Recent research has identified shifts in performing arts educational strategies to meet the changing educational needs of our next generation of performing artists and arts educators. A review of literature suggests a balance between teacher directed instruction and student driven collaborative work with seamless movement among three levels of guided instruction, focused instruction, and independent learning where “developing artistic literacy is a goal” (Hansen & Imse, 2016, p. 26). In addition to specific content knowledge, there is a focus on authentic life skill development and responsible citizenship meeting real world needs of the student (Johnson & Matthews, 2017).

In order to incorporate additional critical thinking, collaboration and communication, student problem solving, innovation and self-direction, teachers may:

- pose questions and facilitate discussion about performances where students collaborate and act as critics to analyze and evaluate using appropriate criteria;
- work with students to create an active learning community where students provide input for peer and self-assessment;
- allow time for students to reflect on sight-reading, composition, investigation, and scripted or improvisational performance to develop strategies for improvement in skill; and
- provide opportunities for increased responsibility for students to develop intrinsic motivation for problem finding and solving where the teacher is a guide and facilitator providing support as necessary.

To provide an emphasis on experimentation, invention, and discovery teachers may:

- demonstrate a variety of technical skills along with academic terms and vocabulary as they are needed through the process of open-ended, student-centered, creative endeavors;
- allow choices that are significant to students’ contemporary understanding, and
- provide opportunities to discover and learn through experimentation as a natural part of the creative process rather than predominantly following pre-determined steps.

Teachers may create a student-centered environment while carefully mediating students’ learning activity by:

- considering and identifying skills as well as the craft of performing while students cycle through the creative process from nascent idea until final presentation;
- encouraging discussion, questioning, and metacognition about their decisions through a range of meaning – making strategies;
- encouraging collaboration with others to be able to experience various perspectives and ultimately make their own interpretations; and
- reflecting and thinking deeply about his or her performance and that of others.

Resources: