

Dance

2010 ASSESSMENT REPORT

Arts Learning Area



Government
of South Australia

SACE
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DANCE

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GENERAL COMMENTS

This year 24 schools across South Australia and the Northern Territory undertook Dance.

The technique and composition and group production components demonstrated a wide variety of dance genres, with some exemplary technique and performance work observed. A range of technical complexity was evident; however, teachers are encouraged to pay closer attention to jazz dance to ensure compatibility with other genres. It is fundamental that teachers 'view' the group production as if they were an audience member in order to accurately assess students' work.

Teachers are to be commended on the high level of organisation and preparation that was evident in the practical components of Dance this year. The most successful compositional works allowed for breadth of exploration and experimentation through appropriate and creative task design.

The responses to essay questions were of an improved standard, with a broad range of topics and interesting, high quality questions provided by teachers.

The presentation component showed mixed student achievement; however a diverse range of innovative topics was investigated in this area of study. Teachers are advised to support student work equally across all assessment components.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 1: TECHNIQUE AND COMPOSITION

This year students were assessed in contemporary dance, jazz, classical ballet, tap and break-dance, and were generally well-prepared for the moderation of technique. Class work was presented with confidence. On some occasions teachers were reminded to cover mirrors.

If a guest teacher is conducting the class, they must be made aware of, and briefed on, the assessment requirements, and adhere to these fully throughout the moderation process. Teachers remain responsible for their students and must therefore comprehensively guide the guest teacher before and during the technique assessment class. Teachers generally were confident and accurate when assessing students in this area of the course.

Teachers need to be mindful that mixing genres is not appropriate for technique moderation. The principles of the specific genre must be demonstrated by students. Teachers must provide opportunities for student achievement through the selection of appropriate exercises.

The lack of complexity in jazz technique continues to be a concern – greater diversity of movement options should be explored in jazz exercises and combinations, with less reliance on simple repetition of movements. Basic warm-ups are not appropriate in any moderation class and should take place prior to the assessment. Technique assessment in all genres must be of an appropriate Stage 2 standard. Exemplar material is on the SACE website.

Teachers must ensure that safe dance practice is adhered to in all technique classes by providing appropriate class progression that keeps the body safe and avoids injury.

The compositional work presented for assessment this year showed some highly skilled work which displayed innovation and creativity. Teachers are advised to encourage students to experiment by working in a variety of groupings such as trios, duos and quartets. Concepts

and tasks that are overly complex or too prescriptive in design may disadvantage students, as the outcome may be unachievable. Task design must be created to suit student ability.

Teachers are encouraged to look carefully at the performance standards and encourage students to move away from known movement vocabulary. This component of the course focuses on creative exploration and must provide students with appropriate opportunities that allow for breadth of exploration and innovative approaches to dance-making. Similarly, teachers are encouraged to assist students in avoiding over reliance on, or being influenced by, music sources, unless this is part of the task design.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 2: GROUP PRODUCTION

Overall the group productions were sophisticated and professional, and displayed choreographic interest and technical proficiency. Teachers are encouraged to continue to show a variety of stylistic dance pieces within a genre – not necessarily a variety of genres.

To ensure visibility it is imperative that the lighting design of the group production is relatively bright. Student numbers must also be clearly visible; it is suggested that numbers are attached to both the front and the back of the dancers. Students who are being moderated must be numbered – even if the student cohort is small. Students must be on stage for the required amount of time and be continuously visible to the moderator.

Teachers need to be selective when including student choreography in the group production. All choreography needs to allow the students to meet the criteria at the highest possible level; student work may not, in some instances, allow this to occur. Appropriate choreographic themes and content need to be considered. Explicit language and overly sexualised movements are inappropriate in a school environment.

There was a reduced number of off-stage roles this year, although this option may provide an excellent alternative to performing on stage for some students, and an opportunity to learn valuable skills through taking on a 'behind-the-scenes' role.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 3: WRITTEN RESPONSES

The most successful students used mature language and supporting information to express ideas, and they referred back to the question throughout the essay. Students who responded to the question analytically, and linked practical application with theoretical knowledge, were highly successful in this assessment task. These students used relevant dance terms, and demonstrated a high level of literacy skills. Practise at drafting essays is an essential tool in the written responses component.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENT 4: PRESENTATION

Presentation of the final outcome is important; however documentation of the process and the research must be included and it is imperative that there is evidence of time spent on evaluation and reflection.

Presentations were displayed in a variety of forms, including PowerPoint displays, web pages, choreographic works, and studio recordings of class work. Student topics for research were broad and innovative.

Chief Assessor
Dance