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Dancing the Diaspora: Discovering the Influence of Traditional and Tribal African Dance in the History of African-American Social and Concert Dance in the Caribbean and the United States

Kerri-Noelle Humphrey

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School

DANCING THE DIASPORA: DISCOVERING THE
INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL AND TRIBAL
AFRICAN DANCE IN THE HISTORY OF
AFRICAN-AMERICAN SOCIAL AND
CONCERT DANCE IN THE
CARIBBEAN AND THE
UNITED STATES

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

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College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance
Dance Education

December 2018

This Thesis by: Kerri-Noelle Humphrey

Entitled: *Dancing the Diaspora: Discovering the Influence of Traditional and Tribal African Dance in the History of African-American Social and Concert Dance in the Caribbean and the United States*

has been approved as meeting the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the College of Performing and Visual Arts, School of Theatre Arts and Dance, Program of Dance Education

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ABSTRACT

Humphrey, Kerri-Noelle. *Dancing the Diaspora: Discovering the Influence of Traditional and Tribal African Dance in the History of African-American Social and Concert Dance in the Caribbean and the United States*. Master of Arts Thesis, University of Northern Colorado, 2018

The primary goal of this research project was to identify the influence of traditional African dance on African diasporic dance in the Caribbean and the United States. The study demonstrated how movement connects people and gives them the opportunity to share common experiences, ideas, and traditions. This qualitative and quantitative study was designed to answer four essential questions.

- Q1 What is traditional African dance?
- Q2 What is Black (Africanist) dance?
- Q3 How the elements of dance (Time, Space, Energy) can be used to help students make comparisons between African tribal dance and a variety of Africanist dance genres?
- Q4 How the elements of dance (Time, Space, Energy) might be used to create movements and dance phrases that represent various African and African diasporic dance genres? The research instruments used to analyze the data were pre-tests, posttests, and the researcher's observation notes.

This study was built around documents published by The Global Citizen Foundation, a non-profit organization that helps teachers develop values in their students. It is the Foundation's belief that students need the ability to solve problems in real time, think and work creatively in both digital and nondigital environments to develop unique

and useful solutions, think analytically, collaborate with others, and learn to be ethical and accountable (Wantabe-Crockett).

One goal of the study was to provide dance educators with a standards-based dance curriculum that employs 21st Century Skills. Another objective was to make available a comprehensive unit for the dance study that was diverse, inclusive, and presented Africanist dance as a high form of artistic expression. One final objective of this study was to provide middle school dance educators with a unit of study that can be incorporated into a course of study for their dance classes.

The study units were taught to approximately forty-five of the researcher's middle school (grades six through eight) dance students; however, only seventeen completed and returned the required consent forms. Upon the conclusion of the study, the researcher noted several limitations were encountered that may have influenced the outcome. These limitations included unexpected severe weather, an acute outbreak of influenza, and the fact that the researcher was also the author, implementor, and observer in the study. Other limitations noted during the study included the research participants' prior relationship with the researcher as her students and the large amount of material covered in the study.

The outcome demonstrated the use of culturally inclusive dance education enriched participant learning. Participants increased ability to articulate their knowledge about Africanist dance was evident. Additionally, the researcher noted a greater confidence in the participants' ability to create dance phrases that were representative of Africanist dance genres. Participants refined their 21st Century skills throughout the study using small group discussions, peer feedback, and group choreography collaborations.

Further research is recommended to solidify current outcomes and to discover alternative outcomes as well.

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To my mother, Evalyn Washington Humphrey, your diligent pursuit of academic excellence has inspired me throughout my life. Thank you for introducing me to the wonderful world of dance and supporting my decision to pursue dance as a career. I hope I have made you proud.

To my daughter, Kaya-Ashley King, you inspire me everyday to do more, achieve more, and work harder. I am a better person because I am your mother. I hope that you see it is never too late to pursue your dreams.

To my parents, Arnold and Marilyn Humphrey, I appreciate you for giving me the courage to try new things, listen to my own voice, and believe in my ability to accomplish anything.

Reverend Doctor Tomasi Muhomba, I am grateful for your support and prayers of encouragement. I appreciate the time you spent mentoring me during this process.

Dr. Sandra Minton and Christy O'Connell-Black, thank you for creating this distinguished dance education program. The experiences and knowledge that I have acquired during this program will carry me through my career as a dancer, artist, educator, and advocate.

To the members of my cohort, #10nacious10, it has been an honor to take this journey with you. You are an inspiration.

I will praise you, Lord,
with all my heart
and tell about the wonders
you have worked. ~Psalm 9:1

My journey of Dancing the Diaspora is just beginning...



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Goal of Thesis

Movement is fundamental to the human existence. A person's ability to move can help them gain status within society, create relationships with others, avoid dangerous circumstances, relieve stress, and/or entertain an audience of familiar and unfamiliar onlookers. It is important to understand how movement connects people and gives them the opportunity to share common experiences, ideas, and traditions.

These ideologies are some of the precursors to what researchers now have aptly named the 21st Century Skills. The education pendulum is swinging toward focusing more on "soft skills" than teaching to the test or preparing students for success on specific test content. Some of the 21st Century Skills such as creativity, critical thinking, and communication are among these soft skills. The soft skills take time and persistence to develop but can often be nurtured through involvement in the arts. Eric Jensen advised in his book *Arts with the Brain in Mind*, that "The arts develop neural systems that often take months or years to fine-tune. The benefits, when they appear, will be sprinkled across the spectrum, from fine motor skills to creativity and improved emotional balance" (Jensen 1). Today's students are dependent on educators who can present them with material that not only communicates a new skill, but also promotes the refinement of much needed 21st Century Skills.

The 21st Century Skills are needed in preparation for the rapidly changing workplace of the future. Many of today's students will work in jobs/fields that do not

currently exist. Although there is no one definitive definition of 21st Century Skills, the Global Digital Citizens Foundation, a non-profit organization that helps teachers develop values in their students, defined these skills. They believed students need the ability to solve problems in real time, think and work creatively in both digital and nondigital environments to develop unique and useful solutions, think analytically, collaborate with others, and learn to be ethical and accountable (Wantabe-Crockett).

The Foundation described analytical thinking, collaboration, and ethics in the following way: They said analytical thinking should include the ability to compare, and make contrasts, evaluate, and synthesize without being supervised; that collaboration needs to take place both physically and virtually; and that ethics and accountability involves being adaptable, having empathy and tolerance (Wantabe-Crockett). In a global community that is driven by computers and technology, researchers have determined that the key to success lies not within the mastery of technology, but in the “soft skills” that technology is dependent upon for its creation and development. Committed educators should present content to their students that encourages students to sharpen these skills.

There exists a need to expand the resources available to devoted educators and more specifically for dance educators. Unlike traditional academic subjects such as math and language arts, a dance curriculum does not follow any predesignated path or agenda, other than standards couched in general terms. The curriculum being taught is generally shaped by the dance educator and dependent on his/her access to good teaching resources and the needs of the students.

The primary goal of this research project was to identify the influence of traditional African dance on African diasporic dance in the Caribbean and the United

States. A supplementary goal of this research project was to provide dance educators with a standards-based dance curriculum that employs 21st Century Skills. A third objective was to make available a comprehensive unit for the dance study that was diverse, inclusive, and presented Africanist dance as a high form of artistic expression. One final objective of this study was to provide middle school dance educators a unit of study that can be incorporated into a course of study for their dance classes. The essential questions addressed in this project were:

- Q1 What is traditional African dance?
- Q2 What is Black (Africanist) dance?
- Q3 How the elements of dance (Time, Space, Energy) can be used to help students make comparisons between African tribal dance and a variety of Africanist dance genres?
- Q4 How the elements of dance (Time, Space, Energy) might be used to create movements and dance phrase that represent various African and African diasporic dance genres? The objectives of this study were explored with 17 sixth through eighth grade students at the researcher's school.

A study conducted in 2015 investigated how traditional African (Zimbabwean) dance could be used to decolonize the mindset of African students. In the study, the researchers found that the teachers were ineffective in teaching the content because they were ill prepared. This research purported that the narrative of African people had been marginalized and deemed irrelevant, but these narratives should have been included in the lesson content because they were a critical component of the identity of African people (Gonye and Moya 259).

The narrative of African and African-American people is similarly marginalized here in the United States. This study viewed the study of African and African derived dance as foundational to the study of dance in a public-school setting. Additionally,

during recent on-campus study with graduate students matriculating in the dance education program at the University of Northern Colorado, the researcher was informed that these dance educators felt ill prepared to teach content related to African-American dance and lacked curriculum resources (Mercer).

Purpose of Study

The significance of African and Africa diasporic dance has continuously been sidelined by the dogma of Eurocentric and Western beliefs and philosophies. In her thesis, *Dance: The Stepchild of the Black Arts Movement*, Rita Delores Page asserted that African and African-American dance has been marginalized, devalued, and kept separate from mainstream American concert dance (xii-xiii). Despite efforts to unravel the significance of these dance genres, African and African derived social dance continue to preserve the personality, ideals, and traditions of these cultures, while African and African diasporic concert dance uses movement to communicate the rich history, combat negative stereotypes, and present political and social commentary on the struggles of the African diasporic people.

In these communities, dance and other forms of artistic expression are rarely performed for the sole purpose of entertainment. People of African descent demonstrate an intrinsic belief that the arts are transformative and essential to human survival. Today, dance concert audiences experience more than ever before the African aesthetic, unapologetically authentic and beautiful. The number of dancers of African descent in numerous dance companies of different dance genres is slowly on the rise.

To understand the rise of the dancer of African descent, one must explore the heritage of these dancers. The birth of the African dance aesthetic in the United States is

ascribed to Sierra Leone native, Asadata Dafora. In one of his earliest documented concerts performed in 1933 at the Little Theater of the Harlem Y.M.C.A., Dafora debuted “the beauty of African cultural expression to the concert stage” (Perpener).

Seventy-two years later, Misty Copeland broke another barrier by exhibiting the beauty of African cultural expression when she became the first female African-American principal dancer of America’s national ballet company, The American Ballet Theater. Ms. Copeland’s notable accomplishments bring flocks of diverse audiences to the theater to get a glimpse of her African American body delightfully performing the intricate subtleties of European classical ballet.

Dafora’s and Copeland’s audiences demonstrated, through tickets sales and social media, a growing interest in African and African diasporic dance and dancers. This interest has opened a window of opportunity to educate more audiences on the beauty of the Africanist culture through the art of dance. This research project was motivated by this opportunity and sought to use dance not only to present factually accurate data, but to transform the perception of African and African diasporic people and one of their forms of artistic expression, dance.

As a practicing dance educator, the researcher has spent countless hours researching available dance textbooks, curricula, and lesson plans. The investigation resulted in a plethora of valuable dance education resources, however, these resources were quite unrelated and difficult to combine. Faced with similar issues, first year dance educator Marianne Zollar described the process of attempting to create curriculum as being somewhat frustrating and unproductive. She commented that:

I spent so much time looking for lesson plans and just found a bunch of random plans but no real curriculum to teach. Of course, I know how to teach dance, but

where to start and how to get there in a public school? It's totally different than teaching in a dance studio. (Zollar)

Just as traditional academic subjects have grade-level curricula and standards, dance educators and advocates must make the investment in creating and publishing comprehensive standards-based curriculum to receive equivalent academic recognition.

Donna Davenport commented on the academic value of dance in her article, "Dance is Academic." In her narrative she noted,

The more we define our complex terms, such as embodiment of theory, aesthetic criticism, kinesthetic knowing, and somatic pedagogy, the more apt people are to let go of superficial assumptions and rethink their understanding. The more we perceive our own work in dance to represent a synthesis of the cognitive, physical, emotional, rural, and political (and whatever else), the more others will do so. (Davenport 34)

Another facet of this research was to present results from authentic classroom instruction based on research participants (students) who have displayed an interest in studying dance. The demographics of the research site indicated the school's population is primarily African-American. These enthusiastic students deserve a thoughtful curriculum, that is representative of their culture and presents lessons in an engaging format. Too often information about African and African diasporic people is relegated to an obligatory Black History Month format and reduced to something outside of everyday learning. The Black History Month lessons, which are often presented with a Euro-centric and racial bias, describe details that negatively portray people of color, and do not present accurate information. The researcher's purpose was to craft research and a curriculum that supports factual accuracy and positive images of African and African-American people, culture, and dance.

Significance of Study

This research study has the potential of introducing practical knowledge to the lexicon of material for dance educators. For decades, African and diasporic forms of dance have been absent from the academic dialogue and literature encompassing the arts. Susan Manning observed in her book *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion* that literature about African diasporic dance is rarely integrated in the historiography of white American dance. Quite often, Africa is viewed as one large entity when in fact there are more than fifty countries in the continent. To create truthful historiography of African dance would entail the research of no less than fifty countries where there are more than 1,500 distinct languages (Dickson).

Another barrier to the research of Africanist dance arose from the strict oral traditions found in African culture. Written history is elusive within the culture, as the griot has been firmly established as the mechanism for preserving tribal antiquity. Griots are a class of traveling poets, musicians or storytellers who preserve the oral history in parts of West Africa. “The reason for this lack of written tradition matters little, it is a simply a fact. For twentieth century Africans there are no early written works to tell them about the imagination and history of their ancestors” (Tiérou 9).

Furthermore, the absence of written documentation was also present even during the Civil Rights movement when black arts were particularly important in communicating the socio/political/protest messages of the time. The struggles for civil rights began as soon as slavery was abolished but is more specifically identified with the time frame from 1900–1968. During this time, the descendants of enslaved Africans began to protest and demand basic civil rights from the American government. This was

a period of awakening, when visual artists, singers and songwriters, musicians, choreographers and dancers began to capture and communicate the struggle of the African-American people as their audience (mostly African-Americans) desired to experience a transformation of the harsh realities of life, to appreciate the beauty in the struggle and receive a message of hope.

In the same vein, African-American leaders (Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Dubois, Dorothy Height, James Baldwin, and Angela Davis) called for a return to a lifestyle and culture that was a restorative representation of African culture. Alongside this return to African aesthetics, African-American dancers were shattering glass ceilings in (mostly white) concert dance companies and as professional choreographers. However, dancers and choreographers who were presenting European/hybrid-European dance received little or no support (Page xi). Thus, the accomplishments of these dance artists went widely unnoticed and undocumented.

