

## *Appendix 2: Glossary for Dance*

Terms in italics are reproduced from the glossary of the National Core Arts: Dance Standards by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards.

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- AB:** a two-part compositional form in which the second part differs from the first
- ABA:** a three-part compositional form in which the first and last parts are the same and the middle part is different
- ABC:** a three-part compositional form, often with a moderate beginning, slow middle, and fast ending
- abstract:** to simplify or exaggerate movement to serve the purpose of the composition; a dance movement that has been removed from a representational context
- accent:** a stress or emphasis on a specific beat or movement
- accumulation:** a choreographic device in which a sequence is repeated with the addition of one or more movements each time; for example, 1, 1-2, 1-2-3, etc.
- aesthetic criteria:** standards by which to judge a work of art or a performance
- aesthetic:** a set of principles concerned with the nature and appreciation of beauty
- agility:** the ability to change the position of one's body quickly, control the movement of one's body, and move with ease or kinetic flow
- alignment:** the process of adjusting the skeletal and muscular system to gravity to support effective functionality
- alternative performance venue:** a performance site other than a standard Western style theater (for example, classroom, site specific venue, or natural environment)
- anatomical principles:** the way the human body's skeletal, muscular and vascular systems work separately and in coordination
- artistic criteria:** aspects of craft and skill used to fulfill artistic intent
- artistic expression:** the manifestations of artistic intent through dance, drama music, poetry, fiction, painting, sculpture or other artistic media. In dance, this involves the dance and the dancers within a context
- artistic intent:** the purpose, main idea, and expressive or communicative goals(s) of a dance composition study, work, or performance
- artistic statement:** an artist's verbal or written introduction of their work from their own perspective to convey the deeper meaning or purpose

**asymmetrical:** a body shape or choreographic formation in which two sides are not alike

**audience etiquette:** parameters of acceptable behavior for audience members at performances

**balance:** 1. the ability to maintain one's stability; 2. in composition, the arrangement of sections of a dance and/or the use of the performance space to create a sense of equilibrium

**ballet:** a form of dance that originated in the Italian Renaissance courts, then made its way to France, where it continued to develop as an art form. There are several different styles of ballet—from Cecchetti (French) to Vaganova (Russian) and Balanchine (American).

**bend:** to bring two body parts closer together

**body patterning:** neuromuscular patterns (for example, core-distal, head-tail, homologous [upper-lower], homo-lateral [same-side], cross-lateral [crossing the body midline])

**body-mind principles:** concepts explored and/or employed to support body-mind connections (for example, breath, awareness of the environment, grounding, movement initiation, use of imagery, intention, inner-outer, stability-mobility)

**body-use:** The ways in which movement patterns and body parts are used in movement and dance practice; descriptive method of identifying patterns

**bound movement:** an “effort element” from Laban Movement Analysis in which energy flow is constricted

**canon:** a sequence in which identical movement phrases are begun by different dancers successively so that the phrases overlap in a manner similar to that of a musical “round.”

**capstone project:** a culminating performance-based assessment that determines what 12th graders should know and be able to do in various educational disciplines; usually based on research and the development of a major product or project that is an extension of the research

**center stage:** at or toward the center of the performance space

**chance dance:** a choreographic form that allows the structure to be determined by some random outside element or rule (for example, flipping a coin or rolling dice).

**choreograph:** to arrange, compose, or create a dance

**choreographer:** a person who creates and/or arranges movements to create a dance

**choreographic devices:** manipulation of dance movement, sequences or phrases (repetition, inversion, accumulation, canon, retrograde, call and response)

**cinquain:** a five-line poem that consists of a noun, two adjectives, three verbs, a four-word phrase, and another noun or synonym at the end

**codified movement:** common motion or motions set in a particular style that often have specific names and expectations associated with it

**competitive exchange:** a process or format of dance in which participants take turns trying to demonstrate spectacular movement, as in “call and response” and or “call and echo”

**concentration:** the act or process of applying close, undivided attention

**contact improvisation:** a dance style in which two or more dancers spontaneously create movement by using close physical connectedness and weight sharing

**context cues:** Information obtained from the dance that helps one understand or comprehend meaning and intent from a movement, group of movements, or a dance as a whole; requires seeing relationships between movements and making inferences about the meaning or intent often gleaned from visual, auditory, or sensory stimuli

**contraction:** movements generated by muscular tension, often accompanied by a shortening or pulling inward of any part of the body

**contrapuntal:** an adjective that describes the noun counterpoint; music that has at least two melodic lines (voices) played simultaneously against each other; in dance, at least two movement patterns, sequences or phrases danced simultaneously using different body parts or performed by different dancers

