Computing "Off Screen" Activity

Dance Moves

Overview – In this activity, children will make up a dance routine and create the instructions for a partner to follow.

Concepts: Algorithms Age group: 4 – 11

Materials you will need: Printable dance cards included but you could draw/paint your own dance cards or use a toy figure to pose and photograph.
Music of your choice

What will your child/children learn?

Algorithms – An algorithm is a precise sequence of instructions, or set of rules, for performing a task.

You will also need to create, persevere, collaborate and tinker.

Getting started

1) Explain to your child/children that they are going to be dance instructors and they are going to make up a dance routine for others in the family to follow.

2) Have some fun by establishing some dance moves to add to your dance routine. Your dance moves could be very simple (e.g. jump, spin, wave arms), or more complex (e.g. floss, dab).

3) Ensure that you all know what each dance move is and that you have a card, picture, painting or action figure to represent that dance move. Create multiple copies of each card so that you can have repeated moves.

4) Explain: An algorithm is a sequence of instructions to get something done.

Their turn

1) Place a sequence of 5 or 6 move cards and ask your child/children to follow the instructions to complete the dance routine. Ask what happens if you swap two cards around? Explain that changing the order of the cards will change the sequence of the routine.

2) Ask your child/children to make their own dance routine. Have they found some funky music to go with it? Encourage your child/children to test their different algorithms by following the routine themselves.

3) Once they have created their Dance Moves sequence, get them to invite family members to have a go. Have fun with your dance routine by using video messaging with distant family.

Time to talk

1) Look at successful examples of your child's/children's dance routines. 2) Use the key vocabulary for this activity: algorithm, sequence, repeat. 3) Explain that the instructions they have made are algorithms – a precise sequence of instructions for performing a task.

More ideas

• Keep dance routines short and simple to start with, for example using only 3 or 4 dance cards. Children may need support creating their own routine.

• Encourage children to create longer dance routines for a whole piece of music. Can they introduce a repeat card? Can they create their own dance outfits or videos?