**Dance Snow Packets 22-31 “Famous American Dancers”**

**Part 1**-Read the Biographical information for the following dancers: Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire, Vera Ellen and Ginger Rogers. On a piece of paper write each Dancers Name and make a list of 12 facts about the dancer from each bio.

**Part 2** Using the internet or phone data - copy the URL which is underneath the dancer name and paste it into your search bar. This will bring you to a youtube video of the dancer BIOs you have read doing a performance for each dancer- (Kelly, Astaire, Ellen and Rogers ) there is a short youtube clip of famous dance scenes. Underneath the 12 facts you listed, write a few sentence on your impressions of the dance scene you have viewed for each. **------OR------** You many choose to spend 4 daily sessions practicing 10 min of YOGA with a parent signing and dating on a piece of paper that you have practiced for 4- 10min sessions.

**Gene Kelly**

URL: <https://youtu.be/GUonwePPcXQ> video called: Top 10 Best Gene Kelly Dance Scenes

Gene Kelly, in full Eugene Curran Kelly, (born August 23, 1912, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.—died February 2, 1996, Beverly Hills, California), American dancer, actor, choreographer, and motion-picture director whose athletic style of [dancing](https://www.britannica.com/), combined with classical [ballet](https://www.britannica.com/) technique, transformed the [movie musical](https://www.britannica.com/) and did much to change the American public’s conception of male dancers.

One of five children born to a record company sales executive and a former actress, Kelly dreamed of becoming a professional athlete but was redirected into dancing by his mother. He studied ballet and other dance forms. Kelly majored in [journalism](https://www.britannica.com/) at [Pennsylvania State College](https://www.britannica.com/) (now University) and [economics](https://www.britannica.com/) at the [University of Pittsburgh](https://www.britannica.com/) (A.B., 1933), but the allure of performing proved too strong to resist. He toured in [vaudeville](https://www.britannica.com/) with his brother Fred (later a prolific stage and [television](https://www.britannica.com/) director), and for several years he ran a successful dancing school in [Pittsburgh](https://www.britannica.com/).

In 1938 he moved to [New York City](https://www.britannica.com/) and won a role as a chorus member in [Cole Porter](https://www.britannica.com/)’s *Leave It to Me*, figuring prominently in star [Mary Martin](https://www.britannica.com/)’s showstopping number “My Heart Belongs to Daddy.” The following year he was cast in the flashy role of Harry the Hoofer in [William Saroyan](https://www.britannica.com/)’s [Pulitzer Prize](https://www.britannica.com/)-winning play *The Time of Your Life*, and in 1940 he achieved stardom with his likeable interpretation of the raffish protagonist in the [Richard Rodgers](https://www.britannica.com/) and [Lorenz Hart](https://www.britannica.com/) musical drama *Pal Joey*. On seeing the play, film producer [David O. Selznick](https://www.britannica.com/) offered Kelly a [Hollywood](https://www.britannica.com/) contract, and Kelly accepted, doing so because Selznick did not require a screen test of him. Before leaving New York in 1941, Kelly choreographed the hit musical *Best Foot Forward* (1941). CITATION INFORMATION URL: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Gene-Kelly>

**Fred Astaire**

URL: <https://youtu.be/IQFamAFNALE> Video Called: Top 10 Iconic Fred Astaire Dance Scenes

Fred Astaire, original name Frederick Austerlitz, (born May 10, 1899, Omaha, Nebraska, U.S.—died June 22, 1987, Los Angeles, California), American dancer onstage and in motion pictures who was best known for a number of highly successful musical comedy films in which he starred with [Ginger Rogers](https://www.britannica.com/). He is regarded by many as the greatest popular-music dancer of all time.

Early career

Astaire studied dancing from the age of four, and in 1906 he formed an act with his sister, Adele, that became a popular vaudeville attraction. The two made their [Broadway](https://www.britannica.com/) debut in *Over the Top* (1917–18). They achieved international fame with stage hits that included *For Goodness Sake* (1922), *Funny Face* (1927–28), and *The Band Wagon* (1931–32). When Adele retired after marrying Lord Charles Cavendish in 1932, Astaire made a screen test, reportedly receiving an unencouraging verdict from executives: “Can’t act, can’t sing. Balding. Can dance a little.” He was nevertheless cast as a featured dancer in the [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer](https://www.britannica.com/) production *Dancing Lady* (1933), which starred [Joan Crawford](https://www.britannica.com/), [Clark Gable](https://www.britannica.com/), and the [Three Stooges](https://www.britannica.com/).

