Even if a song doesn’t already have movement that goes with it, you can make it up, using the dance elements of level, size, direction, body parts, speed and relationship. Learn the basics of these five dance elements. Bring a favorite song to this session and we’ll add movement to it.

Dance is BEST.
The elements of dance are Body, Energy, Space and Time.

Space is *where* we do something. It includes where we begin in space (place) and where we are in space (size, level, direction, pathway).

- **Place** is an element of space because we must begin somewhere. *Self-space* is our place when performing actions. We can move a great deal without traveling. “Self space stay in your spot.”
- **Size**: Are we using a large or small range of motion, reaching far from our core or drawing in?
- **Level**: What is our relationship to the earth or the sky? How low or high is our movement or shape?
- **Direction** is *where* we travel – forward or backward, up, down, sideways or side to side — and **pathway** is how we describe the pattern of our journey in space, whether across the space or through the air. What parts of the body are we using as we make those pathways in the air or on the floor? Are they straight, curved, or angled into zig-zag patterns?

Time is *when* you do something. It’s the element shared by music. In some forms of African dance, the drum pattern and the dance have the same name; the drummers cue the dancers, the steps are dedicated to the rhythmic pattern, and there is no separation of music and dance.

Speed is an element of Time. Speed is slow, medium or fast. It is the way you can teach an even (or uneven) beat.

Body. This category includes parts of the body, body shapes, balance and relationships.

Relationship means relationships among body parts, people, people and things, self and the space. This is a fantastic vehicle for teaching prepositions. Try teaching this concept to young children using farm animal toys and having them place them in different relationships to one another. “Put the pig beside the horse”, etc.
There are so many fun ways to interact with one another and the group through relationships. So many pattern dances and dance games that emphasize relationships. “In and Out the Window” and “Bluebird” are two that come to mind.

For more on the elements of creative dance, see Kate’s blog post: [http://creativedanceconversation.wordpress.com/2013/07/08/what-are-the-elements-of-creative-dance/](http://creativedanceconversation.wordpress.com/2013/07/08/what-are-the-elements-of-creative-dance/)

**Sample Activities:**

1) *The More We Are Together* (Direction) from *AlphaBeat*
   
   For step-by-step instructions on how to teach, see Kate’s blog post: [http://creativedanceconversation.wordpress.com/2014/01/31/what-to-do-with-the-more-we-are-together/](http://creativedanceconversation.wordpress.com/2014/01/31/what-to-do-with-the-more-we-are-together/)

   *The More We Are Together*
   
   *The more we are together, the happier we’ll be.*
   
   *For your friends are my friends, and my friends are your friends.*
   
   *The more we are together, the happier we’ll be.*

2) *Flea* (Body Parts, Speed) from *Songs for Dancing.*

   *Flea*

   *On my toe there is a flea, now he’s climbing up on me, past my stomach, past my nose, on my head where my hair grows.*

   *On my head there is a flea, now he’s climbing down on me, past my stomach past my knee, on my toe ... Take that you flea!*

3) *Welcome Song* (Relationship, Size, Level) from *Songs for Dancing.*

   *Welcome Song*

   *Welcome, welcome, everyone. Let’s reach up and touch the sun.*

   *Now let’s make the rain fall down, gently, gently to the ground.*

   *Close yourself into a ball, 1.2.3 ... let’s jump up tall!*

See *Songs for Dancing* (book/DVD/CD) for modeling and music.