**contrast:** the use of movements with different or opposite dynamics, shapes, or use of space

**cool-down:** movements and movement phrases designed to cool down core body temperature and stretch muscles after dancing

**coordination:** the ability to use the senses together with the parts of the body, or to use two or more body parts together

**core:** the muscular and skeletal structures in the center of the body, including the abdomen, spine, and pelvis.

**counterbalance:** the process by which balance is maintained by placing an equal weight in the opposite direction

**crawl:** to move low to the ground on hands and knees while employing cross-lateral movements of hands and legs.

**creative process:** the process by means of which an artist creates a work of dance; the steps include:

Determining the audience for and purpose of a performance

Improvising (alone and with a group) by using the elements of dance (space, time, and energy/force) to create, experience, and discover dance

Gathering and interpreting information from diverse sources to create dances

Choosing elements, principles, and skills to choreograph dances

Reflecting for the purposes of self-evaluation and improvement

Refining dances through feedback and self-reflection

Presenting dances to others

**cultural movement practice:** physical movements of a dance that are associated with a particular country, community, or people

**dance literacy:** the total experience of dance learning that includes the doing and knowing about dance: dance skills and techniques, dance making, knowledge and understanding of dance vocabulary, dance history, dance from different cultures, dance genres, repertory, performers and choreographers, dance companies, and dance notation and preservation

**dance movement principles:** fundamentals related to the craft and skill with which dance movement is performed (for example, the use of dynamic alignment, breath support, core support, rotation, initiation and sequencing, and weight shift)

**dance phrase:** a brief sequence of related movements that have a sense of continuity and artistic or rhythmic completion

**dance structures:** the organization of choreography and movement to fulfill the artistic intent of a dance or dance study (for example, AB, ABA or theme and variation); often referred to as choreographic form

**dance study:** a short dance that is comprised of several dance phrases based on an artistic idea

**dance techniques:** the tools and skills needed to produce a particular style of movement

**dance terminology:** vocabulary used to describe dance and dance experiences:

**simple dance terminology** (Tier 1/PreK-2): basic pedestrian language (for example, locomotor words walk, run, tip-toe, slither, roll, crawl, jump, march, and gallop; and non-locomotor words bend, twist, turn, open and close)

**basic dance terminology** (Tier 2/grades 3-5): vocabulary used to describe dance movement techniques, structures, works, and experiences that are widely shared in the field of dance (for example, stage terminology, compositional vocabulary, language defining dance structures and devices, anatomical references, dance techniques such as alignment or “line”)

**genre-specific dance terminology** (Tier 3/grades 6 up): words used to describe movement within specific dance forms ballet, contemporary, culturally-specific dance, funk, hip-hop, jazz, modern, tap, and others (for example, in Polynesian dance (Hula), auwana, kahiko, halau, kaholo, uwehe, ami); in ballet: glissade, pas de bouree, pas de chat, arabesque; in jazz: kick ball change, pencil turn, jazz walk, jazz run; in modern: contraction, triplets, spiral, pivot turn; and in tap: shuffle-step, cramp roll, riff, wing, time step

**dance work:** a complete dance that has a beginning, middle (development), and end

**diminution:** a choreographic device in which movement phrases are reduced in size or extent

**direction:** the line or course along which a dancer or body part is moving in relation to the body's center

**distal:** the position of a body part or location situated away from the center of the body or from the point of attachment

**double-time:** a movement performed in half the originally demonstrated amount of time

**downstage:** at or toward the front of the performance space

**duet:** a dance performed by two people

**duple:** a meter in which the basic unit of pulse recurs in groups of two

**duration:** the total length of time in the course of which a movement or dance occurs

**dynamics:** the qualities or characteristics of movement which lend expression and style; also called "efforts," or "energy" (for example, lyrical, sustained, quick, light, or strong)

**echo:** to repeat a movement exactly as shown

**effort actions:** specific actions (as defined by Rudolf von Laban) that combine the efforts of time (quick/sustained), weight (powerful/delicate), and space (direct/indirect) into eight unique actions: dab, float, glide, slash, wring, punch, flick, and press

**elements of dance:** the key components of movement; movement of the body using space, time, and energy; often referred to as the elements of movement; see Elements of Dance Organizer by Perpich Center for Arts Education (used with permission).