After the last RKO Astaire-Rogers film, *The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle* (1939), Astaire appeared with various other partners, such as [Eleanor Powell](https://www.britannica.com/), [Rita Hayworth](https://www.britannica.com/) (whom Astaire cited as his favourite on-screen partner), and Lucille Bremer. He retired temporarily in 1946 but returned to the screen in 1948 and appeared in a series of [Technicolor](https://www.britannica.com/) musicals for MGM that, next to his films with Rogers, constitute his most highly regarded body of work. Several of Astaire’s most-famous dance routines appear in these films, such as the slow-motion dance in *Easter Parade* (1948), which also featured [Judy Garland](https://www.britannica.com/); the dance with empty shoes in *The Barkleys of Broadway* (1949), which was his 10th and final film with Rogers; the ceiling dance and the duet with a hat rack in *Royal Wedding* (1951); and the dance on air in *The Belle of New York* (1952). The best of Astaire’s films during this period was *The Band Wagon* (1953), often cited as one of the greatest of film musicals; it featured Astaire’s memorable duet with Cyd Charisse to the song “Dancing in the Dark.”

CITATION INFORMATION URL: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Fred-Astaire>

**Vera-Ellen**

URL: <https://youtu.be/1caGN5No89w> Video Called: Vera-Ellen performs in Miss Turmstiles

*American dancer and actress. Born Vera-Ellen Westmeyer Rohe on February 16, 1926, in Cincinnati, Ohio; died of cancer on August 30, 1981, in*[*Los Angeles*](https://www.encyclopedia.com/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/los-angeles)*, California; daughter of Martin F. Rohe (a piano tuner) and Alma (Westmeyer) Rohe; married Robert Hightower (a dancer; marriage ended); married Victor Rothschild (an oilman), on November 19, 1954 (divorced 1966).*

*Appeared as a Rockette at Radio City Music Hall (1930s); danced opposite leading stars*[*Gene Kelly*](https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/literature-and-arts/dance-biographies/gene-kelly)*,*[*Fred Astaire*](https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/literature-and-arts/dance-biographies/fred-astaire)*, and others in series of musicals (1940s–1950s); retired from film (1957)..*

Appearing in leading roles over a 12-year film career as dance partner to [Gene Kelly](https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/literature-and-arts/dance-biographies/gene-kelly), [Fred Astaire](https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/literature-and-arts/dance-biographies/fred-astaire), and other leading stars of musical film, Vera-Ellen received consistently high marks for her abilities. Adept in all the varied styles used in cinematic dance, including tap, toe, acrobatic, and dramatic dancing, she appeared in 14 screen musicals and a number of Broadway stage productions.

Vera-Ellen was born Vera-Ellen Rohe in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1926; her mother had dreamed of the name a few nights before her birth. Suffering from poor health, at age ten she began taking dance lessons to strengthen her constitution. She studied dance at a local studio and in high school in Cincinnati, and did so well that she was sent to a Dancing Teachers of America convention in [New York](https://www.encyclopedia.com/places/united-states-and-canada/us-political-geography/new-york) City. While in New York, she tried out for a touring revue and was accepted. She talked her mother into moving to New York with her, and though she was still in her early teens, stage work began to come her way. One of her early jobs was as a Rockette at Radio City Music Hall.

Vera-Ellen had made four films for Goldwyn and for Twentieth Century-Fox by 1947, but that year, after the failure of the film *Carnival in*[*Costa Rica*](https://www.encyclopedia.com/places/latin-america-and-caribbean/costa-rican-political-geography/costa-rica), she found herself without a contract, despite the positive reviews her own performance had received. Rededicating herself to her craft, she undertook new studies in dance, singing, and dramatics, and was planning to return to New York City when her studies paid off in 1948. She was signed to perform in the "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" ballet segment of the Gene Kelly film *Words and Music*, and her performance gained her a new seven-year contract with MGM.

 she was featured in the perennial holiday chestnut *White Christmas*, co-starring [Bing Crosby](https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/literature-and-arts/music-popular-and-jazz-biographies/bing-crosby) and [Rosemary Clooney](https://www.encyclopedia.com/women/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/clooney-rosemary-1928) . Vera-Ellen married and divorced twice. Her last film was the British-made *Let's Be Happy*, in 1957, although she occasionally appeared on television after that. Following her divorce from Victor Rothschild in 1966, she lived in seclusion until her death from cancer in 1981.

