

Dancing Days

Using folk arts in inclusive settings



Folk Unlimited participants enjoying morris dancing together. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Written by Emmie Ward and Roary Neat



JOHN LYON'S CHARITY

English Folk Dance and Song Society

The English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) is the national development organisation for folk music, dance and related arts, championing the folk arts at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape. It is based at Cecil Sharp House, a dedicated folk arts centre and music venue, in Camden, North London which is also home to EFDSS' Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML) - England's folk music and dance archive, which provides free online access to thousands of searchable folk manuscripts and other materials.

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Two of the songs in this resource have a link to their Roud number entry in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library's online archive. (A Roud number is an individual index number for English folk songs which makes it possible to find versions of songs even if the melody or lyrics are not identical.)

Please be aware that these historical materials held by the VWML may contain content considered offensive by modern standards. Teachers are advised to check these links before sharing with students as materials may need contextualising.

Inclusive Folk is supported by John Lyon's Charity.

Resource credits

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Postie's Knock: traditional (Postman's Knock), arranged and performed by Emmie Ward, Nick Goode and Roary Neat

Calling On song: performed by Roary Neat

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About this Resource

In this resource are three folk dances that also involve singing. The first two dances are lively morris dances with accompanying songs from the village of Adderbury in the Cotswolds. For the third dance we travel north for some rapper sword dancing and a traditional 'Calling On' song. All three dances relate to the world of work – washing clothes, posting letters and coal mining.

It can take some coordination to sing and dance at the same time, but this can be made more manageable by simplifying the dance moves whilst singing. When everyone stops singing and goes into a danced section this is time to throw in some more complex moves!

An additional benefit to singing while dancing is that it can be easier to get a feel for the rhythmic phrases in a song whilst moving along to it at the same time. Acting out words with movement can also help convey the meaning better than any attempt to describe with language alone.

Singing and dancing together is a great activity for energising a group and bringing everyone's focus back together. There is a lot to learn: counting moves, changing direction, learning different moves with your body, interacting with others, making eye contact, learning the words to the song and handling a prop.

In this process, getting it 'wrong' and turning in the wrong direction or dropping your stick can be part of the fun, causing a lot of good willed humour! We are all reminded to take ourselves less seriously and laugh at our mistakes. It's a great leveller!

This resource has been developed for working with young people with SLD and complex needs by EFDSS' Inclusive Folk Project. Traditional dances have been adapted to be inclusive of wheelchair users and those with limited mobility.

Please see the section on 'Additional Material' for other EFDSS learning resources on folk dance (including morris, rapper and ceilidh dancing), as well as extension activities and additional sound and video files.

There is a glossary at the end of each page where needed, denoted by an asterisk (*).

Morris Dancing: Introduction

Morris dancing is a style of folk dance that has existed in England for hundreds of years. Nowadays modern morris teams, or sides, dance up and down the country, keeping these traditions alive whilst also adding their own unique style to the dances. There are many different regional styles of morris dancing around the country.

Historically the dances were often performed by working people at festive times. The traditional costume was usually a pair of trousers and a white shirt that could be decorated with rosettes, sashes, ribbons, baldrics* and armbands. Every team had its own distinct costume and they would often wear hats such as top hats, bowler hats or caps. Bell pads* would often be worn by dancers and were often decorated with ribbons.

The two morris dances in this resource come from the village of Adderbury in the Cotswolds (an area covering Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and parts of Northamptonshire). This style of morris dancing is often very recognisable in its use of props such as hankies and sticks. People in Adderbury really liked to start a morris dance with a song. They were known as 'Clap Songs'. It would get the crowd's attention before the dance started and it would also have the combined benefit of giving dancers a little rest in between the energetic dance steps.

In the 1900s there were some women dancing morris in the Cotswolds. They were often dress makers who worked in factories. Their costumes were usually a dress with a frilled apron and a sun bonnet decorated with ribbons and flowers.

Today, people of all genders morris dance, and it is common for each dancer to wear a shirt, trousers, bells and team decoration.

Glossary

Baldric: Two sashes worn diagonally across the shoulder which cross in the middle of the chest and back

Bell pad: A pad decorated with bells, tied around the shin of the leg. As dancers jump and move around it adds a pleasing, percussive sound.



Fool's Gambit, a morris side, dancing in London. You can see they are each wearing a baldric, bell pads and holding a wooden stick. Photo by Roswitha Cheshier.

Capturing the Style

Morris dancing is often danced to jigs, music that is in 6/8 time. The music and dance complement each other with a bouncy and energetic style.

