

LDOE Curriculum Guide
Model Lesson Suggestions (Dance)

Dance

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FIFTH GRADE

Fifth Grade (HP 4)

Title Researching Careers and Professions in Dance
Time Frame Two 30-minute class periods and time for research
Overview: After exploring the variety of jobs related to the field of dance, the students identify, describe, compare, and contrast contemporary careers and professions in dance.

Standards Historical and Cultural Perspective and Creative Expression

Arts Benchmarks	
Identify, describe, and compare contemporary careers and professions in dance.	D-HP-M4
Engage in individual and collaborative use of technical dimensions of dance and explore how use of current technology can enhance dance ideas.	D-CE-M7

Foundation Skills Communication, Resource Access and Utilization

Student Understandings

Students generate questions regarding careers and professions in dance. They research information regarding careers and professions in dance to answer these questions and some questions generated by the teacher.

Vocabulary: career, profession

Materials and Equipment

library access, mentioned texts, chart paper

Prior Knowledge

Students can locate and select information using a variety of organizational features in grade-appropriate resources, including complex reference sources. Such resources include books, periodicals, Internet searching, *etc.*

Sample Lesson

Students generate questions they have about the topic/ theme based on an *SQPL* (Student Questions for Purposeful Learning) prompt ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)). An *SQPL* prompt is a statement generated by the teacher related to the material that would cause the students to wonder, challenge, and question. The statement does not have to be factually true as long as it provokes interest and curiosity (approximately 10 to 15 minutes).

State the following: **Dancers can only work by performing on stage, and they make little money.** Write it on the board or a piece of chart paper as you say it. Repeat it as necessary.

Divide students into groups of three to five and have them generate questions in response to the statement, **Dancers can only work by performing on stage, and they make little money.** As students generate questions, have them each record their questions on an individual piece of paper. After time is up, students share their questions. When students finish asking questions, contribute your own questions to the list (approximately 10 to 15 minutes).

Next, students select five questions from the class-generated list. Have them record their five questions on the back of their paper. These questions, in addition to the ones listed below, are to be used for their research assignment.

- Name a career in dance.
- What is the salary for that career?
- How long can one stay in that career?
- What are some negatives and positives to that career?

These texts are acceptable suggestion for research:

- *I Want to be A Dancer*, A Maze Productions Book
- *Career Ideas for Kids Who Like Music and Dance*, Diane Lindsey Reeves
- *Working in Music and Dance*, Margaret Mc Alphine

After a week of research, have students return to class with their research to share with their peers.

Suggestions for presentations can include:

- Multi-paragraph report
- Interview format (as if the student is questioning a person one on one)
- Poster with graphic design

Remind students that they should ask questions before they learn something new, then listen and look for answers to their questions. Students discuss why this is important based on their research experience (approximately five minutes).

Sample Assessments

Formative

Student responses during opening discussion regarding statement and teacher observation are used.

Summative

Research presentation is due at the end of the lesson.

Resources

Following are suggested texts for students to use during their research:

Maze, S. (1999). *I want to be a dancer*. FL: Harcourt Paperbacks.

McAlpine, M. (2005). *Working in music and dance (my future career)*. OH: Gareth Stevens Publishing.

Reeves, D.L. (2007). *Career ideas for kids who like music and dance*. New York: Checkmark Books.

This website is a great resource for dance histories and biographies titled "Meet the Artists":

<http://www.artsalive.ca/en/dan/meet/index.asp>.

Fifth Grade (CA 5)

Title Elements of Critique: What do you think?

Time Frame 45-minute class period

Overview Using critical development through class discussion, students will complete a graphic organizer critiquing an excerpt of a dance performance.

Standards Critical Analysis and Creative Expression

Arts Benchmarks	
Critique works of dance using expanded dance vocabulary.	D-CA-M5
Demonstrate the ability to use dance as a language and means of communication.	D-CE-M3

Foundation Skills Communication, Problem Solving and Citizenship

Student Understandings

Students use critical development through class discussion and critique an excerpt of a dance performance using a graphic organizer that utilizes expanded dance vocabulary.

Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs)	
Grade 5	English language arts
21b.	Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, completing graphic organizers) (ELA-2-M3)

Interdisciplinary Connections

Students use their knowledge of pre-writing to complete a graphic organizer that critiques a specific dance performance.

Vocabulary: elements of dance (time, space, force); concept/theme; performance; opinion; critic

Materials and Equipment

dance selection, graphic organizer, VHS/DVD player, television

Prior Knowledge

Students have experience with use of space (high, medium, low), pathways, time (fast or slow), and force (sharp, smooth, etc.). They have experience with uncovering the theme of a story, which they can apply to finding the theme of a dance piece. Students have been exposed to various types of performances and technical dimensions that affect a performance such as costumes, lighting, accompaniment, and stage atmosphere.

Sample Lesson

Pose the question, **What makes a dance performance worth watching?** Prompt the students with the following questions:

- Is the dance a good length?
- Are the dancers dancing together?

- Is the dance entertaining?
- Does it keep the audience's attention?
- Are the costumes appropriately aligned with the theme of the dance?
- Does the dance express a mood?
- Is the music appealing?

Generate a list of questions that the students suggest. To be a dance critic, one needs to examine specific areas in order to critique a particular work (10 to 15 minutes). Introduce the following areas and align the questions generated in the first part of the lesson to each of the four areas:

- Elements of Dance—Space, Time, and Force
- Concept/Theme
- Performance
- Personal Reaction/Opinion

Give each student a graphic organizer with each of the above areas. Go over the items in each section of the graphic organizer to make sure students understand their critique options. Show students a brief excerpt (3-5) minutes of a dance performance. Have students complete the attached graphic organizer, while viewing the piece (approximately 20 to 25 minutes).

After allowing students time to complete the graphic organizer, invite the class to share their opinions from each area. Point out if student responses are similar or different and have students explain their reasoning by offering specific examples from the video clip. Ask students if certain elements are more important than others in terms of making the performance worth watching and why (approximately five to ten minutes).

Sample Assessments

Formative

Students are assessed through their brainstorming activity on what makes a dance good. As the lesson progresses, observe student responses during their graphic organizer completion as well as the shared discussion at the conclusion of the class.

At the conclusion of the class, students submit their graphic organizers and are individually assessed on their responses.

Resources

Danmarks Radio, ZDF, RM Arts (Producer/Director). (1986). *An evening with Alvin Ailey: American Dance Theater* [Motion Picture]. USA: NVC Arts International.

Native American VHS—can be used to correspond with Social Studies GLE #27.

Cilento, W. (1999). *Spirit - A journey in dance, drums and song* [Motion Picture]. USA: Polygram USA Video

SIXTH GRADE

Sixth Grade (AP 1)

Title Mapping out Space

Time Frame Two 45-minute class periods

Overview Students explore the characteristics of space and then create a dance map, which demonstrates their knowledge of these characteristics. Students perform dances that utilize the elements of space for their peers.

Standards Aesthetic Perception and Creative Expression

Arts Benchmarks	
Understand the elements of dance and apply expanded dance vocabulary.	D-AP-M1
Use the elements of dance to execute basic movements with increased skill and develop a movement vocabulary.	D-CE-M2
Demonstrate the ability to use dance as a language and a means of communication.	D-CE-M3

Foundation Skills Communication, Linking and Generating Knowledge

Student Understandings

After exploring basic dance movements, utilizing the elements of space, students create a dance that portrays those elements of space. Students demonstrate the ability to use an expanded dance vocabulary as a means of communication when critiquing their peers' performances.

Vocabulary: space, shape, level, direction, pathway, size

Materials and Equipment

large paper (11" x 17"), crayons, markers, pencils, musical selection (teacher's choice), peer-evaluation rubric

Prior Knowledge

The students have some experience with moving safely in the classroom. Students are familiar with the elements of space: e.g., levels (high, middle, low), direction, floor pattern (pathways), shape, and size.

