

The DANCE CHOICE



Maddie felt much better as she watched her classmates dance.

ILLUSTRATION BY SUSANA GURREA

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(Based on a true story)

This story took place in the USA.

Maddie put her dance shoes into her bag. Dance class had just ended, and it was time for lunch. She met her friend Ashlynn at the door. "What did you think of that new song?" Maddie asked as they walked to the lunchroom. Their class was going to dance to a new song for their last show of the year, in front of all their families.

"It's OK, I guess," Ashlynn said.

"Some of the words seemed kind of weird," Maddie said. "I don't like it very much." Maddie thought she'd be embarrassed if her parents and little sister watched her dance to music like that.

Ashlynn shrugged. "My brother really likes it. He plays it a lot."

"Oh." Maddie looked down.

All day the song played in Maddie's head. She didn't like how it made her feel. But Ashlynn didn't think it was bad. Maybe it was OK.

Maddie remembered a home evening lesson her family had about music. Mom said that good music can help people feel the Holy Ghost. And music with bad words could make it harder for them to feel the Spirit. Maybe the Holy Ghost was telling her the song wasn't good.

She frowned. The song didn't have any swear words. Was it still bad?

When Maddie got home, she told Mom about the song.

"Can you look at the words and see what you think?" Maddie asked.

Together they found the words of the song online. Maddie watched Mom's face as she read.

Mom frowned. "I can understand why you don't like it," she said. "It doesn't have swear words, but I don't think it's a good song for fourth-graders to dance to. I'll ask your dance teacher about it tomorrow."

The next day, Mom talked to her teacher, Mrs. Slater, at school. Maddie was worried that Mrs. Slater would be upset, but she wasn't! She said she understood why Mom didn't like the song. But she said it was too late to change the music.

"Maddie doesn't have to dance to the song," Mrs. Slater said. "She can sit out for that dance."

Sitting out by herself sounded scary. Maddie decided to ask Ashlynn to sit out with her. Ashlynn said yes!

When the day of the dance show came, Maddie met Ashlynn in the hall.

"I'm glad you're going to sit out with me!" Maddie said with a smile.

But Ashlynn didn't smile back. "I'm not going to sit out after all," she said, adjusting her skirt. "I'm going to dance with everyone else."

Maddie felt sick inside. She didn't want to sit out alone. But she still didn't feel good about the song.

Maddie lined up with the others and danced to the first song. Then it was time for the next song.

Her heart pounded. She said a little prayer in her heart. Then she took a deep breath, walked to the side of the stage, and sat down.

Once she was off the stage, Maddie felt much better. She watched her classmates dance. When they were done, she clapped. She felt happy and warm.

Maddie smiled. It was scary to sit out all by herself, but she felt good that she had listened to the Holy Ghost. ●