:** Put your left hand behind your head.

**Beat 9:** Move your right hand across your body and place it on the front of your left hip.

**Beat 10:** Move your left hand across your body and place it on the front of your right hip.

**Beat 11:** Place your right hand on the right side of your bottom.

**Beat 12:** Place your left hand on the left side of your bottom.

**Beat 13:** Slightly rotate your hips to the left.

**Beat 14:** Slightly rotate your hips to the right.

**Beat 15:** Slightly rotate your hips to the left.

**Beat 16:** Clap your hands and jump while turning 90 degrees to your left. Repeat the sequence until the song has finished.



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## A Century of Dance Crazes – 1910s to 1990s

Now, let's soft-shoe shuffle back to some popular music and dance eras of the past hundred years – a period during which music technology advanced, resulting in cheaper and better-quality recordings and the widespread distribution of music, which made it more readily available.



### 1910s

The tango is a dance of Spanish-American origin and evolved in Argentina, South America. During the 1910s the tango quickly spread to other parts of the world. Its popularity was based on two elements: the dance style was radically different from anything that had gone before, as dance steps were improvised and it was performed by a couple facing each other. Since its beginning, many forms of tango have been created, each involving different techniques. The most popular styles of tango are the Argentine tango and Uruguayan tango.

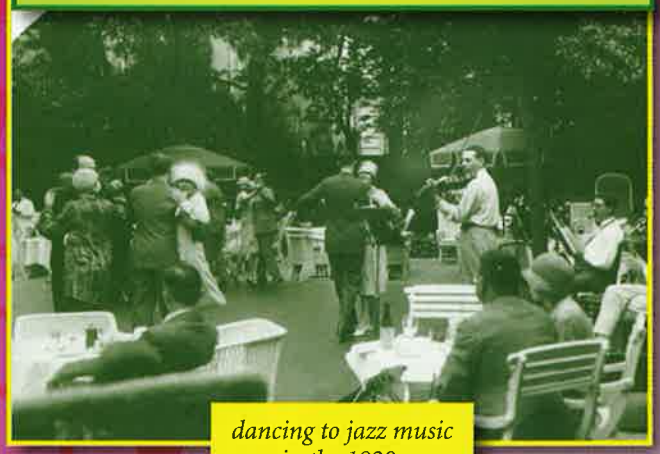
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## 1920s

The charleston was one of the most popular dances during the jazz era – the 1920s to the 1940s. The dance was created when a song of the same name was performed in a Broadway musical in New York, USA, in 1923.



*playing jazz in the 1920s*



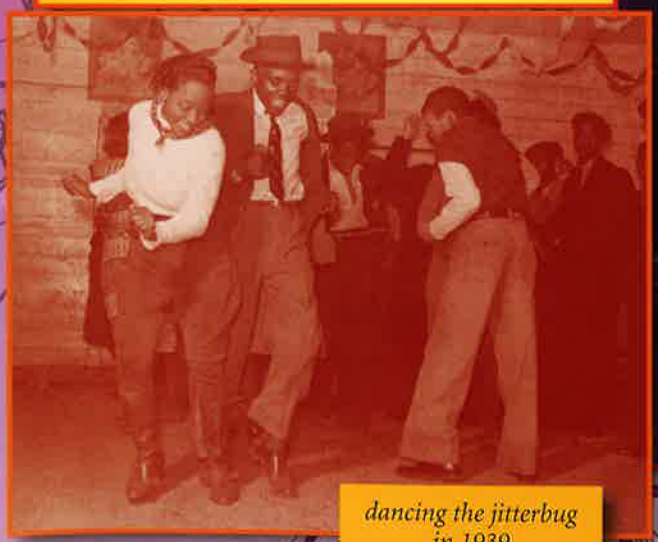
*dancing to jazz music in the 1920s*



*dancing the charleston in 1925*

## 1930s and 1940s

In the 1930s and 1940s, swing dances originated in the USA and one of the most popular swing dances was called the jitterbug.