Sample Lesson

Begin lesson by informing students that they will use their knowledge of space to create a composition that utilizes all of the characteristics of space, which include shape, levels (high, middle, and low), direction (forward, backward, sideways, diagonal, turning), floor patterns (pathways), and size. At the beginning of the lesson, do a mini activity to review each of these characteristics (five minutes).

Explore body shape in space (approximately ten minutes). With students working in their own personal space, ask them to:

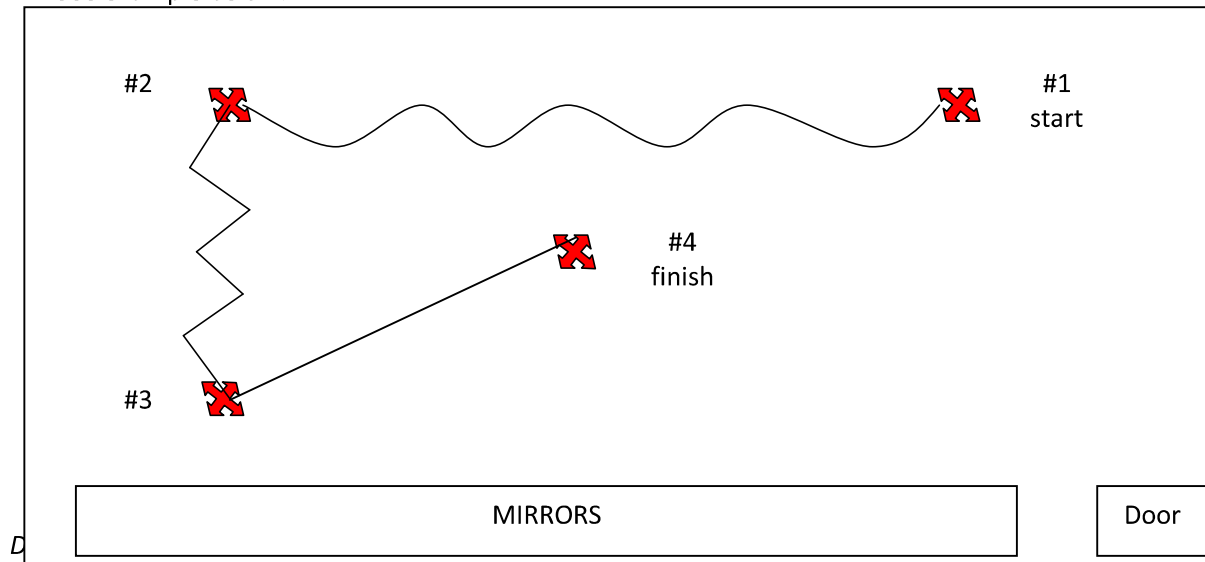
1. freeze in a shape
2. change that shape by moving one arm
3. change the shape by
 - a. moving a leg
 - b. moving their upper body

- c. looking another direction
4. change their level (high, medium, low)
5. change the direction of their shape (forward, backward, sideways, diagonal, turning)
6. explore a pathway in the room by instructing them to travel their pathway to another space in the room (zig zag, diagonal, spiral, straight line, curvy line, etc.).

Separate students into groups of three to four to express their individual understandings of space. Students create a map of their dance in their *learning logs*. *Learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)) are notebooks that students keep in the classroom in order to record ideas, questions, reactions, choreographic process, vocabulary, and new understandings (approximately 25 to 30 minutes).

- First, they draw a map of their dance using 3 to 4 pathways.
- Next, students should select a locomotor movement in which to travel the pathway.
- Then, depending on the movement, students will assign a level to that movement (e.g., crawling is considered a low-level movement and jumping is considered high).
- At the end of each pathway in their dance, students will freeze in a shape before traveling down the next pathway.

See example below:



Allow students 15 minutes to review their dances. Use the remainder of the class for peer performance. After each performance, have the observers identify the various aspects of space that they saw in the routine. Ask students to identify the types of pathways, levels, and directions that they observed in each routine by completing a peer evaluation rubric for each group (approximately 45 minutes).

