**DANCE GLOSSARY**

**AB**

a form in which there is a first theme (A), then a second theme (B)

**ABA**

a form in which there is a first theme (A), a second theme (B), and then a return to the first theme (A). The third section is a repeat or restatement of the first section and can be in a condensed, abbreviated, or extended form.

**aesthetic**

a set of principles concerned with the nature and appreciation of beauty

**agility**

the ability to coordinate movement quickly with ease

**alignment**

the process of adjusting the skeletal and muscular system to gravity to support effective functionality

**alternative performance venue**

a performance site other than a standard Western style theater (for example, classroom, site specific venue, or natural environment)

**anatomical principles**

the way the human body's skeletal, muscular and vascular systems work separately and in coordination

**apron**

the area of a proscenium stage that extends in front of the curtain line to the edge closest to the audience (the 'lip')

**artistic criteria**

aspects of craft and skill used to fulfill artistic intent

**artistic expression**

The manifestations of artistic intent though dance, drama music, poetry, fiction, painting, sculpture or other artistic media. In dance, this involves the dance and the dancers within a context

**artistic intent**

the purpose, main idea, and expressive or communicative goals(s) of a dance composition study, work, or performance

**artistic statement**

an artist’s verbal or written introduction of their work from their own perspective to convey the deeper meaning or purpose

**auditory**

pertaining to the sense of hearing

**axial movement**

movement that is organized in space around an axis of the body and does not travel in space from one location to another (non-locomotor)

**backstage**

the area of a proscenium stage or other performance space that is behind the line of the curtain and not in audience view
**balance**  
a state of body equilibrium

**beat**  
a steady pulse, expressed either aurally or kinesthetically; often an accented motion or tone that defines the tempo or speed of the movement or music

**blackout**  
sudden state of complete darkness onstage, caused by the quick turning off of stage lighting

**bodily animation**  
a state in which the body and mind are energized and ready for action

**body awareness**  
internal sensations or proprioceptive sense of the position and action of the body or body parts

**body patterning**  
neuromuscular patterns (for example, core-distal, head-tail, homologous [upper-lower], homo-lateral [same-side], cross-lateral [crossing the body midline])

**body-mind principles**  
concepts explored and/or employed to support body-mind connections (for example, breath, awareness of the environment, grounding, movement initiation, use of imagery, intention, inner-out, stability-mobility)

**body-use**  
the ways in which movement patterns and body parts are used in movement and dance practice; descriptive method of identifying patterns

**bound movement**  
an “effort element” from Laban Movement Analysis in which energy flow is constricted

**canon**  
a musical or choreographic device in which individuals or different groups repeat a sequence or phrase beginning at repetitive but overlapping intervals

**Capstone Project**  
a culminating performance-based assessment that determines what 12th grader should know and be able to do in various educational disciplines; usually based on research and the development of a major product or project that is an extension of the research

**choreographic devices**  
manipulation of dance movement, sequences or phrases (repetition, inversion, accumulation, cannon, retrograde, call and response)

**choreographic principles**  
compositional elements in dance; factors to be considered (choreographic devices and structures) to attain an aesthetically satisfying dance composition

