Pioneers of modern dance

Technical skills: performing and appreciating

Duration: 10 weeks

Driving question

How has modern dance developed over time? Where did it originate?

Overview

Students investigate the origins of modern dance, including where it came from and who was leading the development of these styles. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the variety of pioneers: Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, Martha Graham, Alvin Ailey, William Forsythe and Graeme Murphy. Students will explore the PowerPoint presentation, youtube clips and practical workshops within the style being studied. Students will explore the development of each of these styles throughout time while gaining knowledge of the importance and significance of the pioneers.

| Stage 4 outcomes | Stage 5 outcomes |
| --- | --- |
| A student: | A student: |
| 4.3.1 describes dance performances through the elements of dance | 5.3.1 describes and analyse dance as the communication of ideas within a context |
| 4.3.2 identifies that dance works of art express ideas | 5.3.2 identifies and analyses the link between their performances and compositions and dance works of art |
|  | 5.3.3 applies understandings and experiences drawn from their own work and dance works of art |

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Content

Students will explore the pioneers of modern dance, through appreciation and practical tasks based on the developing modern styles of dance. The connection of theory to practical work will further engage students, creating more in-depth understanding of the pioneers.

| Cross-curriculum content and key competencies |
| --- |
| Work, employment and enterprise |
| Difference and diversity |
| Gender |
| Literacy |

Assessment

All activities require students to demonstrate their learning and are all formative assessment activities.

Students will submit a summative assessment research task at the end of the unit, exploring one chosen pioneer of modern dance. The pioneer can be any of their choosing. Students will be required to answer set questions in their task, enhancing their ICT skills. Students may wish to present an essay, PowerPoint presentation or speech. A non-linear approach to assessments allows all students to achieve while meeting the same learning outcomes.

Teaching and learning activities

Students are to work both individually and as a group through discussion-based activities throughout this unit, investigating the pioneers of modern dance in written and practical forms.

Suggested student learning activities include:

* discussion and summarising strategies around modern dance
* TEEEC structuring to form sophisticated paragraphing, working with the TEEEC scaffold provided; and
* research and investigate the pioneers of modern dance through questions and activities below.

Modern dance over time

Students will:

* watch a [clip on the progression of modern dance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyEEdb9sZZ4) and discuss how it has evolved throughout time.
* summarise and write a TEEEC paragraph on modern dance.

Loie Fuller

Students will:

* explore the first pioneer of modern dance, Loie Fuller. [Watch a clip on her choreographic style](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkT54BetFBI&feature=related) and describe what you recognise about the movement quality;
* discussion on historical context: what would life have been like in the 1890’s? [Watch a clip](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y321YKUc7KY) and discuss how society would have reacted to her choreographic form:
* summarise information from the PowerPoint presentation, learning summarising techniques. Choose 10 of the most important words on the slide, and then use these words to create your own sentences.

Isadora Duncan

Students will:

* [watch a clip on Isadora Duncan](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FemE2x8CWc&feature=related) and evaluate her choreographic influences;
* [watch a clip on Duncan](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7H31cnTICM&feature=related) and describe the style of movement, commenting on the elements of production.

Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn

Students will:

* watch the attached clips and write a TEEEC paragraph about their movement quality;
  + background information – [Ruth St. Denis Project 2006 Part 1 of 5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42Hc6pvnI8A)
  + choreography - [Ruth St. Denis’s Dance of the Peacock performed by Livia Vanaver](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRSzXbHCbQY).
* summarising activity on Ruth St. Denis, utilising Nominalisations to create a more sophisticated level of writing.

Martha Graham

Students will:

* watch the attached clips and write a TEEEC paragraph on Graham’s technique and the aim of her choreography;
  + [graham's choreography](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xoid5G8j2vY)
  + [a graham technique class](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p78zYG6-aHI&feature=related).
* summarising activity on Graham’s historical context and movement quality
* create a TEEEC paragraph: Who is Martha Graham and why was her technique so influential?

Alvin Ailey

Students will:

* watch the attached clips: Discuss and describe the differences in the Alvin Ailey dance company to that of other contemporary dance companies:
* [Alvin Ailey Dance Company](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2T-Rbf_z54&feature=fvw)
* Alvin Ailey choreography:
  + [Alvin Ailey so you think you can dance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUv8dvSvB_o&feature=fvwrelhttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZzGElW_qRs)
  + [Alvin Ailey performs The Hunt](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZzGElW_qRs).

