

Focus of Learning for Dance K – 12

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Dance:

Dance: Focus for Primary Level Learning

Children entering kindergarten love to move, and easily engage the whole self—muscles, imaginations, and emotions—in the learning process. They are willing to learn by doing and can easily integrate movement with the other arts and academic areas.

Student learning at the primary level should focus on the elements of dance and using them to solve movement problems, perform dance movements, and communicate ideas verbally and non-verbally. By both creating and viewing dance, students develop their understanding of dance and their critical thinking skills. In addition, learning at the primary level should focus on building the students' skills to demonstrate basic movement (locomotor and non-locomotor), to create and perform sequences of movement, to respond to selected dances, and to identify and replicate dances from different cultures and times.

Dance: Focus for Intermediate Level Learning

Intermediate level students have greater strength and endurance, finer movement control and better balance than primary level students. Students should arrive at the intermediate level with basic body movement skills, the ability to solve basic movement problems, and the skills to perform dances and communicate ideas in a variety of contexts.

The focus of student learning at the intermediate level is on developing collaborative dance skills and the ability to work with others to solve movement problems and demonstrate basic compositional forms.

The second focus is development of the students' abilities and skills to work independently in longer sequences of movement. In addition, students should develop a knowledge base of dances from different cultural traditions and be able to identify similarities and differences in dance performances.

Dance: Focus for Middle Level Learning

Students should arrive at the middle level with collaborative dance skills and the ability to work with others to solve movement problems and demonstrate basic compositional forms. They should also have the skills to work independently in longer sequences of movement. In addition, they should have the knowledge of dances from different cultural traditions and be able to identify similarities and differences in dance performances.

The focus of learning at the middle level is developing the skills to create more sophisticated dances, including more complex and extended sequences of movements that express feelings and ideas on topics of significance for the student. This focus requires students to develop a more thorough knowledge of the elements of dance and choreographic processes as well as to improve their physical skills and strength. In addition, students must continue to build a knowledge base that includes the cultural, historical and social significance of dance.

Dance: Focus for High School Level Learning

Students should arrive at the high school level with the skills to create and the strength to perform complex and extended sequences of movement that express feelings and ideas. They should possess thorough knowledge of the elements of dance and of choreographic processes. In addition, students should have a knowledge base that includes the cultural, historical and social significance of dance.

The focus of learning at the high school level is deeper understanding of the elements of dance and increasing ability to achieve physical and technical detail and nuance. Learning at this level should focus on refining the student's knowledge and skills to express emotions and experiences through movement and to create dances with coherence and unity.

In addition, student must focus on the ability to perform with consistency, artistic expression, clarity, musicality and stylistic nuance. They must develop the ability to distance themselves from their work in order to analyze it objectively and compare it with the work of other dancers.