**choreographic study**  
a brief dance made up of several distinct movement phrases that explore a movement idea
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<tr>
<td>choreography</td>
<td>dance movements that are planned and performed</td>
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<td>climax</td>
<td>the “high point” or peak of culmination in a dance</td>
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<td>codified movement</td>
<td>common motion or motions set in a particular style that often have specific names and expectations associated with it</td>
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<td>cognitive</td>
<td>the process of thinking, processing perceptions, or acquiring knowledge</td>
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<td>community</td>
<td>a body of people who live in a common area or who hold something in common</td>
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<td>complex rhythms</td>
<td>a series of syncopated or mixed-meter rhythmic patterns, expressed either aurally or kinesthetically</td>
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<td>context cues</td>
<td>information obtained from the dance that helps one understand or comprehend meaning and intent from a movement, group of movements, or a dance as a whole; requires seeing relationships between movements and making inferences about the meaning or intent often gleaned from visual, auditory, or sensory stimuli</td>
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<tr>
<td>contextualize/other contexts</td>
<td>relating dance and ideas in a dance to situations, experiences, environments, knowledge, events, or cultures outside of the dance experience</td>
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<td>contra-lateral</td>
<td>a body organization connecting the upper right quadrant of the area above the waist and the lower left quadrant of the area below the waist, and vice-versa</td>
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<td>contrapuntal</td>
<td>an adjective that describes the noun counterpoint; music that has at least two melodic lines (voices) played simultaneously against each other; in dance, at least two movement patterns, sequences or phrases danced simultaneously using different body parts or performed by different dancers</td>
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<tr>
<td>conventional dance structures</td>
<td>choreographic movement organized in commonly used structures to create a dance work</td>
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<tr>
<td>core/distal</td>
<td>a body pattern that begins in the center of the body and radiates out through the torso to the extremities or, in reverse, one that starts from extremities and comes in towards the center</td>
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<tr>
<td>crawl/creep</td>
<td>a locomotor movement pattern low to the ground with the weight supported on the hands and knees with cross-lateral hand and leg movements</td>
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<tr>
<td>create</td>
<td>to invent, compose, or generate original dance movement or movement ideas</td>
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</table>
creative movement original movements that are spontaneous or created in order to express an idea, feeling, experience, or solution to a movement problem

cross-lateral movement a body pattern that crosses the vertical mid-line of the body; movement that goes right to left or left to right; a body pattern of connecting body parts along a diagonal pathway through the body's core to the extremities

crossover an area behind the visible stage that is used by performers and technicians to travel from state left to right or vice versa

cultural movement practice physical movements of a dance that are associated with a particular country, community, or people

curriculum detailed plan of goals, objectives, skills, and lessons on a particular subject

curtain a hanging cloth that conceals the stage from the view of the audience; it rises or parts at the beginning and descends or closes after dance works, between acts, and at the end of a performance

dance the language of movement as expressed by the human body for communication, aesthetic purposes, and the release of energy or emotions

dance activities activities involving dance (for example, dance classes, workshops, performances, lecture demonstrations, social event dancing)

dance as text the use of dance as the basis for study or analysis

dance literacy the total experience of dance learning that includes the doing and knowing about dance: dance skills and techniques, dance making, knowledge and understanding of dance vocabulary, dance history, dance from different cultures, dance genres, repertory, performers and choreographers, dance companies, and dance notation and preservation

dance movement principles fundamentals related to the craft and skill with which dance movement is performed (for example, the use of dynamic alignment, breath support, core support, rotation, initiation and sequencing, and weight shift)

dance phrase a brief sequence of related movements that have a sense of continuity and artistic or rhythmic completion
dance structures  the organization of choreography and movement to fulfill the artistic intent of a dance or dance study (for example, AB, ABA or theme and variation); often referred to as choreographic form

dance study  a short dance that is comprised of several dance phrases based on an artistic idea

dance techniques  the tools and skills needed to produce a particular style of movement

dance terminology  vocabulary used to describe dance and dance experiences

simple dance terminology  (Tier 1/PreK-2): basic pedestrian language (for example, locomotor words walk, run, tip-toe, slither, roll, crawl, jump, march, and gallop; and non-locomotor words bend, twist, turn, open and close)

basic dance terminology  (Tier 2/grades 3-5): vocabulary used to describe dance movement techniques, structures, works, and experiences that are widely shared in the field of dance (for example, stage terminology, compositional vocabulary, language defining dance structures and devices, anatomical references, dance techniques such as alignment or “line”)

genre-specific dance terminology  (Tier 3/grades 6 up): words used to describe movement within specific dance forms ballet, contemporary, culturally-specific dance, funk, hip-hop, jazz, modern, tap, and others (for example, in Polynesian dance (Hula), auwana, kahiko, halau, kaholo, uwehe, ami); in ballet: glissade, pas de bourree, pas de chat, arabesque; in jazz: kick ball change, pencil turn, jazz walk, jazz run; in modern: contraction, triplets, spiral, pivot turn; and in tap: shuffle-step, cramp roll, riff, wing, time step