This research also bears significance based on the way that African and African diasporic dance was written and recorded. Quite frequently, collective knowledge about African dance was written by authors who possessed little or no expertise on the subject and who did little or no research to support their writing. Dance researcher, Charmian Wells (who firmly asserts her qualifications and race “I am a white woman . . . and a PhD candidate in Dance Studies at Temple University . . . and a student and professor of African/diaspora dance. . . .”) gave a brash explanation of the flaws apparent in a review of African or African diasporic dance.

The central issue in this review is a glaring lack of cultural literacy combined with a lack of self-awareness about this deficiency, any sense of the historical role of racism in U.S. concert dance criticism, and a galling sense of authority over

subject matter with which the reviewer is clearly unfamiliar. Nor did she take it upon herself to ask questions or do research. (Wells)

In her article, “Strong and Wrong: On Ignorance and Modes of White Spectatorships in Dance Criticism” Wells revealed this lack of literacy is not a new phenomenon in the discourse of dance reviews and exists primarily with white critics “policing black choreography and performance” (Wells). This same writer also asserted this lack resulted from not “training and educating one’s personal apparatus to comprehend formal structures and innovations within cultural practices” (Wells). These issues perpetuated the continued marginalizing of African and African diasporic dance. There exists an overabundance of similar examples demonstrating a disregard for these dance genres. Thus, the researcher intended to add useful content to the investigation of African and African diasporic dance.

This research also has meaning for the professional aspirations of the researcher. According to Jack Jennings of the *Huffington Post*, ninety-one percent of American children are educated in public schools. With this extensive range of influence, public school educators need enhanced teaching resources that speak to the interests and needs of today’s student (Jennings).

The researcher read about a failing, low-income school in Chicago which began offering curriculum that was designed to identify connections between the content of the lesson and the student’s lives and experiences (Rabkin and Redmond 128). To change the school’s culture and climate, educators began to employ integrated arts education. After two years,

The scene we observed in School 1 is being repeated in dozens of schools, many low-income, across the country every day. These schools defy expectation in significant ways: First, because they are succeeding in a system that has failed

millions of low-income children, and in which closing the “achievement gap” has proven to be a most elusive and frustrating goal; second, because their successes have been generated by moving the arts, perpetually on the margins of education, to the center of teaching and learning. (Rabkin and Redmond 128)

Recognizing this example as an opportunity to create meaningful dance content, the researcher approached this study with hopes of creating a curriculum that fostered student engagement, accelerated achievement, and created positive opinions about African and African diasporic dance. The research intended to combat centuries of negative perceptions that appear as early as the 18th century in writings about West African dance. Jean Barbot, a French author and slave trader wrote about West African dance in his memoirs published in 1732. He stated,

The sensual nature of the description, with men and women’s bodies colliding while the dancers exchanged “dirty” words, created an exotic, almost pornographic representation of West Africans. Barbot’s desire to amuse, and maybe even to titillate, male readers was fulfilled through suggestive language that simultaneously informed his Western European and North American audience that these dance scenes were sexual and immoral; African women especially took center stage in these descriptions. (Thompson 2)

Three hundred years later, as noted by Wells, authors continue to misinterpret, marginalize, and describe the exotic nature of African dance. Thus, today they continue to perpetuate current students’ ongoing misconceptions about African and African-American dance, culture and people which creates negative self-images and low self-esteem.

Twenty-first century students are constantly bombarded with information, media, and images. Particularly with the rise in popularity of hip-hop dance, educators must be aware of finding a “point of entry” to discuss current trends with students and find ways to demonstrate how trends are derivatives of previous works and ideas. It is obvious that students today are exposed to African-American dance and dancers, but the question

arises of how to help today's students understand how all people of the African diaspora have an ancestral connection to the movements of hip hop and other genres derived from African dance? While this research may not yield all the answers, it may produce valuable outcomes that other researchers can use to build additional inclusive curricular models.

While the researcher felt there were many aspects of this study that were significant, there were also some limitations. One limitation was that only seventeen of the students' parents or guardians completed the required consent forms. Other limitations were unexpected severe weather, an acute outbreak of influenza, and the fact that the researcher was also the author, implementor, and observer in the study. In addition, the outcome of this study may have been affected by the participants' relationship with the researcher who was their dance teacher prior to the onset of the study, and also by the large amount of material covered during the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

African dance can be traced back to the earliest records made by humans which include paintings and carvings on rocks and cave walls (Udoka). The Yoruban people of Nigeria have six centuries of records which demonstrate dancing has taken place at the annual festival of the goddess Osun. Every August, to this day, the town of Osogbo is flooded with thousands of believers who celebrate the goddess with music and dance. Each year the festival begins with the lighting of a five hundred-year-old sixteen candle candelabra (Feiler).

Ancient Egyptian artifacts display tableaus of men and women engaging in dance. Figure 1 illustrates Ancient Egyptian women dancing to woodwind music.

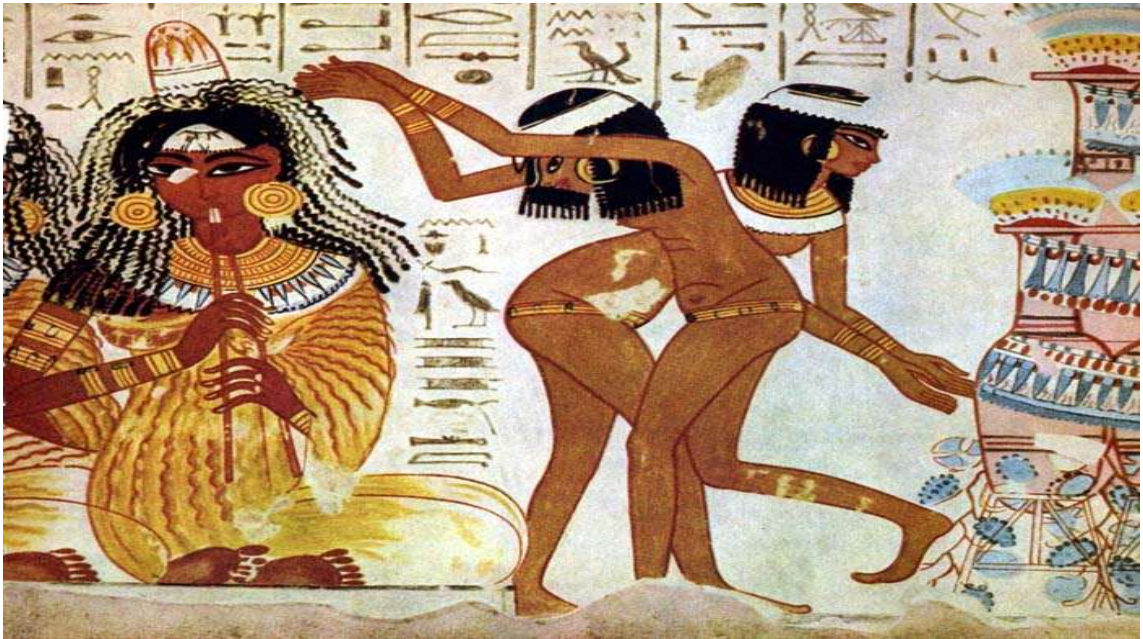


Figure1: Ancient Egyptian Dancers and Musicians (<https://www.ancient-egypt-online.com/egyptian-dance.html>)

Entertainers, especially females, were in great demand and could earn a high wage for performances at festivals, rituals, and ceremonies. During the Roman Period, dancer Isadora of Artemisia (c. 200 CE) earned two hundred sixteen drachmas (approximately \$5,400 today) for a six-day performance (Mark, *Jobs In Ancient Egypt*).

Early records also demonstrate the importance of dance in African life; however, one crucial barrier to authentic appreciation of African dance is the lack of codified and written resources created by reliable African dance scholars. This research will feature how African and African-derived dance is often misunderstood and misrepresented in academic research and classrooms. The intent was to create a link to misinformation and the ongoing bias of Euro-centric scholars and educators via the written account of the capture and transportation of enslaved Africans and their dances. The desire was also to investigate the disconnect established by those who aspire to present African dance to the world as it is often presented as overtly sexual and uncivilized instead of as a rich representation of African high art and culture.

This chapter will explore research associated with the subsequent questions: What is African dance? What comprises African diasporic dance? What words and teaching techniques can be used to explain the African aesthetic, African-based arts in education, and African dance in education?

What is African Dance?

According to author Alphonse Tiérou, dance has been and is a major component in African life. Indigenous African people use dance to create a sense of community and preserve a rich history and culture (Tiérou 11). As indicated in the previous chapter, defining “African” dance is a daunting task because of the vast number of countries and

multiple languages spoken across the continent. Tiérou described African dance using the following terms:

For an African, dance is a perfect manifestation which comes from the intimate union of cou and zou. . . . The cou is the term which defines the body of the dancer when he executes the dance: it is the public part of the dance. . . . The zou is the abstract, conceptual part of dance. The term zou includes the determination of the dancer to dance, the freedom which he has to perform or not, his emotions and sensations, and the different involuntary aspects of the body. (Dooplé 13)

Tiérou further asserted that the identity of African dance cannot be acquired without training. Over the years, European academics set out to create and teach culturally appropriate and diverse curricula. Unfortunately, these courses were devoid of any true awareness of African dance and subscribed to a singular egocentrism. Courses on African dance are available throughout Europe and the West. Tiérou considers them “useless” since they disregard the basic tenants of art. Accomplished African dancers use the word “Foufafou” to describe scholars with an appetite for dance exoticism and “shaking buttocks”. What is taught in these classes has no connection to authentic African dance with connects the dancer spiritual targets (Tiérou 15).

However, the ignorance on display has not been solely dependent on the European educator, since a dual responsibility exists for all academics to research authentic African dance and for African people to create reliable documentation and codified references (Dooplé 15). Having limited access to reliable reference material makes teaching African and African diasporic dance more challenging.

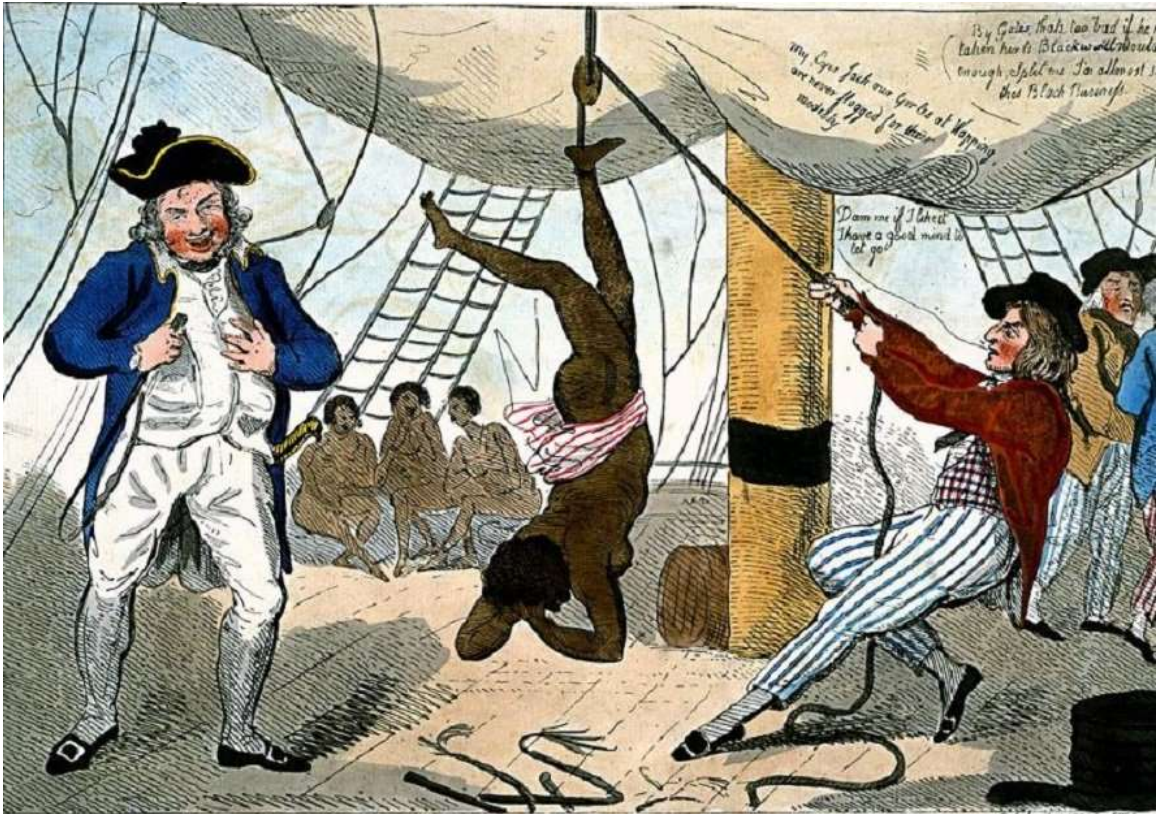
Another hurdle to answering the question What is African Dance? is a fundamental misunderstanding of the importance of African dance in African culture.

Leonard E. Barrett noted:

The debasing manner in which African slaves were brought to the new world and the inhumane conditions under which they were forced to work, for centuries provided a climate in which it was unfashionable for scholars to inquire into their cultural, social or political background. . . . (Barrett 14)

The John Kimber Trial of 1792 recounted the dreadful murder of a Nigerian teenager who refused to dance for her captor, Captain John Kimber. Figure 2 characterizes the disgraceful treatment enslaved Africans often endured. The teenage girl was said to have been tied up by one ankle and whip until she died. 27 Africans died on this voyage of the *Recovery*, but the teenage girl was not listed on the ship's record.

Figure 2. Enslaved African teenager being tied and whipped



(<https://face2faceafrica.com/article/the-tragic-story-of-an-enslaved-nigerian-teen-killed-on-a-slave-ship-in-1791-for-refusing-to-dance-for-the-captain>)

Kimber was acquitted of all charges sending a definitive message that Africans would have to yield to the harsh desires of their owners to have any chance of survival

(Johnson).

Thus, British systematic colonization fashioned an “uncivilized” perception of African people and their cultural traditions. This perception created an inherent misunderstanding when dance historians and dance educators attempted to document this history.