Activity 1: The Music

- To get a feel for the 6/8 jig rhythm, listen to the jigs that accompany this resource. You can also access further audio recordings of morris tunes in EFDSS' *'Morris Contemporary'* resource: [Morris Contemporary Dance \(efdss.org\)](http://efdss.org)
- Count "**1** 2 3 **4** 5 6" and give emphasis to beats 1 and 4. You could also mark these beats by clapping, stamping, swaying or nodding.
- As you mark beats 1 and 4, you may find you start counting a slightly slower "1, 2" as opposed to a quicker "**1**,2,3,**4**,5,6". This is good to do if it is easier for your group.

Activity 2: The Stepping

Morris dancing uses a few important steps. One of these is the **Single Step**. Follow the activities below to build up to this step:

- Try hopping on one leg. An alternative to this is jumping using both legs (another important step in morris!) or moving your arms up and down.
- Once you are confident doing this, you can progress to the **Single Step**: a step and hop on one leg (usually the left though this is optional) followed by a step and hop on the other leg. An alternative is to move your arms or body from side to side.
- Encourage dancers to move in a bouncy way to capture the energetic style!

Here is a table showing how the **Single Step** works with the jig beat:

6/8 Beat	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
Count in 2	"1"			"2"			"1"			"2"		
Movement	Left step			Hop on left			Right step			Hop on right		

Preparation

Props

The two morris dances are called 'Washing Day' and 'Postie's Knock'. Traditionally they are danced with a stick held in one hand. The sticks are 'clashed' or hit against the stick of another dancer to create a percussive sound. A safer alternative to wooden sticks is to use pool noodles (foam sticks used to float at the swimming pool) or pipe lagging (easy to get from DIY stores). Since these will make less sound than wooden sticks when hit together another suggestion would be to wear some wrist or ankle bells which will make a great sound as you move.

If you do not have pool noodles or pipe lagging, or these will not work for you, you can experiment with other props such as ribbon sticks or scarves to create movement. You can use body percussion; clapping, stamping feet etc to make sounds to replace clashing with pool noodles.



Folk Unlimited participants choosing their props. They are using pool noodles that have handles which make them look more like rapper swords. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Directions and Starting Position

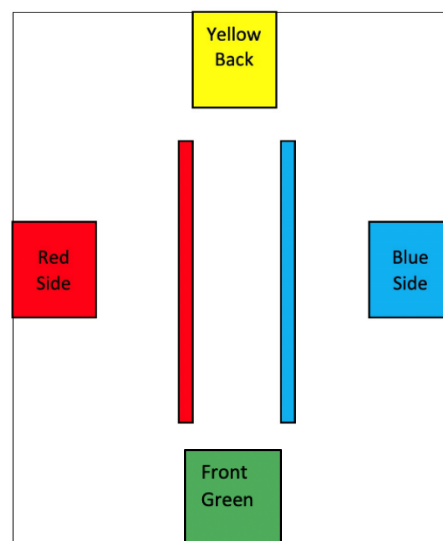
Both dances have been simplified to remove the fancy footwork and jumps to make them easier for everyone to join in. To keep the traditional flavour of morris dance two important elements remain which are:

1. Using directions in the space i.e., front, back and two sides. To learn this concept, you can colour code each part of the room and hang up a coloured piece of paper to help people identify it (see diagram below). If you are dancing outside you could put coloured objects such as beanbags on the ground or draw with chalk.

You could also use directional instructions, such as patio, school gate, window etc.

2. Longways Set is the starting position. People assemble in two lines facing each other (the red and blue lines on the diagram below). They can turn and change direction within this formation. Typically, musicians are positioned at the top of the set (referred to as the front in this resource and identified with a green square).

The longways set is commonly used in Cotswold morris dance. To help people find their line you can draw chalk lines on the floor or put tape down to mark the lines on the floor. If you want to, you can go one step further and put coloured tape down to differentiate the blue and red side as in the diagram.





Folk Unlimited participants positioned in a longways set. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Warm Up: Space Formations

Here are three activities you could try to get everyone warmed up and used to getting into formation:

1. Shout out the direction/colour and everyone moves towards that coloured card. Take turns to call out and be the leader. You could develop this by moving in time to the jig music using a bouncy movement or the **Single Step**.
2. Practise getting into position in a longways set.
3. Practise facing front (green), facing back (yellow), facing the person opposite you and turning back-to-back.



Folk Unlimited participants practising back-to-back. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Morris Figures

Now you're ready to try these five different morris figures* that appear in the dances. If you want to hold your sticks whilst you try these you can, but you do not need to.

