

# ▶ **UT DANCE ENSEMBLE**

**Del Valle Grade 8**

**Fri. February 12, 2010**

**Del Valle & Ojeda Middle Schools**

## ✓ **GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

- Students will learn some of the language that describes dance performances
- Students will learn what to watch for in dance performance
- Students may be asked to discuss or write about their experience or write a critical analysis of the performance

## **MEDIA**

### **UT DANCE VIDEO**

00:00-00:17	Introduction
00:17-02:48	Rehearsing "Three Tangos"
02:49-04:22	Rehearsing "ZoomInn"
04:23-05:49	UT Dancers and "Footloose"
05:50-05:53	Closing

## **VOCABULARY**

**Ballet** – A highly technical form of dance with its own vocabulary. A composition of movements usually set to music that can tell a story, set a mood, or just use beautiful patterns in space.

**Modern Dance** - "Modern dance was developed in America nearly 100 years ago as a reaction against the rules and structure of ballet. While ballet dancers strive to appear weightless, modern dancers embrace gravity." Garth Fagan Dance Lesson <http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/cuesheet/pdf/DDDSA.pdf>

**Contemporary Dance** – A form of dance influenced by both classical ballet and modern dance.

**Ballet vocabulary**– Descriptions of dance movements such as pirouette, plie, on pointe. A significant part of ballet terminology is in the French language, because ballet became formalized in France.

**Choreography** - (Greek, literally "dance-writing", also known as "dance composition") the art of making sequences of movement

**Choreographer** – person who create the dance

**Work** – A musical composition or dance creation that is made and or valued for an artistic rather than a practical function.

**Company/Troupe/Ensemble** – A group of musicians, singers, dancers or actors who perform together.

**Repertoire** – Pieces that a player or company is prepared to perform.

**Narrative** – tells a story

**Space/Time/Force** – Watch how the space is used; how quickly or slowly they move; and with what intensity

# BACKGROUND

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Three purposes of dance:  
Ceremonial  
Recreational  
Artistic Expression

# ? CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

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What is dance?

Why dance?

# REAL WORLD CONNECTIONS

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Television Shows Featuring Dance:

Dancing with the Stars  
So You Think You Can  
Dance

America's Best Dance  
Crew  
Dance You're A\*\* Off

Glee

Films with Dance:

High School Musical  
Hairspray  
Little Miss Sunshine

The Company  
Bring It On  
Dirty Dancing

Save the Last Dance  
Footloose  
Staying Alive

Singers who dance: Michael Jackson, Jennifer Lopez, Madonna, Britney Spears, etc.

# AT THE PERFORMANCE

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As you watch each performer, notice Number of turns or leaps

- Speed
- Going up and down on and off *pointe*
- Direction
- Recovery: stopping still; quiet, controlled landings
- Height of leg—extension
- Height of leap—elevation
- Sustaining when airborne
- Balance
- Line, alignment
- Partnering: lifts, conversational flow
- Ensemble
- Melding; no separation of steps
- Ease, confidence, bravura, attack, freedom, security

From *How to Watch Dance, Barefoot to Balanchine* by Mary Kerner, Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1991

# ! AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

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**Critique Assignment** (adapted from Joyce Payne' lesson at <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3338/>)

A critique is an oral or written discussion strategy used to analyze, describe, and interpret works of art. Critiques help students hone their persuasive oral and writing, information-gathering, and justification skills.

Below is a sample set of focus questions for an art critique related to four major areas of art criticism: description, analysis, interpretation, judgment. Pick one of the dances performed by the UT Dancers and write a paragraph answering the questions for one area of focus.

## **Description**

Describe the work without using value words such as "beautiful" or "ugly":

- What is the title and who is (are) the artist(s)?
- When and where was the work created?
- Describe the elements of the work.
- Describe the technical qualities of the work.
- Describe the subject matter. What is it all about?

## **Analysis**

Describe how the work is organized as a complete composition:

- How is the work constructed or planned (i.e., beginning, middle, end sections)?
- Identify some of the similarities throughout the work (i.e., repetition of movements, patterns).
- Identify some of the points of emphasis in the work (i.e., specific scene, figure, movement).
- If the work has subjects or characters, what are the relationships between or among them?

## **Interpretation**

Describe how the work makes you think or feel:

- Describe the expressive qualities you find in the work. What expressive language would you use to describe the qualities (i.e., tragic, ugly, funny)?
- Does the work remind you of other things you have experienced (i.e., analogy or metaphor)?
- How does the work relate to other ideas or events in the world and/or in your other studies?

## **Judgment or Evaluation**

Present your opinion of the work's success or failure:

- What qualities of the work make you feel it is a success or failure? (What do you think they were trying to "say" and did it work?)
- Compare it with dances that you think are good or bad.
- What reason can you list to help others understand what it made you feel?
- Do you feel this work is original or not original?

## February 12<sup>th</sup> pieces:

“The Well”	Choreographer: Chell Parkins
“ZoomInn”	Choreographer: Yacov Sharir
“Three Tangos”	Choreographer: José Bustamante

### OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

1. How many performers were there?
2. Did they use props, costumes, or makeup?
3. Did you notice the use of a dance soloist versus a dance chorus?
4. What mood(s) did the dance make you feel?
5. Was there a story line you could follow?

### MOVEMENTS

1. Did the dancers move specific body parts in a unique way?  
(arms, hands, fingers, feet, head, shoulders...)
2. Was there a specific movement you noticed them use a lot?
3. What shapes did you notice the dancers make with their whole body?
4. If you drew a line following a dancer’s movement, what shape would it form?
5. How did they use the space on the stage? (front, back, left, right, center)
6. How did they use high/medium/low levels in their movements? (above, at, on floor levels)
7. Did the dancers move together or separately? (unison, non-unison)
8. Did you notice jumping or leaping?
9. Did you notice one dancer lifting up another dancer?
10. Did you notice dancers working as partners?

### RHYTHM & MUSIC & MOOD

1. Could you feel a steady beat in the music and dance?
2. Did you feel accented beats in the music and dance?
3. How did the music help set the moods you felt as you watched the dancers?