Traditional dance curriculum structure implies that traditional Western dance forms require more focused study than world dance forms. At the same time, students of color will find few faculty of color teaching ballet or modern, and even fewer dancers of color employed in ballet. Further, the structure suggests to students that study of dance forms other than ballet or modern is too insignificant to warrant a degree from an accredited institution. In many cases where this situation exists, the departments that promote these ideals (even unintentionally) are predominately white. A more egalitarian curriculum structure would serve to demonstrate tangible actions to decolonize and diversify Western dance aesthetics in higher education. (McCarthy-Brown, *Decolonizing Dance Curriculum* 127)

Geoffrey Gorer, an English anthropologist, and author, concurred that Europeans simply do not understand the importance of African dance to the African people. In his research, Gorer categorized African dance as either amateur or professional, noting that most tribal cultures tend to have more professional dancers than other cultures and that tribal warriors do not participate in agronomic or household work because they are professional dancers. Gorer also emphasized the importance of dance in African culture by describing the connection between fighting and dance. About the tribal warriors he stated: “When they are not fighting they dance” (Gorer 215).

Feral Benga, a prominent African dancer to whom Gorer’s book is dedicated, affirmed that Gorer’s book *Africa Dances* is an authentic account. Nevertheless, one of many of the author’s statements did reveal an ever-present bias in regard to African people and their culture. This bias was revealed when Gorer wrote, “For at least a century

they must be under the guidance of foreigners until they have learned a common language, common purpose, common morality” (Porter 363).

In the book *African Dance: An Artistic, Historical and Philosophical Inquiry*, African dance is described by essayist Doris Green as representing everyday experiences and events that African people choose to remember (Asante 14). Traditional African practices demonstrate that dance “can be a significant psychosocial device able to penetrate many aspects of human existence” (Asante 41).

In this collection of essays about African Dance many of the contributors referred to a lack of understanding of the importance of African Dance and how colonization has robbed many tribes of the authenticity of their native dance. In her essay, *Bridges to Humanity*, Tracy D. Snipes came to the following conclusion:

One often hears the phrase that dance is an international language. It is only when dance is performed with some prior knowledge of a cultural heritage that we can truly begin to achieve an international language of dance. . . . Understanding the dance is one crucial way of breaking the cultural barriers which have kept people bounded in the past; moreover, it could provide some valuable clues to interpreting events which surrounds us. These concerted measures will help to destroy the long standing myth of Africa as the dark continent which has been enhanced by colonialist mentality, policies and stereotyped images perpetuated by the mass media. (Asante 73)

Defining and teaching Black Dance has historically been challenging to dance advocates and historians, mostly resulting from a lack of unbiased comprehensive resources. In 1972, Katherine Dunham wrote “until the publication of Lynne Emery’s fascinating book, *Black Dance from 1619 to Today*, there has been in this country no comprehensive study of the dance forms of people of African origin” (Emery vii). As previously mentioned, most African cultural groups have limited or no written language, making academic research and analysis more complex (Glass 5).

African Diasporic Dance

Despite the misrepresentations of Africanist dance by Western and European scholars, it has continued to exist and flourish as an art form today. Keita Fodeba made this point in the following statement. “Yet, to the best of our knowledge, nowhere in the world during the long years of their tragic expatriation have the black races enjoyed social and economic conditions which were sufficient to destroy utterly their original ties” (Fodeba 20).

What is Black (Africanist) Dance?

The researcher found a commonality amongst authors who wrote about Black Dance. Black dance emerged in the form of dances created by enslaved and freed Africans and African Americans at strategic moments throughout the African diaspora. The constant influx of newly enslaved Africans to the United States allowed traditional African influences to remain vital in the formation of African American arts (Glass 15). This influx resulted in new traditions and dances that were firmly rooted in authentic African aesthetics. These amalgamations would survive through the creative infusion of new traditions to become part of social and nonspiritual dances that would inspire an early 20th century dance craze in mainstream America (Glass 16). As the African became more immersed on the North American continent, the clear-cut distinction between religious and secular interests vanished and the previously distinct communities became homogenous.

Early Black dance in the New World emerged as a regional phenomenon based on traditions of enslaved Africans in combination with the work model of their home plantation. Thus, the type of labor individuals performed influenced daily routines and

social customs which meant the dance routines of urban and house workers were different from the dance routines of field workers (Hazzard-Gordon 102). The group or individual dances that developed were also based on aspects of the African customs that could be retained under the watchful eye of the lash. Nevertheless, enslaved Africans found a reprieve in the weekend and holiday dances that were allowed by their enslavers and any opportunity afforded for entertainment, enjoyment or release was seized.

Abolitionist Frederick Douglas commented on occasions when slaves performed such dances:

holidays were among the most effective means in the hands of the slaveholders of keeping down the spirit of insurrection among slaves . . . but for those [dances, frolics, holidays,] the rigors of bondage would have become too severe for endurance and the slave would have been forced to a dangerous desperation. (Douglas 147)

At its roots, Black dance grew not out of the need or desire to perform but more so from the African and African American's natural aspiration to maintain a cultural connection to home and community and to unwind from the everyday stresses in the New World. Black dance was an instrument of freedom for the enslaved and a mechanism to oppress for the enslaver.

A new cultural identity, the African American, was born out of the horrors of colonization. Hazzard-Gordon wrote:

The process of change from African to African-American was protracted, but a clear demarcation emerged between ritual, or sacred, ceremonial dances and the secular dancing which occurred at festivities and parties. We cannot be sure exactly when this delineation appeared, but the processes responsible for its development began in the middle passage. By the time, the first generation of Africans were born on these shores the process was probably well established. (Asante 104)

As the effects of slavery began to weaken African culture, "inter-African" cultures began to emerge (particularly in the South) and out of the rubble Black dance

began to develop. These “macro-sociological” dynamics offered the “socio-historic background to some of contemporary America’s most vibrant folk cultural and entertainment forms (Asante 122).

The appearance of the incorporation of European aesthetics denoted a distinct departure from traditional African aesthetics as Africanist people began to create new cultures in the new land. The Cakewalk was one example of this transition. It emerged during early harvest festivals and was sometimes referred to as the “chalk-line walk” (Haskins 11). However, the Cakewalk quickly became a sensation with white people and “became a popular white social dance, another example of whites copying blacks copying whites. The equation also travels in the other direction” (Gottschild 26). The viral sensation created by this dance led to the appropriation of a brand-new artistic expression of Africanist people.

Another example was found in early minstrelsy which demonstrated new folk dances and other forms of entertainment. White entertainers imitated Africanist performers by painting their faces black and replicating movements only previously performed by black performers (Gottschild 26). At this time, the brilliance of Africanist dance was being re-discovered and emerged under the umbrella of social and sometimes jazz dance, but simply put it was African dance in the new world.

Development of African Diasporic Dance

In the book *Black Dance in America*, James Haskins constructed a thorough chronology of African diasporic dance. This book traveled back in time and explored the earliest known diasporic dance, covering content from slave ship dancing, up to and

including current hip hop dance styles. Like Frederick Douglas before him, Haskins believed:

. . . dance would not only help the slaves to survive in a physical sense in the New World. It would also help them to stay alive in spirit, and that was something that slave masters could not take away from them. And because enslaved Africans brought their dances to the New World, over time their dances, like their music, would have a profound effect on the cultures there. (Haskins 5)

See Table 1 for an outline of the development of African American diasporic dance extending from the movements performed on the slave ships to the development of current popular dance styles such as Clowning and Krumping.

Table 1

Abbreviated Chronology of Africanist Dance

| Reasons for Dance or Types of Dances | Dates | Examples of Dances |
|---|--------------|--|
| Dance Exercise | 1600s-1900s | Enslaved Africans forced to dance on slave ships to stay healthy |
| Plantation Dance | 1600s-1900s | |
| Sacred, Commemorative | | Ring Shout, Buzzard Lope |
| Imitating Nature | | Snake Hips, Turkey Trot |
| Competitive | | Chalk-Walk, Cakewalk, Water Dance |
| Rhythm & Percussion | | Buck, Jig, Juba |
| Festival | | |
| Circle dances | | Pinkster |
| Negro Election Day | 1750s | Marching, Parade dances |
| Masquerade dances | 1800s | John Canoe |
| Corn Shucking | 1900s | Pigeon Wing, Improvisation |
| Traveling Shows | | |
| Minstrel | 1880s | Caricature dances, Essence of Virginia |
| Follies | 1900s | The Reel, Cotillion, Coontown |
| Social Dances | | |
| Competition, Entertainment | 1990s | Tap |
| Club Jazz | 1920s | Dance Marathons, Lindy Hop |
| Afrocubanism, Black Identity | 1920s | Salsa |
| Marching, Competitive | 1940s | Greek Steppin' |
| Big Band | 1940s | Swing, Boogie Woogie, Line Dances |
| Jook/Dance Hall | 1950s | Jitterbug, Stroll |
| Sock Hop | 1960s | Hand Jive, Pony, Twist |
| West Coast Identity, Soul | 1960s | Poppin', Boogaloo, Locking |
| Train | | |
| Disco | 1970s | Hustle |
| Break Dance | 1970s | Competitive, B-boying |
| "Urban" Ballroom, Competitive | 1980s | Chicago Steppin' |
| House | 1980s | Footwork, Lofting |
| Party Dance | 1990s | Prep, Running Man |
| New Skool | 2000s | Clowning, Krumping |

A notable shift occurred in Black dance when the of the Civil Rights Movement was launched because from that point onward dance assumed a more historical role. As a result, Black dance became a way to communicate a message in the same way the

Plantation dances were used to communicate rebellion rather than being solely a vehicle to entertain white audiences.

During this same period, Gittens noted the emergence of West African dance in American studios and on the stage. The Black Power movement of the 60's was the launching pad for the Black Arts movement which fueled the academic study of African Diasporic dance.

The Black arts movement not only marks the launching point for African choreography as a centerpiece within Black dance in the United states, but it was also the period in which much of the scholarship on the Black dancing body within the American performance began. . . . Considering the significant elements that link Black dance to Africa, it is critical to highlight the complexity of nomenclature to better understand the recent contributions of African American choreographers under the rubric of the many body techniques and social vernacular expressions that inspired them to create what they too have called "Black dance." (Gittens 56-57)

The development of Black dance has seen a continuous progression created by an oppressed people who used movement predominantly to create community, retain African identity, and relieve the stress of existing in the New World. From being marginalized and with its very humble beginnings, Black dance has materialized to become a force with international influence.

Haskins had the following to say about the contribution of Black Dance to the American dance scene: . . . "black dancers can take heart in the knowledge that some of the most respected dancers in the twentieth century recognize how vital has been the role of black dance in modern America and, indeed, the world" (Haskin 215). Agnes de Mille echoed this sentiment in her 1963 book because she felt that there had been little to no innovation in European dance since 1850 and innovations in dance after 1850 came mainly from the United States. "One of the primary sources of these innovations,

especially the rhythms, has been African, and the messengers of those rhythms have been black people” (Haskin 215).

The Characteristics of African and African Diasporic Dance

The distinctive nature of African movement remained authentic well after the importation of slaves was banned in the United States. In addition, the illegal smuggling of enslaved Africans continued for decades, helping to keep the customs of African people alive in the New World right until the “eve of the Civil War.” In plantation communities, African people from various national and ethnic backgrounds shared customs and traditions which led to the emergence of blended, new ways of life (Glass 13). Newly arrived Africans reinvigorated the traditions of the homeland in the New World for older Africans and African Americans who had arrived earlier had no first-hand knowledge of Africa.

In Africa dance is present everywhere, it is part of the daily life of the village and punctuates the main events of existence. It is completely integrated into village activities and facilitates meetings and exchanges. It is a privileged means of communication between human beings and allows them to express all their feelings. (Tiérou 13)

Since dance was a foundational part of African life, Africans and African Americans in the New World crafted contemporary dance conventions that combined various indigenous African movements, yet which reflected life in the strange new world. The characteristics of these Africanist inspired dances were distinct and identifiable in terms of the movement vocabulary, earthy orientation, and use of improvisation, formations, polyrhythms, percussion, pantomime, and props. Creating a sense of community and competition were also identifying characteristics of these dances (Glass 16-21). For example, the Ring Shout preserved the polyrhythms, pantomime, circle

formations, and participation of the community found in traditional African dance (Glass 44). The ritualistic qualities of the Buzzard Lope were indicated through the grounded orientation of the dancer, inclusion of pantomime, use of nature as an inspiration for movement, and performance to create a sense of community (Glass 58). In stark contrast to the European movement aesthetic focused on a stiff upper body with fluid movement of the arms and legs, African dance utilizes the entire body. In many African tribes, male and female dancers wore little to no clothing from the waist up which allowed for a broader range of motion. Similarly, the movement choices of Europeans were undoubtedly influenced by the prevailing fashion of the time (high necks, corsets, long sleeves, heeled shoes, etc.) the postures of the two styles (European and African) are clearly distinct. African dancers performed movements that were grounded with bent knees, and flat feet. This movement style is reflective of an agricultural lifestyle in which the body is bent slightly forward. In contrast, European movements tend to present a more aristocratic lifestyle with an upright posture and movement progressions that reflect an aspiration for the ethereal or being raised on the toes with a floating quality (Glass 16). These contrasting movements and postures illustrate a primary difference in these two cultures, since Africans seek a connection to the earth (nature, ancestors) while Europeans desire a connection with the sky (supernatural, god). Traditional African and European dances found a commonality in the use of geometry within dance formations although geometry was used differently in the two genres. Africans predominantly danced in groups which reflected their view that the community has importance over the individual. Tiérou proclaimed, "African dance, the major component of African culture, also depends on the circle, the symbol of life which is both spiritual and temporal (Tiérou

36). The use of clear lines and circles dominated scores of African dances, while European dance formations were more elaborate in their use of floor patterns. Figure 2 illustrates the floor patterns used for a European dance, the minuet (Glass 26).