dance work  a complete dance that has a beginning, middle (development), and end

double-time  pulse based on two beats for every one beat in a measure (for example, double-time for a measure of four quarter notes [4/4] would be eight eighth notes; dancing double-time is twice as fast as the pulse)

downbeat  the first beat in a musical measure

downstage  the area of the stage closest to the audience

duple meter  musical meters such as 2/4 or 4/4, with an even subdivision of beats, in sets of two

dynamics  the qualities or characteristics of movement which lend expression and style; also called “efforts,” or “energy (for example, lyrical, sustained, quick, light, or strong)
**elements of dance** the key components of movement; movement of the body using space, time, and energy; often referred to as the elements of movement; see Elements of Dance Organizer by Perpich Center for Arts Education (used with permission)

**embody** to physicalize a movement, concept or idea through the body

**energy** the dynamic quality, force, attach, weight, and flow of movement

**evaluative criteria** the definition of values and characteristics with which dance can be assessed; factors to be considered to attain an aesthetically satisfying dance composition or performance

**explore** investigate multiple movement possibilities to learn more about an idea

**far focus** movement intent directed outward or toward the audience

**feedback** descriptive information provided for the purpose of supporting continued growth, recognizing effective work, or providing guidance for improving work

**fine motor skills (or activities)** coordinated use of small muscle groups (for example, the fingers in handwriting, drawing, playing piano)

**flexibility** range of motion determined by a person’s particular skeletal structure and muscular elasticity

**force** a change in energy with which a movement is executed

**free flowing movement** an “effort element” from Laban Movement Analysis in which energy is continuous

**functional alignment** the organization of the skeleton and musculature in a relationship to gravity that supports safe and efficient movement while dancing

**gallop** a locomotor sliding and springy step in an uneven rhythm in which the same foot is always leading

**general space** spatial orientation that is not focused towards one area of a studio or stage

**genre** a category of dance characterized by similarities in form, style, purpose, or subject matter (for example, ballet, hip hop, modern, ballroom, cultural practices)
genres (music)  a broad category of music that may include many different forms, styles and expressions (for example, Baroque, Romantic, Minimalist, Broadway, Jazz, New Age)

gesture  the movement of a body part or combination of parts that suggests a particular idea

gross motor skills (or activities)  coordinated use of large muscle groups (for example, the legs in leaping or hopping)

group skills  abilities that require cooperation, collaboration, or coordination with others, and interpersonal skills (for example, inter-dependence, lead and follow, unison movement, call and response, constructive feedback)

half-time  pulse based on one beat for every two beats in a measure (for example, half-time for a measure of four quarter notes \([4/4]\) would be two half notes; dancing twice as slowly as the pulse)

head/tail  a body pattern that connects the top of the head and the bottom of the spine (the coccyx, which is the vestige of a tail) through curving, arching, or in some way bending the spine

High School Proficient  a high school entry level of dance proficiency

High School Accomplished  a high school level of dance accomplishment for students continuing elective coursework, but not focusing on dance education

High School Advanced  a high school level of dance proficiency that is equivalent to an “advanced placement” course of study or pursuit of study in a performing arts program

home culture  the environment, milieu, or values that a student experiences in his/her home and/or with the family

hop  a movement that springs (elevates) off the ground from one foot and lands on the same foot

house  the part of a performance hall in which the audience sits; also sometimes colloquially used to refer to the audience itself, as in "Is the house all in yet?"
improvisation  dance activity in which the dancer spontaneously and simultaneously creates and performs movements

improvise  to simultaneously invent and perform movement

instrumentation (music)  instruments used in playing a piece of music (for example, strings, horns, percussion, electric guitar, voice)

interdisciplinary  blending of content, skills and knowledge from more than one discipline; involving two or more arts disciplines

internalize  make one’s own; translate for one’s own understanding; personalize meaning

isolation(s)  movement(s) executed with one body part or a small section of the body

