

In Collaboration
with Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay

A CHILDREN'S GUIDE TO BALLET

5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BALLET

- 1 Ballet dancers communicate what is happening in the story through pantomime, facial expressions and movements.
- 2 Ballet started in the Italian courts of the 15th century.
- 3 Women were not allowed to dance ballet in public until 1681!
- 4 Male ballet dancers have to be strong and athletic. Not only do they have to perform jumps and leaps, they also have to lift their partners high up!
- 5 Early 19th century ballets such as *Giselle* and *La Sylphide* were filled with characters like fairies and nymphs. To look more magical, dancers started dancing on the tips of their toes. This technique is now known as *pointe* work.

THE 5 BASIC POSITIONS OF BALLET

Every ballet dancer has to master these basic positions. Try these out!



1st Position

Heels touching, toes turned out. Make an oval with your arms and hold them out in front of you.

2nd Position

Feet apart, arms wide open.

3rd Position

Cross one foot in front of the other. Stretch one arm to the side and the other, in front of you.

4th Position

Put one foot in front of the other, with a space in between them. Raise one arm and curve it inwards. With the other arm, curve it in front of you.

5th Position

Put one foot in front of the other but closed up together. This time, raise both arms in a ballerina oval.

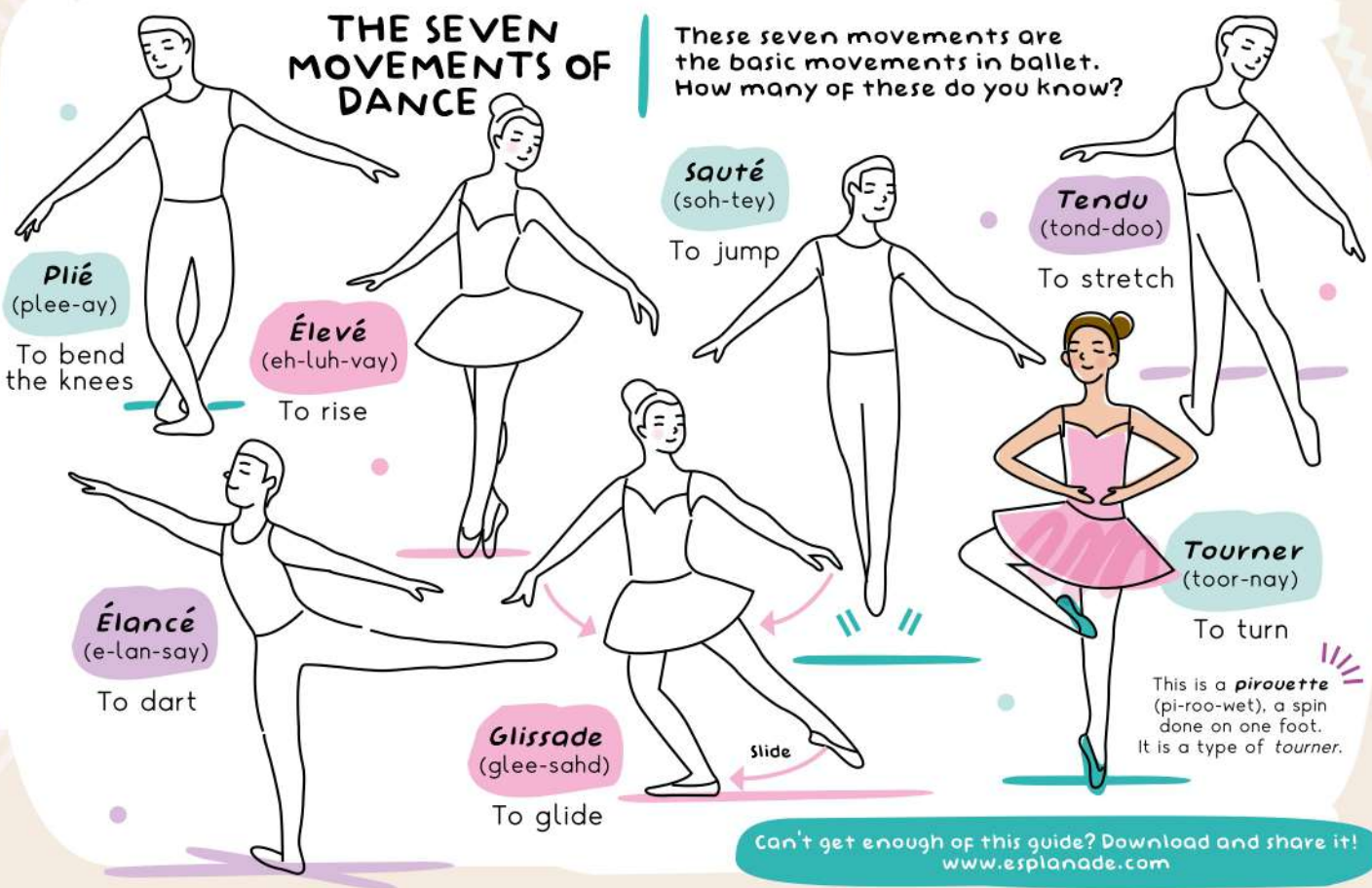
PANTOMIME POSES



Pantomime has been a part of ballet for a long time. They help us understand what the dancers are trying to say through their gestures. Try out these basic pantomime poses!

THE SEVEN MOVEMENTS OF DANCE

These seven movements are the basic movements in ballet. How many of these do you know?



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