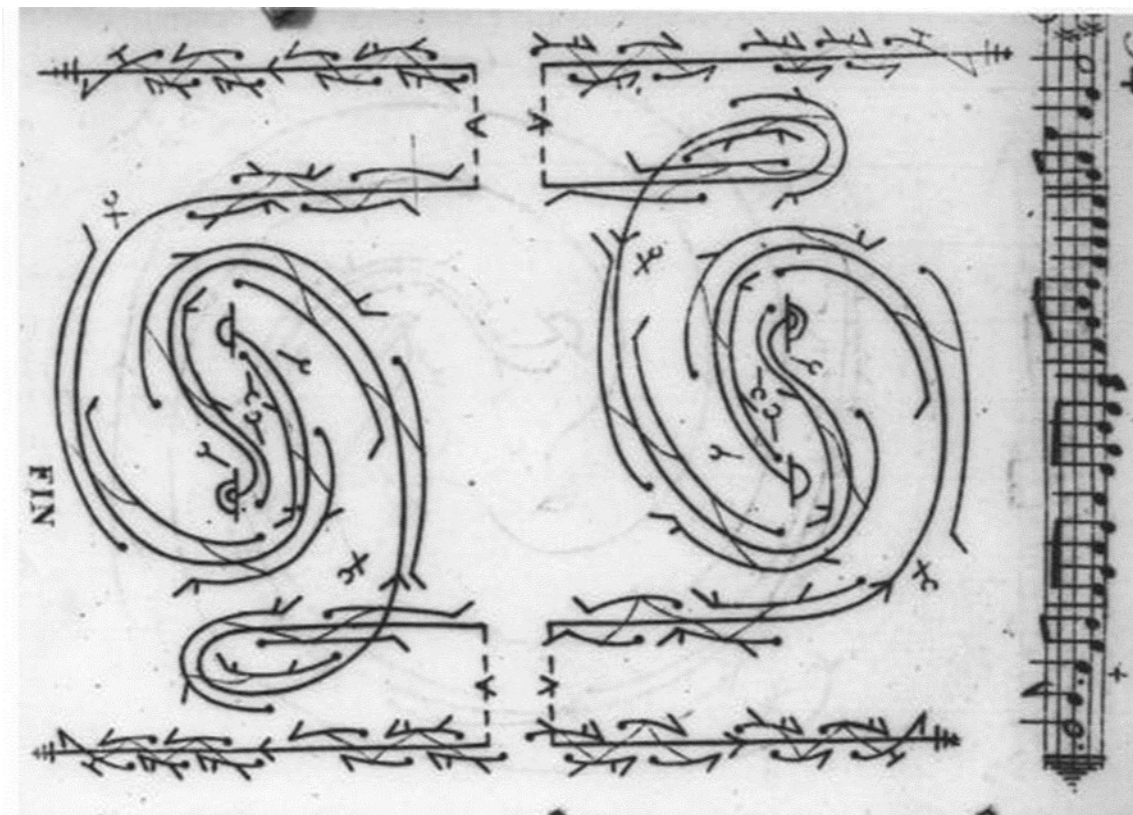


Figure 3: <https://danceinhistory.com/2018/05/01/the-menuet-a-quatre-steps/>

After emancipation, Africanist plantation communities became smaller and their social units became more independent. The shift from large group dancing to couple dancing reflects the political changes of the time. Couple dancing was not common among enslaved people until liberation allowed them to stand “alone” as a family unit (Glass 21).

The influence each culture had on the other is significant. As Europeans continued to enjoy the entertainment provided by Africanist people, they began to incorporate African body postures into their movements and African rhythms into their

music. Similarly, Africans and African Americans began integrating European styles in their dance. The formal ball adopted by Africanist people became a medium to distinguish themselves from “more common or lowly blacks.” Using the European aesthetic was a form of early elitism in this community (Glass 28). The Cakewalk, which was danced in couples, was fashioned by enslaved Africans to mock ostentatious mannerisms of white plantation owners. The use of line formation, pantomime, water carrying, and competition represented the African origin of the dance. The duality in the dance is striking and the Cakewalk became an American sensation (Glass 151).

The creative freedom of African-derived dance presents itself in the use of improvisation. African dancers continuously add a spontaneous, individual flare and style, contributing to the ever-changing nature of the dances. Improvisation is considered vital to the African dance tradition to keep movement alive and meaningful (Glass 18).

Percussion and polyrhythms are the most easily identifiable characteristics of African dance. Africanist-inspired dancers fascinated European and Western observers with their ability to simultaneously dance to many rhythms.

Polycentrism runs counter to academic European aesthetics, where the ideal is to initiate movement from one locus—the nobly lifted, upper center or the aligned torso, well above the pelvis. Africanist movement is also polyrhythmic. For example, the feet may maintain one rhythm while the arms, head, or torso dance to different drums. This democracy of body parts stands in sharp contrast to the erect body dictated by the straight, centered spine. (Gottschild 14)

In terms of rhythm, the drum is the heartbeat of African movement. Doris Green described African music as being comprised of inseparable elements. These structural features are articulated by body movements. Speech patterns are played by the musicians which the dancers act out with gestures, following the dictates of the music (Green 166).

The drum is one of the most important forms of accompaniment for African dance and the primary method of creating auditory rhythms. The drum was and still is inextricably linked to African dance and African customs. Since Africans also used drums to send messages, many plantation owners in the United States banned enslaved Africans from playing and owning drums. However, the prohibition of drums did little to discourage enslaved Africans from creating other forms of percussion to support customs they developed in the New World (Amin 38).

Dance in Education

The benefits of an education infused with the arts can be striking. The “arts build capacities that develop 21st century skills in students and provide constructivist learning experiences for them” (Bonbright 7). Schools with arts-rich curriculum have produced students with higher standardized test scores. At-risk students and those having a lower socio-economic status benefit equally from the gains of an arts-rich curriculum; thus, the arts can create an equitable learning environment for all students (Bonbright 9).

What Can Be Learned through Arts Education

Arts with the Brain in Mind, by Eric Jensen provided evidence of learning that can be achieved through the arts. He found that study of the arts enhances physical, emotional and cognitive learning (75). Students who are involved in the arts demonstrated an improvement in their ability to follow directions. Jensen stated dance generates vestibular activation that improves balance and ultimately a child’s reading skills. A child’s developing brain needs appropriate stimulation of the motor-cerebellar-vestibular system for successful movement and cognitive growth (77).

One study measured the ability of dancers to re-create music pacing in their head. . . . The reproducibility of these mental performances was astonishingly accurate.

Though nondancers were equal to dancers in estimating short (10-second) intervals, in the longer intervals, which included routines from 40-90 seconds, the error rates for dancers was a remarkable 1 percent of less compared to a 28-percent error for nondancers (Michon 1977). This suggests that the longer the time for mental rehearsals, the greater the success. (Jensen 79)

The above study pointed to the conclusion that dancers refine and develop intricate brain simulations to perform elaborate movements. Students are expected learn and experience a tremendous quantity of content from mathematics, science, reading and history in the education. Research suggests that students who receive that information through arts-centered education learn more than what is written in the textbook (Jensen 13).

What Can Be Learned through Educational Dance

Dance can be used to reclaim heritage and racial identity in a classroom or school. Colonization interrupted the growth and stability of the entire continent of Africa. Tribes were forced out of their homelands, with their language, religion, culture, and traditions stripped away. Dance is a positive vehicle to re-introduce lost cultural content by exposing students to the fullness of Africanist history and the rich traditions. It can provide a doorway to begin the process of positive self-recognition and social recovery is available here (Gonye and Moya 259).

In post-colonial educational settings, dance, more specifically African dance, continues to be marginalized via a curriculum model that espouses Western values. The study of African dance can splinter the connection with a preference toward European aesthetics as preferable and dominant. The study of multi-cultural dance forms can lead students to question social trends and recognize political and social unrest as it illustrates

the often contentious and tumultuous history of a culture alongside its successes and joys (Gonye and Moya 261).

The National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) estimated that as of 2003, of the 95,726 public schools in the United States, only 6000 (approximately 6%) offered dance as part of the K-12 curriculum (National Dance Education Organization).

Considering this research, dance educators and advocates faced an opportunity to change the landscape of education by including diverse cultural dance in the consortium of public education. Dance can and should occupy a meaningful place in public education because it also has the potential to bolster the holistic development of the student population (Gonye and Moya 262).

American students have been taught that Europeans made the most significant contribution to the dance world by creating classical ballet as the most important genre and that men are the most important choreographers (Hanna 149). Hanna also noted that,

Experiencing similarities and differences in dance modes of expression may help an individual to become more skillful and comfortable interacting with members of diverse groups at work and at play. Learning about other cultures can stretch the mind and help dissolve prejudices. (149)

With the rapidly changing demographics of the United States, culturally inclusive curricula are increasingly important. A dance education in which students learn dances from diverse cultures can provide schools and their students with a vibrant array of multi-cultural experiences and varied historical perspectives. Re-situated from the margins of curricula to an autonomous program, the study of dance has the potential to create new connections between current and future generations of children with diverse backgrounds and dispel colonial and neocolonial biases.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the researcher will describe the methods used to prepare for this study, conduct the actual study and analyze the data or outcomes. While conducting this study, the researcher faced unforeseen obstacles such as multiple school snow days due to inclement weather. To accommodate for this issue, the researcher offered participants the opportunity to make-up the Caribbean Salsa lessons during the school's regularly scheduled study hall.

Crafting the Dance Curriculum

The exercises utilized in this study were from the middle school dance education curriculum written by the researcher specifically for use in this endeavor. The research and resulting curriculum chronicled the influence of traditional/tribal African dance in the Caribbean and the United States. The researcher had no specific hypothesis or predictable outcome at the onset of the study other than designing a curriculum and lessons that would support her students' acquisition of new knowledge of African and African American dance genres. The goal was to guide the participants through a chronology of African and African diasporic dance that would culminate in an original piece of choreography, representing these influences. The researcher also hoped the study would promote a better understanding of historical elements of African and African American cultures that are traditionally studied in academic social studies classes.

The researcher used conventional methods to craft the curriculum. The first step was to identify the learning objectives of the unit. Once identified, the researcher began to identify available resources that would support the learning objectives of the unit. This was the most challenging aspect because of the vast amount of material that the researcher found and had to decipher for this unit. Creating the participant learning experiences proved to be the most rewarding step in the process. At this point in the process the researcher found opportunities to be creative and unconventional. Any classroom materials needed to implement the lessons were identified and collected.

*Added Background for Creation of
the Curriculum*

In addition to the above goals, the researcher endeavored to “enhance the ability” of the magnet program at her school to attract students by providing a unique curriculum. Thus, the curriculum created for use in this study stemmed from a 1963 lawsuit in which the local school system was required to desegregate. However, in 1984 the school system had still not achieved integration, so a United States District judge ordered the creation of a magnet school to further the desegregation agenda. By offering the curriculum designed for this study, the researcher hoped to help the school system move closer to achieving unitary status as declared by the court (United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama Northeastern Division 11). With respect to dance, the goal was to include a dance program at the magnet school that would exceed the breadth and quality of such programs offered at other schools (United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama Northeastern Division 29).

*Details of the Setting and Curriculum
Curriculum Used in the Study*

The dance curriculum taught as part of this study was based on the Alabama dance standards for grades six through eight. More specifically, the researcher used these standards to help create, explore, and revise sections of her curriculum. The Alabama Course of Study Standards state

If students are engaged with relevant dance activities that focus on contrasting emotional content, they will create sophisticated solutions to movement problems that guide them toward a strong understanding of artistic intent. Changing bodies and contradictory emotional states require a focus on scientifically safe movement principles and healthy nutritional behaviors. (Alabama State Department of Education)

See Appendix C for a copy of these sections of the Alabama dance standards.

The researcher created an eight-lesson unit for this research project and titled it the *Evolution of Jazz*. The researcher selected three lessons within the unit to use for this study. The lessons were taught at contrasting times during a nine-week time period. The researcher was the sole author of this unit. The dance curriculum was designed for students with an age range of eleven to fifteen years. The students participated two times a week in the dance classes with each class lasting for ninety minutes. It was estimated that fifteen to twenty students would be the optimal number of participants in the study.

All lessons in the curriculum were taught in the dance studio at the school. The school moved in 2015 to a new building where eighteen million dollars of renovations were done. This allowed the student population to double. The dance studio is a state-of-the-art learning facility. There are two classrooms used throughout the day to accommodate over five hundred students participating in dance at the school. The rooms include floor-to-ceiling mirrored walls, large white boards, Wi-Fi and ethernet internet

connections, Epson projectors, and built in speaker systems. Both rooms have a floating wood floor, and the large studio floor is covered with a Marley portable dance floor.

The dance floor is essential when teaching dance. Beginning dancers often take class in their bare feet to help them acquire the stability and balance needed for movement (Dance Spirit). The condition of the floor greatly impacts the safety of the dancers and helps with the prevention of injuries. Concrete floors are unsafe for dancers because they provide no shock absorption which means the entire force of impact is absorbed by the person. Such an impact can lead to injury not only to the feet and legs but to the entire body. Wooden flooring provides the necessary absorption but requires a great deal of maintenance to ensure that nails and splinters, etc. do not injure the dancer. A good wooden floor will provide approximately 50% shock absorption while the dancer absorbs the remaining force. A vinyl floor-covering like Marley, provides an adequate dance surface, gives dancers enough grip and allows the dancers to slide when necessary (Ausdance National).



Figure 4: The large studio before the Marley floor was added (Photo by co-worker)

The specific content and dance genres selected for the research study included the West African style and its connection to American jazz dance, Caribbean Salsa, and Chicago and Greek Steppin'. See Table 2 for a summary of the lessons included in the unit. A more detailed copy of the dance curriculum can be found in Appendix C.

Table 2

Outline of Curriculum Unit

| Lesson Title | Types of Activities |
|---|---|
| The History of American Jazz Dance | research, writing, visual art created |
| The West African Influence in American Jazz Dance | analysis, choreography, performance, notation |
| Dancing La Vida Loca (Salsa) | choreography, performance, notation |
| Let's Do the Lindy Hop | choreography, performance, notation, discussion |
| Steppin' in the Chi | choreography, performance, notation |
| Hip Hop Ya' Don't Stop | research, discussion, visual art created, choreography, performance, notation |
| Takin' it to the Streets | research, discussion, choreography, performance, notation |
| The Evolution of Jazz | choreography, performance |

The participants were given access to a variety of online and printed resources that were specific to each lesson and used their school issued laptops to investigate the content on the Internet. The participants found it difficult to find video representations for their research as the local school system had blocked streaming sites like YouTube. The research activity was followed by writing about the content that was discovered. Once the writing was completed participants took part in small group or whole class discussions to share their research findings or created pieces of original art work based on the research

to share with the class. Next, the participants analyzed the researched content and created their own original dances based on their analysis. Later, they notated the dances created using a choreography notation worksheet. See Appendix C to view the choreography notation worksheet used by the participants in this exercise. In conclusion, the participants performed their dances in small groups for their fellow classmates.

