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Greetings everyone. I'm Dr. DeBelle Williams and the Professional Development Director for Engage in Creative Minds. We are a nonprofit in Charleston where we aim to bring arts integrated schools to schools all over South Carolina. Today we have a wonderful presentation entitled Dance Matters with one of our very own esteemed teaching artists, instructors, Marielle Richardson. Today you're going to learn about the cake walk.

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So stay tuned as we hear from Marielle. Hi. My name is Mariel Richardson, and today I'm going to be talking to you about the cakewalk. Now, it's okay if you don't recognize that social dance form because it was actually popular a little over 200 years ago. Like most things in our country, dance was inspired and influenced by traditions that were brought over by immigrants pioneers and slaves.

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When Africans were brought over to the U.S. through the slave trade, they brought with them their traditions, through dance and through drumming. So you guys are pretty used to celebrating big moments in your life, like birthdays, weddings, graduations, other big events. You're used to celebrating those things with dance, music, food, all the good stuff, right? Well, it's the exact same thing.

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Africans were used to celebrating big, momentous occasions in one's life, through dance and through drumming. It's very communicative, keeps everybody together. And social dance at this time, every day is continuing to grow and change. So let's talk a little bit more about the cake walk specifically. This dance form started as a dance performed on plantations by slaves and was popular through the early 1900s.

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This dance mocked the manners and dances of the whites. Plantation owners would judge the dance and the winner would take the cake. The cake walk became popular in minstrel shows where whites performed in blackface using coal, and this reinforced the negative stereotypes which African Americans fought to change over time. When the Cake Walk was a popular dance form, South Carolina was adapting to conditions brought about by the end of slavery and the Civil War.

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Many white South Carolinians would not accept the new government. They used intimidation and violence, including the KKK, also known as the Klu Klux Klan, to scare and or kill black leaders. Jim Crow laws mandated racial segregation and blacks and whites could not attend school together, marry or sit together in public spaces. These inequities persisted until the 1954 Board versus Brown decision, which declared that segregated schools were unconstitutional.

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Later, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1965 Voting Rights Act further prohibited discrimination. So with all that being said, let's go ahead and learn a little bit of the cakewalk itself. So as we have discussed, this is a dance form from a little over 200 years ago. So it might look a little bit different to you guys now.

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But don't worry, we're going to dance to a traditional song that the cakewalk was used. And then we're going to dance to a song that you might be familiar with from today. So we're going to start off standing nice and tall. You're going to hold your arms out in front of you just like this, and you're going to stand nice and tall.

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You're going to hop and kick your feet out in front of you four times. So we're going to hop and kick our right foot when we jump and change to jump and change. Three, jump and change four, you're going to do the same thing kicking back behind you. Kick your right foot back. Hop and change. Hop and change.

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Hop and change. So forward to the front and four to the back. We're going to do the same thing one more time. Kick front and two and three and four to the back. Five and six and seven and eight. Okay, so eight total going around front and back. Eight again, front and back. After that, we're going to do what's called a cross ball change.

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I'm going to take my right foot. I'm going to cross over my left. And then I'm going to put my weight on that foot. Take my left foot out to the side. Step and step my right foot one more time. Now my weight is off my left foot. I'm going to use this one to do the same thing on the other side.

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Cross left. Step out with the right. Step out with the left. I'm going to repeat that again on each side. Right. Ball change. Cross left. Ball change. So total will do that four times up to speed. It will look like this. Cross ball change. Cross ball change. Cross ball change. Cross ball change. So we had our four kicks forward for kicks back four kicks forward four kicks back for cross ball changes, alternating right and left, right and left.

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After that, we're going to do cross kick. So we're going to twist our hips to the side, kick across our body with our right foot, do the same thing the other way. Step, twist and kick. Step. Twist and kick. Step. Twist and kick. So four of those as well. We have a jump kicks right back. Our front kicks front back.

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We've got our crossbar changes. Right, left, right, left. We've got our twist kicks. Right, left, right, left. After that, you're going to put your feet firmly on the floor and you're going to dust your left leg with your right hand. Dust your right leg with your left hand just left arm with your right, right arm with your left.

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You're going to put an invisible jacket on. You're going to twist your body to the side, give a big kick. You're going to walk backwards, popping your feet as you move behind you. Okay. So that dusting section looks just like this. Brush. Brush, brush, brush jacket. Turn and kick. Back, back, back, back. Okay, so let's try the whole thing together.

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Remember, we start off with our jump kicks and rewarding our torso and our arms upright just like this. Ready? We go. One, two, three, four. Back. Six, seven, eight. Repeat. Two, three, four, back. Six, seven, eight. We step crossbar change. Cross ball change. Cross ball change. Cross ball change. Twisting. Kick twisting. Kick twisting. Kick twisting, kick. We dest.

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Left leg. Right leg, left arm. Right arm. Jacket. Turn, kick. Walk. Back, back, back, back. And as you're walking back, kind of looks a little bit like a moon walk, but we're actually going to go ahead and pop our heels and set our weight in our back foot. Pop, pop, pop, pop. As we're traveling backwards. Okay, so let's give that some try with music.

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Ready? Five, six, five, six. Ready, go. We kick and back and front and back. Cross watching press. Cross, cross, cross, twist, kick, dust up. Dust, dust, dust, dust jacket kick back, back, back. That was very good. How'd that go? Well, we're actually going to try that again. This time. We're going to try it to a more popular song that you guys might be familiar with today from.

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Right. So we've got our rhythm with you. We've got our be in the fast lane. We have big dreams. And remember, we start with our arms up and stretch out them. Are we're going to jump kick four times to the front. Ready? Five, six, seven. Go, kick. It's been too long. That's long ago. Again, front and back to it.

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Cross change. Right, left, right, left. Kick out. Out, out, out. Now. Just out. Out, out, out. Over. Twist, kick. Back, around, around. Yeah. You can add your own style and your own flare to it as you do it so it makes it your own. We can take dances that have been inspired all the way from the early, early, early times in the US.

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And we can bring them forward to today and we can add a little twist, a little flare and a little amp to it. All right. Hope you had fun learning a little bit about the cakewalk today and have a great day. Bye. Wow. We just learned all about a phenomenal dance entitled The Cakewalk. Stay tuned as we continue with this series that matters.

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As we hear from Mario In Session two.