1. **Crossover:** Dancers start in two lines facing each other (a longways set). Over a count of 8, move towards each other, swap places and then turn to face each other.
2. **Turn around:** Dancers turn around on the spot for a count of 8.
3. **Forwards:** This move can start facing each other or everybody facing the front (green) Move forwards for a count of 4, or 8 if more time is needed.
4. **Backwards:** After moving forwards, try moving backwards for a count of 4 or 8.
5. **Clock:** This is a more difficult sequence and so it might take a bit of practice. Everyone starts in a longways set, before turning to the front (green square), then back-to-back (red and blue squares), then to the back (yellow square) and then back to facing each other in a longways set.

On the next pages, you can see a demonstration of how to do the clock move.

Some dancers may want to use the **Single Step** to move. Others may want to add in jumps or their own bouncy moves! Encourage individuality, it is common in morris dancing to do a solo jig where the dancer gets to be creative and show their moves!

Morris dances often use a verse/chorus structure. For the songs in this resource, you sing in the chorus and dance in the verse.

Glossary

Figures: The dance moves

The Clock Move

1. Everyone starts in two lines (longways set). Both lines are **turned in to face each other**.

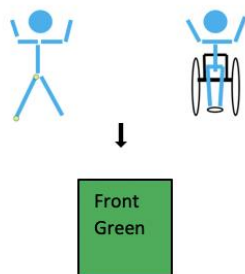


2. When the music starts, stay on the spot for 4 counts then take 4 counts to turn to the front, the green square (8 counts altogether).

You can count this out together like this:

**“On the spot 2,3,4
Turn to the front 2,3,4”**

If you are holding your stick, you can move it rhythmically to the beat.



3. Stay on the spot facing the green square for 4 counts then take 4 counts to turn out, to face the red and blue sides (8 counts altogether).

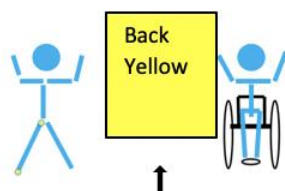
**“On the spot 2,3,4
Turn out 2,3,4”**

You have now turned so that both sides are **back-to-back** facing the red and blue squares.



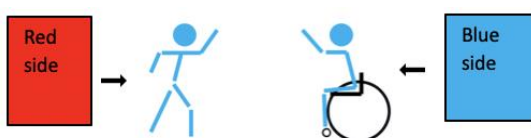
4. Stay on the spot back-to-back for 4 counts then take 4 counts to turn to the back, the yellow square (8 counts altogether).

**“On the spot 2,3,4
To the back 2,3,4”**



5. Stay on the spot facing the yellow square for 4 counts then take 4 counts to turn back in, back to your starting position in a longways set (8 counts altogether)

**“On the spot 2,3,4
Turning in 2,3,4”**



Stick Moves

Now you have tried the morris moves, it is time to add in your morris stick! Sticks are traditionally held in front of you, resting over your shoulder, but they can be held however is comfortable.

Although the pool noodle/pipe lagging 'sticks' are made from foam, it's a good idea to go through some safety rules before clashing sticks together such as keeping the stick away from your dance partner's face. The sticks could also be ribbons, scarves, or other objects that work for you.

Here are four different moves you can try with your stick:

1. **Tap your stick** on the ground or somewhere else accessible, such as a chair, to a count of 8.
2. **Raise your stick** high to a count of 4 and then lower it back to a count of 4.
3. **Move your stick up and down** to the beat.
4. **Clash sticks** by moving towards the person facing you in the opposite line and tapping their stick. You can do a single or double tap in time to the music.



Roary and Emmie demonstrate clashing sticks. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Song and Dance 1: Washing Day

Roud number 3747

This song is all about the dreaded washing day! This was a job done before washing machines were invented, usually one day a week in the home. It was extremely hard work as everything had to be done by hand!

The 'sticks' are tapped on the ground in the chorus which is reminiscent of how washing was often stirred and pounded with a big stick in a washing tub.

Washing Day Lyrics

Thump! Thump! Scrub! Scrub! Scrub, scrub away,

(Sign for scrub or cleaning)

