

Teacher Guide



Applause Series

Pilobolus Is a Fungus

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Enduring Understandings



Overarching (aka, “big”) ideas that are central to the core of the discipline and may be transferred to new learning beyond the performance.

1. Artists use their personal/political/cultural/historical perspectives and experiences to shape their choreography and performances.
2. When we understand elements, structures and context of dance we can “read” the movement to understand the intent of the performance and to ask deeper questions about purpose.
3. Understanding a dancers’ intent can help audiences more deeply appreciate the work and to be able to engage in meaning-making.

Before You Go

Use this glossary to connect the elements of dance to what you experienced during the performance. We put a star by the terms that we think you will spot on stage.

THE ELEMENTS OF DANCE

The elements of dance—easily remembered with the acronym BASTE: Body, Action, Space, Time, and Energy—can be helpful guides in watching or thinking about dance.

BODY	ACTION	SPACE	TIME	ENERGY
<p>PARTS: Head, eyes, torso, shoulders, fingers, legs, feet</p> <p>INITIATION: core, distal, mid-limb, body parts</p> <p>PATTERNS: upper/lower body, homologous, contralateral, midline</p> <p>BODY SHAPES: Symmetrical/asymmetrical, rounded, twisted, angular, arabesque</p> <p>BODY SYSTEMS: muscles, bones, organs, breath, balance, reflexes</p> <p>INNER SELF: senses, perceptions, emotions, thoughts, intention, imagination</p>	<p>NON-LOCOMOTOR (AXIAL): stretch, bend, twist, turn, rise, fall, swing, rock, tip, shake, suspend</p> <p>LOCOMOTOR (TRAVELING): slide, walk, hop, somersault, run, skip, jump, do-si-do, leap, roll, crawl, gallop, chaîné turns</p>	<p>SIZE: large, small, narrow, wide</p> <p>LEVEL: high, medium, low</p> <p>PLACE: on the spot (personal space), through the space (general space), upstage, downstage</p> <p>DIRECTION: forward, backward, sideways, diagonal, right, left</p> <p>ORIENTATION: facing</p> <p>PATHWAY: curved, straight, zig-zag, random</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP: in front, beside, behind, over, under, alone, connected, near, far</p> <p>FOCUS: Where a dancer looks</p>	<p>METERED: pulse, tempo, accent, rhythmic pattern</p> <p>FREE RHYTHM: breath, open score, sensed time, improvisation, cued</p> <p>CLOCK TIME: seconds, minutes, hours</p> <p>TIMING RELATIONSHIPS: before, after, unison, sooner than, faster than</p>	<p>ATTACK: sharp/smooth, sudden/sustained</p> <p>WEIGHT: Heavy or light</p> <p>STRENGTH: push, horizontal, impacted</p> <p>FLOW: Free, bound, balanced, neutral</p> <p>QUALITY: flowing, tight, loose, sharp, swinging, swaying, suspended, collapsed, smooth</p>

After the Performance

Listen to music while responding to these questions in whatever format makes sense to you - writing, drawing, recording a video or a responding with technology.

- What did you see? What was your favorite part?
- What did you hear? How could you draw it?
- What did you imagine? What idea came to your mind?
- What do you wonder about?

We love to hear from you. Please send any of your responses to the performance to us at education@dmpa.org. We'll share the responses with the artists and Applause Series donors.

Want to Explore More?

Check out the [Exploration Guide](#) here!

Inquiry 01 Connecting to Self

How do we, as audience members, understand the story of what is happening on stage? What senses did you use to interpret the performance? Do you think you had the same idea about the show as they intended you to? Reflect on what meaning you interpreted and the senses you used to interpret it. What does that add to what you interpreted?

What story would you write to match a part of the performance?

Use the graphic organizer on page 4 to guide student's reflections. Connect the observations to a memory, a feeling, or a familiar connection from a movie, book, or even their imagination!

Inquiry 02 Connecting to Art

As you watch and listen to the show, consider how the music or sound, or perhaps its absence, connects to each piece. How important is the music or sound to the dancers' movement?

Click the video linked below and play the sound without the video visible to students. Ask students to:

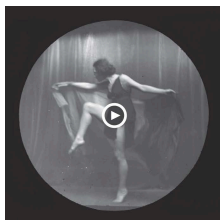
1. Create movement connected to the music.
2. Create a story start inspired by the music.
3. Create an illustration of what students "see" in the music.

[Video link here!](#)

Inquiry 03 Connecting to Science or Social Studies

When we understand elements, structures and context of dance we can better "read" the movement to understand the intent of the performance and ask deeper questions about purpose. What do we know about the history and context of the type of dance being performed? How does this performance add to the conversation in the genre? Does it replicate a tradition or do something new?

Find out more about the genre of modern dance by viewing the performance videos of two pioneers in the field. Then ask students to try and connect Pilobolus' dance style to others in the modern dance tradition.



Isadora Duncan

Alvin Ailey



Thinking Form

What did you . . .

see	hear	connect to