Citation from: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/women/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/vera-ellen-1926-1981>

**Ginger Rogers**

URL: <https://youtu.be/sZfKZudV5ic> video called: Follow the Fleet (1936) Let yourself go Ginger Dances alone

Ginger Rogers, original name Virginia Katherine McMath, (born July 16, 1911, Independence, Missouri, U.S.—died April 25, 1995, Rancho Mirage, California), American stage and film dancer and actress who was noted primarily as the partner of Fred Astaire in a series of motion-picture musicals.

McMath was given the nickname Ginger, which was based on a cousin’s failed attempts to pronounce Virginia. Her parents divorced when she was still an infant, and she was raised by her mother, Lela Owens McMath. In 1920 Lela married John Rogers, and Ginger took his last name. She began her career, which was carefully orchestrated by her mother, performing in local shows in Texas while she was still a child. She then appeared with [Eddie Foy](https://www.britannica.com/)’s [vaudeville](https://www.britannica.com/) troupe before winning a [Charleston](https://www.britannica.com/) contest at age 15. That success ultimately led her to the [Broadway](https://www.britannica.com/) stage in 1929, when she performed in *Top Speed*. By the time she was 19 years old, Rogers had introduced [George Gershwin](https://www.britannica.com/)’s “Embraceable You” and “But Not for Me” in the 1930 Broadway hit *Girl Crazy*. She then went to [Hollywood](https://www.britannica.com/) and began performing in movies, typecast as a flippant blonde.

Rogers made her motion-picture debut in *Young Man of Manhattan* (1930), in which she immortalized the catchphrase “Cigarette me, big boy.” Her gum cracking and good-natured wholesomeness typified [*42nd Street*](https://www.britannica.com/) and *Gold Diggers of 1933* (both 1933), while her stately beauty and sophisticated charm fueled the on-screen chemistry with Fred Astaire in their films. [Katharine Hepburn](https://www.britannica.com/) notably said, “He gives her class, and she gives him sex.” Rogers first performed with Astaire in *Flying Down to Rio* (1933), and their dance scenes—featuring an effortlessness and energy that became their trademarks—proved so popular that they continued the partnership in nine other films, notably *The Gay Divorcee* (1934), [*Top Hat*](https://www.britannica.com/) (1935), *Follow the Fleet* (1936), *The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle* (1939), and *The Barkleys of Broadway* (1949), their last collaboration.

Though best known for her dancing, Rogers preferred dramatic acting, and in 1940 she won an [Academy Award](https://www.britannica.com/) for her leading role in *Kitty Foyle*, in which she portrayed a spirited working girl who ultimately chooses love over money. She also enjoyed a sure hand in light comedy and starred in such films as *Tom, Dick and Harry* (1941) and *The Major and the Minor* (1942), in which her character pretended to be a 12-year-old girl. Some of her other 70 films include *Roxie Hart* (1942), *Lady in the Dark* (1944), and *Monkey Business* (1952).

After appearing in her last film, *Harlow* (1965), Rogers maintained a busy theatre schedule, performing the title role in *Hello Dolly!* from 1965 to 1967 and introducing *Mame* to London audiences in 1969. In addition, Rogers occasionally appeared on television, with guest roles in such series as *Here’s Lucy* and *The Love Boat*. Her last acting role came in a 1987 episode of *Hotel*.

Rogers was a 1992 recipient of the [Kennedy Center](https://www.britannica.com/) Honors for lifetime achievement. In her autobiography, *Ginger: My Story* (1991), she touched on her five failed marriages and explored her lifestyle as a [Christian Scientist](https://www.britannica.com/). Citation-**URL:** <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ginger-Rogers>