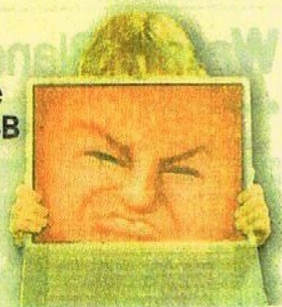
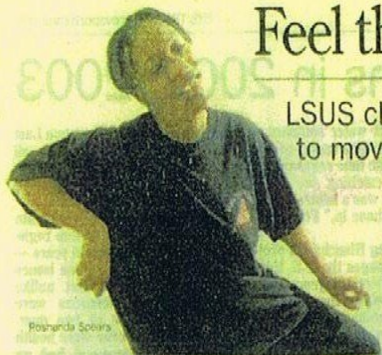


Feel the hip-hop beat | Online bullies

LSUS class teaches participants to move with music • **LIVING, 1D**

Web allows children to victimize others anonymously • **MONEY, 4B**



The Times

shreveporttimes.com

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MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2005

Lagniappe

A little bit of this, a little bit of that

Talk about some cool toys

For starters, Elmo's vocabulary has been expanded. The newest version of the plush little guy can recite your child's name and birthday and announce when it is time for lunch. The "Knows Your Name" Elmo is \$40.



But that is only the beginning, says Newsweek magazine. The toy world is filled with a wide range of chattering, interactive characters that conjure images of a "Toy Story"-type after-hours party.

New robots from WowWee are creating a stir because they take on a life of their own without the controls. The "Roboraptor" comes with sonar vision and hearing and responds to noise by becoming playful. He will come over and nudge or bite you (gently). Robosapien V2 will play catch and shake hands.

Hasbro's Furby picks up words to say back to you as a parrot does. And like many girlfriends, Pixel's \$30 Pda Chix packs her bags and leaves if you ignore her. "Here Puppy, Puppy" comes out of his doghouse when you make noise. If you leave him alone, he goes back in.

They sound like some humans we know.

Analyze this

He wants leopard prints and animal heads.

She loves minimal white rooms and area rugs. What's the couple to do?

Call a designer, a therapist or both?

Some people are making the latter choice with "design-therapists." The Wall Street Journal says decorators are hoping to upgrade their image and raise fees by adding psychologists to their job descriptions. They ask clients to complete long surveys examining their intimate living habits ("When do you shave?") and childhood traumas before they produce a renovation plan. They may conduct a series of intense interviews. In short, as the WSJ notes, to find you a couch, they want to put you on one.

They are apparently restyling their fee structure because the traditional way of billing on the basis of furniture purchased has shifted. Consumers have access to furniture at discounted or wholesale prices.

Meanwhile, design school students are being encouraged to enroll in psychology classes.

Grab the remote

"EVERYBODY LOVES RAYMOND," 8 P.M., CBS
Tonight, we learn which episode viewers picked as the second-best "Raymond" ever.



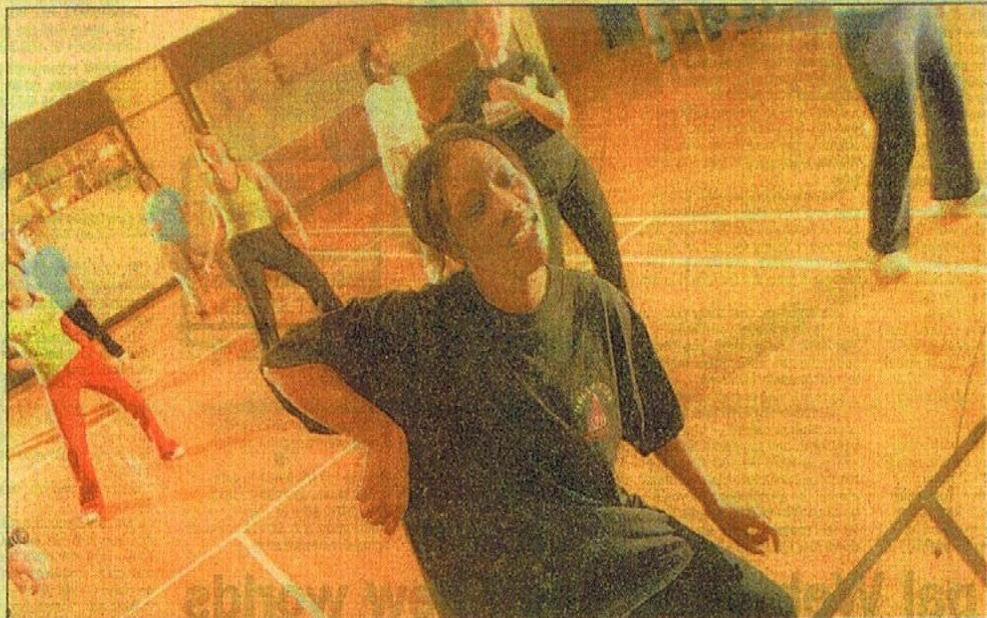
Last week's episode — Marie accidentally drives her car into Ray's house — was hilarious. That was picked as third best; earlier, we saw a suitcase standoff (No. 4) and Robert getting down with the black culture (No. 5). Stick around. In its final season, "Raymond" continues to delight.