jump  movement that springs (elevates) off the ground from two feet and lands on two feet

kinesphere  the area of space directly surrounding one’s body extending as far as a person can reach; also called personal space

kinesthetic  pertaining to the motion or movement of the body; pertaining to awareness or sensations of bodily movement

kinesthetic awareness  pertaining to sensations and understanding of bodily movement

kinesthetic feedback  giving or receiving information through responsive bodily movement; developing awareness through sensations and awareness of bodily movement

kinetic  having to do with motion

kinetic awareness  pertaining to sensations and understanding of motion

kinetic energy  energy that a body possesses by virtue of being in motion

leap  a locomotor movement that leaves the ground (elevates) from one foot and lands on the other foot

learning situation  an event or activity in which learning occurs

learning strategies  a method or systematic plan to acquire understanding, information, knowledge, or skills (for example, questioning, observing, rehearsing, imaging, comparing, brainstorming, reflecting, outlining, discussing)
level  the height of the dancer’s position or movements in relation to the floor or ground (for example, high: moving or standing straight or on one’s toes; middle: moving or standing crouched with knees or body bent; low: moving or positioned close to or positioned on the floor or ground)

locomotor  movement that travels from one location to another or in a pathway through space

logical  reasonable or organized methodically

media technology  elements of technology relating to media arts

meter  in music, the number and length of beats in a measure (for example, 2/4 equals two quarter notes in a measure and 6/8 equals six eighth notes in a measure)

mirror movement  two or more dancers face one another and move simultaneously in unison

motif  a distinctive and reoccurring gesture or movement used to provide a theme and unify ideas

movement analysis  the decoding of movement into components of movement; systems of decoding phrases of movement into components of movement (for example, kinesiological analysis, Laban Movement Analysis)

movement characteristics  the qualities, elements, or dynamics that describe or define a movement

movement facility  ease and range of bodily movement and coordination

movement invention  original or innovative movement

movement phrase  a brief sequence of related movements that have a sense of continuity and artistic or rhythmic completion

movement problem  a specific focus that requires one find a solution and complete a task; gives direction and exploration in composition

movement qualities  expressive components of movement, also called efforts

movement vocabulary  codified or personal movement characteristics that define a movement style

multicultural  pertaining to diverse peoples, objects, or phenomena from a variety of countries or societies having different artifacts, customs, values, or environments
**multi-step movement problem**

specific focus that serves as direction for exploration and composition that requires several solutions or tasks to complete

**musicality**

a keen sensitivity to nuances and honed understanding of tonal and rhythmic elements: (pitch, harmony, tone, duration) and the ability to coordinate with and embody them

**narrative**

a compositional structure that develops a story line with a beginning, middle, and end

**near focus**

movement intent directed inward toward self or group and/or draw audience attention inward towards themselves

**negative space**

the area (space) around and between the dancer(s) or dance images(s) in a dance

**non-locomotor**

movement that remains in place; movement that does not travel from one location to another or in a pathway through space

**non-locomotor body patterns**

organization of the body that does not travel through space; can involve neuromuscular patterning (for example, core-distal, head-tail, homologous [upper-lower], homo-lateral [same-side], cross-lateral [crossing the body midline])

**non-traditional performance space**

an area or environment used for dance presentation that is not a theater

**notation system**

a symbol system for components of movement (for example, Labanotation, Language of Dance (motif), Beauchamp-Feuillet Notation, Eshkol-Wachman, Benesh Notation)

**observe**

to notice, perceive, recognize or identify visually

**pantomime**

a genre in which the performer communicates actions or situations through gesture, facial expression, and realistic or exaggerated movement rather than speech

**pathway**

the line through space along which a person or body part moves

**pedagogy**

the art or science of teaching and the principles of instruction

**perceive/perception**

to gather and interpret sensory information from the external and internal environment
**performance**  
the presentation of dance to observers

**performance etiquette**  
performance values and expected behaviors when rehearsing or performing (for instance, no talking while the dance is in progress, no chewing gum, neat and appropriate appearance, dancers do not call out to audience members who are friends)