Research Participants

The participants were middle school students currently attending a PK-8 arts magnet school in Alabama. The local school district serves approximately 24,000 students and employs 2,600 administrators, teachers, and staff members. This was the researcher's second year as a dance educator at this school.

The researcher taught the lessons in the unit designed for this study to all the students in her middle school Dance I classes. There were approximately 45 students enrolled in two classes, however only seventeen students submitted the required consent form and were part of this study. The students who participated in the study were in grades six through eight. Of these, nine were in the 6th grade, three were in the 7th grade and five were in the 8th grade. The school identified the participants in the study as follows: fourteen were African American, two were Caucasian and one was a Native American/Alaskan Native. Sixteen of the participants were female and one was male. One student was identified by the school as Special Needs.

Prior to the beginning of this study, the students had participated in at least one elective dance class per week beginning in August 2017 and continuing throughout that academic school year. Since the entire student group invited to participate in the study was under the age of eighteen, those who elected to participate in the study had to have a parent or guardian sign a consent form.

The dance program at the school was established one year after the school opened in the fall of 1985. At that time, only lower elementary students took dance. Today the dance department serves the entire PK-5 population which consists of over 450 students. Currently, there are over 100 middle school students who have elected to take one or more of the following dance classes: Dance I, Dance II, Dance III, Tap, Jazz, or Ballet, totaling approximately 135 enrollments in the school's elective dance classes.

Description of Research Study

The data collected in this study are described in the next section of this thesis. The research instruments used to collect data were: pre-tests, the researcher's observations and posttests.

Pre-Test of Participants' Knowledge

Each lesson presented in the study had a unique pre-test that was given to the participants at the start of each lesson. Participants take took a pre-test to determine their prior knowledge of traditional African tribal dance and black American dance genres. A unique coding system was utilized to maintain the confidentiality of all participants and to identify individual participants' responses. A copy of this pre-test is in Appendix B.

Researcher Observations

The researcher was the only teacher in this study. As such, the researcher interacted with and observed students involved in the study activities. To assist in her observations, the researcher created a digital video of some lessons, and took notes during or after the lessons.

Posttest of Participants' Knowledge

Participants were given a written posttest after participating in each dance unit. The posttest was comparable to the pre-test and based on participants' knowledge of the

unit content at the end of the study. A unique coding system was utilized to maintain the confidentiality of all participants and to identify participants' posttest responses.

Data Analysis Procedures

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative forms of analysis in this study. The questions posed in the purpose section of this thesis were used to guide analysis of the data collected. Through the analysis, the researcher hoped to learn about the participants' responses to the specially designed dance curriculum and the degree to which they understood its content. Once analyzed, the data served as the primary resource for writing the discussion chapter of the thesis.

In the qualitative analysis of the data, the researcher wanted to identify and describe themes found in the participants' responses to the specially designed dance curriculum. The quantitative part of the analysis was used to determine which parts of the curriculum were enjoyed and understood by the participants and which parts were not. The researcher used an observation rubric to determine participant responses e.g. behavior, engagement, and spontaneous participant responses.

Data and Document Handling Procedures

All data, and findings related to the study were stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office. No other person had access to the data. Digital files (Word documents, Excel Files, Videos, etc.) were stored on the researcher's computer and password protected. The consent forms associated with this study are stored in a locked cabinet in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Dance Education Master of Arts, co-coordinator, Christy O'Connell-Black.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of traditional/tribal African dance on African diasporic dance in the Caribbean and the United States. This chapter is organized chronologically to answer the research questions posed in Chapter 1. The researcher first surveyed participants to determine their prior knowledge of the subject matter and then presented learning activities for the participants to experience Africanist dance in their own bodies. Finally, the researcher evaluated the participants' new knowledge with a posttest that was identical to the pre-test. Each lesson's tests were organized using a similar method. Section one emphasized knowledge of how the elements of dance (space, time, and energy quality) can be used to describe and understand a dance. Section two focused on broader topics that underscored the participants' dance literacy.

Outcome of First Pre-Test and Posttest

The initial set of pre-tests and posttests given to the participants were entitled "Coming to America: Plantation Dance." The pre-tests in this set were delivered to participants on the first day of the study. The posttests were taken following the presentation of the lesson based on the Plantation dance content. These tests can be viewed in Appendix B. The data collected for the pre-test and posttest regarding emerging themes and new knowledge will be discussed below.

This pre-test and posttest had two-sections. Section one asked participants to articulate their knowledge about Plantation dance in short answer form. Section two

presented questions in a multiple-choice format. The data from section one was analyzed qualitatively while the data from section two was analyzed quantitatively. Although seventeen students participated in this study, only eleven students participated in the Plantation Dance lesson due to illness or unsafe road conditions. Thus, the data reported in this section of the study includes an analysis of responses from those eleven participants.

*Qualitative Analysis: Section One
Plantation Dance Test*

The questions in section one of this test gave participants an opportunity to thoroughly express their ideas about Africanist dance. There were four short answer questions in section one of this test. In these questions, the participants were asked to compare the movement characteristics of African tribal dance to the movement characteristics of European ballet. For example, question one was: What characteristics are unique to African dance? For their answer to this question on the pre-test, one participant responded, "Really upbeat footwork." On the posttest the same participant said, "Each part of the body describe[d] each part of the song." Participants also expressed similar themes related to their lack of knowledge about Africanist dance. When discussing their lack of knowledge, almost half of the participants gave the answer "I don't know" to question one.

In addition, on the pre-test, participants described themes related to the emotional quality of Africanist dance like "fun", "upbeat", and "happy." In comparison, the posttest answers were more descriptive and dance-related because students discussed dance terms such as the elements of dance and talked about the dances as "sharp", "fast", and

“rhythmic.” Participants’ posttest answers also reflected that the purpose of the dance is often “religious.”

Another example of a short answer question on this test is: Why do you think slaves carried their traditions and stories through song and dance? On the pre-test, participants answered that dance was used as a form of expression and communication. Other participants said enslaved Africans danced because of the restrictions placed upon them by their captors. When using the elements of dance to describe how African tribal dance is different from ballet, on the pre-test, one participant described as follows. Student A described African dance as having “a lot of energy.” While answering “sharp” for African and “smooth” for Ballet on the posttest. Participants were asked to use the element of time, to describe how a traditional African tribal song (*Warba*) is different from a European ballet selection (*Sugarplum Fairy*). Participants described the timing of African music as fast, with a steady beat on both the pre-test and post-test. Overall, the participants’ posttest answers demonstrated the acquisition of new knowledge and increased confidence in their ability to express the new understanding. The pretest answers were at times correct but the posttest answers were much more succinct.

*Quantitative Analysis: Section Two
Plantation Dance Test*

The researcher used the outcome of the pre-tests to assess participants’ prior knowledge at the beginning of the Plantation Dance lesson. Participants’ answers to section two, questions five through nine, on the pre-test and posttest are charted below in Table 3.

Table 3:

| Comparison of Outcome for Pre- and Posttest for Plantation Dance Knowledge | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Question Number | Number of Participants who answered | % of Correct Answers | Number of Participants who answered | % of Correct Answers | Correct Answer |
| | Pre-test Correctly | | Posttest Correctly | | |
| 1 | 4 | 36 | 9 | 81 | A |
| 2 | 1 | 9 | 9 | 81 | D |
| 3 | 3 | 27 | 6 | 54 | D |
| 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9 | C |
| 5 | 2 | 18 | 10 | 91 | D |

This table showed there was a noteworthy progression in understanding the Plantation dance content for four of the five questions between the pre-test to posttest. In fact, the participants' answers for question one and five displayed the greatest increase in understanding. A traditional classroom grading scale was used on this test where each question in section two was worth twenty points. The pre-test average score on the Plantation Dance test was 18% while the posttest average score was 64%. This is a notable increase in the participants' demonstration of the acquisition of added content knowledge. However, question four appears to be the question that prevented the participants' average score from being a "passing" grade or 70%.

The outcome for question four showed there was minimal improvement in understanding the content of this question. Based on the students' answers, the researcher felt the content for this question deserved a more in-depth discussion during the lesson since this question appeared to be the most difficult for participants.

Question four was: The John Canoe was a dance slaves used to celebrate _____. The possible multiple-choice responses were : a. Kwanza, b. Easter, c. Christmas, d. Thanksgiving. The correct answer was c. Christmas. The first pre-test

revealed the participants had very little prior knowledge of this dance. The participants' posttest responses to this question indicated they were able to remember the dance was in some way related to Christmas, but they were not able to distinguish between Kwanza and Christmas celebration rituals. This data suggested more information should have been provided about Kwanza to help the participants distinguish between the two holidays.

The content of question five was based on the history of the Cakewalk which was really emphasized in this lesson. The researcher observed participants' surprise when they learned a present-day carnival game has roots in American slavery. At the PTA's carnival fundraiser held at the researcher's school, the Cakewalk is a game played each year. In this version of the Cakewalk, game participants dance around a numbered circle while music is playing. When the music stops, the organizer calls out a number and the person standing by that number receives a cake as their prize.

Many Americans may only be familiar with the cakewalk in the form of the game played at countless fairs, carnivals, picnics, fundraising events, and festivals around the country. . . . This modern-day adaptation, or perhaps appropriation, of the cakewalk bears no resemblance to its origins in the antebellum South. The cakewalk began as an appropriation of white ballroom dancing by black slaves in the South as an exaggerated parody of ballroom dances, such as the waltz, which were favored by white elites. ("Appropriation and Parody")

The researcher believes making a connection between the content and the participants real-life activities helped them to retain more information about the Cake Walk. During the choreography activity for this lesson one participant exclaimed "this is so lit." Lit is used as a vernacular term to describe something awesome or exciting.

Outcome of Second Pre-Test and Posttest

Three weeks into the study the participants took the second pre-test entitled “Out of Africa: Black Dance in the Caribbean.” The data from all seventeen participants was recorded during this pre-test. The researcher was better prepared to deal with participants’ absences during this phase of the study. She kept a record of participants when they were absent for a lesson and used study hall time to make up the lesson with the participants. The researcher observed that the participants seemed more comfortable while completing this pre-test as they were familiar with the process and understood there would be no penalty (“points off”) for incorrect responses. This pre-test can be viewed in Appendix B.

This test also had two sections. Like the initial test, section one in this pre-test required participants to articulate their responses in short answers. In these answers, the participants described Africanist dance as it related to the diaspora and more specifically to Caribbean Salsa dance. In part two, the students again answered multiple choice questions.

Qualitative Analysis: Section One Black Caribbean Dance Test

The participants’ answers to question one revealed several common themes and ideas. Question one was: Two things I know/remember about the Cuban Salsa are _____. Several participants knew the dance was a partner dance. Multiple students also described the dance as fast. Only one student conceded no knowledge of the dance. At the start of the class immediately following the introduction of the Caribbean Salsa lesson, one student asked: “Are we doing Salsa again? That was fun.”

Included below are a few of the unique participant pre-test responses. Student A said, “I know that you dance on heels + that you have to dance with attitude.” Student B felt, “Its [it’s] dramatic + loud. It is also very romantic at times.” Student C indicated, “People might gather around and have a feast.” Student D suggested, “Cuban salsa is an hispanic dance that hispanic adults do to express love.”

The overall analysis of the data for this portion of the study uncovered a wide variety of opinions about the content of the salsa lesson. It is evident that the participants felt more confident about their prior knowledge of this dance. This may be a result of the more general nature of question one when compared to question one on the Plantation Dance pre-test. In this question, the researcher asked for general knowledge about the salsa, while in the Plantation Dance question the students had to describe the characteristics of the dance. The answers on the Salsa dance test may also have been influenced by the popularity of recent dance shows like *So You Think You Can Dance* and *Dancing with the Stars*. Both shows include ballroom style dance and have included performances of the salsa on their programs.

Participants gave similar answers on the pre-test and posttest to question two. Question two was: Why did slaves educate themselves in secret? The theme of avoiding punishment from their captors emerged on both tests. Another theme present on both tests for this question was that enslaved Africans were not allowed to go to school. On the pretest Student A responded, “they educate themselves so they could escape + get jobs.” On the posttest, this same student answered, “because it was illegal to educated slaves.”

When asked to why enslaved children were taught games like hambone, double talk and hand jive, on the pretest participants responded with themes relating to having

fun, needing entertainment and not having access to traditional children's games. On the posttest, participants responded that these were secret methods used by enslaved people to communicate in ways their owners would not understand. "Because they did not have gameboards", was Student A's response on the pretest. In contrast on the posttest, Student A responded, "so they could talk in secret ways to other slaves."

When asked to use the elements of dance to describe the Cuban Salsa the participants gave comparable answers on the pretest and posttest. On both tests, participants described the energy as strong, sharp, and smooth. Participants used the terms fast with the music and medium to describe the timing element of salsa dance. And participants described the space element using with medium and high levels on both tests.

*Quantitative Analysis: Section Two
Black Caribbean Dance Test*

As noted above, section two included questions in a multiple-choice format. There were again five questions in this section of the test. The emphasis in these questions was on Africanist dance during the Middle Passage and the early stages of the diaspora. A copy of the Out of Africa: Black Dance in the Caribbean Test can be found in Appendix B. Table 4 below illustrates the quantitative outcome for the second part of the Caribbean Salsa test.

Table 4

Comparison of Outcome for Pre- and Posttest for Out of Africa: Black Dance in the Caribbean Test

| Question | Number of Participants who answered Pre-test Correctly | % of Correct Answers | Number of Participants who answered Posttest Correctly | % of Correct Answers | Correct Answer |
|----------|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|----------------|
| 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 44 | C |
| 2 | 11 | 67 | 15 | 89 | A |
| 3 | 2 | 11 | 10 | 56 | A |
| 4 | 8 | 44 | 15 | 89 | D |
| 5 | 2 | 11 | 11 | 67 | C |

The data suggests that study participants acquired new content knowledge from pre-test to posttest with the greatest gain being on section two, question five. Section two, question five was: the Gombay dancer group were composed of only _____ and _____. The possible multiple-choice selections were a. women, children, b. husband, wife, c. men, boys, d. women, girls. The correct answer was c. men, boys. The researcher speculated that this outcome developed from in-class discussion about the Gombay dance.

