

Name/Title: Michael Jackson's Beat It Dance (September 2010)

Purpose of Event: The students will be able to correctly perform the 32 count Beat It line dance, staying with the music, and be able to list facts about the 1980's. This dance would make an excellent warm-up activity!

Suggested Grade Level: 4-12

Materials Needed: Music player

Recommended music: Michael Jackson's Beat It song

Beginning dance formation: Students are randomly spaced on the gym floor.

Description of Idea

Introductory Ideas:

Life in the 1980's: Average salary was \$15,757; a BMW cost \$12,000 and a Mercedes 280E was \$14,800; AIDS took the lives of many talented citizens and spread among the population; Sandra Day O'Connor became the first woman on the US Supreme Court; the space shuttle Challenger exploded 74 seconds after liftoff and killed all seven astronauts aboard, including school teacher Christa McAuliffe; Cabbage Patch dolls and Rubik Cubes were popular toys; Beat It won the 1983 Grammy Award for Best Record of the Year and Best Rock Vocal Performance; the lyrics to Beat It are about life on the streets.

<http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decade80.html>

Dance Steps:

Counts 1-8 - Walk forward RLR, raise the L knee (1-4)

Walk forward LRL, raise the R knee and pivot 1/2 turn to the L (5-8)

Counts 1-8 Place feet apart and sway hips R for 2 counts, L for 2 counts, and RLRL for 1 count each

Counts 1-8 - Grapevine R (1-4) and Grapevine L (5-8)

Counts 1-8 - Walk backwards RLRL (1-4) and jump out-in-out-in. (5-8)

Repeat the dance to a new wall.

Variations:

If you are teaching younger children, you can take the turn out of the first 8 counts and continue to face the same wall for the entire dance.

If you are teaching middle school or high school students, a second turn can be added. The students will do the initial 1/2 turn during the first 8 counts and the second turn comes during the grapevines. Simply add a 1/2 turn to the L at the end of the second (L) grapevine. The students are now facing the wall that was originally to their R. You can even ask them to figure out the total number of degrees that they turned: 270!

Submitted by **Brenda Goodwin** who teaches at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 11/6/2018.**

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