

#### Activity: Bare Feet

Themes: Dance Knowledge, Health and Wellbeing

Elements of dance: body

1. As a class, view *Dance Academy* episode 15, *My Life En Pointe*, where Petra Hoffman arrives at the Academy on exchange from the Berlin Ballet School. Homesick, she adopts a lost dog and attempts to conceal him in the boarding house. Kat has been ditching class to spend time with her new boyfriend and her punishment is to teach ballet to a class of underprivileged children. Tara ends up kissing Christian behind Ethan's back, leaving her feeling guilty and confused. In the introduction, Petra says: *"You can tell everything about someone by their feet; how they stand in the world, how grounded they are and how they dance."*
2. Ask students if any have ever experienced discomfort with their feet, what this felt like and what procedures they had to undertake to remedy the problem. Discuss with students that not all dancers' feet are bloodied by working in pointe shoes. Some feet are less prone to blistering. Why would that be? (Better fitting shoes, shape of the foot, skin type, years of training – more experienced dancers have calluses where old blisters used to be.)
3. Have students list the different occupations that deal with the wellbeing of feet, including podiatrists, cobblers, orthopedics and various shoe designers and manufacturers. This list can extend to physiotherapy and myotherapy. Have students complete **Student Activity Sheet E15.1: Foot Professionals** to consolidate understanding of the role of different health professionals.
4. Have students explore the concept of 'Feet':
  - a. Ask students to take one shoe off and trace around their foot onto a piece of paper.
  - b. Use the diagram as a "mind map" and generate words that describe their own feet.
  - c. Ask students to trace around the other foot and imagine that this is a ballet dancer's foot. Label the changes or injuries to the foot that a dancer may experience, e.g. bunions, blisters, etc.
  - d. Surround this foot with words that the foot might "say" while dancing in a pointe shoe all day.

5. Ask students to imagine that their foot was a 'personality'. Have them imagine what the foot does in a 24-hour period and have them make suggestions about the foot's activities and list these on the board. Have students write a journal entry about '*One day in the life of a ballet dancer's foot*'. Select a few of the stories to share with the class.

### Download

- Student Activity Sheet E15.1: Foot Professionals

### Useful resources

- [Ausdance Factsheet 16, Caring for the dancer's body](#)
- [Ausdance Factsheet 14, First aid for dancers](#)
- [Ausdance Factsheet 12, Healthy bones for female dancers](#)
- [The Guardian – I was doing a solo and I heard my foot crack](#)
- [Foot Health Facts – Dance Injuries to the Foot and Ankle](#)



NAME: .....

Student Activity Sheet: E15.1 Episode 15: My Life En Pointe  
Activity: Bare Feet Clip: Dancers' Toes

## Foot Professionals

Write the profession next to the correct description, and then include an example of a problem that each profession might address.

### Professions:

- Podiatrist
- Cobbler
- Shoe designer
- Shoe manufacturer
- Reflexologist
- Physiotherapist
- Myotherapist

<i>Profession</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Example of problem that this profession might address.</i>
	A person who designs footwear	
	A person qualified to diagnose and treat foot disorders	
	A person who performs a foot massage that is thought to help heal other parts of the body	
	A person who mends shoes	
	A person who builds shoes	
	A person who performs a form of massage that can be used to treat feet	
	A person who performs a form of physical therapy that can be used to address foot problems	