William Forsythe

Students will:

* watch the following clips by Forsythe and answer on intent communication, and generation of movement in their workbooks:
* [William Forsythe choreography: One Flat Thing](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGvfqpQZC-s)
* [William Forsythe: generating movement](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPScI15bUkE) .

Graeme Murphy

Students will:

* watch this clip titled [You and I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScODvp3VJCk). Write down your observations. Suggested driving questions could be:
  + describe the dance style
  + does it include solo or partner work?
  + is it aesthetically pleasing?
  + what meaning can you draw from the work?

Modern dance today

Students will:

* explore and discuss:
  + how could modern dance have changed over time?
  + describe the style of modern dance now.
* Watch the following clips and discuss how the story is being communicated giving clear movement examples.

* [So you think you can dance - Fix You](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=do2vmsmdwlk)
* [So you think you can dance - Gravity](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhI4CpAH8wM)

When structuring the lessons work through the above sections across the entire unit.

Explore one pioneer each week throughout the term, coupling them with practical lessons exploring the studied style.

Attempt to engage in practical work around each style of modern dance.

Students are encouraged to present their research task, either an essay, speech or PowerPoint presentation/Prezi presentation to the class.

Making skills

Performance and appreciation

Students are to:

* demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the pioneers of modern dance, and its progression from the 1800s to the 21st century
* explore performance opportunities embodying the differing styles of modern dance throughout time
* submit a research task based on their chosen pioneer of modern dance.

Communicate

Written responses are documented and shared within collaborative discussion facilitated by the teacher.

Process diary

Students are to:

* document the process through practical classes in a process diary. This should be a journal, exploring reflections of each practical lesson or section investigating each pioneer. This can be their class workbooks, a dance process diary, or an online blog through sites such as Class Notebook or [Google classroom.](https://edu.google.com/k-12-solutions/classroom/?modal_active=none)
* Investigate the pioneers of modern dance through a literacy lens, embedding discussions, summarising, TEEEC paragraphing, and nominalisations in written form. These processes explore literacy structures, language forms and features, as seen in the [DoE text type support document.](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/eppcontent/glossary/app/resource/factsheet/4108.pdf)

Differentiation

Extension

Students could:

* investigate another pioneer in any style of dance, that we as a class, have not explored
* watch a work from their chosen pioneer and write a review outlining, summarising and analysing it for a set audience.

Life skills

| Life skills outcomes |
| --- |
| A student: |
| LS.3.1 experiences a variety of dance performances |

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Students could:

* experience a range of dance styles through film and class performance
* perform a style of modern dance from the 1800’s using a cloth to mimic Loie Fuller’s original style
* perform this routine to their class.

Evaluate

Feedback is formative for the duration of the unit.

Reference list and resources

* [Dance 7-10 Syllabus](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/dance-7-10) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2003.
* [Clip on the progression of modern dance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyEEdb9sZZ4)
* [Loie Fuller’s choreographic style](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkT54BetFBI&feature=related)
* [Loie Fuller clip and historical context](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y321YKUc7KY)
* [Isadora Duncan clip one](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FemE2x8CWc&feature=related)
* [Isadora Duncan clip two](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7H31cnTICM&feature=related)
* [Ruth St. Denis Project 2006 Part 1 of 5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42Hc6pvnI8A)
* [Ruth St. Denis’s Dance of the Peacock performed by Livia Vanaver](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRSzXbHCbQY).
* [Martha Graham's choreography](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xoid5G8j2vY)
* [Martha Graham’s technique class](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p78zYG6-aHI&feature=related)
* [Alvin Ailey Dance Company](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2T-Rbf_z54&feature=fvw)
* [Alvin Ailey so you think you can dance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUv8dvSvB_o&feature=fvwrelhttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZzGElW_qRs)
* [Alvin Ailey performs The Hunt](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZzGElW_qRs)
* [William Forsythe choreography: One Flat Thing](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGvfqpQZC-s)
* [William Forsythe: generating movement](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPScI15bUkE)
* [You and I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScODvp3VJCk)
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