Hot sites

This job-hunting site uses RSS feeds and other tools to help you find new employment and news about careers.



www.jobsearchnews.com



Roshanda Spears leads a hip-hop class at LSUS on Monday nights.

Shane Bevel/The Times

The beat is in HIP-HOP the feet

By Candice Leone
cleone@gannett.com

As you approach the room and hear the blaring rap songs booming from within, you might think you're outside a night club rather than a studio. Take a peek inside and spot a dozen tired bodies, struggling to imitate the motions of their leader. Although it may seem that the participants are being forced to join in some form of torture, they're all there voluntarily and they're all happy about it. They're learning to dance — hip-hop style.

"The key to everything when you're dancing is expression, but most importantly, the music," said Roshanda Spears, instructor of "Hip-Hop Dance for Beginners," a weekly continuing education class at LSUS. "Stay on the beat, and just be loose. Try not to think about it so much and just move."

Good advice to follow coming from someone who has taught more dance classes than she can remember. But although Spears has taught tap dance at the university for the past year and a half or so, this is the first session a hip-hop class has ever been offered.

"People were calling (LSUS) requesting a hip-hop dance class," she said. "(They



Shane Bevel/The Times

asked me if I could teach it, and I said, 'Sure.'"

Twelve people showed up on the first night of class to soak up a few hip-hop tips.

Brandon Rowell of Shreveport, the lone male participant, said he enrolled in the



Shane Bevel/The Times



ABOVE: Roshanda Spears (center) tells hip-hop class participants to "try not to think about it so much and just move." FAR LEFT: Kelsey Yerger (left), Lauren Sadasivan and Roshanda Spears practice hip-hop moves during dance class. LEFT: Eleanor Knox (left) and Courtney Scrubbs "cross the floor" from one side of the room to the other upon Roshanda Spears' instruction.

See HIP-HOP 2D

CONTACT KATHIE ROWELL — 459-3258 or krowell@gannett.com

Hip-hop: Class teaches participants all the right moves

Continued from 1D

course to brush up on his dance moves.

"I just wanted to kind of update some of my moves," said Rowell, 33. "I go out to clubs periodically and I'm kind of falling behind."

Rowell said by the end of the two-month course he hopes to learn how to mirror a move he saw on Usher's "Caught Up" video.

"I don't know what it's called, but they do this feet thing," he said. "It's pretty smooth."

Lisa and Marissa Miciotto, mother and daughter respectively, signed up for the course together to help Lisa learn some new moves. Marissa, a student at Loyola College Prep, has been involved in various types of dance since she was about 3 years old.

"(Marissa) dances and I want to learn," said Lisa Miciotto. "We went on a cruise together last spring and she said I had like two moves so she made me take (the class)."

It took a few minutes to loosen up the participants, but about 15 minutes into it, the class was relaxed and laughing, only somewhat struggling to follow Spears' lead. Above the sound blasting from the speakers

— blaring dance club favorites like Ciara's "Goodies," Terror Squad's "Lean Back" and various cuts by Juvenile — Spears encouraged her students to loosen up and keep trying.

"Step out. ... Bring it in. ... That's it. ... Shake your shoulders, shake your hips. ... Break it down. ...," Spears instructed.

The students broke into sweats as the dancing continued and each song pulsed into the next — which was more than OK for Tammy Sadler.

"I'm taking (the class) mostly for exercise and fun," said Sadler. "I've taken hip-hop exercise classes before and I just like to dance. I love all kinds of dancing."

Spears said she agrees the class can benefit participants' health.

"It can be considered aerobics and an exercise class, but you're not necessarily thinking about 'Oh, I gotta get my legs smaller' while you're dancing," she said. "But (the students) were sweating."

Spears said although tap is her favorite form of dance to teach, she likes hip-hop because "it's just free movement. There's no structure.

That's what makes it different from other art forms, like ballet, jazz and tap — they're more structured. (Hip-hop) is more closely linked to African dance."

Besides working as office manager at Dudley Enterprises, Spears splits her other time working with students in Shreveport Regional Arts Councils' Art Smart and Arts in Education programs, choreographing the "Yazzy" program at the Theatre of Performing Arts and various other projects.

Although she is super-busy, Spears doesn't rush or get frustrated with her hip-hop students who aren't catching on to a step automatically.

"I just work with them the best way I can, without stopping the class

from progressing and moving on," she said. "Eventually they'll catch on. You just have to have patience."

Spears suggests that people hoping to improve their dance skills just have fun with it and let it flow.

"What makes hip-hop what it is is that you exaggerate," she said. "Just be free. Try not to think about it so much and just move. A lot of (hip-hop) is what comes out of you and what you make out of it, so just be free."

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