



# Gina the Dancing Queen

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## Teachers' notes

### Biographical information

Marisa Alo was born and lives in Geelong, Victoria.

In 1994 she graduated from the Melbourne School of Art in Elsternwick, Victoria.

After graduating she has worked as a freelance illustrator, illustrating a variety of products from greeting cards to bed linen. Since childhood, it has been Marisa's dream to write and illustrate children's books. As a passionate dancer, she was inspired to write "Gina The Dancing Queen."

This is Marisa's first picture book

### Before reading

What does the cover suggest about the main character?

Where do you think Gina is?

Gina is a giraffe and the title suggests the book is about dancing. How good do you think a giraffe will be when it comes to dancing?

### After reading discussion.

After Gina's first attempt at dancing she ended up falling in a heap, embarrassed.

How does the illustration convey her embarrassment?

Instead of giving up Gina becomes more determined to dance. Are there times where you have felt embarrassed at not being able to do something?

What does Gina's example show you?

What do you think the three golden rules of dance mean?

Why is Gina surprised when the handsome Zebra asks her to dance?

How do you think Gina felt at the end of the book?

Why did Gina succeed in the end?

Why do you think the author used animals as characters rather than people?

### Movement and music

Gina learns three different styles of dance. What are they?

Find music that matches the three style of dance and as a class follow the rules of dance...feel the rhythm and follow the music.

Clap out the rhythm.

How does the rhythm of the three styles differ?

Learn a few basic steps of each style.

Which type of dance step do you prefer and why?

### Integrated studies

When Gina is learning to dance the music takes her to three different countries. What are they?

Can you find out more information about those countries?

Why does ballet take her to the streets of France?

Can you think of any other dance styles that come from particular countries?

