

ScratchJr: make our character do a little dance

Lesson at a glance

Open with a three-move body dance (clap, turn, jump) so pupils feel order before any tablet appears. Model on the IWB a ScratchJr line — green-flag start, move right, hop, turn — then press the green flag and name what happened first. The class calls three picture blocks for a shared dance; pairs then snap two or three of their own, swap two blocks, and watch again. They draw the final left-to-right order on the Investigation Journal page and finish with the oral stem “After we changed it, ____ happened first.”

Learning objectives

- Snap three or four ScratchJr blocks together after a green-flag start, in their own order
- Press the green flag and watch the character act out the dance
- Change two blocks around and notice how the dance changes

Before the bell – prep

Charge one tablet per pair (or plan two 10-minute waves). Pre-open each device on a fresh ScratchJr project: one character, simple background, Start on Green Flag ready, Motion tab open. Set the IWB the same way. Assign named partners before devices leave the trolley. Have Investigation Journal pages and crayons ready.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
tablet with ScratchJr installed	1	group	school kit	If only half as many tablets: two waves of about 10 continuous device minutes each so every pair completes make-dance then change-two-blocks before swapping; waiting wave does unplugged body-order practice with the teacher, not a simultaneous IWB character. Not one shared board turn for the whole class.
IWB or projector linked for ScratchJr modelling	1	class	classroom	large tablet held facing the class for the model
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	classroom	one A4 sheet of plain paper per child
crayons or pencils	1	pupil	classroom	shared pot of crayons per table

Safety watch-point

One tablet per pair with clear hands-on turns; carry with two hands, no cables trailing, return to the charge trolley and wipe screens at pack-away.

Teaching moves

- **Getting Started:** Stand where all can see. Lead clap, turn-on-the-spot, small jump twice and ask whether the moves stayed in the same order. Keep tablets away; only hint that a little character will dance next.
- **Watch a three-block dance:** On the IWB, name each picture first (hop picture, turn picture), then snap Start on Green Flag, move right, hop, turn. Press the green flag and voice the order aloud. Stress: the order of the blocks is the order of the dance — the character does not choose.
- **We choose the dance together:** Limit the palette to move, hop, turn and Pop (or one looks picture). Keep green-flag start first. Snap three blocks the class calls, press the green flag, and fold watchers in with “What will happen next?” Run once more if half the class missed it.
- **Make your own little dance:** Name partners, then hand out one tablet per pair. Circulating, check green-flag start is on the left, blocks click tight, and pairs press the green flag. Kneel and fix snags with them. Two dance blocks after the start is success; stretch is three or four with talk about which move came first. No target square and no bug talk.
- **Change two blocks around:** Model on the IWB with your finger how to slide two dance blocks so they swap places, green-flag start still first. Pairs do the same, press the green flag, and answer “Which move is first now?” On a two-wave plan, keep make-then-change as one continuous device turn.
- **Draw your dance:** Screens stay visible as a reference. Prompt: point to the first move on screen, draw it on the left, then the next beside it. A scribbly two- or three-picture sequence is enough. Collect devices only once drawing is under way.
- **What changed?:** Board stem: “After we changed it, ____ happened first.” Think-pair-share thirty seconds, then three or four pairs share. Revoice infant answers into clear sentences and link aloud to people who make apps changing order so the character’s dance changes.

What it should show

After the green-flag start, the character runs the dance blocks left to right in the snapped order. Swapping two blocks changes which move happens first; many different dances are right. If nothing moves, check green-flag start is first and tight, blocks are clicked together, the right character is selected, and the green flag was pressed — not that the order idea failed.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **“The character picks its own moves” — pupils think order comes from the sprite, not the blocks.** — Point along the snapped line left to right as it runs and say: the order of the blocks is the order of the dance. Swap two blocks on the IWB and watch the first move change.
- **Pupils tap the green flag button but never place the yellow Start on Green Flag block, so nothing runs.** — Kneel beside the pair and separate the phrases: green-flag start is the first picture on the left; press the green flag is the go button. Place the start block, snap tight, then press.
- **Blocks sit near each other but are not snapped, so the dance stops or skips.** — Have them drag until they feel/hear the click. Run once loose and once tight so they see the difference.

**Differentiation**

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Success is green-flag start plus two dance blocks pressed and watched; teacher kneels and helps snap tight rather than taking over. • Journal: point-then-draw one or two pictures left to right from the still-visible screen.	• Add a third dance block and say which move happened first after the green flag. • After swapping two blocks, use the stem “After we changed it, ____ happened first.”	• Snap three or four dance blocks and clearly name first, second and third moves. • If space allows, draw the order both before and after the swap on the Investigation Journal page.

**Cross-curricular hook**

Link to PE sequencing — pupils act their block order as a short body dance and check it matches the pictures.