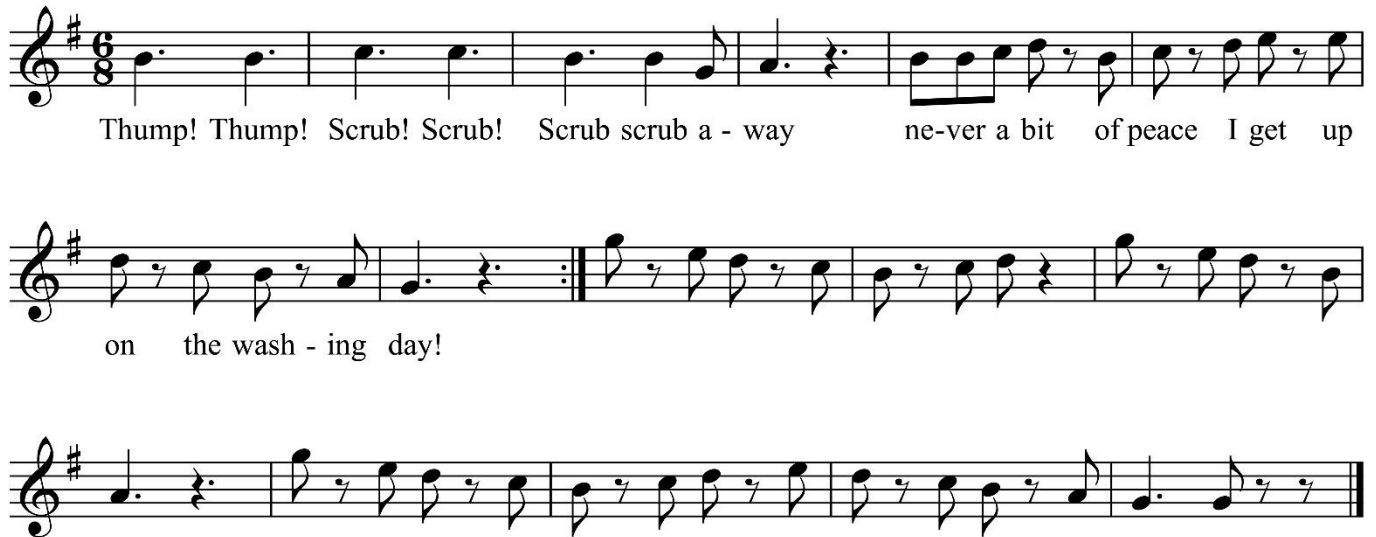
Never a bit of peace I get upon the washing day.

(Sign for no and piece/quiet)

Thump! Thump! Scrub! Scrub! Scrub, scrub away,

Never a bit of peace I get upon the washing day.

Score: Washing Day



Thump! Thump! Scrub! Scrub! Scrub scrub a - way ne-ver a bit of peace I get up
on the wash - ing day!

The Dance

Start in a longways set (two lines facing each other, see diagram for a reminder)

Chorus section (singing)

You are going to start by singing the song through once with simple stick moves, outlined in the table below:

Lyrics to sing	Stick moves
Thump! Thump! Scrub! Scrub! Scrub, scrub away, Never a bit of peace I get upon the washing day.	Hit your stick on the ground or somewhere else accessible, such as a chair, in time with the pulse of the music.
Thump! Thump! Scrub! Scrub! Scrub, scrub away, Never a bit of peace I get upon the washing day.	Carry on hitting your stick on the ground but this time when you sing the words 'upon the washing day' turn to face the front (green square) ready for the dance section. If you need more time to turn, you can turn earlier.

Dance section

Now you have sung the song, it is time to start morris dancing! You should already be facing the front (the green square).

- Move **forwards** for 8 counts and then **backwards** for 8 counts. Try using the **Single Step** or variations on this to move.
- As you do this, **raise sticks** up when moving forward then down when moving back.
- Repeat this dance figure.
- Alternate chorus and dance sections ending on a chorus.

Variations for Dance Section

Instead of doing the forwards and backwards figures you could try some of the other moves you have learnt. You will need to be facing your partner for these, rather than facing the front:

- **Crossover** for 8 counts x 2
- **Turn around** for 8 counts x 2

You can then try doing a different move for each dance section and call out the moves.

Song and Dance 2: Postie's Knock

Roud Number 13177 (originally Postman's Knock)

This song celebrates the good old postal worker and was written in 1860, twenty years after the Great Post Office Reform. The first stamp called a 'Penny Black' was introduced for the first time and letters could arrive at any address in the country. It must have been a great cause for celebration as previous to this, working folk would not have had such easy and affordable access to the postal service. To update the lyrics, we have changed the word postman to 'postie'.

In the chorus sticks are clashed against your partner's stick as if knocking on a door. The 'clock' figure is reminiscent of a clock going through the hours of the day as it turns around.

Postie's Knock Lyrics

Every morning as true as the clock

(Sign for morning and clock)

Somebody hears the Postie's knock.

(Sign for knock)

Every morning as true as the clock

Somebody hears the Postie's knock.

Score: Postie's Knock



Eve - ry morn-ing as true as the clock some-bod-y hears the post -ie's knock!



Eve-ry morn-ing as true as the clock some-bod-y hears the post -ie's knock!



The Dance

Starting position

Start in a longways set (two lines facing each other, see diagram for a reminder)

Chorus section (singing)

As you sing the chorus, **clash your stick** against your partner's stick to the beat. This sounds like a postie knocking on doors!