Sample Assessments

Formative

Observe students exploring body shapes in space and creating dance maps that demonstrate basic locomotor movements, levels, and pathways.

Summative

Students complete a peer evaluation rubric to demonstrate the ability to recognize dance elements. Assess students' performances and maps with peer evaluation rubric.

Resources

Gilbert, A. G. *Creative dance for all ages: A conceptual approach*. Virginia: American Alliance for Health Physical.

Chappelle, E. (2000). *Contrast & Continuum: Music for Creative Dance*. (Vols. I-IV). Seattle, WA: Ravenna Ventures. These CDs contain a wide variety of music styles, sounds, and contrasts in tempo, texture and much more; and they are suitable for students of all ages.

EIGHTH GRADE

Eighth Grade (CA 2)

Title A Deeper Meaning in Dance
Time Frame Two 60-minute class periods
Overview Students observe a dance selection in class and use their knowledge of dance elements to identify how they are used to communicate choreographic intent or theme in a dance. They work in groups to create a dance that utilizes dance elements to express the choreographic intent. Dances are shared with classmates.

Standards Critical Analysis and Creative Expression

Arts Benchmarks	
Identify how elements of dance are used in a work to communicate the choreographic intent.	D-CA-M2
Use the elements of dance to execute basic movements with increased skill and develop a movement vocabulary.	D-CE-M2

Foundation Skills Communication, Problem Solving, Linking and Generating Knowledge

Student Understandings

Students observe a dance in class and identify how elements of dance are used in a work to communicate the choreographic intent or the theme of a dance. Students incorporate appropriate elements of dance into choreography to support the theme.

Vocabulary: choreographic intent, mood, theme, elements of dance

Materials and Equipment

video clip of examples, *learning logs*, choreographic intent/theme cards

Prior Knowledge

Students can identify basic examples of dance elements in various works of dance. They are familiar with the term *mood*.

Sample Lesson

Review how elements of dance are used in a work to communicate choreographic intent. Choreographic intent is the impact or mood that a choreographer, through the use of performers, desires to create or make real to the audience (e.g., to entertain, to raise questions, to surprise, to introduce a point of view). Choreographic intent is achieved through the use of dance elements, principles of design, and technical dimensions (10 minutes).

Briefly review the Elements of Dance—Use of Space, Time, and Force:

- Time: tempo (fast, medium, slow), meter (2/4, 3/4 4/4), music, no music
- Space: (levels) low, medium, high; (direction) forward, backward, sideways, diagonal, turning
- Energy, Movement Qualities: strong, light, sharp, smooth, suspended, vibratory, collapsed, swing

Review the use of the body: body parts, body shapes, body moves, relationships, balance, off-balance.

Students view a short dance piece that effectively portrays the incorporation of dance elements (20 to 25 minutes). A suggestion for the short dance piece would be *Endangered Species* by Danny Grossman, which can be found under the *Mediatheque* video gallery on Arts Alive. Have students respond to the following:

- Identify the main element(s) used in this particular dance piece.
- Make a statement that correctly describes how an element of dance was used in this dance piece.
- What is the choreographic intent or theme of the dance?
- Create a story that would describe what is happening in this particular dance piece.

After the class has completed the above activities appropriately, students will create choreography that incorporates the elements of dance. Assign students to groups of four or five. Groups will choose a theme or choreographic intent card. Suggestions for cards:

- Refugees carrying all of their belongings on their backs
- A Cubist painting coming to life
- The inside of a machine
- Traffic on a freeway
- Kites flying

Allow students the remainder of the class period to work in their groups. Students record in their *learning logs* the choreographic intent/theme and elements of dance that they will use in their choreography to achieve this intent. Students discuss in small groups how these elements fit the theme they chose (30 minutes).

Activity/ Final Class Period (approximately 60 minutes)

After conducting a basic warm-up with the students, allow students 15 minutes to review their dance and discuss their elements. Have students share the dances with their classmates. After each performance, observers identify the intent, elements, and why the elements were or were not appropriate for the intent. What would have made them more appropriate?

