

Key Stage 3: The Place of Folk Dance in the Secondary Physical Education Curriculum

This document gives an indication of how English folk dance can help teachers enhance and deliver aspects of the National Curriculum for PE in England at Key Stage 3 (ages 11 - 14) and suggests a range of supporting resources created by folk artist-educators.

This document refers to English folk dance which comprises social folk dancing: (ceilidh / country / barn dancing); and performance dance: (morris dancing; clog / step dance; maypole dancing; sword dancing - rapper sword and longsword).

There are many similarities with folk dancing from the rest of Britain and around the world.

Key Stage 3 PE Subject Content	Links to folk dance	
	Social folk dance <i>ceilidh / country / barn dance</i>	Performance dance <i>morris dancing; clog / step dance; maypole dancing, sword dancing</i>
Use a range of tactics and strategies to overcome opponents in direct competition through team and individual games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social folk dance can be very flexible. Once the general structure of the dance has been comprehended, it lends itself well to being adapted. There is potential for pupils to adapt a dance in groups, using creativity to influence figures, positions and transitional moves learnt previously to develop their own version of the dance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As in any team game, dancers in a folk-dance group would work together to devise and deliver a strong routine, choosing appropriate, technical material (steps/figures) and rehearsing to performance standard. This may then be critiqued by their peers (other students in the dance class), bringing in the element of competition. [This applies to social folk dance too.]

<p>Develop their technique and improve their performance in other competitive sports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the basic figures, steps and structure of social folk dance has been acquired, technique can begin to be developed in certain areas such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> choreography and styling rhythm and timing posture and poise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All performance styles can be improved once the basic steps have been mastered. There is potential to focus more closely on the intricacies of the steps, for example, clog shuffles could progress from forwards and backwards to becoming 'rounded' shuffles which is more stylistic. Maximum effort can be applied to jumps, hops and travelling steps in all styles.
<p>Perform dances using advanced dance techniques within a range of dance styles and forms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning intricate moves such as a chain across (a more complicated way of changing places) and variations on moves learnt in KS1 and KS2 such as different techniques for swinging with your partner, different hand holds, smoother transitions between figures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance dance styles all have specific techniques. Applying general dance performance techniques such as stage presence, posture, accuracy and effort to these specific styles will progress the students to an advanced performance standard.

<p>Take part in outdoor and adventurous activities which present intellectual and physical challenges and be encouraged to work in a team, building on trust and developing skills to solve problems, either individually or as a group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social dancing is a very adaptable form of dance and can take place outdoors, it can work particularly well in the school playground. At this level, pupils may be able to teach dances to younger pupils or choreograph their own dances which requires problem solving and decision making as a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maypole, morris, clog and sword dances are traditionally performed outdoors often as part of processions, parades or festivals. • Providing opportunity for small group choreography enables a creative way for pupils to develop problem solving skills as well as encouraging teamwork and relationship building.
<p>Analyse their performances compared to previous ones and demonstrate improvement to achieve their personal best</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dancing could be filmed or performed at appropriate times (end of each lesson, once per month etc), this allows for evaluation to take place and improvements to be made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance styles usually comprise a series of steps which can be ordered/developed into a routine, these steps and routines can easily be developed into more challenging choreographed sequences as the dancers improve. • Keeping a record of the progression will allow pupils to reflect on their performance.
<p>Take part in competitive sports and activities outside school through community links or sports clubs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social folk dances (ceilidhs) take place across the country, some venues provide specific youth ceilidh opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are regional and national competitions for young folk dancers such as clog and rapper sword dance. • More generally there are platform events and festivals for young dancers across all genres, for example, U.Dance National Festival.

Learning Resources

EFDSS' award-winning Resource Bank provides freely downloadable materials for using English traditional folk song, music, dance, drama and other arts in your teaching and learning. The following resources support aspects of the secondary dance curriculum at Key Stage 3:

Beginners' Guide to English Folk Dance (video, accompanying PDF document) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/beginners-guides/37-english-folk-dance>

Ceilidh Band Project: five tunes & dances (audio files with tunes at practice speed and dance speed, PDF document containing instructions for five dances) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/5278-ceilidh-band-project>

Clog Workshop for Beginners (a video of a clog dance workshop for absolute beginners – suitable for everyone from 7 years) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/10604-dancepassion-clogs>

Contemporary Folk Dance Fusion (A resource for dance teachers and dance artists working with students studying dance in secondary school) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/3014-contemporary-folk-dance>

I Love English Folk Dance - youth folk dance showcase performance from U.Dance 2012 (10-minute film showing various folk dance styles) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/55-resources/learning-resources/3324-i-love-english-folk-dance>

Morris Contemporary Dance (a creative, contemporary approach to using morris within the secondary dance curriculum) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/40-resources/resources/morris-contemporary/2927-morris-contemporary-dance>

Morris Hey! (morris dancing for young people) <https://www.efdss.org/70-resources/resources/morris-hey/10501-morris-hey-intro>

Youth Ceilidh Dancing (short film) <https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources-listing/38-resources/resources/10140-youth-ceilidh-dancing>



At the English Folk Dance and Song Society, we champion the folk arts at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape.

Our award-winning Resource Bank contains over 100 resources – incorporating hundreds of audio files, videos and supporting documents, all free to download. They offer endless practical ways to use folk song, music, dance, drama and more in all sorts of community settings, as well as in formal education.

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