

harlem is... DANCE ACTIVITIES

Link to site page: <https://www.harlem-is.org/dance>

Dance Activity #1: Eclectic Histories, Robust Biographies

Use these prompts as a pre-reading game or post-reading quiz for the four featured dance biographies:

- A member of the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, which modern dancer counted one of the other women featured in this group as one of her teachers, and was a bonafide Broadway star?
- Born in Guadeloupe, which dancer studied dance and culture from countries throughout the African Diaspora and travelled around the globe with her students from the Restoration Dance Theater School in Brooklyn?
- Which dancer travelled to Nigeria, specializes in West African and African-American dance, said "Movement is the universal language," and founded the Forces of Nature Dance Theatre company?
- Which dancer and educator is "dedicated to the children of Harlem" and started her Dance Studio in Harlem in the landmark Hotel Theresa on 125th Street and 7th Avenue where she has taught dance to over 40,000 young people over the past 50 years?.

Dance Activity #2: Student Tributes

The youth that conducted the oral history interviews with Marie Brooks, Ruth Williams, and Dele Husbands wrote a series of poetic tributes to her after learning about their life stories and their commitment to dance, culture, and education. Read the student tributes at the bottom of each page to learn how these women touched young people's hearts and minds. Is there a teacher who has had a great impact on your personal or academic growth? Write a tribute letter or poem in honor of your favorite teacher. For inspiration, read the tribute poem "Harlem is a Dance Divine" written by Abdel Salaam.

Dance Activity #3: Art Inspired by Dance

Dynamic line drawings by the artist Ademola Olugebefola are featured in this exhibit. Look at the gallery of six drawings and notice the straight lines, circles, arcs, and waves that capture the spirit of movement that is dance. Compose your own dance drawings by inviting a classmate, teacher or family member to dance for you while you capture their expression in a line on the page. Be as fast and free with the movement of your pencil as the dancer is their body. Have fun.

Dance Activity #4: Dance on Film/Video

View the recently rediscovered film, **INSEPARABLE**, choreographed by Andy Torres and performed by harlem is...Dance legend Loretta Abbott and John Parks. This video documents a fluid form of modern dance popularized by choreographers Katherine Dunham and Alvin Ailey. Loretta Abbott performed with some of the most celebrated dancers and choreographers in New York City. You can learn more about each of their distinctive styles and the rich history of black dance from films and videos online and in the archives of institutions like The New York Public Library of the Performing Arts and the Brooklyn Academy of Music archives. Moving from the past to the future of dance, how have music videos and social media promoted black dance and choreography around the world? Who are your favorite contemporary dancers? What are the popular dance moves of today?

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