Sample Assessments

Formative

Question and answer during the review discussion with the whole class, teacher observation during group work, and teacher observation during the presentation of each group's dance will be used.

Summative

Based on teacher-determined criteria, evaluate *learning logs* at the culmination of the lesson.

Resources

National Arts Centre. (2008). *Mediatheque* (photo and video gallery). Retrieved February 18, 2008, from <http://www.artsalive.ca/en/dan/mediatheque/photos/photos.asp?offset=0>

NINTH GRADE

Ninth Grade (AP 5)

Title Collaborating on Duets

Time Frame Two 55-minute lessons

Overview Students choreograph duets and reflect on the collaborative process.

Standards Creative Expression, Aesthetic Perception

Arts Benchmarks	
Discuss the significance of collaboration and other group dynamics in creating, performing, and observing dance.	D-AP-H5
Incorporate improvisation, choreography, and choreographic forms into dance compositions.	D-CE-H4
Present and evaluate dance compositions designed to display skills and techniques.	D-CE-H5

Foundation Skills Communication, Problem Solving, Citizenship

Student Understandings

Students demonstrate an understanding of the significance of the collaborative process when they choreograph duets and reflect on the collaborative process.

Vocabulary: collaboration, negotiation, compromise

Materials and Equipment

open space, sound equipment

Prior Knowledge

Students have basic compositional skills and an understanding of the elements of dance: space, time, energy.

Sample Lesson

Each lesson begins with a modern dance warm-up (see Appendix A).

Lesson 1

After the warm-up, assign students into groups of two. Each group of two choreographs a one-minute duet based on contrasting dance elements. Be very specific with the assignment of contrasting dance elements. Some examples of assignments are “quick and slow,” “little and big,” “curved and jagged,” “strong and weak.” Emphasize that *both* students in the duet are to contribute equally to the choreography.

Students use the rest of the class period to choreograph the duets.

Lesson 2

After the warm-up, students take ten minutes to rehearse the duets choreographed in the previous class period. Then each group shows their duet to the class. After the showing, discuss the advantages and

disadvantages of collaborating on choreography and ask the students to reflect on the process in their *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)).

Learning log prompts:

- Did you feel that you and your partner contributed equally to the choreography?
- How was the duet different than if you had choreographed it by yourself?
- Were you able to express your ideas in the duet?
- Did you have to compromise your ideas?
- What was the best part of the collaborative process for you?
- What was the most difficult part of the collaborative process for you?
- As an observer of the other duets, did you see anything unexpected that may have been the result of collaboration?

Sample Assessments

Formative

Observe the choreographic process, noting whether the students worked collaboratively on the project and worked with contrasting dance elements. Review the *learning logs*.

Resources

Blom, L., & Chaplin, L. (1982). *The intimate act of choreography*. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Ellfeldt, L. (1988). *A primer for choreographers*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Humphrey, D. (1959). *The art of making dances*. New York: Grove Press.

Ninth Grade (CA 4)

Title Social Themes and “Rainbow Round My Shoulder” by Donald McKayle

Time Frame Two 55-minute lessons

Overview Students view Donald McKayle’s “Rainbow Round My Shoulder” and create their own chain-gang studies and discuss how their experiences affect their interpretation and reaction to the dance.

Standards Creative Expression, Critical Analysis

Arts Benchmarks	
Describe the social theme conveyed in a dance and how personal experience influences interpretation of dance.	D-CA-H4
Utilize dance as an expression of individual ideas and feelings.	D-CE-H3
Incorporate improvisation, choreography, and choreographic forms into dance compositions.	D-CE-H4

Foundation Skills Communication, Problem Solving, Citizenship

Student Understandings

Students demonstrate an understanding of how personal experiences affect interpretations of social themes in dances when they view excerpts of “Rainbow Round My Shoulder,” create their own chain-gang studies, and discuss their experiences and interpretations.