Dance section

Once you have sung the chorus once you will do the **clock move** (see diagram on page 13).

As a reminder, this move starts with everyone in a longways set, then everyone turns to the front (green square), then back-to-back (red and blue squares), then to the back (yellow square) and then back to facing each other in a longways set. Another way of thinking of this is doing a quarter turn every 8 beats.

Alternate chorus and dance sections ending on a chorus.

Rapper Dance

Rapper dance is a traditional dance from the North-East of England, historically a coal-mining region. Rapper was originally danced using rapper 'swords'. Rapper swords are not real swords, but rather strips of sprung steel with wooden handles at both ends so that two dancers can hold onto each end of a sword and be linked together. It is often said that they evolved from mining tools which may have been used to scrape the sweat and dirt off pit ponies*.

As with morris, each rapper team wears a similar but distinct outfit to distinguish themselves from other teams. The traditional outfit was probably just a decorated version of the work clothes worn by miners: shirt, hoggars*, long socks, and a sash around the waist. Since female and mixed-gender teams started becoming more common, the hoggars have sometimes been swapped for skirts. The sash, and sometimes rosettes, are usually the distinguishing feature between teams, varying in colour or having the team's logo on them.

A 'Calling On' song is often sung by a non-dancing member of the group called a 'Tommy', who introduces the dance and comments on it throughout. The 'Calling On' song gets the crowd's attention, as well as introducing and uplifting the dancers.

Glossary

Pit pony: A pony or small horse that was used to haul loads in a coal mine before this could easily be automated.

Hoggars: Knee-length working trousers used by miners in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, now a standard part of rapper attire.

Props

Whilst not actually sharp swords, rapper swords can still cause injury if used incorrectly and are hard to obtain. We therefore suggest using a safer alternative.

Pool noodles or pipe lagging can be used like in the morris dances, or you can use ribbon sticks or scarves. The usual length of a rapper sword is around 70cm but it is best to tailor the length of your swords to the needs of your dancers. Wheelchair users may require longer swords for example.

For the purposes of this resource please read the word 'swords' as whatever you will be using in their place. It is great if everyone can have their own sword, but if this is not possible, it does not matter.

Music

The rapper dance explained in this resource can be danced to a number of rapper stepping tunes. In *'Swords and Stars: Rapper Sword Dance for Primary Schools'*, another EFDSS resource, you will find lots of audio files to listen and dance to.

Here is a link to the resource: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Swords and Stars: Rapper Sword Dance for Primary Schools \(efdss.org\)](http://www.efdss.org/resources/swords-and-stars-rapper-sword-dance-for-primary-schools)

The Main Elements

Rapper dances traditionally have three main elements:

1. **Figures or moves:** relate to how the dancers move around the space.
2. **Stepping:** traditionally the footwork of each dancer and helps keep the beat. However, to make the stepping accessible to everyone you can simply keep the beat in whatever way works best, be that stamping feet, clapping hands, helpers tapping out the beat on someone's arm (with their consent), making a noise, or speaking a word etc.
3. **The chorus:** dances sometimes alternate figures with a chorus. For use in SEN/D settings it is likely to be helpful to keep to this rough structure.



A rapper side performing at the 2012 U.Dance Festival held at the Southbank Centre, photo by Brian Slater courtesy of Youth Dance England.

Warm up Activities

Getting into the rhythm of the dance is a great way to warm up physically and vocally. These activities will also prepare everyone for the rhythms they will make in the chorus section of the rapper dance. Each activity is done with everyone positioned in a circle.

Activity 1: Jig Beat

- The jig beat is the same as with the morris dancing, but with a faster tempo. If you need to remember how this feels, count “1 2 3 4 5 6” and give emphasis to beats 1 and 4.
- You can also choose a word or phrase to repeat that has three syllables, such as “step shuffle”, to help get the jig feel.

Activity 2: Stepping to the Beat

- While repeating “step shuffle, step shuffle” together over 6 counts, you can now get everyone stepping (stamping feet) or clapping **on all of the 6 counts** to make a percussive sound. This is going to be more challenging but it’s fun trying!
- Alternatives to this could include people moving other parts of their body in time to the 6 beats or vocalising. A top tip would be to start slowly and build up speed.
- Keep this activity going for as long as it takes for people to get into the rhythm and get warmed up physically and vocally. Since this activity will also be used as the chorus for the dance, make sure everyone is confident before moving on.
- You can also play [audio recordings](#) of a jig to the group. People can follow the beat using their bodies and voices as they have been practising. It’s good to hear that the rhythm that they have just created fits the tune.