The students seemed surprised that dances practiced today still used what they described as “old-fashioned” gender rules. They also expressed frustration in the restrictions placed on women and girls who could not perform the Gombay. This discussion led to talking about other modern-day activities like education and politics in which there are fewer females participating. The students also expressed their frustration over the fact that so few countries, including the United States of America, had never

elected/appointed a woman as head of state. This issue was described by the students as a social tradition like the one practiced in the Gombay dance that may have helped to perpetuate the ongoing global inequality faced by women and girls.

The improvement from pre-test to posttest in this lesson was positive. The researcher acknowledges that other lessons may have had comparable success if uncontrollable external circumstances such as an influenza outbreak and winter weather school closures had not been a factor during the study.

Outcome of Third Pre-Test and Posttest

The final survey was distributed in week six of the research study. The researcher was able to use the data of only thirteen participants for this lesson because many students were ill due to an outbreak of influenza. Students missed on average ten to twelve days of school because of illness. During the second testing session, the researcher scheduled time to work with students who had been absent during study hall, but for the third session the researcher felt it was more appropriate for the students to use their study hall time to catch up on their academic assignments rather than continue with the study. Thus, only thirteen of the seventeen students completed the third and final test. Again, the researcher noticed an increased confidence in the participants' willingness to complete the pre-test as they were familiar with the process and the third test had a format consistent with the prior two.

During the third test, the researcher immediately noticed the participants requested copies of classroom resource, the elements of dance worksheet, to assist with answering the pre-test and posttest questions. The elements of dance worksheets were available to dance students at any time during dance class, and are laminated to protect

the documents and allow for multiple uses. A copy of the elements of dance worksheet can be found in Appendix C.

*Qualitative Analysis: Section One
Steppin' Dance Test*

The participants expressed some solid prior knowledge about this lesson's content on the pre-test. A singular theme emerged from the pre-test in response to question one. Question one was: In your own words describe steppin' (a.k.a. Greek steppin'). Several students named historical African-American Greek letter organizations that are part of the National Pan Hellenic Council since these organizations often perform variations of the steppin' dance. Organizations in the council are often referred to as the "Divine Nine."

The Divine Nine are Greek letter organizations that were founded in the early 1900's and are well known within the African-American community particularly communities with Historically Black Colleges/Universities (HBCU's). There are three HBCUs in the town where this research study took place. The Divine Nine organization was established on the campus of Howard University (Washington, DC) in 1930. The purpose of the organization is "Unanimity of thought and action as far as possible in the conduct of Greek letter collegiate fraternities and sororities, and to consider problems of mutual interest to its member organizations" (National Pan Hellenic Council). Thus, on the pre-test, the participants demonstrated some knowledge of groups who traditionally perform the steppin' dance.

On the posttest, one participant showed excellent articulation when answering question two: In your own words describe stepping (a.k.a. Chicago-Style Steppin'). The participant wrote "Its timing is slow and medium and it is [performed] with music. It is a locomotor dance. Its energy is smooth and light, and it uses all the body parts." Thus, a

common theme that emerged on the posttest with respect to steppin' was the description of the energy of the dance. Included below are a few of the participants' posttest responses that relate to the energy theme.

Student D wrote, "Stepping is a form of dance that is light, smooth and very soft. Student E said, "Its energy is smooth and light. . . ." Student F found that steppin' was ". . . smooth and light and slow."

Participants were able to clearly articulate the energy used in Chicago-Style Steppin'. The researcher believed this clarity resulted partially from experiencing the dance in their own bodies. But the researcher also credited the experience of having the students do research on steppin' which helped them understand how to specifically communicate the characteristics of this dance genre. The students also recognized they had resources such as the elements of dance Worksheet available to them which helped in describing the quality of this dance. Additionally, this was the third time the students had experienced this learning process and they were familiar with the researcher's processes and the learning objectives.

*Quantitative Analysis: Section Two
Steppin' Dance Test*

Section two of this test again included questions in a multiple-choice format. There were five questions in this section of the test. The emphasis in these questions was the social constructs that influenced the dances studied during this part of the class. Of the three pre-tests, participants demonstrated they were most proficient in prior knowledge of Steppin' style dances. The researcher attributes this partially to the current popularity of the Steppin' dance and importance of the Greek letter organizations in the local African-American community. The entertainment industry often promotes this

dance as well. In addition, Netflix recently released “Step Sisters” (2018), “Burning Sands” (2017), theatrical movies like “Stomp the Yard” (2007) and “Steppin’: the Movie” (2009). These movies all focus on African-American Greek steppin’ and thus all help to promote and educate the public about this dance (Blanco).

The quantitative outcome from the Steppin’ pre-test and posttest are in Table 5. This table showed there was a progression in understanding the dance content for four of the five questions between the pre-test to posttest. The participants’ answers for question one displayed the greatest increase in understanding. Question one was : Steppin’ (Greek) is a _____ form of dance. The possible multiple-choice selections were a. Celebratory, b. Percussive, c. Ritual, d. Improvisational. The correct answer was b. Percussive. During classroom discussions, participants recognized the percussive nature of the dance but did not have the vocabulary to adequately describe the dance. Participants were asked to use their laptops to look up the definition of the four multiple-choice selections. After reading the definitions participants could proficiently articulate the answer.

Table 5

Comparison of Outcome for Pre- and Posttest for Steppin’ to the Bad Side

| Question | Number of Participants who answered Pre-test Correctly | % of Correct Answers | Number of Participants who answered Posttest Correctly | % of Correct Answers | Correct Answer |
|----------|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|----------------|
| 1 | 3 | 23 | 8 | 62 | C |
| 2 | 7 | 54 | 8 | 62 | A |
| 3 | 5 | 38 | 1 | 8 | C |
| 4 | 6 | 46 | 10 | 77 | D |
| 5 | 7 | 54 | 9 | 69 | A |

Based on the outcome for question three, the researcher felt the participants' answers deserved a more in-depth discussion since this question appeared to be the most difficult for participants. According to the data shown in Table 5, there was no improvement of understanding for this question. Question three was: Chicago-Style Stepping is a social dance that evolved from a dance called _____. The possible multiple-choice responses were: a. Ballet, b. Break-dancing, c. The Bop, d. The Hustle. The correct answer is c. The Bop.

The pre-test revealed the participants had some prior knowledge of steppin' dance, but the posttest data suggested more information should have been provided in the class about the link between Chicago-Style Steppin' and the Bop. Participants selected the answer that would have been chronologically correct. The lesson outlined the chronology of social dances from the Lindy Hop to Chicago Style Steppin', but the Hustle, which was the students most popular answer to this question on the posttest, was the dance genre that was featured on the dance timeline presented to the class. The participants watched videos of the Hustle and quickly found similarities in the qualities of the two dances. The Hustle immediately preceded Chicago-Style Steppin' on the timeline. The researcher concedes this may have been the source of some confusion for the students.

Summary of the Study's Qualitative and Quantitative Outcome

The data collected in this study indicate that students have a better understanding of Africanist dance when they have experienced it in their own bodies and created original movement phrases to mirror the dance elements associated with a particular style. Participant knowledge growth was evident between each pre-test to posttest in the

study. A pattern of increased confidence in the participants' ability to articulate knowledge about the dances is apparent over the duration of the study. The researcher also noted a positive change in the participants' attitudes about completing the pre and posttest over the course of study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This research study was conducted to identify the influence of traditional African dance on African diasporic dance in the Caribbean and the United States. The final chapter of the thesis restates the research questions and goals, reviews the methods employed in the study, reiterates the study outcomes, describes limitations faced by the researcher during the study, and gives suggestions for future research.

Research Questions

As stated previously, the intent of this research study was to chronical the diaspora of African dance specifically in the Caribbean and the United States. The thesis attempted to answer the following questions:

- Q1 What is traditional African dance?
- Q2 What is Black (Africanist) dance?
- Q3 How the elements of dance (Time, Space, Energy) can be used to help students make comparisons between African tribal dance and a variety of Africanist dance genres?
- Q4 How the elements of dance (Time, Space, Energy) might be used to create movements and dance phrases that represent various African and African diasporic dance genres?

This middle school curriculum created by the researcher demonstrated a deeper understanding of African dance and helped students discover the similarities between

traditional African dance and Africanist vernacular dance. The participants in the research study were seventeen middle school students currently enrolled in an elective dance class at an arts magnet school in northern Alabama. The researcher is a PK8 dance teacher at the research site.

Research Goals

The primary goal of this research study was to create and implement a dance history and choreography curriculum based on African and Africanist dance inside a PK8 academic setting. The researcher set out to create a standards-based dance curriculum that also employed 21st century skills. The lessons in the study were designed with activities that required collaboration amongst participants, creativity, and critical thinking. Each lesson integrated an individual and group choreography activity as well as research, group discussion and sharing. Participants were required to use traditional (non-digital) and digital resources to complete learning activities.

A secondary goal of the research was to create and make available a culturally inclusive dance education unit of study that presented African and Africanist dance as high art. Programs with a strong focus on Western/European forms of concert dance (ballet, contemporary, jazz, etc.) can lead students (particularly students of color) to feel their cultural dances are not valued in an academic setting. Social dances like the Ring Shout, Tap, Cuban Salsa, Steppin', and Hip Hop are dance forms that are accessible without private studio dance training and give students of color a seat at the creative table in the dance classes (McCarthy-Brown, *The Need for Culturally Relevant Dance Education* 121).

Review of Methods

The research methodology used in this study consisted of pre-tests, posttests, and researcher observations. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were both employed. The qualitative analysis consisted of identifying themes and ideas in the participants' short answers to questions about historical content knowledge and the use of the elements of dance to articulate understanding of specific dance genres. In the quantitative analysis the researcher calculated the number of correct multiple-choice responses given in the pre-tests and posttests and compared the two. The researcher had no hypothesis or predictable outcome for this study, but used the questions noted above along with student responses on the research instruments to guide analysis of the data collected.

Each lesson in the study had a unique pre-test and that same test made up the posttest which was used to evaluate participants' knowledge at the close of each lesson. After each pre-test, the researcher led the participants through a variety of learning activities that included research (traditional or digital), small group and class discussions, choreography, choreography notation, and performance. The researcher kept observation notes as the students worked during the study.

To do this study, the researcher conducted a broad literature search of traditional African and African diasporic dance. While reviewing literature on traditional African and Africanist dance, the researcher focused on African dance emanating from west Africa, specifically Nigeria. The researcher identified a traditional Nigerian dance, the Bata, that has direct connections to Cuban Salsa. The researcher also focused on literature that described the difference in how enslaved Africans were treated in the Caribbean

versus the United States, and how their treatment was reflected in the innovative dance forms that were created.

Lastly, the researcher focused on literature that explained the connections between present day dances like the carnival Cakewalk, Greek Steppin', and African and African diasporic dances such as a much earlier version of the cakewalk and the African Gumbo. The researcher then created an outline for a curricular unit of study entitled *The Evolution of Jazz*. The final unit included eight unique lesson plans that focused on the history and evolving characteristics of African diasporic dance. The researcher selected three lessons from the unit to be included in the research study.

Review of Research Outcomes

The potential benefits of participating in the study were notable. Participants demonstrated the acquisition of new knowledge related to traditional African and Africanist dance genres. The participants also exhibited a better understanding of historical elements of African and African diasporic cultures that have been or will be explored in their social studies classes.

The researcher also noted an increased confidence in the participants' ability to use the elements of dance to articulate knowledge as it related to African and Africanist dance. Additionally, the participants' willingness to trust the research study process increased significantly throughout the study and thus the work presented by the students became more unique and thoughtful. Overall, the participants gave positive, informal, verbal feedback to the researcher or to other participants during the lessons.

The classroom dynamic was positive throughout the study. The researcher attributed this outcome to the fact that the participants collaborated on other dance

projects earlier in the school year. This meant a level of trust already existed amongst study participants.

During the study, the researcher led informal question and answer discussions with the participants. These sessions uncovered the participants' desire to have more time to explore the creation of original choreography and the opportunity to present their work outside of the classroom. Such performances could be casual and performed for the elementary students in the school's auditorium. Participants also suggested learning activities such as costume design should be included in these classes.

Limitations

Although the outcomes of the research study were predominantly positive, the researcher felt it was important to acknowledge the limitations that were inherently present in the study. There were only seventeen students out of approximately forty-five potential participants who returned the required consent form. The researcher speculated that the sample size may have been larger if she had been able to give the consent form directly to the potential participants' parents or guardians instead of sending them home in the students' bookbags. From the researcher's personal classroom experience, middle school students have the propensity to misplace or lose documents, etc. The researcher also felt that the sample size could have been larger if there had been a scheduled opportunity to discuss the study directly with the parents or guardians of her students before the study began.

Unforeseeable severe winter weather conditions and an unusual outbreak of influenza created obstacles to the successful implementation of some parts of the study. The researcher planned to complete the study over nine weeks, but during that period, the

researcher's school district closed school for nine "snow days." Also, during the study, there was a serious local outbreak of influenza. Many of the students at the researcher's school, including study participants, contracted the flu and missed up to ten days of school.

The researcher was the writer, instructor, and observer of this study. The researcher also completed all the analysis of the data collected. It is reasonable to assume that the researcher had some bias in the presentation, collection, or analysis of the data that may have impacted the outcome of the study. The researcher also had a prior relationship with all the participants because they were already students in her dance classes. In addition, the students may have shown bias when answering questions by trying to present the answers they believed the researcher expected based on their prior experiences in her classes.

The scope of the research study also presented some drawbacks. The study could have been comprised of one very in-depth lesson from the curriculum unit instead of including three lessons. The study felt rushed and the material could have been covered more thoroughly if there was less content to cover. Teaching three new lessons during a specified time presented a challenge for the researcher. She could have taken more time to master the content with less material to cover.

