

**Content Standard 7: Students will make connections between dance, other disciplines, and daily life.**

**Grades K-4**

**Students will:**

- a. create a simple dance that reveals understanding of a concept or idea from another discipline (such as pattern in dance and science);
- b. respond to a dance using another art form; explain the connections between the dance and their response to it (for example, making a painting about a dance and describing the connections); and
- c. video record a simple dance (after collaborative planning in small groups) which successfully shows the concept or idea that drives the dance.

**Grades 5-8**

**Students will:**

- a. cite examples of concepts used in dance and another discipline outside the arts (such as balance, shape, pattern);
- b. create a dance project that explores and expresses important ideas from another arts discipline (such as foreground and background, or color, in visual art); and
- c. video record a dance produced in class, intensifying or changing the meaning of the dance through the recording process.

**Grades 9-12**

**Students will:**

- a. create an interdisciplinary project based on a theme identified by the student, including dance and two other disciplines;
- b. identify commonalities and differences between dance and other arts disciplines with regard to fundamental concepts such as materials, elements and ways of communicating meaning; and
- c. create an interdisciplinary project using media technologies (such as video, computer) that presents dance in a new or enhanced form (such as video dance, video/computer-aided live performance or animation). ■

## Detailed Description Of Dance Content Standards

This section provides a more detailed description of the dance content standards.

### **Content Standard 1: Students will identify and perform movement elements and dance skills.**

This standard addresses students' knowledge of dance as *performers*. Students should be able to identify and understand the elements of dance – action, space, dynamics (at the age-appropriate level) – and be able to use and accurately perform these elements in dance sequences with confidence, concentration and focus. Students also should be able to describe these elements verbally and in written form.

### **Content Standard 2: Students will understand choreographic principles, processes and structures.**

This standard addresses students' skills as *choreographers*, experimenting with movement, improvising around themes and structures, and creating dance sequences and dances. Through studying different compositional forms, the work of various choreographers on video, or live, and through creating their own dances, students can become competent choreographers (either alone or in collaborations). They also can become informed critics, *responding* to different choreographic works and being able to compare one work with another and make discerning judgments about the quality of the work both in terms of its content and form.

### **Content Standard 3: Students will understand how dance creates and communicates meaning.**

This standard is concerned with students' understanding of the meaning of dance, not only as creative artists, but also as informed audience members. Students need to be able to "read" dance and explain, for example, whether the dance is abstract, narrative or Expressionistic. When they are creating a dance, students need to be able to explain their decisions regarding the form and content of the dance, and discuss reasons for making other choices. This process requires students to be able to analyze what they see and do, and distinguish, identify and describe the pertinent features of their own and others' choreography.

As is evident from the description of the content standards, dance differs from the other disciplines in the way in which critical skills are included. Analytical and evaluative skills are integrated into broader standards. For example, "Students will understand how dance creates and communicates meaning" integrates the processes of performing, creating and responding into the standards (as evident in the relevant performance standards). Understanding meaning – and the ability to find, describe and analyze it – is directly connected to the creation of meaning. Critical and creative skills are presented as skills reliant upon each other, rather than skills which can be clearly separated.

This may be more of a resource issue than a philosophical stance, however. Dance – unlike music, theatre and the visual arts – does not have a rich array of original work and performances that is appropriate and available for classroom use either on video or in notated form. Consequently, dance teachers and students are more likely to create their own exemplars and use them as the main source of material for critical study.

### **Content Standard 4: Students will apply analytical and evaluative thinking skills in dance.**

This standard introduces the important skill of *evaluation*. Students are able to evaluate their own dancing and choreography and discuss them using critical language and appropriate terminology. They are also able to view and evaluate the work of others, and to compare works from different cultural traditions. The students are able to distinguish between personal preferences and reasoned judgments by creating and applying aesthetic criteria.

### **Content Standard 5: Students will demonstrate an understanding of dance in various cultures and historical periods.**

Students are able to perform a range of traditional folk dances and dances from different historical periods. They are able to view dances from different cultural, social and theatrical traditions, and from different time periods, and describe the main stylistic features of the dance movement in terms of dance vocabulary, musical rhythm and expressive quality. They also know, or can make well-supported conjectures about, the dances' country or region of origin and/or the historical period during which the dances were created.

**Content Standard 6: Students will make connections between dance and healthful living.**

This standard reflects the health and physical education aspects of dance education. Students should know and understand the body and how it works. The dance class presents an excellent environment for developing positive attitudes toward safe and productive exercise and for developing healthy lifestyles.

