



ON YOUR MARKS

Build skill and confidence in mark making through our exciting workshop series.

On Your Marks is fun, engaging and leads children through activities that are creative, inclusive and ignite their desire to 'Make their Mark'!



Call 07738042089 | email louise@primaryschooldance.co.uk

On Your Marks



What is On Your Marks?

Get set to meet super characters, travel to the moon with sparkly silvers and go on an adventure with crayons! On Your Marks transports children into a world of mark making opportunities through imaginative sessions that develop children's confidence, skill and engagement in pre-writing.



Why take part?

This workshop series is designed to support the anatomical journey of mark making, priming the body ready to write. It develops strength in the shoulder girdle and core, whilst mobilising the elbow and wrist joints in preparation for fine motor activity – all through movement play and dance!



What happens during a session?

On Your Marks offers a wide variety of mark making experiences, using traditional writing materials alongside a range of exciting props and loose parts such as foam strips, colourful pom poms and ribbons. The On Your Marks box allows children to discover and explore: sessions are structured around these resources but also give opportunity for 'in the moment planning', allowing children to play and respond in ways that they choose, enabling ownership and self-expression. The wide array of props help facilitate fine motor coordination and encourage children to work towards tripod grip and finger strength away from the classroom in a fun, creative judgement-free environment.



On Your Marks



Skill Development

The workshop series includes plenty of moments to improve gross motor skills such as balance, body awareness and agility. Children work alone, in pairs and as a class, enabling pupils to cooperate, learn from and be inspired by each other.



As well as taking part in creative movement adventures, children also participate in 'Time to Make Your Mark' at the end of each session, expressing, practicing and processing the content from that day onto a variety of mediums, which can be displayed as a gallery at the end of the workshops.

Accessibility

On Your Marks is an accessible project, working with what the children's bodies can do in a non-competitive atmosphere, allowing everyone to be seen as equals. All pupils are viewed as unique and sessions are flexible, tailored towards the needs of each individual school.



Continuous Professional Development

Sessions are led by experienced creative dance/movement artists, giving staff valuable opportunity to learn from specialists, gain new ideas and time to observe their class in a different context.



Feedback from schools

From staff...

"The children are always excited on a Tuesday as it's On Your Marks day, and always intrigued to find out what's in the box! Mark making in a non-threatening, engaging, creative environment is a positive start to early writing, and the children have been able to apply skills such as "sharky fingers" to their mark-making in class and at home. It has been incredibly useful to talk to professionals who are expert in early physical development, and to be able to use their advice in our own practice...We have loved having On Your Marks at school and we can really see the progress of the children across all areas of their development: in particular their listening and attention, their gross and fine motor skills, and of course their pencil control. Moreover, it has been an overwhelmingly fun and positive enhancement to our curriculum, which fits in perfectly with our school ethos of engaging children in active learning through play. We've been recommending it to everyone!"

Southbourne Infant teachers

"On Your Marks is an approach which supports physical and emotional skills based in sound early childhood development. It is clearly sequenced and build sequentially on the small steps and foundation blocks for later skills in the wider curriculum as well as specifically in reading, writing and maths. It is engaging and fun and fully inclusive for all children at all levels. It has also included valuable professional dialogue based on where the children are and potential next steps which we have been able to incorporate into our universal provision back in (and out) of the classroom."

Deb Hockley, Reception teacher

From children...

"Yeah On Your Marks ...I love On Your Marks ...it's my favourite...I love flying and I love spinning...what's in the box today?"

Reception child, Chidham Primary School

"Can I go and look at everyone's work with my binoculars? I like seeing what people have drawn."

Reception child with additional needs, St James Primary School

What you need to know...

Before the project begins

We recommend communication and/or a brief online or in person meeting between class teachers and dance artist in advance of the sessions.

This is an opportunity to...

- ask questions before the project starts
- hear more about the project
- receive clarification with booking details
- familiarise with the school and the dance space (dance artist)
- conduct a risk assessment
- discuss SEN and access requirements

Duration of the project

On Your Marks can be booked at any time of the academic year

It is usually a 10 week project (though this can be shorter if required)

45 minutes per session is recommended

Mid-project check in to support and discuss project continuation

Brief evaluation afterwards, assessing the impact of the project

The dance artist will need...