**performance practices**  
commonly accepted behaviors and practices when rehearsing and performing on stage (for example, production order is technical rehearsal, dress rehearsal, then performance; dancers warm up on stage and must leave when the stage manager tells them; when "places" are called, dancers must be ready to enter the performing space)

**performance presence**  
the quality that draws an audience’s attention to the performer; a quality in which the dancer is both fully embodying the movement and artistic intent of the choreography and is simultaneously communicating with the audience

**performing**  
the execution of movement or dance whether in solitude, with other dancers, or for presentation to observer

**personal beliefs**  
assumptions made about ourselves, others, and the world; statements, principles, or doctrines that individuals choose to accept as true

**personal identity**  
a sense of self

**personal meaning**  
concerning an understanding or awareness affecting one’s self or private life

**personal movement preferences**  
movements chosen by the performer because the movements feel comfortable, pleasurable, or most suited to the performance

**personal space**  
the area of space directly surrounding one’s body extending as far as a person can reach; also called the kinesphere

**personal style**  
an individual’s own approach to moving (see style)

**personal values**  
ideas that we hold to be important about behaviors, communication, and interactions with others
personal voice  one’s own thoughts, reflections and subsequent critical actions in one’s own choreography

phrase  a brief sequence of related movements that have a sense of continuity and artistic or rhythmic completion

phrasing  in music, the dynamic and qualitative arc of a musical phrase within a larger piece of music; in dance, the way a dancer shapes a series of movements within a larger piece using dynamics (for example, amplitude, attack, movement qualities), especially but not exclusively in coordination with music

pivot  a turn that shifts the direction of facings and is executed with weight on both feet on the ground

polyrhythmic  in music, several rhythms layered on top of one another and played simultaneously; in dance, embodying several rhythms simultaneously in different body parts

prance  a locomotor movement that springs (elevates) from one foot to the other with knees bent as the legs are raised to the front

production elements  aspects of performance that produce theatrical effects (for example, costumes, make up, sound, lighting, props)

production terminology  words commonly used to refer to the stage, performance setting, or theatrical aspects of dance presentation

projection  a process in which the dancer energizes performance of movements and use of focus to communicate out into the house and reach all audience members

proprioception  internal sensations and awareness of body position and movement

proscenium arch  the front section of a stage that frames the curtain

proscenium setting  a proscenium stage performance space; the stage is set back from the audience who observes the action from the front only

quality of movement  the dynamic energy, force, effort, or characteristics that give movement its style, expression, or effect

research resources  sources for information and/or data gathering (for example, observation, interview, oral tradition, text, media, or movement)
responding  an affective, cognitive, or physical observation or reaction to that which is perceived or experienced

rhythm  the patterning or structuring of time through movement or sound

rock  a repetitive movement of the torso that rhythmically tilts the body off the vertical axis from side-to-side or forward and back

See.Think.Wonder  an inquiry-based Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) used for critical analysis from Harvard Project Zero, in which children respond to simple questions (What do you see? What do you think? What do you wonder?) which enable a child to begin make meaning from an observed (dance) work of art

side/side  homo-lateral movement of body parts that are on one side of the body

skip  locomotor movement involving a step-hop pattern that changes legs

slide  a gliding locomotor movement done sideways; one leg reaches out sideways, the other foot follows to join together by gliding along the floor, usually performed with a slight elevation after the coming together and the next sideways step; a form of sideways gallop

slither  a form of crawling movement with the belly on the floor

somatic practice  the application of a somatic system

somatics  systems of bodily movement that focus on moving with ease, lack of physical stress, and movement efficiency

sound environment  sound accompaniment for dancing other than music (for example, street noise, ocean surf, bird calls, spoken word)

space  components of dance involving direction, pathways, facings, levels, shapes, and design; the location where a dance takes place; the element of dance referring to the cubic area of a room, on a stage, or in other environments

spatial  of or relating to space or existing in space

spatial design  pre-determined use of directions, levels, pathways, formations, and body shapes