Vocabulary: work gang, dance phrase

Materials and Equipment

TV/DVD or computers with Internet access, notebook and pen, strips of soft cloth

Sample Lesson

Background Information

A work gang is a line of prisoners who are chained together at the ankles while they perform physical labor. Work gangs were used mostly in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. Alabama began to use chain gangs again in the 1990s. The reason chain gangs were instituted is not clear. Was it for punishment? Was it to perpetuate slavery? Was it to keep the prisoners from escaping? Was it to deter crime? Was it for restitution for the crimes committed?

Donald McKayle (1930-) is an African-American modern dance and Broadway choreographer. Some of the many awards he has received are the Martha Hill Lifetime Achievement Award, Dance Magazine Award, the American Dance Legacy Institute’s Distinguished and Innovative Leadership Award, and a medal from the Kennedy Center recognizing McKayle as *Master of African-American Choreography*. McKayle is now a professor of dance at the University of California Irvine. “Rainbow Round My Shoulder” is one of McKayle’s most famous dances. It depicts men on a chain gang. The rainbow is the arced pick-ax. The movement is full of strikes, kicks, and anger.

Lesson 1

In a lecture setting, give the students background information on chain gangs and Donald McKayle. Show an excerpt of McKayle's piece, "Rainbow Round My Shoulder."

Discuss McKayle's depiction of chain gangs in his dance. Sample questions for discussion include the following:

- Do you think the depiction of chain gangs was realistic?
- What types of movement did you see?
- Did the movement evoke a reaction from you? If so, what?
- Did the piece make you uncomfortable?
- Was the piece beautiful?
- Is it possible for a dance based on a disturbing subject to be beautiful?
- Do you think your personal experiences influenced your interpretation of the dance?

Lesson 2

Students participate in a modern dance warm-up that incorporates the desired skills.

Divide students into small groups and supply the students with strips of soft cloth they can use to tie their ankles together to make a chain gang. Students create a repeatable eight-count dance phrase that travels from one side of the studio to the other. The dance phrase should reflect the emotions of prisoners in a chain gang. Students use the rest of the class period to rehearse their phrase and show it to the class.

Students reflect on their chain gang experience in their *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)): "How did dancing in a chain gang affect your impression of prisoner chain gangs?"

Sample Assessments

Formative

Observe participation and cooperation in chain gang studies and reviews reflections in *learning logs*.

Resources

Cass, J. (1993). *Dancing through history*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentiss Hall.

Reinhart, C. L. S. (Executive Producer), & Lacy, Madison (Producer and Director). (2001). *Free to dance*. [Video]. United States: National Black Programming Consortium.

A video clip of "Rainbow Round My Shoulder" may be retrieved from the following website. Scroll down to 1959 and click on the video icon at the left of the screen. (Additional clips may be found at video websites.)

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/freetodance/timeline/timeline6.html>

ELEVENTH GRADE

Eleventh Grade (CA 2)

Title Interpreting “Sweet Dreams”

Time Frame 45 – 60 minutes

Overview Students view Jiri Kylian’s “Sweet Dreams,” improvise with an apple, and discuss choreographic intent.

Standards Creative Expression, Critical Analysis

Arts Benchmarks	
Explain how elements of dance communicate the choreographic intent in various works.	D-CA-H2
Use the elements of dance to develop technical skills and expand or refine movement vocabulary.	D-CE-H2

Foundation Skills Communication, Problem Solving, Citizenship

Student Understandings

Students demonstrate an understanding of how elements of dance communicate choreographic intent when they warm-up by improvising with an apple, using the elements of dance, and viewing “Sweet Dreams.” They discuss how Kylian communicated the idea of dreams in his dance.

Vocabulary

Space: level, direction, shape, symmetry, asymmetry, positive/negative space, focus

Energy: sustained, vibratory, swinging, suspended, collapsing

Time: tempo, momentum, duration, accent, meter, rhythm, motif
choreographic intent

Materials and Equipment

video of Jiri Kylian’s “Sweet Dreams,” apples, dance space, learning logs, and pen

Prior Knowledge

Students should be familiar with the elements of dance.

Sample Lesson

Divide the students into groups of three or four. Give an apple to one dancer in each group. Ask the students to pass the apple among them and to incorporate the apple in their movement. Encourage them to explore using a variety of shapes, body parts, levels, directions, energies, and times. Allow ten to fifteen minutes for this episode.

Sometimes meaning in dance can be obscure or ambiguous. Many times it invites a great diversity of interpretation. The first clue as to a work’s meaning comes before the dance begins, in the form of its title. Provide five to ten minutes.

Lead a class discussion. Given the title “Sweet Dreams,” in what ways would the students manipulate the elements of dance? Other questions include the following:

- What are the characteristics of a dream?
- How can dance portray a dream-like quality?
- In what specific ways might you use the elements of dance, space, time, and energy to convey your ideas about dreams?

“Sweet Dreams” uses a variety of techniques to evoke a dream-like quality. Scenes seem disjointed from one another as they pass from space to space in windows of light. Strange images and analogies are suggested in the movements of the dancers. Unifying the piece is the continuing presence of apples. Dancers stand on them, grab them in their mouths, sandwich them between each other, and pass them among themselves. At one point, a sleeping dancer is deluged by a river of apples pouring down on her.

Show a video of Jiri Kylian’s “Sweet Dreams.” Students pay attention to various elements of dance incorporated in the choreography as they watch the video. This is a rich, complex work that students may wish to view more than once. This episode will take approximately 15 minutes.

During the last few minutes of the class, students respond to the following questions in their *learning logs* ([view literacy strategy descriptions](#)):

- How were elements of dance used to convey the idea of a dream in the video?
- How was space used to create a dream-like quality?
- How did variations in energy portray different moods?
- Did time play an important role in creating the theme of the work?

Sample Assessments

Formative

Observe students as they pass the apple from one to another. Assess their understanding and skill in incorporating variations in space, time, and energy. *Learning log* writings will demonstrate an understanding of how the elements of dance communicate the choreographic intent in “Sweet Dreams.”

Resources

Blom, L., & Chaplin, L. (1982). *The intimate act of choreography*. University of Pittsburgh Press.
 Humphrey, D. (1959). *The art of making dances*, New York: Grove Press.

This video includes Jiri Kylian’s “Sweet Dreams”:

Kylian, J. (1995). *Jiri Kylian’s black and white ballets*, Image Entertainment.

Eleventh Grade (CA 4)

Title Social Themes and Urban Bush Women

Time Frame 45-55 minutes

Overview Students view excerpts of Urban Bush Women dances and discuss the social themes presented through the choreography.

Standards Creative Expression, Critical Analysis

Arts Benchmarks	
Describe the social theme conveyed in a dance and how personal experience influences interpretation of dance.	D-CA-H4

Foundation Skills Communication, Linking and Generating Knowledge, Citizenship

Student Understandings

Students demonstrate an understanding of how personal experience influences the interpretation of social themes in dances when they view and discuss choreography by Urban Bush Women.

Materials and Equipment

video of Urban Bush Women

Sample Lesson

Urban Bush Women, founded by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, is a Brooklyn-based, predominately female African-American dance company. Urban Bush Women’s message is more than entertainment. They hope their art encourages people to become involved, responsible members of their communities. [Urban Bush Women](#) uses dance to tell the stories of disenfranchised people.

Three well-known pieces of Zollar and the Urban Bush Women are “Batty Moves,” “Girlfriends,” and “Give Your Hands to Struggle.” “Batty” is a word used to describe the buttocks. The piece asks the audience to look at their ideas of body image and appropriate movement. “Girlfriends” looks into the relationships of college girlfriends. “Give Your Hands to Struggle” depicts the African-American experience in movement.

Students view a piece of Urban Bush Women choreography. After watching the choreography, the students participate in a guided discussion about the social theme of the piece.

Questions for discussion:

- How was the social theme depicted in the dance?
- Can you relate to the theme in any way?
- Do you think you would react differently to the piece if you were the opposite sex, a different race, or a different generation?

