

# WAKAKIRRI PRE-DANCE RITUAL



**Note to facilitator:** All Wakakirri dancers across Australia will perform this ritual simultaneously to help each dancer feel grounded, connected to each other, and ready to get on stage. An adult facilitator is needed to read out the instructions for the ritual (adjustments in wording may be needed for younger dancers, and you are welcome to make any other changes needed for your unique group of students).

## To Begin:

- Stand or sit in one large circle or a few smaller circles with a bit of space between each person.
- Close your eyes if you feel comfortable, or let your gaze rest softly on the floor.



## Step 1: FEEL (1 min)

**Note to facilitator:** *Listening to and accepting feelings* will help students become more self-aware, which enables them to overcome challenges/hurdles and enjoy experiences to the fullest.

- Place a **hand over your heart** and slow your breathing down.
- Begin to **pay attention to your body** in this moment.
- **Notice each sensation and feeling** in your body. (You might feel excitement, nervousness, tension, or physical discomfort, among other things).



## Step 2: PAUSE (1 min)

**Note to facilitator:** *Intentional breathing and choosing an empowering focus point* will help students channel their nervous energy and start the performance from a grounded and calm place.

- Place your hand on your solar plexus, right beneath your ribcage.
- Start taking slow, deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth.

- We are going to practice changing nervous energy and discomfort in our minds and bodies into kindness and strength and anything else that will help us thrive in this performance and in our lives in general.
- As you do this exercise, imagine that at the very center or core of your body, you are able to transform anything negative or challenging into something positive and uplifting.
- As you breathe in, imagine breathing in your own nervousness or any discomfort you feel.
- Feel the power of your core as you transform this, and as you breathe out, send yourself kindness and strength, and anything else you need in this moment.
- Notice the power of your breath, your body, and where you are placing your focus, and the impact that you can have. Notice how inspiring you can be for everyone around you, and how you can BE the change you want to see in the world.



### Step 3: THINK (1 min)

**Note to facilitator :** *Observing and questioning thoughts* will help students identify and overcome hidden internal blocks that might hinder their performance (e.g., self-doubt, fear of judgement, low motivation).

- Place both hands on the top or back of your head.
- Give your mind a chance to find a thought that lifts you up. (You might have a thought about what this performance means to you, or the impact you can have when onstage, or your own strength and courage).
- Choose to focus on this helpful thought as you perform. Repeat it to yourself as many times as you need so that you can remember it.



### Step 4: ACT (1 min)

**Note to facilitator :** *Reaching out to others and choosing helpful actions* will help students recognise their internal and external support systems to draw on when taking the stage. It will also help them carry a sense of purpose and connection from this performance into the rest of their lives.

- Open your eyes and look around you.
- Hold hands with the people on either side of you.
- Squeeze the hands you are holding to let your friends know **you are in this together**.
- Feel the collective energy of the group and the excitement of what you are about to do.
- Together, say the following words (repeat three times, getting louder each time): **This is our story. We are here to inspire change. Together, we can make a difference!**

***This ritual was created by:***

*Open Parachute, a K-12 Mental Health curriculum brought to life by peer stories with lived experience, created by clinical psychologists and educators, and mapped to Australian curriculum targets. For more information, visit: [openparachute.com.au](https://openparachute.com.au)*