

Teacher's Name:

Studio:

Season:



Teacher's Self-Feedback Form

The F-Words by CanChild focus on six key areas of child development - Fun, Friends, Family, Fitness, Function, and Future. As an instructor with the Dance Ability Movement, you play a critical role in supporting your dancers' growth throughout their dance classes and beyond!

Please use this tool to document how you are applying the F-words within your classes, identify next steps for yourself, ideas for future classes, and/or questions/feedback from OTs, volunteers, parents, etc. You can refer to the F-Words Teacher Checklist on pages 3-6 of this document for details.

Learn more about the F-words by reading the original F-words publication [Rosenbaum, P., & Gorter, J. W. \(2012\). The 'F-words' in childhood disability: I swear this is how we should think!. Child: care, health and development , 38 \(4\), 457-463.](#) or visit the F-words Knowledge Hub at: www.canchild.ca/f-words

Fun: The driving force of my class! I create a space that feels comfortable for dancers to be able to enjoy themselves and share ideas within the group. Dancers look forward to dance class, and leave feeling good (and so do!).

Friendship: It is important that everyone feels included and has the chance to make friends with their peers. I help to facilitate meeting new people, communication & sharing ideas, and building relationships between the dancers. I model positive language and interactions among the group.

Family: I create positive relationships with dancers' family members and take time to connect with them and learn from them. I foster a welcoming space for parents, include them in my decision-making, share successes, ask for feedback, and recognize the value they bring to our classes.

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Fitness: I provide opportunities for the 'just-right' challenge for dancers to improve their fitness skills. My lesson plans are focused on movement activities that will keep dancers engaged and motivated. I support dancers' physical activity in a way that is safe for their needs and abilities.

Function: I recognize the unique strengths of each dancer and volunteer, and incorporate this into my lesson planning. I facilitate others in building their capacity and performance competence by engaging in class activities, exploring movement and challenging themselves, which validates their abilities and strengthens their sense of belonging as an expert member of the dance community. I invite others to use their strengths to contribute to classes in new ways, and use creativity to design classes that are unique to the abilities and interests of the group.

Future: I help our dancers to shape their identity as dancers, to promote their self-esteem and self-confidence which will help them succeed in their future endeavours. I seek insight into their future aspirations, and encourage new possibilities for them within dance and beyond.

Teacher F-Words Checklist

Below are actionable items that you can do as a teacher to implement the F-words within your dance classes

Fun

- Set the tone of the class to be a fun environment!
- Themed classes (i.e., Halloween, Christmas, Superhero day) or use of costumes
- Including freeze dance/freestyle/free time into class plan for dancers to give them the opportunity to be the leader and explore their own movement
- Include fun activities/songs that are enjoyed by dancers (i.e., Hey baby, hip hop warm up song, flower petals, parachute, hula-hoops, sing-along songs, etc.) to facilitate participation and encourage creative movement
- Teachers & volunteers having high energy, enthusiasm, having fun and being creative to set the tone of the class
- Embody positive body language (i.e., smiling, open posture, high fives, encouragement, laughing, etc.)
- Observe dancers and volunteers having fun with friends, volunteers, teachers or by themselves - take note of what they enjoy and how they express joy!

Friends

- Set group norms/ class rules/guidelines/expectations at beginning of season
- Introductions in opening circle
 - Ex: Drum Circle Activity - helps dancers in the class introduce themselves to each other in a fun way and promotes a feeling of acceptance and belonging as the whole group chants each dancer's name to the rhythm of a drum they beat and drumming their feet against the floor)
- Use name tags for the first couple of weeks
- Observing and supporting interactions amongst dancers (greeting each other, waving, high fives, showing encouragement and supporting each other as well as demonstrating inclusivity)
- Providing support to provide a model for socialization and dancing (turn taking, initiating conversations and learning about each other)
- Peer learning (modeling, social learning, healthy competition to motivate each other)
- Provide networking opportunities with other families to support friendships and supportive dance studio community
- Keep records of dancers' attendance (Dance Studio Pro link).

