

**Fosse Technique/Choreo**  
**Day II**  
***Rebecca East***

**Description:** This lesson is meant for dance students and could be implemented in a Level I or II musical theatre or dance class. These students will have previous knowledge of eras and styles of American musical theatre up to the 1970s. This lesson is a part of a three day series in a unit on musical theatre history in which students will learn the historical context of the Fosse movement and apply knowledge to sing and dance to a section of “All That Jazz” from the musical *Chicago*. This is embedded in a six week unit.

**Subject Matter:** Bob Fosse, *Chicago* the musical, dance technique, endurance/stamina for performers, ensemble performance

**Rationale:** This lesson seeks to apply the knowledge they have about productions, styles of performance, and especially Fosse dance techniques utilized on American stages in the 1970s. Once techniques have been taught the students will be able to dance alongside their peers in a lower stakes setting then putting them in front of an audience.

**Materials Needed:** iphone / apple watch to play and pause the music, speakers, iphone adapter, jazz shoes, comfortable clothing, and feather boas

**Objectives:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Identify what the main characteristics of Bob Fosse’s style are
- Apply Fosse techniques in their own bodies
- Remain in time with “All That Jazz” and execute choreography that is taught during the lesson

**TEKS Addressed:**

1.A. - Foundations: create theatrical, dance, and vocal music preparation and warm-up techniques.

1.G. - Foundations: collaborate effectively with all artistic partners in a musical theatre production

1.H. - Foundations: employ the language of musical theatre such as stage terminology, elements of musical theatre, or theatrical conventions.

2.A. - Creative Expression, performance: apply appropriate safety measures in vocalization, dance movement, and theatrical movement.

2.B. - Creative Expression, performance: appraise creativity as it relates to self and ensemble in musical theatre.

4.D. - Historical and cultural relevance: defend musical theatre as a reflection of life in particular times, places, and cultures

**21<sup>ST</sup> Century Skills:**

**Communication**

**Collaboration**

**Creativity**

**Critical Thinking**

## **Lesson**

**Preset:** Open space, room to move. Students should dress out or be wearing clothes they can move around in.

### **Activities and Timeframe: 45 Minutes**

**Warm-Up:** Check in by using a sound and gesture to represent how we feel that day. **(3 minutes)**

**Stretch:** Warm-up our bodies **(5 minutes)**

- Lead the students in a full body stretch as the song “Money” from *Cabaret* and “I Hope I Get It” from *A Chorus Line* plays in the background.

**Transition:** Re-cap who Bob Fosse was and write out the main characteristics of Fosse dance (rounded shoulders, turned in knees, jazz hands, tense muscles, snapping, confidence, and being deliberate with movement) on the board. **(3 minutes)**

**Transition:** Have students stand up in 2 or 3 lines in windows with enough room to move in their own space. Stand in front of class with back to the class. **(1 minute)**

**Embodying Fosse:** Go through the list of Fosse techniques and get them in everyone’s body. **(5 minutes)**

- Rounded shoulders
- Turned in knees
- Jazz hands
- Tensed muscles when moving
- Snaps
- Confidence
- Every movement done must be deliberate and purposeful

Go around the lines of students and help shape their embodiments into proper form, offer feedback and be open to questions asked.

**Transition:** Circle back up as a group, shake it out, and listen to the first minute of “All That Jazz” a couple of times. **(4 minutes)**

**“All That Jazz” Choreography:** Learn choreography to the first minute of “All That Jazz” ( 20 minutes)

- I will go through pre-choreographed material move by move and continue to build at a necessary pace that aligns with the class’ ability.
  - Demonstrate a move, have them practice it, then do it all together. Then move on to the next step.
  - After executing a series of moves we will run that small chunk with the music before moving on to the next series of moves.

Once everyone knows the choreography we will run it as a class as I continue being at the front of the class as a guide. After the third run I will stand at the back of the class and see what they can remember without me and so I can see who needs clarification on particular moves. All of the choreography will be easy to execute. Once the ensemble has the dance down I will record the class doing the dance and play it back for them to see.

**Transition:** Water break (2 minute)

**Reflection:** Popcorn session of response about the class. (4 minutes)

- How did it make your body feel to embody Fosse techniques?
- What techniques look most compelling when executed by an ensemble?
- How can these signature techniques be used to build a character?

**Contingencies:**

Time remaining: If they learn the dance super fast I will let them polish the routine a few extra times before filming. If there is still time remaining then I will have them do a cool down stretch to another song from *Cabaret*.

Short on time: If the students are taking a long time to grasp the choreography then I will adapt the choreography to make them sway their hips and do waving hands for the rest of the 1-minute chunk of music.