**embody:** to physicalize a movement, concept, or idea through the body

**endurance:** the ability of the muscles to perform physical tasks over a period of time without becoming fatigued

**energy:** the dynamic quality, force, attach, weight, and flow of movement

**light:** a quality of movement that minimizes the appearance of strength and/or weight

**sharp:** sudden, percussive quality in a movement

**smooth:** continuous, sustained quality in a movement

**strong:** a quality of movement that maximizes the appearance of strength and/or weight

**free-flow:** an uncontrolled, unrestricted quality of movement

**bound-flow:** a contained, controlled quality of movement

**evaluative criteria:** the definition of values and characteristics with which dance can be assessed; factors to be considered to attain an aesthetically satisfying dance composition or performance

**exaggeration:** a choreographic device in which movements or movement phrases are enlarged or altered beyond the original proportion

**expansion:** a choreographic device in which movement or movement phrases are made larger or broader or become more fully developed

**explore:** investigate multiple movement possibilities to learn more about an idea

**expression:** the nuances (of tempo, dynamics, phrasing, and so forth) by means of which the performance of a movement conveys ideas and feelings

**extension:** reaching or stretching any part of the body away from its point of origin or the body's center

**external rotation:** a pivoting of a bone in a joint away from the midline (in the legs, the degree is commonly referred to as "turn-out")

**flexibility:** the ability to move the joints and muscles through a full range of motion

**flexion:** bending or folding any part of the body toward its point of origin or the body's center

**flow:** a quality of energy whereby movements can either be contained or free flowing

**fluent:** moving smoothly from part to part and movement to movement, or demonstrating transitional flow.

**focus:** 1. the ability to concentrate and keep one's attention fixed on the matter at hand; 2. the direction in which the dancer is looking and the manner in which the dancer is relating (single, multi, direct, indirect); 3. the point towards which the audience's attention is directed

**form/design:** a principle of choreography/composition; the organization and sequencing of sections of a dance into an overall whole

**free flowing movement:** an "effort element" from Laban Movement Analysis in which energy is continuous

**fullest extent:** a full, physical engagement and commitment to the quality of a performance

**functional alignment:** the organization of the skeleton and musculature in a relationship to gravity that supports safe and efficient movement while dancing

**gallop:** a two-beat stride during which both legs are off the ground simultaneously: either the right foot stays back and the left foot is forward or the left foot stays back and the right foot is forward; one foot always chases the other

**general space:** 1. spatial orientation that is not focused towards one area of a studio or stage.  
2. also, the space through which a dancer travels (for example, shared or common space)

**genre:** a category of dance characterized by similarities in form, style, purpose, or subject matter (for example, ballet, hip hop, modern, ballroom, cultural practices)

**grand plié:** a ballet term for a deep knee bend in which the heels come off of the ground, except in second position

**grapevine:** a series of side steps in which one foot crosses in front of and behind the other foot (for example, step left side, cross right foot in front, step left side, cross right foot behind)

**halftime:** a movement performed in twice the originally demonstrated amount of time, by slowing down the beat. For example, an eight-count rise becomes a sixteen-count rise

**hop:** to spring into the air by taking off from one foot and landing on the same foot

**improvise:** to create or compose with little or no planning, but with purpose

**intentional energy:** energy/force that is purposeful and expresses the ideas and feelings that the dancer or choreographer intended

**internal rotation:** a pivoting of a bone in a joint toward the midline

**jump:** to spring into the air by taking off from and landing on both feet

**juxtapose:** in choreography, placing two or more different dance phrases or elements side by side, or one in front of the other, so that they are performed simultaneously

**kinesphere:** the “bubble” of space immediately surrounding a dancer, including all levels and directions that the dancer can reach by extending the limbs and torso (synonym: personal space).

**kinesthetic awareness:** pertaining to sensations and understanding of bodily movement

**Labanotation:** a system for recording and analyzing movements of the human body using a vertical three-line staff to represent the dancer and symbols to represent points on the dancer's body and the direction, level, and duration of movements; named after the Hungarian dance theorist Rudolf Laban

**leap:** to spring into the air by taking off from one foot and landing on the other foot

**level:** the dancer's location in relation to the floor; high, middle, and low

**locomotor:** movement that travels from one location to another or in a pathway through space

**hop:** a basic locomotor movement that involves leaving the floor from one foot and landing on the same foot

**gallop:** a two-beat stride during which both legs are off the ground simultaneously: either the right foot stays back and the left foot is forward, or the left foot stays back and the right foot is forward; one foot always chases the other

**jump:** to spring into the air by taking off from and landing on both feet

**leap:** to spring into the air by taking off from one foot and landing on the other foot

**meter:** in music, the grouping of beats in a measure (determined by the time signature)

**mirroring:** a skill that involves one partner leading by performing a movement and the other partner imitating the leader's movement simultaneously.