**Content Standard 7: Students will make connections between dance, other disciplines and daily life.**

This standard is concerned with students' abilities to see and understand the relationships among the arts, and between the arts and other disciplines. When students are able to make appropriate connections across disciplines, their learning becomes more useful and meaningful, and they are able to see real-world connections rather than isolated knowledge.■



## ILLUSTRATIVE LEARNING/ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES WITH SCORING DIMENSIONS

The following sample learning/assessment activities are intended to illustrate how the standards may be taught and assessed in a classroom. Some of the instructional and assessment sequences emphasize a particular content standard; others are deliberately designed to address multiple standards. Opportunities for assessment are provided within each instructional sequence. Collectively, these activities are designed to demonstrate the following important principles:

- Series of well-designed instructional activities typically address more than one standard. While it is often desirable to break instruction into discrete chunks to focus on specific skill or knowledge areas, the most interesting and effective instruction recognizes and exploits the fact that the standards are interrelated. As pointed out in the common introduction to this chapter, having students carry out several steps of an artistic process necessarily addresses several content standards. This enables teachers to cover, and students to make connections among, broader ranges of learning. [Note: Although each illustrative activity requires students to apply learning from many, if not all, of the content standards, only those content standards which are actually *assessed* are listed.]
- Opportunities for assessment grow naturally out of well-designed sequences of instruction, rather than occurring as add-ons after the end of such a sequence. Such assessments, which are built into instructional sequences, often are referred to as “embedded” assessments.
- The dimensions of assessment (aspects of student work which are assessed) should always be linked to, and derive naturally from, the content and performance standards that the instructional sequence is designed to address. In other words, what is assessed should be what teachers had hoped that students would learn.

The following table is designed to assist readers in finding illustrative learning/assessment activities for particular content standards and grade levels. A teacher looking for an example of how content standard 4 might be addressed at Grade 8 should find the number 4 in the content standard column, then follow that row over to the Grade 8 column to find the letter(s) of the learning assessment activity(s). Each illustrative learning/assessment activity is presented in alphabetical order.

### GUIDE TO FINDING ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES AT DIFFERENT GRADE LEVELS

CONTENT STANDARD	ILLUSTRATIVE LEARNING ACTIVITIES		
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 12
1	C, F	A	
2	C	B	
3	C, F		D
4	F	E	G
5	H	I	
6	J	K	L
7	M	N	O, P

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*Illustrative Learning/Assessment Activity A (Grades 5-8)*

**Content Standard 1:** Students will identify and perform movement elements and dance skills.

**Performance Standards:**

- e. identify and demonstrate a range of dynamics/movement qualities
- g. memorize and reproduce movement sequences and dances
- h. describe the movement elements observed in a dance, using appropriate movement/dance vocabulary

**Learning Activity.** Students learn and perform two dynamically contrasting dance sequences – one powerful and strong, the other soft and gentle. The sequences are demonstrated by the teacher. After viewing and trying the sequences, the students discuss the technical and expressive problems and experiment with ways of solving them. Students work with a partner to critique each other's performance, using appropriate dance terminology to describe and to suggest improvements in the dynamic and expressive qualities of their partner's work.

Finally, the students are videotaped performing the sequences in small groups. During their next class, the tapes are viewed and the work discussed.

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*Illustrative Learning/Assessment Activity B (Grades 5-8)*

**Content Standard 2:** Students will understand choreographic principles, processes and structures.

**Performance Standards:**

- b. create sequences and simple dances that demonstrate the principles of, for example, repetition, contrast, transition and climax
- d. demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively in pairs and small groups during the choreographic process
- e. demonstrate the following partner skills: creating contrasting and complementary shapes, taking and supporting weight, balance and counter balance

**Background.** Students explore a wide variety of body shapes through taught sequences and through improvisational tasks (e.g., changing from small to large body shapes). Contrasts in shape are highlighted through teacher and student demonstration, followed by discussion.

**Learning Activity.** Students learn a series of body shapes, then explore the possible transitions between them. By experimenting with contrasting transitions – for example, slow/quick, direct/circuitous – students become aware of how the use of transitions can affect the expressiveness of a phrase or sequence. Discussion also should include how a body shape expresses feelings (for example, hunched up in depression, thrown wide apart in joy).

Students work with a partner, experimenting with complementing and contrasting body shapes, and then create a short duet demonstrating contrasting shapes with a variety of transitions.