Sample Assessments

Formative

Observe the students participating in discussion.

Summative

Students write a one-page essay describing how the social theme is depicted in an Urban Bush Women piece and how their personal experiences influenced their reactions to and interpretations of the work.

Resources

Women's work: urban bush women. (1996). (Video).

Urban Bush Women website contains information on the dance company:

<http://www.urbanbushwomen.org/home.html>

TWELFTH GRADE

Twelfth Grade (AP 6)

Title Examining Attitudes toward Six Dance Compositions by African-American Choreographers: *Dancing in the Light*

Time Frame 60 minutes (may be extended)

Overview Students view and reflect on *Dancing in the Light: Six Dance Compositions by African-American Choreographers*.

Standard Aesthetic Perception

Arts Benchmarks	
Question/weigh evidence and information, examine intuitive reactions, and articulate personal attitudes toward dance.	D-AP-H6
Understand the elements of dance and apply advanced dance vocabulary.	D-AP-H1

Foundation Skills Communication, Problem Solving, Linking and Generating Knowledge

Student Understandings

Students examine attitudes and reactions towards dance when they watch and reflect on the works of six African-American choreographers.

Vocabulary: objectivity, subjectivity, intuitive response

Materials and Equipment

Dancing in the Light video, learning logs, and pen

Sample Lesson

Lesson one

Dancing in the Light features six historic works, presented chronologically, by African-American choreographers:

- (1) "Ostrich" by Asadata Dafora (1932)
- (2) "Barrelhouse Blues" by Katherine Dunham (1938)
- (3) "Strange Fruit" by Pearl Primus (1943)
- (4) "Mourner's Bench" by Talley Beatty (1947)
- (5) "Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder" by Donald McKayle (1959)
- (6) "D-Man in the Waters – Section 1" by Bill T. Jones (1989)

In a classroom setting, introduce the students to the African-American choreographers featured in the video, *Dancing in the Light*.

Asadata Dafora was an African drummer from Sierra Leone. "Ostrich" is an early modern dance composition which fuses African movements with Western staging.

Katherine Dunham was trained as an anthropologist. She was an innovator in modern dance. For over three decades she directed the Katherine Dunham Dance Company, choreographing more than 90 dances.

Pearl Primus was also trained as an anthropologist and her dances were influenced by the work of Katherine Dunham. She focused her dances on social injustice and approached her choreography as a tool for reform.

Talley Beatty danced with the Katherine Dunham Dance Company for a number of years before forming his own dance company to tour the United States. He collaborated with Duke Ellington in several works. He is noted for his incorporation of jazz into his work.

Donald McKayle studied with Pearl Primus and others at the New Dance Group. He danced with a number of substantial companies before becoming an independent choreographer. He uses story and dramatic characters to deal with emotional issues.

Bill T. Jones is a contemporary African American dancer, choreographer, and artistic director based in New York City. Many of his compositions tackle social issues like racism and homophobia, and have been labeled as “victim art.”

Show the first half of the video to the class (35-45 minutes). After seeing each selection, pause the video to let students answer these questions in their *learning logs*:

- Did the choreographer express a particular attitude or idea in his work? What was it?
- Do you empathize with the choreographer’s point of view?
- Did viewing the dance change your opinion on an idea?

Lesson two

Show the second half of the video to the class. After seeing each selection, pause the video to answer the same questions as they did in the last lesson (35-45 minutes).

After seeing all six dances, students discuss the following in their *learning logs* (10-15 minutes):

Select a dance that was the most affective. Describe why you found it to be moving?

Sample Assessments

Formative

Review *learning logs* to assess students’ understanding of ways to use dance to express an individual’s ideas and feelings.

Resources

Kultur Video. (2007). *Dancing in the light: Six dance compositions by African-American choreographers/ Asadata Dafora, Katherine Dunham, Pearl Primus, Talley Beatty, Donald McKayle, Bill T. Jones*. [Motion Picture].