Family

- Communication with family re:
 - Upcoming events, reminders, recital info, updates
 - Child's progress, participation, areas of strength and/or areas for growth, parents participation and involvement with supporting child

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- Follow ups, incident debriefs, safety plans
- Guest coming in (i.e., Special Olympics ambassador)
- Consult with families by asking for their input, feedback, and if they have suggestions/recommendations on other strategies they may have to further improve child's participation in dance class
- Promote open door policy for parent participation during classes, inviting families as valued team contributors to help in facilitating each dancer's participation

Fitness

- Work towards achieving the just- right challenge where dancers feel as though they are being challenged and are able to succeed
- Have a good warm up and stretch to start class
- Utilize action songs
- Incorporate consistent movements through action songs
- Provide opportunity to build core strength, balance, coordination, flexibility, gross and fine motor skills and endurance through dance
- Optimize class time and engage dancers in movement as much as possible during the class using the elements of dance (keep them active and moving, minimize transition time and/or waiting time to travel across the floor)
 - strategy: have volunteers engage dancers in quiet games/ movement activity while teacher is occupied with something else so that they are still moving

Function

**Communicate with your OT to learn more about your dancers' specific needs and abilities, and their recommended strategies in providing support*

Dancers' Functioning

- Ensuring a just-right challenge (activities that are challenging but still achievable)
 - Have consistent moves/songs that are achievable
 - Mix in new move /songs to continue to challenge dancer
- Use of action songs to promote movement
- Use of props to support movement and placement (i.e., cones, spot markers, feathers, drums, stop signs on doors, etc.)
- Provide education around body parts (how to use them in isolation, unison, etc.)
- Observe and support each dancer's functioning (i.e, use of body, if dancer is favouring one side over the other, etc.)
- Use proper positioning and handling techniques (i.e., transfers, mobility, mobility equipment/devices, how to safely get up from the floor, assisted walking/ movement , etc.)
- Teach quality of movement (soft, sharp, etc.) & how to match energy to quality of movement
- Teaching steps at a slower pace than speed it up as dancers pick up on steps, using repetition, exaggerating movements, modeling, cueing, breaking down movements

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(footwork, then arms, then add together), clapping out beat, using physical guidance (hand over hand), tactile cues, etc.

- Utilize energy conservation strategies (i.e., asking/taking breaks, doing a variety of high energy and more relaxed activities, etc.)
- Providing opportunity for dancers to showcase their ability to recall steps from previous weeks
- Use improvisation/freestyle as a way to explore movement
- Strategies to adapt lower extremity (leg) movements for dancers in wheelchair (W/C) and/or strategies to maneuver W/C to optimize engagement with dancer

Class/Group Functioning

- Create an accessible physical space and utilize inclusive language
 - Ensure consistent environment and structure of class
- Use of clear and simple instructions during class (i.e., 'first...then', redirection, etc.)
- Use eye contact and address dancers by name
- Use of visual aids (timer or clock, visual schedule, visual cues, limit distractions)
- Structure transitions (countdowns, use of transition toys, minimized time waiting for next activity) and involve dancers in transitions (set up, "helping jobs") to ease transition
- Structure class with preferred activities at the end so dancers have something to look forward to
- Implement helper roles for dancers to take on leadership role
- Integrate sensory regulation props and activities into the class schedule (petals, butterfly-cocoon activity) to enable dancers with sensory processing needs to achieve their full potential and maximize their ability to participate by providing activities that can reduce or provide greater sensory stimulation
- Educate volunteers on:
 - How to support dancers (i.e., breaking down steps, getting down to eye level, simple instruction, etc.)
 - Transition (i.e., Using first..then), keeping their buddies engaged, quick and organized transitions
 - How to redirect/re-engage dancer (i.e.,: clear, direct instructions, holding hands)
 - Support volunteers in observing and grading dancer's functioning to help them identify where they should put their focus (i.e., technique, ROM, paying attention, fitness (keeping them moving), having fun, socialization, building friendships, etc.

Future

- Communication amongst staff, studio, OT, parents, dancers, volunteers re:
 - Check in, strategy review, progress, recital communication, safety plans, information for upcoming class/weeks/seasons, debriefs
- Class progressions & next steps - have a plan for how you will continue to build skills
- Building dancers' confidence in their abilities and improving their sense of self-efficacy by emphasizing a strengths-based approach
- Facilitate dancers' participation each class to help build capacity in dance in self and with others
- Consider future roles for dancers within The Dance Ability Movement (ie. new class styles, volunteering, leadership in classes).

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References

Rosenbaum, P., & Gorter, J. W. (2012). The 'F-words' in childhood disability: I swear this is how we should think!. *Child: care, health and development*, 38(4), 457-463.

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