Unit 2: Dance Expression
Dance Grades 7 and 8

22 Class Meetings

Updated January 2026

Essential Questions

- How can we express who we are through dance?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: Dance is an art form that allows individuals to express themselves.
- Analyze how dancers express themselves through movement.
- Create movements inspired by objects and words.
- Perform a dance publicly

EU 2: School communities celebrate their diversity through dance.
- Analyze how communities express themselves through dance.
- Devise movement to create a dance about our ISAAC community.

Standards

National Core Arts Standards:

DA:Cr1.1.8 a. Implement movement from a variety of stimuli (for example, music, observed dance, literary forms, notation, natural phenomena, personal experience/recall, current news or social events) to develop dance content for an original dance study or dance.

DA:Cr1.1.8 b. Identify and select personal preferences to create an original dance study or dance. Use genre- specific dance terminology to articulate and justify choices made in movement development to communicate intent.

DA:Cr2.1.8 a. Collaborate to select and apply a variety of choreographic devices and dance structures to choreograph an original dance study or dance with a clear artistic intent. Articulate the group process for making movement and structural choices

DA:Cr2.1.8 b. Define and apply artistic criteria to choreograph a dance that communicates personal or cultural meaning. Discuss how the criteria clarify or intensify the meaning of the dance.

DA:Cr3.1.8 a. Revise choreography collaboratively or independently based on artistic criteria, self-reflection, and the feedback of others. Articulate the reasons for choices and revisions and explain how they clarify and enhance the artistic intent.

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DA:Pr4.1.8 b. Analyze and select metric, kinetic, and breath phrasing and apply appropriately to dance phrases. Perform dance phrases of different lengths that use various timings within the same section. Use different tempi in different body parts at the same time.

DA:Pr4.1.8 c. Direct energy and dynamics in such a way that movement is textured. Incorporate energy and dynamics to technique exercises and dance performance. Use energy and dynamics to enhance and project movements.

DA:Pr5.1.8 a. Embody technical dance skills (for example, functional alignment, coordination, balance, core support, clarity of movement, weight shifts, flexibility/range of motion) to replicate, recall, and execute spatial designs and musical or rhythmical dance phrases.

DA:Pr6.1.8 a. Demonstrate leadership qualities (for example commitment, dependability, responsibility, and cooperation) when preparing for performances. Use performance etiquette and performance practices during class, rehearsal and performance. Document efforts and create a plan for ongoing improvements. Post- performance, accept notes from choreographer and apply corrections to future performances.

DA:Re.7.1.8 a. Describe, demonstrate and discuss patterns of movement and their relationships in dance in context of artistic intent.

DA:Re.7.1.8 b. Explain how the elements of dance are used in a variety of genres, styles, or cultural movement practices to communicate intent. Use genre- specific dance terminology.

DA:Re8.1.8 a. Select a dance and explain how artistic expression is achieved through relationships among the elements of dance, use of body, dance technique and context. Cite evidence in the dance to support your interpretation using genre specific dance terminology.

DA:Re9.1.8 a. Use artistic criteria to determine what makes an effective performance. Consider content, context, genre, style, or cultural movement practice to comprehend artistic expression. Use genre-specific dance terminology.

DA:Cn10.1.8 a. Relate connections found between different dances and discuss the relevance of the connections to the development of one's personal perspectives.

DA:Cn11.1.8 a. Analyze and discuss, how dances from a variety of cultures, societies, historical periods, or communities reveal the ideas and perspectives of the people.

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ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

Competency 1: Write effectively for a variety of purposes.
Competency 2: Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.
Competency 3: Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.
Competency 4: Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.
Competency 5: Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

Unit Content Overview

1. **Analyze how dancers express themselves through movement and how communities express themselves through dance.**
   Key Terms and Vocabulary:
   - Dance Styles
   - Modern dance
   - Ballet
   - Tap
   - Jazz
   - Bollywood
   - Hip-hop
   - African Dance
   - Cultural Dance
2. **Create movements inspired by objects and words.**
   - Base choreography on an object.
   - Devise choreography from a poem that is relatable.

   Key Terms and Vocabulary:
   - Tableau
   - Movement poem
3. **Devise movement to create a dance about our ISAAC community.**
   - Create a Poem about ISAAC
   - Distinguish our school community's dance styles.

