

**ALLICIA  
ALONSO**



**TAKES THE  
STAGE**

**REBEL GIRLS®**



## ACTIVITIES



### CLAIM YOUR SPACE

Alicia was a powerful presence on stage, drawing the audience's eyes to her as they followed her expressive and emotional performances. She loved how the fierce, confident rhythm of the music made her feel fierce and confident in turn (page 22). It gave her strength to take up space on the stage, which inspired her to take up space in the world. You can do this, too! Use your body to make a few simple shapes and see how strong it makes you feel.

- See how far you can stretch your body.
- Try to take up as much space as possible without moving your feet.
- Try to take up as much space as possible using a movement that travels through space, such as skipping, running, crawling, etc.

## NOW LET'S PUT SOME EMOTION INTO IT!

- Make a full-body shape that makes you feel COMFORTABLE.
- Make a full-body shape that makes you feel SCARED.
- Make a full-body shape that makes you feel CONFIDENT.

How did it make you feel to move through these emotions with your body? How do you think this activity can translate into your everyday life?

## COORDINATE YOUR MOVEMENTS

Training your brain to multitask can be useful both in dance and in real life. When learning to play the castanets, Alicia had to move her hands and feet in different ways at the same time (page 23). You can combine hand gestures with foot movements, too. Improve your own coordination with the following steps.

1. Create three movements with just your hands or arms.
  - Shake your hands like you're drying them out in front of you.
  - Draw a rainbow with your arms above your head.
  - Pretend you're playing the castanets like Alicia: raise your arms in the air and tap your middle, ring, and pinky fingers against your palms.
2. Try all three hand movements in a row.
3. Now try performing your hand movements while walking forward, then walking backward.
4. Try the same gestures while turning, walking on the low level (close to the ground) or high level (tiptoes or jumping).

What was the most challenging part of this exercise? What was the most fun? What did you learn about your own coordination?

## MAKE BALLET YOUR OWN

Alicia perfected the art of ballet through years of training and dedication. She understood that a dancer must know all the fundamentals before learning how to make the dance her own. Let's learn some of Alicia's signature ballet moves so you can make them your own, too. Remember that practice makes perfect, and as Alicia told herself on page 101, "You can do it"!

Try out these three ballet technique positions:



### **Plié**

Stand tall with straight legs and bring your heels together and toes apart to a first position. Start bending your knees while keeping your heels on the ground and posture straight. Then straighten your knees to your starting position.



## Arabesque

Standing on your right leg, extend your left leg behind you while your torso bends forward slightly. The leg behind you is straight, and toes are pointed. Extend your left arm out to the side and right arm out in front of you for balance. Now try the other side.



## Pirouette

“Pirouette” is a French word that means “to twirl.” Starting on two feet, start with a “plié” and try to

make a full turn while balancing on your right leg. Your standing (right) leg is straight and your left toes touch your ankle or knee as you spin around.

Once you've mastered these positions, you can create your own versions that are unique to you.

- Try these positions using different body parts.
- Now try them on the low level or the high level.
- Explore moving in and out of these positions.

How did it make you feel to take ownership of these steps and create something all your own?

Now that you've learned how to take up space, improve your coordination, and practice your technique, it's time for you to choreograph your own dance! Using the movements you practiced, come up with a dance routine that is uniquely YOU. Share it with your friends and family the way Alicia did with hers.

## SMASHWORKS DANCE

Smashworks Dance is a New York-based dance company founded and directed by choreographer Ashley McQueen. We dance to advocate for human rights issues and women's empowerment through performing arts, educational programming, and community outreach. We make dance accessible and inspire audiences to take action through our performances both onstage and in site-specific environments. We view artistic expression as power—*smashing* stereotypes and promoting dance as a unifying and confidence-building practice for all.

Visit Smashworks Dance at [smashworksdance.com](http://smashworksdance.com)  
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Instagram ([@smashworksdance](https://www.instagram.com/smashworksdance))





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