**movement characteristics:** the qualities, elements, or dynamics that describe or define a movement

**movement motif:** a movement-related idea, shape, or gesture that recurs in a composition of a dance.

**movement phrase:** a brief sequence of related movements that have a sense of continuity and artistic or rhythmic completion

**movement problem:** a specific focus that requires one find a solution and complete a task; gives direction and exploration in composition

**movement theme:** a movement, a phrase, or an idea in a dance that can be developed or varied

**movement vocabulary:** codified or personal movement characteristics that define a movement style

**narrative:** a choreographic form that tells a story through the development of a character or situation

**negative space:** the area (space) around and between the dancer(s) or dance images(s) in a dance

**non-locomotor:** movement that remains in place; movement that does not travel from one location to another or in a pathway through space

**opposition:** the position or movement of one part of the body in contrast to another; for example, the left arm moves to the right, while the left leg moves to the left

**originality:** the use of arts knowledge and skills to solve problems and express ideas in unique and personal ways

**pantomime:** the nonverbal gestural communication of an action, an emotion, an activity, or an idea

**pathway:** the route that a dancer takes through general space, or the route that a specific body part takes through personal space/self-space

**pattern:** the intentional repetition of the elements and movements of dance

**performance etiquette:** performance values and expected behaviors when rehearsing or performing (for instance, no talking while the dance is in progress, no chewing gum, neat and appropriate appearance, dancers do not call out to audience members who are friends)

**performance process:** the process by means of which an artist prepares for, presents, and learns from a performance of dance; the steps include:

Determining the audience for and purpose of the work and/or performance

Selecting artistic resources, materials, and/or repertoire to create, perform, and present

Analyzing the structure, context, and/or aesthetics of the work

Interpreting meaning through personal understanding of the dance and/or performance

Rehearsing, adjusting, and refining through evaluation, reflection, and problem-solving

Presenting and producing dance and/or a performance for others

Reflecting upon a dance and/or performance and self-evaluating to set goals

**personal space:** the area of space directly surrounding one's body extending as far as a person can reach; also called the kinesphere

**phrase:** a sequence of at least three movements that convey a sense of continuity

**pirouette:** the act of spinning on one foot, typically with the raised foot touching the knee of the supporting leg

**place:** a position or location in space and in relation to other dancers

**plagiarism:** the act or practice of reproducing someone else's work and presenting it as one's own; also, incorporating into one's own work material that was borrowed from another's work without permission or acknowledgment of the original source

**polyrhythm:** a rhythm that makes use of two or more rhythms at once

**polyrhythmic:** in music, several rhythms layered on top of one another and played simultaneously; in dance, embodying several rhythms simultaneously in different body parts

**positive space:** the space filled by the dancer's body

**posture/stance:** the relationship of the body (skeleton) to the line of gravity and the base of support

**prepositional relationship:** the relationship between body parts, dancers, props, or space that shows a prepositional connection (for example, under, over, behind)

**principles of choreography/composition:**

**form/design:** the organization and sequence of sections of a dance into an overall whole

**theme:** the content that informs a piece of choreography; the theme may be taken from the movement itself (for example, expanding and contracting) or from other sources (for example, ideas, images, or emotions)

**repetition:** the repeated use of a movement, movement phrase, or element

**emphasis:** the importance given to certain moments in the dance

**balance:** the arrangement of the sections of a dance and/or the use of the performance space to create a sense of equilibrium

**contrast:** the use of movements with different or opposite dynamics, shapes, or uses of space

**variety:** the use of artistic elements in a work to create differences that add interest

**production elements:** aspects of performance that produce theatrical effects (for example, costumes, make up, sound, lighting, props)

**production terminology:** words commonly used to refer to the stage, performance setting, or theatrical aspects of dance presentation

**proximal joints:** situated nearer to the center of the body or the point of attachment (for example, shoulder and hip joints); the opposite of distal

**pulse:** an underlying steady beat expressed in the body (the source of the pulse can be internal or external)

**quartet:** a dance performed by four dancers

**range of motion:** the extent of movement that is possible using the joints and muscles

**repertoire:** a body of existing artistic work

**repetition:** the repeated use of a movement, movement phrase, or element

**respond:** to express (verbally, in writing, or through movement) a response to dance

**responding process:** the approach that an artist or artistically literate person uses to respond to a work of dance; the steps include:

Engaging the senses actively and purposefully while experiencing dance

Articulating what is seen, felt, and/or heard when responding to dance

Analyzing the use and organization of elements, principles, skills, foundations, and technique