A Folk Unlimited participant stepping out! Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Song and Dance 3: Calling On Song

Originally many rapper dance teams had their own Calling On song, some of which were quite long and introduced each dancer individually. Today, most teams use a variant of the first verse of the Calling On song formerly used by the Winlaton Sword Dancers, a team from Winlaton near Newcastle upon Tyne. The song has been shortened and adapted for this resource to make it easier to learn.

If you only want to dance then you can leave this part out, or else you can just sing it once through to announce the dance without teaching it to everyone, as would be more traditional.

If you have the time, however, it is nice to teach the song so that everyone can announce themselves through the song before they start dancing. You can help people understand the meaning of the words by using some signs, which are suggested below.

Calling On Song Lyrics

Good people give ear* to me story,

(Sign for listen)

It happens we've come here by chance,

(Sign for here)

These heroes I bring, blithe* and bonny*,

(Sign for superhero)

Intending to give you a dance.

(Sign for dance)

In the third line, instead of “these heroes”, “five heroes” will often be sung, as that is the standard number of dancers for rapper. This resource is designed to work for other numbers of dancers, however, so feel free at this point to sing whatever number of dancers you have in the circle.

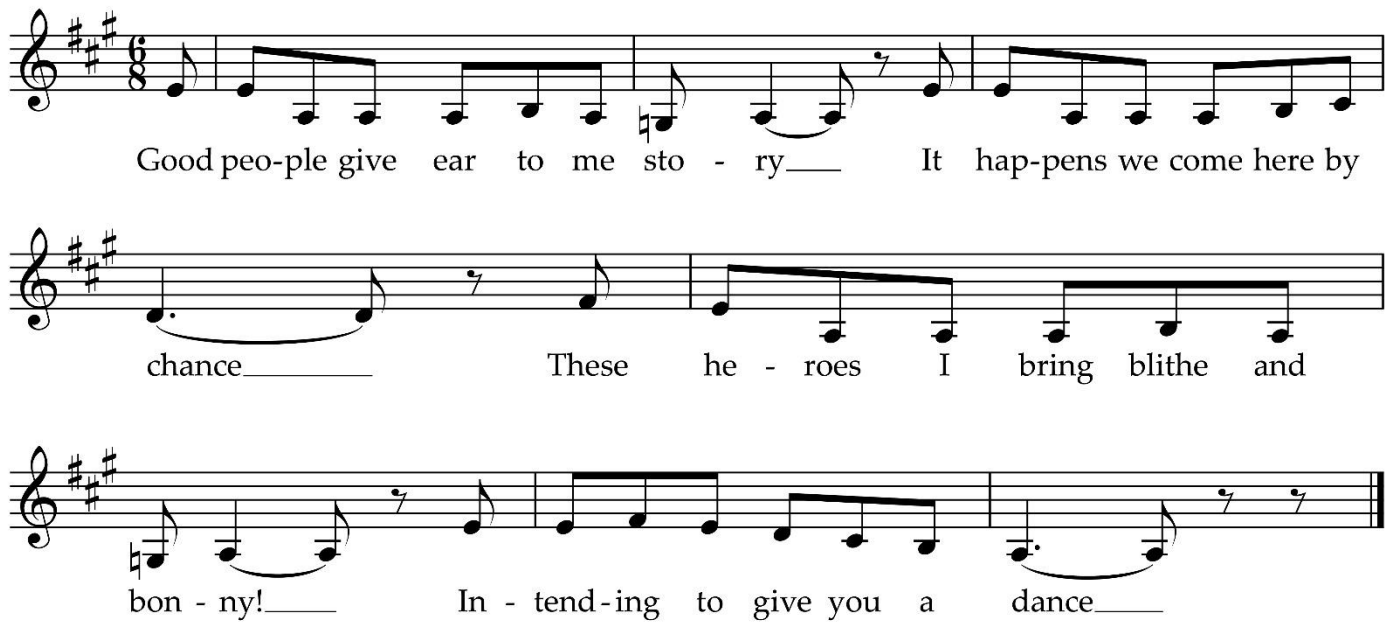
Glossary

Give ear: A colloquial way of saying “listen” or “pay attention”.

Blithe: An old-fashioned word for happy or carefree.

Bonny: A Northern English and Scottish word for good looking.

Score: Calling On Song



Good peo-ple give ear to me sto - ry___ It hap-pens we come here by
 chance___ These he - roes I bring blithe and
 bon - ny!___ In - tend-ing to give you a dance___

The Dance

Linking Swords

With everyone positioned in a circle, it is the time to give out whatever you are using as swords.

Ideally everyone needs their own sword and they should hold the end of it. They could hold it in their hand, under their arm, or another person might assist them in holding the end.