*dancing the jitterbug in 1939*



*dancing the jitterbug in 1942*

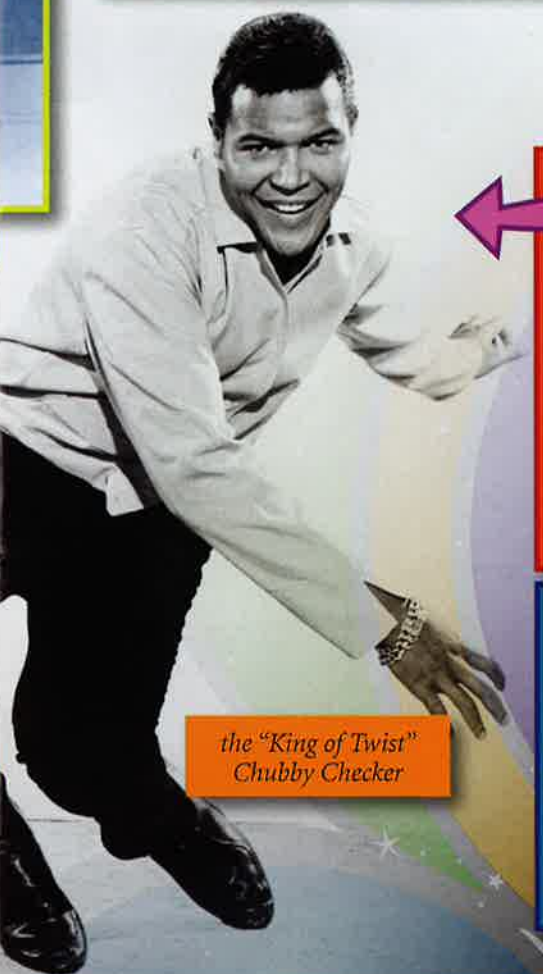
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## 1950s

This decade saw the beginning of the rock'n'roll era, when African-American musicians were composing a new upbeat style of music alongside that of other American artists. Their music appealed to mainstream audiences of all colours at a time when racial tensions were running high. Influential artists of the time included Chuck Berry, who was one of the first black rock'n'roll performers popular with both black and white audiences, and Elvis Presley, who was a white performer whose style and music helped to bring the sound of black musicians to a broader audience.



*the "King of Rock and Roll" Elvis Presley*



*the "King of Twist" Chubby Checker*

## 1960s

American rock'n'roll music inspired others to build on the style, and pop music quickly spread globally. The British pop group the Beatles came to be known as one of the most successful and influential bands in the history of recorded music. One of the most popular dance crazes was the twist, first danced to Chubby Checker's song of the same name. He was called the "King of Twist".

## 1970s

Many dance crazes in this decade were line dances, such as the nutbush, which was danced along to "Nutbush City Limits", a song performed by Tina Turner in 1973. The disco dance craze began as another style of line dancing towards the end of the 1970s.

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## 1980s

Michael Jackson (1958–2009) was influenced by famous dancers such as Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly. His video clips show him to have been an innovative dancer and choreographer. Perhaps his most memorable dance style was the moonwalk. Always an artist who wanted to create something new in each music video, he used magic effects to create the famous anti-gravity lean, showcased in his video clip for the song "Thriller". In this video, pegs rose up through the stage floor so that Michael Jackson and his dancers could click their heels onto the pegs, and lean forward.

## a talented choreographer and dancer



*Michael Jackson doing his famous moonwalk*

## 1990s

Like the macarena, the chicken dance was very popular in the 1990s at social gatherings, such as weddings and birthdays.

### THE CHICKEN DANCE

This dance was first composed in Switzerland in the 1950s and it was originally known as the duck dance. Over the next 40 years it had several names before finally becoming known as the chicken dance and reaching the height of its popularity in the 1990s.