

Instructional Unit Title: Improvising Within a Structure

Dance
High School

Fundamental Pathway

As an introduction, the teacher may show video samples of improvisational dance exercises so students can begin appreciating the concept and power of improvisation and its endless creative possibilities for dance.

The teacher may utilize improvisational warm up activities, such as mirroring in partners, so students can begin exploring different ways to move (and find comfort in moving).

The teacher may demonstrate the seven basic locomotor movements (e.g., walk, run, hop, skip, jump, leap, and gallop) so that students can begin to internalize these foundational movements for improvisation.

The teacher may provide visual examples of floor patterns, along with the concepts of space, time and energy so students can make connections between these concepts and the art of choreography.

The teacher may model a process for embedding music in dance so that students can understand how the choice of music helps determine and enhance quality choreography.

The teacher may share examples of successful collaborations so that students will learn how working together in small groups can refine and enhance creative choices that will further structure improvised dances.

The teacher may familiarize students with popular choreographic formats (e.g. ABA or Variation on a Theme) so the students can begin to conceptualize how dancers/choreographers adapt improvised movements into a structure.

The teacher may demonstrate a creative process for dance so that students can begin to understand the significance of exploring and experimenting with movement.

The teacher may model a quality rehearsal process (introduce, rehearse, and perform) so that students can examine the ways in which preparation helps dance performances link improvisation and structure to create a fully realized dance performance.

The teacher may provide/establish rules for safe and appropriate backstage-performance etiquette and professionalism so that students can recognize the need for behavioral expectations when off/back stage.

(Post-Performance Task) The teacher may revisit the creative process so that the student can reflect on how improvisation into structure helps to produce quality choreographic dance pieces.

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT: As an improvisational and choreographic expert, you have been asked to visit a dance class for young learners to be a teacher for the day! For your guest teaching appearance, you have decided to prepare various fun and basic structured improvisational dance pieces for your young students so they can get a feel for what basic choreographic patterns look like when performed. Your dances will incorporate the collaborative, improvisational skills gained in this unit, as well as utilizing an appropriate rehearsal process with strong performance skills. After your performances, you will have a chance to reflect upon your personal thoughts and ideas while evaluating not only the creative process in which these dances were developed, but also analyzing how improvisation links to choreographic structure.

This unit was authored by a team of Colorado educators. The unit is intended to support teachers, schools, and districts as they make their own local decisions around the best instructional plans and practices for all students. To see the entire instructional unit sample with possible learning experiences, resources, differentiation, and assessments visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples>.