Interpreting meaning based on personal experiences and knowledge

Evaluating and justifying by using supportive evidence and aesthetic criteria

**retrograde:** a choreographic device in which dance movements or phrases are performed backwards

**revise:** to rework dancing or choreography with the goal of improvement

**rhythm:** the patterning or structuring of time through movement or sound

**roll:** to move by turning over on an axis

**rotation:** turning the whole body around itself; a pivoting of a bone in a proximal joint

**See.Think.Wonder:** an inquiry-based Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) used for critical analysis from Harvard Project Zero, in which children respond to simple questions (What do you see? What do you think? What do you wonder?) which enable a child to begin make meaning from an observed (dance) work of art

**self-space:** the area in which movement happens within one's kinesphere ("bubble" of space); see kinesphere and personal space

**setting:** the "where" of a dance, including time and place

**shadowing:** a skill that involves one partner leading by performing a movement and the other partner(s) following or copying the leader's movement

**shape:** the three dimensional form a body takes in space, such as curved, angular, twisted, straight, symmetrical, or asymmetrical

**skip:** to step from one foot to the other with a hop in between

**slide:** to travel by sliding one foot along the floor in any direction until both legs are separated and bent, and bringing the other leg to meet the first as both legs straighten

**solo:** a dance performed by one person

**sound environment:** sound accompaniment for dancing other than music (for example, street noise, ocean surf, bird calls, spoken word)

**space:** components of dance involving direction, pathways, facings, levels, shapes, and design; the location where a dance takes place; the element of dance referring to the cubic area of a room, on a stage, or in other environments

**spatial design:** pre-determined use of directions, levels, pathways, formations, and body shapes

**stage left:** at or toward the performer's left when facing downstage

**stage right:** at or toward the performer's right when facing downstage

**stillness:** a pause in movement (synonym: rest)

**stimuli:** A thing or event that inspires action, feeling, or thought

**strength:** the amount of force a muscle can exert

**stretch:** to elongate or extend one's limbs or body

**structured improvisation:** the use of spontaneous movement to explore the elements of dance within a given framework

**style:** dance that has specific movement characteristics, qualities, or principles that give it distinctive identity (for example, Graham technique is a style of Modern Dance; rhythm tap is a style of Percussive Dance; Macedonian folk dance is a style of International Folk dance; Congolese dance is a style of African Dance)

**swing:** a movement that suspends and then falls in an arched pathway by giving into gravity; individual body parts may swing, as can the whole body

**symmetrical:** identical on both sides of a central line

**syncopation:** the process of displacing the expected beats by anticipating or delaying one half-beat, so that the strong beats become weak and the weak beats become strong

**technical dance skills:** the degree of physical proficiency a dancer achieves within a dance style or technique (for example, coordination, form, strength, speed and range)

**tempi:** different paces or speeds of music, or underlying beats or pulses, used in a dance work or composition (singular: tempo)

**tempo:** the pace or speed of a pulse or beat underlying music or movement (plural: tempi or tempos)

**theme and variation:** a choreographic form in which a movement/phrase (theme) is established and followed by a series of variations

**theme:** a dance idea that is stated choreographically:

the content that informs a piece of choreography; the theme may be taken from the movement itself (for example, expanding and contracting), or from other sources (for example, ideas, images, or emotions); a phrase or sequence of movement around which a dance is constructed

**transition:** going from one movement/phrase to another, or from one shape to another; the quality of transitions affects the overall flow of the dance

**transposition:** a choreographic device that transfers a movement to a different part of the body (for example, the swing of an arm becomes the swing of a leg)

**trio:** a dance performed by three people

**triple:** a meter in which the basic unit of pulse recurs in groups of three

**triplet:** a walk or run with a downbeat on one, followed by two up beats

**turn:** to change the position of one's body to face in a different direction, or to rotate one's body in a circular motion around an axis or point (for example, pirouette)

**twist:** to form into a bent, curling, spiraled, or distorted shape

**unison:** individuals and groups perform the same movement/phrase at the same time

**upstage:** at or toward the back of the performance space

**variety/variation:** 1. a principle of choreography/composition in which different elements of dance or a full spectrum of one element are used to create a dance; 2. the use of artistic elements in a work to create differences that add interest

**walk:** to move at a regular and steady pace by lifting and setting down each foot in turn and never having both feet off of the ground at once

**warm-up:** movements and movement phrases that are designed to raise the core body temperature and increase blood and oxygen flow in preparation for dancing

**weight-sharing:** the process of giving or receiving weight between two or more dancers