The other end of the sword is given to the person to their left or right to hold. Each person will now be joined to the two people on either side of them by a sword and a closed circle should have formed.



Folk Unlimited participants linking swords. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

The Figures

Figure 1 - Walk Around

For this figure everyone turns in one direction and moves around in a circle following the person in front of them. They will be connected to the person in front and the person behind by a sword, which is traditionally held over the shoulder, but can be held whichever way is comfortable for the dancers.

Chorus

- Try doing the above figure and then teaching people that when you call out “chorus”, everyone should turn into the centre of the circle to do the **stepping to the beat** activity they learned during the warm up (see page 24). Remember this can be adapted for your group – some people could stamp, others could vocalise, some could clap.
- It doesn't really matter how long you do the figure for and how long you do the chorus for, but a good length of time for each is probably 8 bars (8 counts of “1 2 3 4 5 6” or 16 repeats of “step shuffle”).
- Practice alternating between **Walk Around** and the **Chorus**, making sure that you leave enough time for people to turn into the centre.
- Once people have got the hang of moving around the circle, turning into the centre, doing the chorus, and turning out again, you can switch up the direction in which people move around.
- Make sure to give clear calls such as “change direction” or “this way” with accompanying gestures.

Figure 2 - Single Guard

Once people are comfortable with Walk Around, you can progress to **Single Guard**.

- In this figure, most of the circle stays moving in one direction (as in Walk Around), but one dancer exits the circle and turns to move around the outside of it in the opposite direction (see photo below).
- The dancer exiting the circle will keep hold of their sword but will let go of their neighbour's sword. Everyone else continues moving in a circle, perhaps saying hello to the individual dancer as they pass! It may be helpful for you to go with them, especially the first time they do this figure.
- Once the dancer reaches their original space in the circle, they slot back in and continue moving in the same direction as everyone else. Don't worry if they miss their place, they can just go around the whole circle again! Once back in the circle, everyone takes hold of both swords they were holding before so that the circle is once more complete.
- Traditionally in this figure dancers take turns to exit and walk around the outside of the circle. The figure is considered complete once everyone has taken a turn.



Folk Unlimited participants dancing the Single Guard Figure. Notice how the big circle is moving in one direction whilst one participant supported by Roary goes in the opposite direction around the outside of the circle. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Chorus

Once the dancers are confident with Single Guard, you can try calling out “**Chorus**” again, either between each dancer’s turn on the outside, or between every few dancers. Whatever you choose, make sure again that you’re leaving everyone enough time to turn into the middle for the chorus, and also to turn out when it’s their turn to move around the outside.

Figure 3 - Walk the Dog

If your dancers enjoy Single Guard and have got to the point that they want more of a challenge, then you can build on that figure to teach them **Walk the Dog**.

- This figure has very much the same structure, except that instead of just one dancer exiting the circle to go around it in the opposite direction, two dancers who are positioned next to each other go. It is called ‘Walk the Dog’ because the first person to leave the circle is the ‘owner’ and the second person is the ‘dog’ being walked!
- When the two dancers let go of the swords either side of them to leave the circle together, they should keep hold of the sword between them, as this is the ‘lead’. Depending on the age of participants and the rapport you have with them, you can potentially encourage them to have fun with this move by, for example, making dog noises when they are being the dog.
- Once both owner and dog have returned to the circle, the person who was being the dog has a turn at being the owner, leading the next person in the circle out behind them as the new dog, and so on until you have once more got around the whole circle. You may have to pay particular attention to ensure that the dancers are letting go and taking hold of the correct swords when they exit and re-join the circle.

Chorus

As with the previous moves, try mixing up ‘**Walk the Dog**’ with the ‘**Chorus**’, leaving plenty of time for turning out and in.

End of the Dance

When you want to end the rapper dance, it is fun to have a defined finishing move. A good option for this is a 'clash'.

For this, everyone lets go of one of the swords they are holding so that each person has just one sword. Then everyone moves forward into the centre of the circle, raises their sword and clashes it against all the other swords in the centre. To get the timing right on the clash it may be helpful to count down for the dancers: "3, 2, 1, clash!"

This is likely to be more successful if using something that is rigid for the swords, such as pool noodles. If using ribbon sticks or scarves, dancers can instead wave their ribbon or scarf high in the air in the middle of the circle.

Each rapper side likes to make their dances unique so if you can think of different, creative endings then this is great too!