spatial pathways  the line through space along which a person moves

stage left (SL)  on a proscenium stage, the left side of the stage from the performer's point of view when looking out toward the audience
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<td>stage right (SR)</td>
<td>on a proscenium stage, the right side of the stage from the performer’s point of view when looking out toward the audience</td>
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<tr>
<td>stage terminology</td>
<td>words commonly used to refer to the various areas of a proscenium stage and its equipment (for example, wings, upstage, downstage, quarter, apron, teaser, crossover)</td>
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<tr>
<td>stimuli</td>
<td>a thing or event that inspires action, feeling, or thought</td>
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<td>structural criteria</td>
<td>applicable principles of compositional organization that serve to communicate an artistic idea</td>
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<tr>
<td>structure</td>
<td>the organization or design of a dance composition</td>
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<td>structured improvisation</td>
<td>using a framework to explore movement possibilities, skills, or concepts as process or product</td>
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<td>style</td>
<td>dance that has specific movement characteristics, qualities, or principles that give it distinctive identity (for example, Graham technique is a style of Modern Dance; rhythm tap is a style of Percussive Dance; Macedonian folk dance is a style of International Folk dance; Congolese dance is a style of African Dance)</td>
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<td>sub-divided rhythms</td>
<td>sub-divisions of a beat within a rhythmic structure (for example, a tango rhythm which is long, long, short-short, long)</td>
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<td>sway</td>
<td>a movement in which the body rhythmically leans side-to-side in opposite directions</td>
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<td>swing</td>
<td>an arcing action in which the body or the limbs rise and fall in a suspending and falling rhythm</td>
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<td>systematic analysis</td>
<td>the application of a logical method to organize perceptions of a dance that is observed or performed</td>
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<td>technical dance skills</td>
<td>the degree of physical proficiency a dancer achieves within a dance style or technique (for example, coordination, form, strength, speed and range)</td>
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<td>techniques</td>
<td>methods developed to teach and learn particular dance styles, and the styles associated with those methods (for example, Graham technique; Cecchetti ballet, Irish Dance)</td>
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<td>tempi</td>
<td>different paces or speeds of music, or underlying beats or pulses, used in a dance work or composition (singular: tempo)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>tempo</strong></td>
<td>the pace or speed of a pulse or beat underlying music or movement (plural: <em>tempi</em> or <em>tempos</em>)</td>
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<td><strong>theme</strong></td>
<td>a dance idea that is stated choreographically</td>
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<td><strong>theme and development</strong></td>
<td>a dance idea that is stated choreographically and restated through a progression of variations in the choreography</td>
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<td><strong>time</strong></td>
<td>an element of dance involving duration, tempo, rhythm, and/or phrasing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>tonalities</strong></td>
<td>various qualities of sound (for example, sounds of different instruments or the human voice)</td>
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<td><strong>transition</strong></td>
<td>an organized and smooth connection between dance movements that maintains continuity of the dance</td>
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<td><strong>triple meters</strong></td>
<td>measure of three beats, or beats sub-divided into groups of three beats (for example, 3/4 time is a waltz with three beats to the measure; 6/8 time can be subdivided as two groups of three beats or three groups of two beats)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>turn</strong></td>
<td>rotation around the central axis of the body</td>
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<td><strong>unison</strong></td>
<td>more than one dancer performing identical dance movements that take place at the same time</td>
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<td><strong>upper/lower</strong></td>
<td>an organizational construct of the body into an upper half (above the waist) and a lower half; the two halves can coordinate or operate as separate units</td>
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<td><strong>upstage</strong></td>
<td>the area of the stage furthest from the audience</td>
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<td><strong>values</strong></td>
<td>qualities and behaviors that have intrinsic worth in the process of making or experiencing dance or for personal or social development or health</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>verbal</strong></td>
<td>communicated in words; oral communication</td>
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<td><strong>visual</strong></td>
<td>pertaining to sight</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>wings</strong></td>
<td>curtains or screens that are on the side of the performing area of a stage and are partially off-stage to separate and conceal from the audience the area backstage and performers waiting to enter</td>
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