The curriculum unit itself could have benefitted from having a different title. The researcher had hoped that other dance educators would find this curriculum unit useful. However, the title *The Evolution of Jazz* might turn off potential educators who may believe this curriculum is a traditional concert jazz dance unit. During her search for sources, the researcher discovered that a much broader range of American and Caribbean

dance was influenced by African dance and a more appropriate title might have been *The Exportation of African Dance* or *The Evolution of Movement* or *Yes! That's African Dance Too!*

The researcher also conceded that her inexperience in conducting a research study of this magnitude may have skewed the outcome. The process of researching the content, writing the curriculum unit, implementing the study, and analyzing the data was an enlightening experience. If given the opportunity to conduct a research study again, the researcher would design future studies to be more methodical and succinct.

Suggestions for Future Research

The researcher recommends additional research is needed to fully explore and record the potential benefits and outcomes of a study of this nature. The study involved a limited number of participants so conducting the study on a larger population of participants might provide alternative outcomes. Conducting the study on students who have no access to dance education, could similarly provide alternate outcomes.

Conducting research studies during the fall semester rather than during the spring semester might provide a more stable group of subjects for future research studies. The impact of childhood illness is significantly less in the fall. According to the Center for Disease Control, the flu season peaks annually between December and February each year. There are some outbreaks that occur in the fall, but far fewer than in the winter months (Center for Disease Control).

Future research studies would also benefit from pre- and posttest questions that asked participants to respond to queries about their personal feelings and perceptions about African and African diasporic dance. This line of questioning would add evidence

to the validity of culturally inclusive dance education and whether the curriculum being presented resonates with the students.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher believed that this study demonstrated the use of culturally inclusive dance education enriched the learning progression for the students involved in the study. Through the analysis of pre-test and posttest data, the researcher observed that participants acquired new knowledge about African and Africanist history, culture, and dance. The researcher concluded that overall the study participants had a positive experience during the study. During the study, participants demonstrated increased confidence in their ability to articulate their own knowledge about African and Africanist dance and a greater confidence in their ability to create dance phrases that were representative of these dance genres. Participants refined their 21st Century skills throughout the study using small group discussions, peer feedback, and group choreography collaboration. The researcher believed students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds benefited from the study of Africanist dance.

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APPENDIX A
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD DOCUMENTS

Kerri-Noelle -

Thank you for your patience with the UNC IRB process. Dr. Collins, the first reviewer of your application, has provided approval based on the revised consent and assent forms submitted. Subsequently, I reviewed your original and revised materials and am also recommending approval.

Please be sure to use these revised forms in your participant recruitment and data collection.

Best wishes with your research.

Sincerely,

Dr. Megan Stellino, UNC IRB Co-Chair

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB's records.



Institutional Review Board

DATE: November 6, 2017

TO: Kerri-Noelle Humphrey

FROM: University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [1139668-2] Dancing the Diaspora: Discovering the Influence of Traditional/ Tribal African Dance in the History of African-American Social and Concert Dance in the Caribbean and the United States.

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: November 6, 2017

EXPIRATION DATE: November 6, 2018

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this project. The University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB has APPROVED your submission. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on applicable federal regulations.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of November 6, 2018.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry May at 970-351-1910 or Sherry.May@unco.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.



ASSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
STUDENT ASSENT DOCUMENT

Hello!

My name is Kerri-Noelle Humphrey and I am a dance teacher at your school. I also do research on the history of African-American dance in the United States and how we can use movement to help you learn that history. Simply put, I use movement to teach dance *and* history. I am inviting you to participate in a research study. Below are some answers to questions you may have about this study.

1. What is it for?

The goal of this research is to: 1) create a deeper understanding of traditional/tribal African dance when experiencing dance in your own body; 2) identify the similarities found in traditional African dance and African-American dance in the United States; 3) use the elements of dance (space, time and energy or quality) to help you make comparisons between traditional African tribal dance and a variety of African-American American dance genres; 4) explain how the movement elements might be used to create movements and dances that represent various African-American American dance genres.

2. Why me?

I am asking you to participate because you are signed up for an elective middle school dance class at the [REDACTED] a.

3. What will I have to do?

Your dance class will continue to run as usual. You will dress out, warm-up and learn new dance techniques/moves. You will also watch videos, take notes, create choreography and take written tests. Participation in this research project will not change your dance class but it will introduce you to new dance knowledge. You will face the same risks by participating in this study that you do in your dance class (like feeling tired after exercising/dancing).

4. Did my parent/guardian say it was Okay?

Yes! Your parent/guardian has already signed a consent form giving you their permission to participate. But you do not have to participate. Taking part in this research study is up to you and voluntary.

Student Initials _____

Page 1 of 2



Institutional Review Board

5. What if I want to quit?

If you say “yes” but then change your mind, you can stop any time. Participating or not participating in this research study will have no impact on your grade or participation in the dance program here at the Academy for Academics and Arts.

6. Will anyone else know about my participation?

I may videotape the class activities to back up my observation notes. Be assured that I intend to keep the contents of these videos private, because they will be stored on my computer where they will be password protected. Every effort will be made to protect your identity. All records will be kept private. The completed consent forms will be shipped via Fed Ex to be stored in a locked cabinet in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Christy O’Connell-Black, Dance Education MA co-coordinator. In content that is made public, I will not use any information that will make it possible to identify you. No actual names will be used.

7. What if I have questions?

I am the researcher conducting this study. Please ask me any questions you have now. If you have questions later you may contact me via the Edmodo group for this project. (Ms. Humphrey’s Research Team).

8. So what happens next?

If you want to work with me and be in my research, sign your name below and write today’s date next to it. Thank you!

Student’s Full Name – Printed

Student’s Signature

Date

Researcher’s Signature

Date

Kerri-Noelle Humphrey

Researcher Obtaining Consent Full Name -
Printed



Institutional Review Board

CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Hello!

My name is Kerri-Noelle Humphrey and I am a dance teacher at your child's school. I also do research on the history of African-American dance in the United States and how we can use movement to help students learn that history. Simply put, I will use movement to teach dance *and* history. I am inviting your child to participate in a research study. Below are some answers to questions you may have about this study.

1. What is it for?

The goal of this research is to: 1) create a deeper understanding of traditional/tribal African dance when your child experiences this dance form in his-or her own body; 2) identify the similarities found in traditional African dance and African-American dance in the United States; 3) use the elements of dance (space, time and energy or quality) to help your child make comparisons between traditional African tribal dance and a variety of African-American American dance genres; and 4) explain how the movement elements might be used to create movements and dances that represent various African-American American dance genres. This research will help me create an inclusive curriculum for African-American dance outside of what is taught during Black History month.

2. Why my student?

I am asking your child to participate because he/she is signed up for an elective middle school dance class at the [REDACTED].

3. What will my student have to do?

Their dance class will continue to run as usual. They will dress out, warm-up and learn new dance techniques/moves. They will also watch videos, take notes, create choreography take written tests have small group and class discussions, and write in a journal in response to my prompts. Participation in this research project will not change their dance class but it will introduce them to new dance knowledge. They will face the same risks by participating in this study that you do in their dance class (like feeling tired after exercising/dancing).

4. Can my child say yes by himself or herself?

No! Because your child is under the age of 18, I must have your permission for him or her to participate first. But they do not have to participate. Taking part in this research study is voluntary.

5. What if they want to quit?

If you say "yes" but then change your mind, your child can stop any time. Participating or not participating in this research study will have no impact on their grade or participation in the dance program here at the [REDACTED].

Parent/Guardian Initials _____

Page 1 of 2



Institutional Review Board

6. How will you protect my child's identity?

Every effort will be made to protect your child's identity. The completed consent forms will be shipped via Fed Ex to be stored in a locked cabinet in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Christy O'Connell-Black, Dance Education MA co-coordinator. All data from this research project will be kept private and stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's school office. In information that is made public, I will not use any information that will make it possible to identify your child. No actual names will be used. All data and consent forms will be destroyed after three years.

I may videotape the class activities to back up my observation notes. Be assured that I intend to keep the contents of these videos private, because they will be stored on my computer where they will be password protected. Only students for whom I have parental or guardian permission will be videotaped. The names of subjects will not appear in any professional report of this research because all participants in the study will be identified with pseudonyms or codes.

7. What if I have questions?

I am the researcher conducting this study. Please ask me any questions you have now. If you have questions later you may contact me via phone at [REDACTED]

8. So what happens next?

If you want your child to work with me and be in my research, read the statement below, sign your name below and write today's date next to it. Thank you!

Statement of Consent:

Participation is voluntary. Your child may decide not to participate in this study and if your child begins participation you or your child may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you and your child are otherwise entitled. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like your child to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future reference. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, Office of Sponsored Programs, 25 Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| _____ | _____ |
| Child's Full Name – Printed | Child's Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY) |
| _____ | |
| Parent/Guardian's Name – Printed | |
| _____ | _____ |
| Parent/Guardian's Signature | Date |
| _____ | _____ |
| Kerri-Noelle Humphrey Researcher's Signature | Date |



Institutional Review Board

If you give permission for Kerri-Noelle Humphrey to use video of your child for instructional purposes in her Dance Education courses at the University of Northern Colorado please initial here. Only those students for whom I have parental or guardian consent will be included in the videos. The identity of any child in the video will be kept strictly confidential.

_____ Parent/Guardian Initials

APPENDIX B
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

COMING TO AMERICA: PLANTATION DANCE – UNIT PRE/POSTTEST 1

Section 1 – Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. What characteristics are unique to traditional African dance?

2. Why do you think slaves carried their traditions and stories through song and dance?

3. Using the Elements of Dance, describe how traditional African (Tribal) dance is different from ballet.

| | African (Tribal) | European (Ballet) |
|--------|------------------|-------------------|
| Space | | |
| Time | | |
| Energy | | |

4. Using the Elements of Time, describe how this traditional African (Tribal) song is different from the European (Ballet) song.

African – *Warba (Burkina Faso)* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PMNA580UdQ>

European – *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* https://youtu.be/Rapf3g_XvCc

| | AFRICAN | EUROPEAN |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------|
| TEMPO (FAST/SLOW) | | |
| BEAT (STEADY/UNEVEN) | | |
| RHYTHM (PATTERN/FREE) | | |
| ACCENT (ON BEAT /SYNCOATED) | | |

COMING TO AMERICA: PLANTATION DANCE – UNIT PRE/POSTTEST 1

Section 2 - Answer each question by circling one response.

1. In the painting *Old Plantation*, scholars suggest the painting depicts slaves



- a. performing a West African dance
- b. performing a jumping the broom/wedding ceremony
- c. participating in a funeral procession
- d. celebrating a bountiful harvest

2. The _____ is the oldest continuously practiced dance of African origin in the United States.

- a. The Hand Jive
- b. Lindy Hop
- c. The Hustle
- d. The Ring Shout

3. While performing the Buzzard Lope you would _____ the _____ of a buzzard.

- a. Sing / Song
- b. Dance/ Rhythm
- c. Describe/ Flight
- d. Pantomime/ Movements

4. The John Canoe was a dance slaves used to celebrate _____

- a. Kwanza
- b. Easter
- c. Christmas
- d. Thanksgiving

5. _____ was a dance created to make fun of plantation owners.

- a. The Pinkster
- b. Djembi
- c. Congo Square
- d. Cake Walk

**OUT OF AFRICA: BLACK DANCE IN THE CARRIBEAN-
UNIT PRE/POSTTEST 2**

Section 1 – Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. Two things I know/remember about the Cuban Salsa are:

2. Why did slaves educate themselves in secret?

3. Why did they teach their children games like hand jives, double talk and hambone?

4. Using the Elements of Dance, describe the Cuban Salsa

Salsa

| | |
|--------|--|
| Space | |
| Time | |
| Energy | |

**OUT OF AFRICAN: BLACK DANCE IN THE CARRIBEAN-
UNIT PRE/POSTTEST 2**

Section 2 - Answer each question by circling one response.

1. *Dancing the Slaves* was a common ceremony held following breakfast on slave ships. The purpose of this ceremony was to

- a. celebrate sunrise
- b. give thanks for a safe journey to the new world
- c. get a better price for a slave who had exercised
- d. allow the slaves to do an activity they enjoyed

2. African traditions like dance were more likely to survive in the West Indies because an African was considered a(n) _____ but in the United States they were considered _____

- a. human being /property
- b. servant/slaves
- c. investment/burden
- d. hard worker/lazy

3. These dances were enjoyed by nearly all slaves in the Caribbean

- a. Calenda, Juba
- b. Zimbabwe, Watoosi
- c. Bwana, Dengue
- d. Marimba, Okapi

4. Many of the dances performed by Africans in the Caribbean were part of ceremonies celebrating _____

- a. birth
- b. initiation
- c. social occasions
- d. religious rites or events

5. Gombay dancer groups were composed of only _____ and _____

- a. women, children
- b. husband, wife
- c. men, boys
- d. women, girls

STEP IN TO THE BAD SIDE: STEPPIN' (GREEK) VS. STEPPERS (CHIGAO-STYLE)
UNIT PRE/POSTTEST 4

Section 1 – Write your answers in the spaces provided

1. In your own words describe steppin' (a.k.a greek steppin')

2. In your own words describe stepping (a.k.a Chicago-Style Stepping)

3. Using the Elements of Dance, describe how steppin' (Greek) is different from steppin' (Chicago).

| | Steppin' (Greek) | Stepping (Chicago-Style) |
|--------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Space | | |
| Time | | |
| Energy | | |

STEP IN TO THE BAD SIDE: STEPPIN' (GREEK) VS. STEPPERS (CHIGAO-STYLE)
UNIT PRE/POSTTEST 4

Section 2 – Answer each question by circling one response

1. Steppin' (Greek) is a _____ form of dance.
 - a. Celebratory
 - b. Percussive
 - c. Ritual
 - d. Improvisational

2. _____ use recorded music while _____ are the musicians.
 - a. Chicago-Style Steppers/Step-dancers
 - b. Step-dancers/Chicago-Style Steppers

3. Chicago-Style Stepping is a social dance that evolved from a dance called _____.
 - a. Ballet
 - b. Break-dancing
 - c. The Bop
 - d. The Hustle

4. The _____ is thought to be one of the biggest influences on Greek Steppin'.
 - a. movie School Daze
 - b. Soul Train line
 - c. forming of the National Dance Educators Organization
 - d. African gumboot

5. Chicago-style stepping is a _____ dance.
 - a. partner
 - b. circle
 - c. folk
 - d. wedding

APPENDIX C
EXERCISES

Relevant Data:**Name of the Unit: The Evolution of Jazz****Name of the lesson plan creator(s):** Kerri-Noelle Humphrey**Date lesson is to be taught:** TBD**Number of Participants:** 15-20**Space Required:** Dance studio (preferred), classroom (furniture moved), gymnasium**Materials:** see listing for each lesson**Age Range:** 11-15/6-8 grades (adaptable to lower grades)**Time Required:** 4-month unit; 90-minute classes 2x/week**Methodology:** Lecture, Collaboration, Improvisation, Research**Alabama Course of Study - Arts Education - Dance Standard(s):****8th - Dance****Explore**

2. Select personal movement preferences to express an artistic intent in choreography and justify the choices made using genre-specific dance terminology.

