

# Jack-in-a-box

## Movement Objectives



### Actions

Jumping and balancing

### Dynamics

Sudden, surprising, fast

### Shape

Small to big

## Warm up

**In a space on their own, ask the children to imagine** there's a big toy box in front of them. Get them to imagine what could be inside – ask the children for responses. Open the toy box to discover...a Jack-in-a-Box!

Ask the children to stand in a long line and warm up in a follow my leader style. Start off with small gentle actions such as arm circles and knee bends, then gradually increase the size and range of the movements to get the children's heart beats raised. Ensure to include jack-in-a-box style actions into the warm up, such as jumps and sudden arm and leg actions.

Finish the warm up by asking the children to make a small shape, then slowly open and unfold out to stretch the whole body.

Pencil Full of Lead - Paolo Nutini



# Boo!

Popcorn - Hot Butter



**Sitting in a circle, ask the children to hide their hands behind their back.**

On the count of 3, bring their hands out and say 'boo!' Try this with different parts of the body. Ask the children to focus on sudden, surprising and fast movements.

In pairs, ask one child to make a shape. Ask the other child to hide behind it by fitting behind the shape. The hiding child can either jump out suddenly, or choose to pop out individual body parts from behind the shape. Encourage the children to build suspense and anticipation by adding in pauses and silence between each move.

Watch the pairs in two groups. Which children were good at surprising the audience by pausing before they popped out?

# Choreography

Soir de Fete - Yann Tiersen



**In a space on their own, ask the children to make a small box shape.** Ask them to keep it really still. On the count of 3, ask them to jump up and make a large still shape, like a Jack-in-a-Box. Get the children to try out a range of big shapes eg. emotions (happy, sad, angry), spiky shapes, curved shapes, tall, wide...practice holding the shapes completely still.

In pairs – share their Jack-in-a-Box shapes with each other. Feedback to their partner on which positions were most effective – which ones were balanced and still, or funny, or interesting? Ask all the children to choose their best shapes (as a result of feedback from their partner) and have a quick practice of them.

Back in their pairs, ask the children to label themselves Jack and Box. Jack curls up small and box makes a shape over them. When the box starts to move, Jack pops out and holds one of their shapes from the previous activity. Swap over.

**Health and safety. Children must be mindful of each other during this activity. Make sure the child making the box shape moves completely out of the way before 'Jack' jumps up.**



# Performance Opportunity

**Create a Jack-in-a-Box class dance. For example...**

**Beginning** – tiptoe and creep around the room looking mischievous. Pause randomly and rub their hands together, or gesture 'shh' as if they are up to something.

**Middle 1** – creep to their partner and take it in turns to make a shape for their partner to hide behind (like the earlier activity). The person behind pauses before jumping out suddenly. Swap over several times.

**Middle 2** – take it in turns to be the Jack and the box in their pairs. Remind them to use their shapes they practiced earlier on in the session.

**End** – ask the children for ideas. What activity could they do as a whole class to conclude the dance? Encourage ideas that are linked to the topic and might involve sudden movement and / or jumps and balances.

# Appreciation

**Perform the dance as a whole class** – it would be great to video it so the children can watch it back afterwards. Discuss the performance afterwards – what was their favourite part? If they could do it again, what would they change and why? Ask them to perform the dance one last time, making improvements as the result of feedback.



# Cool Down ↓

**Ask the children to repeat the beginning section** of the dance where they are creeping around the room. Gradually slow the pace down.

Finish off by asking the children to make a small shape, then slowly open and unfold out to stretch the whole body

Open the toy box and place the Jack-in-a-Box back inside.

# DANCE

## CLASS IN A BOX

**Other sections available from Dance Class In A Box**

**All About Me**  
**Ancient Egypt**

**Animals**  
**Ballroom**

**Books**  
**Celebrations**  
**Cultural Dance**

**People Who Help Us**  
**Pirates**

**Romans**  
**Science**  
**Space**  
**Traditional Tales**  
**Transport**  
**Victorians**  
**WWII**  
**Olympics**

**Each section contains lesson plans filled with great dance session ideas.**

Find more from Dance Class In A Box  
[www.primaryschooldance.co.uk](http://www.primaryschooldance.co.uk)