

# Pathfinders - Dancing Spy

What

I

Should

Know

**D**imensions  
CURRICULUM



## Overview

Dancing Spy is a history-based theme, with a focus on the four competencies of courage, commitment, creativity and community, integrating the subjects of PSHE, drama, English, dance and geography. The story of Josephine Baker, a black American entertainer who fought hard against racism and segregation, is both inspiring and challenging.

## Where?

### Where did Josephine Baker live?

- Josephine was born in 1906 in the USA and lived there until she was 13 years old.
- At the early age of 13, because Josephine was such a good dancer, she toured the United States with a group of travelling musicians.
- In 1925, at the age of 19, she moved to France where there were more opportunities for her as a black dancer to become the star she had always dreamed of being.
- Even though she now considered France to be her home, she continued to visit America in the hope of abolishing segregation against black people and of being recognised as an equal to white performers in her birth country.



## Who?

### Who was Josephine Baker?

- Josephine was a black girl from a poor family who ran away from home at the age of 13, in search of a better life. She found her passion for dancing at this young age and soon became popular with audiences. However, when Josephine was growing up black people were treated very unfairly, therefore, she was not fully accepted by her birth country as equal to white performers.
- So, she moved to France and soon became one of the most popular and highest-paid performers in Europe, being fully accepted for who she was, despite her colour.
- During World War Two, she put herself in danger by working as a spy for the French Resistance. Because of her great courage, Josephine was awarded two of France's highest military honours.
- During the 1950s, after gaining her fame and fortune, she used this influence to make a stand against racism. She often returned to the USA to support the Civil Rights Movement (equality for black and white people), participating in demonstrations and refusing to perform in theatres that didn't allow black people to attend. Because of her efforts to end segregation, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) society named the 20th May "Josephine Baker Day".

# Pathfinders - Dancing Spy

## Which?

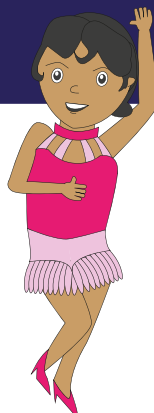
Which dances did Josephine Baker co-invent and perform?

- The Turkey Trot
- The Itch
- The Mess Around
- The Charleston



## Knowledge and Understanding

- To know and be able to retell the life story of Josephine Baker
- To know what Josephine Baker was famous for
- To understand the contribution Josephine Baker made to cross-cultural relationships
- To understand what makes Josephine Baker an inspirational historical figure
- To understand the importance of community, courage and commitment



## Vocabulary

**Audition:** An interview for a role or job as a singer, actor, dancer, or musician, consisting of a practical demonstration of the candidate's suitability and skill

**Broadway:** A famous district in New York where there are many theatres in which many dancers, singers and actors perform

**Citizenship:** Belonging to a particular country

**Discrimination:** The unfair treatment of different people based on their race, religion, gender etc.

**Diverse:** To show or have many differences/different types of something

**Facial Expression:** To show an emotion using your face, for example, to smile for happiness and to frown for sadness / anger

**Hostility:** Unfriendliness or unkindness towards someone

**Performer:** A person who entertains an audience

**Prejudice:** Dislike, hostility or unfair behaviour towards someone based on opinion

**Race:** A group of people sharing the same culture, history, language, physical features etc.

**Racism:** To discriminate or treat someone unfairly based on their race/ethnic origin

**Segregation:** The action of separating someone from others