

Joy of Dance Student Apprentice Program

Our Student Apprentice Program is a valuable learning experience for any Joy of Dance student looking to further their dance experience. It is offered by Joy of Dance to those students who show they want to take their knowledge further than what's offered in regular technique classes. It provides an opportunity for current dancers at our studio to apprentice alongside one of our experienced teachers and assist them in instructing their classes. It will also help them to improve upon their current level of technique.

As an assistant teacher, an apprentice's job to encourage, motivate and cultivate a love for dance for their students! Open communication between apprentices and teachers is necessary. Any questions or concerns from either party should be discussed as soon as possible.

Guidelines for Apprentices

- ↪ Apprentices must be currently registered at Joy of Dance, must have a minimum of 2 years dance training and be 12 years of age. Apprentices must commit to the program for a full year in order to complete it successfully.
- ↪ Apprentices will receive a discount \$5 off per class taught (no matter the length of the class) from monthly tuition. Discounts earned will be taken off of the following month's tuition. Credits earned in May and June will remain on accounts to be applied towards September tuition.
- ↪ Apprentices must well behaved, positive, kind role models to the younger students and their peers. As a result, any inappropriate behavior will result in immediate suspension or dismissal from the program.
- ↪ Participants are expected to be hard workers in their own technique classes as well as the classes they're apprenticing.
- ↪ Apprentices must wear the dress code required for the class(es) they teach.
- ↪ Full attendance is mandatory for the term and participants must let their teacher know in advance when they are unable to attend a class. If more than two unexcused absences occur, participant may be asked to leave the program. No more than 4 absences should be missed within a given dance year.
- ↪ Participants should arrive 5-10 minutes before class starts. Promptness is expected for all classes.
- ↪ Participants are expected to take direction from their teacher. This includes, but not limited to, leading classes, making corrections and reviewing choreography. Remember, you are also there to help your teachers and the students, so you should not stay silent the whole class! It's a delicate balance between taking direction and taking over the class. Always refer back to your teacher if you are unsure of your duties.
- ↪ If your teacher is out and there is a sub, please be respectful of his or her teaching style. It might be different than you are used to, but it good to mix things up sometimes. Some substitutes may want a lot of help from you while other may require very little. Your teacher will have given the substitute a detailed syllabus and you should look for guidance from the sub when help is needed.
- ↪ Lastly, apprentices should keep an eye on the class for any dancers who may be struggling with a step, or who doesn't seem to be engaged in the lesson. Feel free to go over and quietly work with them.

In the unfortunate event that a participant is unable to follow these guidelines, they will be released from the program. If the program is found to be a poor fit for a student, they may also leave the program voluntarily; however, they will not be able to return to the program in the same dance year and may harm their chances of acceptance in future years.

For the Dance Assistant

*Article credits to www.balletcurriculum.com

Assisting your dance teacher with younger classes is a wonderful way to learn about teaching dance. The extent of your responsibilities will depend upon your age and your maturity.

If your teacher has chosen you for an assistant, realize she is placing trust in you, and in your ability to be mature enough to handle the job. Trust her in return, trust her leadership, trust her advice. The two of you must work together as a team, but always with the teacher in charge, and you as the backup person.

1. Demonstrating

Become acquainted with the classwork and the dances the class is learning. Memorize all of it as soon as you can. You will need to get a feel for how your teacher relates to the class, and how she guides them through the dance work.

You must be ready to demonstrate any of the work to the class as needed. The teacher presents the activity or exercise, then lets you know whether she wants you to do it as a demonstrator in front of the class. To do this well, you must learn the work. Some will be the same each week, but if a new item is presented, you must learn it immediately; be a “quick study.”

Whether you face the students, or demonstrate with your back to them will depend on your teacher’s method. She may have you do it differently at different times. When you face the class, mirror them, and start with the opposite foot.

2. Giving Individual Help

If you see a student having trouble with a movement, and you are free to do so, give them some help, quietly, gently, and with a friendly and positive attitude. Give some praise if they respond correctly.

You can help the class as needed in lining up, forming circles, being ready to start. Sometimes your teacher may want you to take one or two students aside at the back for special help.

Avoid openly criticizing a student. Instead, ask them individually, and quietly if they’d like some help with that step. Try not to use the words “Don’t” and “NO...”. We want to create a positive environment and we ask you to contribute to this.

3. Helping to Manage the Class

Learn the students’ names as soon as you can. Your teacher might give you instructions on helping them find the right place to dance, and she might tell you if certain students need to dance apart from each other. Dancers of all ages have personality and behavioral differences. Your teacher may want you to help guide their behavior, to help them learn what is appropriate for dance class. It is also important to remember what age group you are teaching and how your assistance is different from other age groups. For younger classes, try to act like their age and make each encounter opportunity magical! For older classes, remember what it was like being that age and what you benefited from in dance class.

4. Care of the Dancers

As an assistant, you now share some of the responsibility for keeping the students safe from injury, and for encouraging happy, friendly feelings within the class. Be positive in helping them to keep the rules of safety and courtesy. Be on the watch for any behavior that might lead to injury, or to damaging property.

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5. Music and Props

Sometimes, your teacher might want you to run the music, so she can concentrate more on the students. Learn how to work the equipment, and how to quickly find the music your teacher uses.

Come a few minutes early and help your teacher get equipment and props ready. During class help to make sure the props used in the class are used correctly, and passed out and gathered up with minimum disruption.

6. Your Behavior

Come dressed as if you were a teacher. You are a role model for the students. As an assistant, the students will look up to you, and copy you in how you dress, how you dance, and in how you treat people.

Be a support to your teacher, stand by her and show respect for her and her studio rules. Never say anything negative about her, and never correct her openly in front of students. If you feel she needs a reminder during class, go to her and whisper it very quietly, and only if this item cannot wait until after class. Use good judgment.

When talking to parents, always be positive, encouraging, and supportive of your teacher. If you cannot answer a parent's question, promise to get the answer from the teacher when she is available.

In Conclusion

Being a dance teacher's assistant is a real job requiring more maturity and dependability than just being a student. Take your job seriously. Be there when you are supposed to be; be there when you are needed. If, for any reason, you need to be late, or absent, let your teacher know just as soon as you can.

May you enjoy your job as a dance teacher's assistant! May you enjoy working with your teacher, and sharing a part of her responsibility. Most of all, may you share her enjoyment in seeing the progress made by the students.

I have read all of the information above and agree to abide by these guidelines.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____