Dance Structure

All parts of the dance are optional, but the way in which the figures have been described above is designed so that each figure builds upon the last. The overall structure of the dance, if you wish to do the whole thing, is therefore as follows:

A	Be positioned in a circle and sing the Calling On song
B	Link up swords
C	Music starts. Audio files can be found here .
D	Figure 1 - Walk Around
E	Chorus
F	Repeat D and E as many times as you wish
G	Figure 2 - Single Guard
H	Chorus
I	Repeat G and H as many times as you wish
J	Figure 3 - Walk the Dog
K	Chorus
L	Repeat J and K as many times as you wish
M	Clash and music ends

All there is to do after that is congratulate yourselves on a dance well danced!

Contributors

Emmie Ward is the Lead Tutor for EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. Emmie is a musician, SEN teacher and multi-sensory storyteller specialising in heritage and folk arts. She is trained in using Sounds of Intent (Roehampton University) and has many years' experience of working in colleges, schools and other SEN education settings. Emmie is the main author of this resource.

Roary Neat is the current Inclusive Folk trainee music leader as well as a folk singer-songwriter who has always been interested in championing inclusivity in the folk world. As an autistic and non-binary queer person, they take pride in altering traditional folk songs and writing new ones which explore the narratives of minority groups often ignored by mainstream media. Roary is also a keen rapper sword dancer and wrote the rapper section of this resource.

Nicholas Goode is a regular tutor for EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. He has been a professional musician for over twenty years. He holds a PGCE in SEN/Music from the University of Roehampton, London, and has taught and led workshops across all ages, from early years to adults, and worked with students with a wide range of complex needs. In addition to his work as a musician and educator, Nick works extensively in theatre as a composer/arranger and actor.



Emmie Ward, Nick Goode and Roary Neat. Photo by Roswitha Chesher.

Additional Material

We hope you enjoy using the songs and dances in this resource. There are many more useful free educational resources in the EFDSS Resource Bank. Below are a few suggestions which relate to inclusive learning and folk dance.

Inclusive Learning

Further SEN/D Resources

A Song and a Dance is a great resource with three more folk songs that can be danced to: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - A Song and a Dance: using folk arts in inclusive settings \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/2023/05/23/a-song-and-a-dance-using-folk-arts-in-inclusive-settings/)

Songs of May has a range of strategies to use with inclusive learning: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Songs of May: using folk arts in inclusive settings \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/2023/05/23/songs-of-may-using-folk-arts-in-inclusive-settings/)

Songs of Rural Life has Makaton signed songs: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Songs of Rural Life: accessibility and adaptability in SEN settings \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/2023/05/23/songs-of-rural-life-accessibility-and-adaptability-in-sen-settings/)

Songs of London Life has songs and activities related to the city: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Songs of London Life: Using folk arts in inclusive settings \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/2023/05/23/songs-of-london-life-using-folk-arts-in-inclusive-settings/)

The Wind and the Waves is all about sea shanties and sea themed songs and activities: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - The Wind and the Waves: using folk arts in inclusive settings \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/2023/05/23/the-wind-and-the-waves-using-folk-arts-in-inclusive-settings/)

Folk Dance

These resources contain more information about folk dance and include a variety of activities and opportunities to learn more about the history and practice of folk dance.

Morris Specific Resources

Make a Morris Dancers Hat: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Make a Morris Dancer's Hat \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/2023/05/23/make-a-morris-dancers-hat/)

Morris Hey: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Morris Hey! \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/2023/05/23/morris-hey/)

Morris Contemporary Dance: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Morris Contemporary Dance \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/morris-contemporary-dance)

Tradition and Composition: Unit of Work for Cotswold Morris Dance (aimed at GCSE or equivalent): [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Tradition and Composition: Unit of Work for Cotswold Morris Dance \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/tradition-and-composition-unit-of-work-for-cotswold-morris-dance)

Rapper Specific Resources

Swords and Stars: Rapper Sword Dance for Primary Schools: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Swords and Stars: Rapper Sword Dance for Primary Schools \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/swords-and-stars-rapper-sword-dance-for-primary-schools)

More General Folk Dance Resources

Beginners' Guide to English Folk Dance: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Beginners' Guide to English Folk Dance \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/beginners-guide-to-english-folk-dance)

Ceilidh Band Project: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Ceilidh Band Project \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/ceilidh-band-project)

I love English Folk Dance is a short film: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - I Love English Folk Dance \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/i-love-english-folk-dance)

Creative Folk Dance for Primary Schools: [English Folk Dance and Song Society - Creative Folk Dance for Primary Schools \(efdss.org\)](https://www.efdss.org/creative-folk-dance-for-primary-schools)

Resource Bank

Inspire learning with folk

Explore free online materials for using English traditional folk song, music, dance, drama and other arts in your teaching and leading.



Discover more learning resources

www.efdss.org/resourcebank