A clear ventilated space, such as the hall

Access to power sockets (for music). Some artists will also require a school sound system to use with their music device.

What you need to know...

The school will need to...

Provide a consistent member of staff each week (preferably the class teacher)

Actively support each session (teachers are encouraged to join in)

Provide writing pencils (weekly) and colouring pencils and/or crayons (on request)

Aid with the project evaluation

The children will need to...

Take part in bare feet (unless for medical or SEN reasons)

Wear PE clothing if appropriate

For more information...

Leicestershire contact...

Louise Jaggard (JumpStart Dance)

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Silver squares...going to the moon!

Warm Up

Use the 'On Your Marks' song and actions...“On your marks, get set, go, wiggle your fingers fast and slow. Hands in the sky, up high, lets count...1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. I can hear the clock: tick tock, tick tock, tick tock, tick tock. What time is it? It's On Your Marks time!”

Get the space ready. Ask the children to find a clear space on a wall and push it away to make space. Repeat lying down and pushing away the ceiling, then the walls and the air around them. Now we are ready to see what is in the box.

Key Component

Strength
Fine Motor skills
Gross Motor skills
Shoulder, elbow, wrist pivots

Opening the Box

Everyone sitting in a circle. Hold the On Your Marks box and call out “I've got a rhythm, got a rhythm, got a rhythm. “I've got a rhythm and push...”. Ask the children to join in and beat their hands to the rhythm. Repeat several times.

Shake the box and ask the children what they think might be inside. Pull out one of the silver squares and show the class. Demonstrate different ways of playing with the square, for example scrunch, twist, throw and catch, smooth out. Hand out one to each of the children.

Key Component

Strength
Engagement and motivation

Silver Squares

With the children still sitting on the floor, ask them to try out some of the actions that they have already seen with the silver square.

Remind them of our 'shark hands' from previous weeks: stretch and separate the fingers out, count thumb, index and middle fingers (skill side of hand) and then place the two fingers onto the thumb, making a mouth out of them (like a shark). Can the shark gobble up the silver square?

In the moment planning...children to explore different ways to interact with the silver squares, sitting, standing and/or travelling through the space. They can magpie ideas from each other and some of their ideas can be selected to try out as a whole class.

Key Component

Grip
Wrist pivot
Fine Motor skills
Making their mark
Hand/eye coordination

Silver Squares...going to the moon!

Silver Squares

In a space. Ask the children to scrunch the square in their hands, wait for the count down 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and then throw it into the air on the word 'blast off'. Encourage the children to swing their arms forwards and backwards, working through their shoulder and elbow, for every count down number before they release.

Now the children are part of the rockets – get them to crouch down low, shake from side to side during the count down, jump up and throw the silver square before catching it. Then they can zoom their square around the room, making them fly without crashing or bashing into other rockets. Get them to repeat several times – they can lead their own count downs if appropriate.

Finally, repeat the count down and blast off, but this time children stay on the spot balancing and pivoting on their feet or one leg. Ask them to move their square like a rocket again, but on the spot and around their own bodies.

Put the silver squares away into the box.

Key Component

Grip
Proprioception
Gross Motor skills
Balance in motion
Shoulder and elbow pivot

Time to Make Your Mark!

"In my pocket, I have a new rocket!" Pull out a pencil and use a piece of long card to demonstrate to the class. Draw side to side at the bottom of the paper (like they did with their bodies earlier) on the count down 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. On the 'blast off' draw a line up towards the top of the paper, then off into the air, before landing back onto the paper and drawing back down the original line to where it first started.

Hand out pencils and cards to the class and ask them to each have a go with their rockets, drawing side to side before up and down. Try out several times.

Key Component

Fine Motor skills
Making their mark
Hand / eye coordination
Engagement and motivation

Cool Down

Put the pencils away and ask them to view some of the other children's rocket drawings – they could use their hands as space telescopes to view through. If time, they could discuss the drawings they've seen afterwards – what did they notice? Did they have a favourite picture?

Get the children back into a space and ask them to hold their drawing in both hands. Perform one last blast off, holding the card, but this time do it all in slow motion and finish with some big stretches.

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