

Dance/Movement

Basic Vocabulary

AB	A two-part compositional form with an A theme and a B theme; the binary form consists of two distinct, self-contained sections that share either a character or quality, i.e. same tempo, movement quality or style.
ABA	A three-part compositional form in which the second section contrasts with the first section. The third section is a restatement of the first section in a condensed, abbreviated or extended form.
Abstract	To remove movement from a particular or representative context and, by manipulating it with elements of space, time and force, create a new sequence or dance that retains the essence of the original.
Action	A movement event.
Aesthetic criteria	Standards on which to make judgments about the artistic merit of a work of art.
Alignment	The relationship of the skeleton to the line of gravity and the base of support.
Axial movement	Any movement that is anchored to one spot by a body part using only the available space in any direction without losing the initial body contact. Movement is organized around the axis of the body rather than designed for travel from one location to another; also known as nonlocomotor movement.
Call and response	A structure that is most often associated with African music and dance forms, although it is also used elsewhere. One soloist/group performs with the soloist/group entering “in response” to the first.
Canon	Choreographic form that reflects the musical form of the same name, in which individuals and groups perform the same movement/phrase beginning at different times.
Chance	A choreographic process in which elements are specifically chosen and defined but randomly structured to create a dance or movement phrase. This process demands high levels of concentration in performance to deal effectively with free association and surprise structures that appear spontaneously.
Choreographic	Describes a dance sequence that has been created with specific intent.
Choreographic	The specific compositional forms in which movement is structured

Structure	to create a dance.
Classical	Dance that has been developed into highly stylized structures within a culture. Generally developed within the court or circle of power in a society.
Discuss	To engage in oral, written or any other appropriate form of presentation.
Dynamics	The expressive content of human movement, sometimes called qualities or efforts. Dynamics manifest the interrelationships among the elements of space, time and force/energy. See also movement quality.
Elements	The use of the body moving in space and time with force/energy.
Elevation	The body's propulsion into the air away from the floor, such as in a leap, hop, or jump.
Folk	Dances that are usually created and performed by a specific group within a culture. Generally these dances originated outside the courts or circle of power within a society.
Improvisation	Movement that is created spontaneously, ranging from free-form to highly structured environments, but always with an element of chance. Provides the dancer with the opportunity to bring together elements quickly, and requires focus and concentration. Improvisation is instant and simultaneous choreography and performance.
Initiation	Point at which a movement is said to originate. This particularly refers to specific body parts and is generally said to be either distal (from the limbs or head) or central (from the torso).
Kinesphere	The movement space, or the space surrounding the body in stillness and in motion, which includes all directions and levels both close to the body and as far as the person can reach with limbs or torso.
Kinesthetic	Refers to the ability of the body's sensory organs in the muscles, tendons and joints to respond to stimuli while dancing or viewing a dance.
Levels	The height of the dancer in relation to the floor.
Locomotor movement	Movement that travels from place to place, usually identified by weight transference on the feet. Basic locomotor steps are the walk, run, leap, hop and jump and the irregular rhythmic combinations of the skip (walk and hop), slide (walk and leap) and gallop (walk and leap).

Movement quality	The identifying attributes created by the release, follow-through and termination of energy, which are key to making movement become dance. Typical terms denoting qualities include sustained, swing, percussive, collapse and vibratory; and effort combinations such as float, dab, punch and glide.
Movement theme	A complete idea in movement that is manipulated and developed within a dance.
Musicality	The attention and sensitivity to the musical elements of dance while creating or performing.
Narrative	Choreographic structure that follows a specific story line and intends to convey specific information through that story.
Palindrome	A choreographic structure used with a phrase or longer sequence of movement in which the phrase, for example, is first performed proceeding from movement 1 to movement 2, etc.; when the last movement of the phrase is completed, the phrase is retrograded from the penultimate movement to the first movement. (A commonly used example in prose is “Able was I ere I saw Elba.” In this example, the letters are the same forward to the “r” in “ere” as they are backward to the “r.”)
Personal space	The “space bubble” or the kinesphere that one occupies; it includes all levels, planes and directions both near and far from the body’s center.
Phrase	A brief sequence of related movements that has a sense of rhythmic completion.
Projection	A confident presentation of one’s body and energy to vividly communicate movement and meaning to an audience; performance quality.
Reordering	A choreographic process in which known and defined elements (specific movements, movement phrases, etc.) are separated from their original relationship and restructured in a different pattern.
Rhythmic acuity	The physical, auditory recognition of various complex time elements.
Style	A distinctive manner of moving; the characteristic way dance is done, created or performed that identifies the dance of a particular performer, choreographer or period.
Technology	Electronic media such as video, computers or lasers used as tools to create, learn, explain, document, analyze or present dance.
Theatrical	Dance genres primarily developed for the stage such as jazz and tap.

Traditional dance The term “traditional” is used to denote those dances and dance forms that have arisen out of the tradition of a people, such as the dances of bharata natyam, noh or the folk dances of indigenous peoples of Europe or other areas.

Warm-up Movements and/or movement phrases designed to raise the core body temperature and bring the mind into focus for the dance activities to follow.