

Name: _____

Rhythmless Blues

by Kelly Hashway

"You're going to the charity dance on Friday, right?"

Gabby asked.

Shauna's stomach lurched. She didn't want everyone to find out she had no rhythm. "Um, I don't know if I can."

"You have to. It's for a good cause."

The bus stopped, and Shauna sprang up from her seat.

"See you tomorrow," she said as she ran off the bus and to her parents' hardware store. The space next door had been empty, but now there was a sign in the window that read, "Hip Hop Dance Studio."



Dance lessons! Exactly what Shauna needed. She waved to her mom and pointed next door. After her mom nodded, Shauna ducked inside.

"Can I help you?" asked a woman in a colorful dance outfit.

"I want to learn to dance," Shauna said. "There's a dance at school this Friday."

"Friday, huh?" The woman chuckled. "Dance requires study and practice. Unless you have great natural ability, I don't think I'll be able to teach you much in just a few days."

"Please? One move? Anything!" Shauna begged.

The woman sighed. "I have a class starting. You can sit in on it, but I'm not promising anything by Friday."

Shauna smiled. "Thank you!"

The door opened and kids poured into the studio. Young kids, no older than five. Shauna's face dropped.

"But they're—"

"Beginners, like you," the woman said.

Shauna didn't know what else to do, so she put her backpack down and stood next to a girl wearing an Elmo t-shirt.

The instructor, Miss Monique, talked slowly and demonstrated all the steps, but Shauna still couldn't get them right. She went back to the dance studio everyday after school. By Friday the only progress she had made was no longer tripping over her feet.



"Good luck tonight, Shauna," Miss Monique said. "And remember the important thing is to have fun."

Shauna nodded before hopping into her mom's car. The drive was quick, and Shauna's heart pounded as she walked into the gymnasium. She considered making a run for it, but Gabby grabbed her arm and pulled her over to their friends who were wildly jumping up and down.

"So you just jump around?" Shauna asked.

"Why? Can you dance?" Gabby asked.

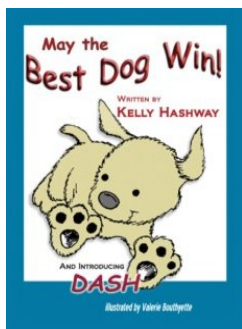
"I took some lessons, but they didn't help."

"Well, you can jump, right?" Gabby asked.

Shauna laughed. She'd worried for nothing. "Yeah. I can do that." The dance was going to be fun after all.

About the the Author

Kelly Hashway



Kelly Hashway's latest book, *May the Best Dog Win*, is now available!

Dash has the perfect life until the Super Sweeper 5000 shows up. Sweeper runs all over the house sucking up the leftover food scraps, and he even gets his own room! But Dash won't give up his place as the favorite dog without a fight.

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1. Why did Shauna go to the Hip Hop Dance Studio?
 - a. She wanted to take advanced dance lessons.
 - b. She wanted tickets to the charity dance.
 - c. She wanted to make new friends.
 - d. She wanted to become a dancer in a hurry.

2. How did Miss Monique feel when Shauna asked for lessons?
 - a. She was excited to teach Shauna to dance.
 - b. She was amazed by Shauna's talent for dancing.
 - c. She doubted she'd be able to help Shauna.
 - d. She worried that the other dancers might not think Shauna was good enough.

3. Describe the other kids in Shauna's dance class.

4. What did Miss Monique tell Shauna was the most important thing to remember at the dance?

5. After Shauna arrived at the dance and saw her friends, how did she probably feel?
 - a. relieved
 - b. anxious
 - c. nervous
 - d. confused

Explain why you chose the answer above.

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Match each vocabulary word from the story on the left to its definition on the right.

- | | | |
|-------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| _____ | 1. ability | a. place where people learn or practice dance |
| _____ | 2. tripping | b. showed how to do something |
| _____ | 3. studio | c. improvement over time |
| _____ | 4. progress | d. felt uneasy about something; fretted |
| _____ | 5. wildly | e. metal items used for making and fixing things, such as nails, screws, and tools |
| _____ | 6. worried | f. the skill to do something |
| _____ | 7. heart | g. asked for something; pleaded |
| _____ | 8. hardware | h. organ that pumps blood through the body |
| _____ | 9. begged | i. falling |
| _____ | 10. demonstrated | j. crazily |

Rhythmless Blues

- What skill you'd like to learn
- Why you'd like to learn this skill
- Where and when you would use this skill

[illegible]

ANSWER KEY

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 - c. **She doubted she'd be able to help Shauna.**
 - d. She worried that the other dancers might not think Shauna was good enough.

3. Describe the other kids in Shauna's dance class.
They were all beginners who were under 5 years old.

4. What did Miss Monique tell Shauna was the most important thing to remember at the dance?
She said, "The important thing is to have fun."

5. After Shauna arrived at the dance and saw her friends, how did she probably feel? **a**
 - a. **relieved**
 - b. anxious
 - c. nervous
 - d. confused

Explain why you chose the answer above.

When she realized the other kids at the dance were just jumping around, she probably felt relieved to learn that she wasn't the only one who couldn't dance.

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