   Key Terms and Vocabulary:
   - Community
   - School Community

Interdisciplinary Connection:
1. Social Studies: Community and culture
2. Music: Music styles
3. Math (Geometry): Lines, shapes, angles in movement
4. Theater: Storytelling through dance
5. ELA: Poetry

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Daily Learning Objectives with *Do Now Activities*

Students will be able to…

- Compare different dance styles and their origins.
  - *What makes dance a universal language?*
- Analyze Cultural Dances: African, Indian, Caribbean
  - *Early dances were often part of rituals and ceremonies. What kinds of celebrations or rituals (wedding, harvest, etc.) might include dance today?*
- Evaluate Folk Dances
  - *Why do you think different parts of the world developed different types of dance?*
- Create and Combine 4 dance moves based on an object.
  - *How can learning dances from different cultures build respect and understanding?*
- Devise choreography based on words.
  - *What do you think inspires choreographers?*
- Devise choreography based on a poem with as large group.
  - *What do poems express?*
- Distinguish, and discuss who our school community. Create a poem that describe our school community.
  - *What do similarities or differences in dance show us about the people and places they come from?*
- Create movement using the words in the poem we wrote about ISAAC.**
  - *How can words inspire movement?*
- Rehearse, critique, and modify our choreography. ***
  - *What goals from the performance checklist do we have for our rehearsal today?*
- Critique our dance piece and notice where changes may need to be made.*
  - *Why do artists revise their work?*
- Perform the dance piece for another class and reflect on performing.
  - *How are you feeling about sharing the dance?*
- Connect to the characters and story of the musical we will see at Goodspeed Opera House.
  - *What do you think this musical is about?*
- Experience a Musical at Goodspeed Opera House
  - *What are your expectations for our trip?*
- Reflect on the musical we saw at Goodspeed Opera House.
  - *Brainstorm everything you remember about the musical.*
- Rehearse and revise the original dance combination for with all the elements using the performance checklist.
  - *Put your copy of the performance checklist in your dance journal.*
- Perform dances for families at the Winter Theater and Dance Performance.
  - *Review entrance and exits for the dance piece with a partner.*
- Reflect on and assess what it was like performing for peers/ teachers and the learning in the unit using accountable talk.

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- *Write in your dance journal using the sentence starter, I had a growth mindset in dance class during this unit because I…*

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Visuals of instructions for assignments
- Plan for the Day (Visual and Aural)
- Scaffolding (Building on dance skills)
- Repetition
- Imagery
- Silent Cues
- Visual learning, Aural Learning, Kinesthetic learning
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Written feedback
- Think-pair-share and small-group discussions
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Photos of Dance styles
- Small group instruction
- Conferencing

EL Differentiated Instruction

- Word walls with visuals of dance vocabulary
- TWPS (Think, write, pair, share)
- Pre-reading strategies
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Explicit modeling of dance steps by teacher
- Key Vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- Strategic grouping
- Non-verbal Assessment

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Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Do Now/ TWPS (Warm-up/ Dance Journal Entries)
- Daily Participation Checklist
- Student discussions and responses
- Dance styles worksheet
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Peer Collaboration Skills
- Object/ 4 movements choreography class assignment
- Words that describe our school community assignment
- ISAAC Poem (EU 2)
- Constructive responses to peer work
- Performance Task- "ISAAC Dance" (EU 1 & 2)

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Movement Poem (EU 1)
- School Community Dance (EU 1 & 2)

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: Dance Performance

Description: In this task, students will employ dance skills and choreography methods to collaborate and create a performance that reflects our school community. Throughout the unit students will develop choreography skills that are reflective of personal expression. (EU 1). They will study different dance styles and will consider the expression of our school community. (EU 2) Students will combine the skills they have learned to create an original movement piece expressive of our school community. (EU 2) Students will participate in a public performance to perform a dance they have learned in their class. (EU 1)

Evaluation: Unit Task Scoring Guide

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Unit Resources
Video Resources ● https://newvictory.org/virtual-events/new-victory-dance-2020/ The New Victory Theater- Victory Dance 2020 ● https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLpiq1XrUh8- History of Hip Hop Dance ● https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OC1NN7egCgs- History of Street Dance ● https://qcc.libguides.com/c.php?g=818979&p=6267812- History of Dance Styles ● Photos of different dance styles. ● Dance Journals ● Box of objects ● Laptops ● Google Slides/ Power Point Presentations ● Music ● Speakers