Revise

5. Apply feedback and self-reflection to revise a collaboratively choreographed dance and explain how the changes clarify artistic intent

NCCAS - Dance**8th - DA:Cr 1.1.8****Explore**

b. Identify and select personal preferences to create an original dance study or dance. Use genre specific dance terminology to articulate and justify choices made in movement development to communicate intent.

Revise

a. Revise choreography collaboratively or independently based on artistic criteria, self-reflection, and the feedback of others. Articulate the reasons for choices and revisions and explain how they clarify and enhance the artistic intent.

***Adaptation for Diverse Learners:** Students who demonstrate an aversion to class discussion participation will be given the choice to write their responses.

Lesson 1: Allow students to watch videos related to jazz history.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whN5PXsrP6E>

Lesson 2 and 3:

Allow students from West African, Caribbean, Latin culture/nations share dance songs from their culture or teach students counting (1-8) and easy movement words.

Lesson 5:

Students to write brief essay on the importance of dance history and dance history careers.

Lesson 6:

Allow students to find graffiti pictures from the internet for poster.

Lesson 8:

Students will be given the opportunity to video tape performance with teacher instead of live performance in-class. Students will teach original dance phrase to classmates instead of performance.

Storyboard:**Title: The Evolution of Jazz****Lesson 1: The History of American Jazz Dance**

Teacher Objective: To lead students in investigative research to uncover the origin of American Jazz Dance.

Student Objective: To create a visual art piece that reflects the facts about the origins of American Jazz Dance.

Activities:

I. Small (3-4) student groups to read articles on the history of Jazz Dance. Each group member to read a different article.

http://dance.lovetoknow.com/History_of_Jazz_Dance

<https://natashapowell.wordpress.com/2013/07/19/jazz-dance-the-story-of-american-vernacular-dance/>

<https://www.dancestudiolife.com/common-ground-defining-jazz-dance/>

<http://chicagoguide.cpsarts.org/chicago-pages/dance/jazz>

NAME _____

CLASS _____

DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Read your assigned article. Make a list of interesting or new facts you learned about Jazz dance from the article. (no less than 7). Share your discoveries with your group. Were there similarities? Differences? What do you think created the similarities/differences in our knowledge? Groups to create a poster/chart to reflect new knowledge of Jazz History.

THINGS I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT JAZZ HISTORY/ DANCE

ARTICLE TITLE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Lesson 1:

Formative Assessment

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--|---|---|---|-------------------|
| Students created a poster that creatively and accurately reflected historical information about jazz dance history. Students took pride in the presentation (neat, easy to read) | Students created a poster that generally reflected historical information about jazz dance history. Students took some pride in the presentation (neat, easy to read) | Students created a poster that minimally reflected historical information about jazz dance history. Students took minimal pride in the presentation (messy, mark outs). | Students created a poster that did not reflect historical information about jazz dance history. Students took no pride in the presentation. | Non-participation |

Lesson 2: The West African Influence on American Jazz Dance

Teacher Objective: To lead students in investigative research to articulate the West African influence on American Jazz Dance.

Student Objective: To create an original dance phrase incorporating basic movements used in jazz and West African dance. Students will articulate the connection between West African dance and American Jazz Dance.

Activities:

I. Students to watch performance of West African dance. (Invite local guest instructor if available)

<https://www.ket.org/education/resources/manjani-africanafrican-american-culture/>

Students to create original dance phrase combining West African and jazz movements.

Students to notate original dance phrase using notation journal pages.

Students discuss how to notate unfamiliar dance genre with dance elements, pedestrian language.

Lesson 2:

Formative Assessment

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|---|---|--|---|-------------------|
| Students provide an in-depth description of dance experience. Students accurately compare the two genres. Students' notation is thorough and easily readable. | Students provide a general description of dance experience. Students make a general comparison of the two genres. Students' notation is readable. | Students provide a limited description of dance experience. Students make a limited comparison of the two genres. Students' notation is somewhat readable. | Students provide an unclear description of dance experience. Students make an unclear comparison of the two genres. Students' notation is incomplete and unclear. | Non-participation |

Students notate choreography for future recall.

Lesson 3: Dancing La Vida Loca (Cuban Salsa)

Teacher Objective: To lead students in investigative research to uncover the influence of the African Diaspora in the creation of Caribbean Salsa.

Student Objective: To create an original dance phrase incorporating basic movements used in jazz and Caribbean Salsa. Students will understand that the African Diaspora is the foundation to the creation of Caribbean Salsa.

Activities:

Students to complete KWL worksheet about Salsa dancing.

Student share answers in small groups to discover similarities and differences.

Students to watch video

<https://animoto.com/play/Cjr1zPNNrzXYmrO1XCynFQ>

Students to watch video tutorial on Salsa dance. (Invite local guest instructor if available)

<https://youtu.be/FdQ87SOfb7Y>

Students to create original dance phrase in the style of Salsa.

Students notate choreography for future recall.

Lesson 3:

Formative Assessment

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--|--|--|--|-------------------|
| Students created a poster that creatively and accurately reflected historical information about Salsa dance. Students took pride in the presentation | Students created a poster that generally reflected historical information about Salsa dance. Students took some pride in the presentation (neat, easy to read) | Students created a poster that minimally reflected historical information about Salsa dance. Students took minimal pride in the presentation . | Students created a poster that did not reflect historical information about Salsa dance. Students took no pride in the presentation. | Non-participation |

NAME _____

CLASS _____

DATE _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Fill in the chart below. Answer to the best of your ability.

WHAT I *Know* ABOUT SALSA DANCING?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

WHAT I *Want* TO KNOW ABOUT SALSA DANCING?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

WHAT I *Learned* ABOUT SALSA DANCING?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Lesson 4: Let's Do the Lindy Hop

Teacher Objective: To lead students in investigative research to uncover the influence West African dance has on American Social Dance.

Student Objective: To create an original dance phrase incorporating basic movements used in jazz and The Lindy Hop. Students will evaluate the cultural influences on American Social Dance.

Activities

Students to watch video history of the Lindy Hop and take notes.

https://youtu.be/3W2A_qifVpU

Students to discuss notes in small groups.

Students to watch video tutorial of the Lindy Hop. (Invite local guest instructor if available)

<https://youtu.be/ZLzgHbuqrW0>

Students to create original dance phrase combining Lindy Hop and jazz movements.

Students notate choreography for future recall.

Lesson 4:

Formative Assessment

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--|--|--|--|-------------------|
| Students' discussion answers are fully supported by notes taken. | Students' discussion answers are generally supported by notes taken. | Students' discussion answers are minimally supported by notes taken. | Students' discussion answers are not supported by notes taken. | Non-participation |

Lesson 5: Steppin' to the Bad Side

Teacher Objective: To lead students in investigative research to uncover that the Lindy Hop/the Bop was the foundation of Chicago Steppin'. To demonstrate the difference between to dance genres referred to as Steppin'.

Student Objective: To create an original dance phrase incorporating basic movements used in jazz and Chicago Steppin'.

Activities

Day 1

Students to watch the following videos

<https://youtu.be/6X5sT2ehZOs>

<https://youtu.be/9tyyEP9mGMQ> (2:53-5:30)

Lead students in a discussion about the similarities of the two dances. List student responses on the board.

Students to work in small groups to create a percussive dance phrase.

Day 2

Students to conduct online research on the history of Chicago Steppin' and create a list of sources.

Students to discuss why limited written history exists for Chicago Steppin' and why careers in dance history are valuable.

Students to watch video tutorial of Chicago Steppin'. (Invite local guest instructor if available) *Learn the Fundamentals of Chicago-Style Steppin' (DVD)*

Students to create original dance phrase combining Chicago Steppin' and jazz movements. Students notate choreography for future recall.

Lesson 5:

Formative Assessment

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--|--|--|--|-------------------|
| Students' discussion answers are fully supported by notes taken. | Students' discussion answers are generally supported by notes taken. | Students' discussion answers are minimally supported by notes taken. | Students' discussion answers are not supported by notes taken. | Non-participation |

Notes

When was Lindy Hop popular?

When was the Bop popular?

When was Chicago Steppin' started? (decade)

How are they
simillar?

How are they different?

List Sources found:

| Source Data | Credible Rank |
|-------------|---------------|
| | 1 - Very 2 - |
| | Somewhat |
| | 3- Unsure |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Notes:

Lesson 6: Hip Hop Ya Don't Stop

Teacher Objective: To lead students in investigative research to uncover the connection between Chicago Steppin' and Hip Hop.

Student Objective: To trace the history of Hip Hop dance as a result of the changes in jazz music. (Jazz, blues, R&B, Hip Hop)

Students to research articles on the history of (urban) Hip Hop Dance.

Students to discuss the responsibility of creating complete dance history and who is responsible for creating/writing/maintaining the history.

Students to read handouts/instructions on Hip Hop Dance. (Invite local guest instructor if available)

Students to create original dance movement tableau in the Hip Hop style.

Students to create a graffiti style poster to illustrate a tableau in their dance phrase.

Students notate choreography for future recall.

Lesson 6:

Formative Assessment

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------|
| Students created a graffiti style poster and accurately illustrated a hip hop style tableau from their dance. | Students created a poster that generally reflected graffiti style artwork and attempted to illustrate a hip hop style tableau from their dance. | Students created a poster that minimally reflected graffiti style artwork and minimally illustrated a hip hop style tableau from their dance. | Students created a poster whose style is unclear and does not illustrate a tableau from their dance. | Non-participation |

Lesson 7: Takin' It to the Streets (Street/MTV Jazz)

Teacher Objective: To lead students in investigative research to uncover how Street/MTV Jazz was created to commercialize urban street dance (Hip Hop).

Student Objective: To create an original dance phrase incorporating basic movements used in jazz and Hip Hop.

Activities

Students to research videos that demonstrate street jazz.

Students to use the dance elements to describe street jazz.

Students to watch video tutorial on Street Jazz dance. (Invite local guest instructor if available)

Street Fusion! Street Jazz and Hip Hop Dance with Karen Gayle

Students to create original dance phrase combining hip hop and jazz movements.

Students notate choreography for future recall.

Lesson 7:

Formative Assessment

| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--|---|---|--|-------------------|
| Students discovered videos that accurately demonstrated Street Jazz. | Students discovered videos that generally demonstrated Street Jazz. | Students discovered videos that minimally demonstrated Street Jazz. | Students discovered videos that did not demonstrate Street Jazz. | Non-participation |

Lesson 8: The Evolution of Jazz - Summative Assessment

Identified Desired Result:

Teaching Objective: To lead students to create an original dance work (using previously notated choreography) that demonstrates with movement studies the evolution of jazz dance.

Student Objectives: Students will consider the concept of American Jazz Dance via West African and diasporic African dance by examining the history and basic movements to inspire the creation of Jazz dance.

Acceptable Evidence:

Summative Assessment: Teacher will divide the class in groups of 4-5 students. Students will create an original dance phrase for each jazz subgenre. Students will create transitions that link all six dance phrases. Students will perform a chronological dance study that tells the story of the Evolution of Jazz Dance. Performances will be videotaped to facilitate self-assessment and classroom discussion.

Students will watch <https://youtu.be/BieEBTCOb7I> as evidence of combining various dance styles in one dance study.

Lesson 8: The Evolution of Jazz - Summative Assessment

Summative Assessment Rubric

| WEIGHT | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|---------------|--|---|---|---|---------------------|
| 20% | Students created an original dance phrase for each jazz subgenre. | Students created an original dance for almost all subgenres. | Students created an original dance for some of the subgenres. | Students created an original dance for 1-2 of the subgenres. | Non - participation |
| 10% | The dance phrases artistically include movements that clearly reflect the subgenre. | The dance phrases include movements that reflect the subgenre. | The dance phrases include movements that somewhat reflect the subgenre. | The dance phrases include movements that ineffectively reflect the subgenre. | |
| 20% | The dance study skillfully incorporates the use of dance elements (time, space, energy). | The dance study incorporates the use of dance elements (time, space, energy). | The dance study incorporates the use of dance elements (time, space, energy) in a limited manner. | The dance study minimally incorporates /does not incorporate the use of dance elements (time, space, energy). | |
| 50% | Students succinctly articulate in class discussions * the evolution of jazz dance | Students articulate in class discussions * the evolution of jazz dance | Students moderately articulate in class discussions * the evolution of jazz | Students are not able to articulate in class discussions* the evolution of jazz dance | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| | using genre specific terminology and how their movement choices reflect the subgenres. | using genre specific terminology and how their movement choices reflect the subgenres. | dance using some genre specific terminology and how their movement choices reflect the subgenres. | using any genre specific terminology or how their movement choices reflect the subgenres. | |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|

APPENDIX D
ELEMENTS OF DANCE WORKSHEET

CREATING MOVEMENT USING THE ELEMENTS OF DANCE

Ideas inspired by Saskatchewan Online Curriculum, COQE Ontario and InspiEd Arts. Created by Natesha Hutchins at www.prodiver.com

It is important to create your own movement and not just learn the movements from or about the movements of another. You can use the elements of dance almost like a menu to help get you moving. Begin with an inspiration, select a few movements that fit the purpose or express this idea, sequence these movements, add other elements as needed and then repeat this pattern changing your movements as you so choose.

WHAT BODY PARTS WILL YOU USE?

WHAT MOVEMENTS WILL YOU MAKE?

HOW WILL YOU SEQUENCE THEM?

WHERE AND HOW WILL YOU TRAVEL THROUGH THE SPACE?

WHAT TYPE OF TIME WILL YOU TAKE?

HOW MUCH ENERGY DO YOU WANT TO INJECT INTO YOUR MOVEMENTS?

WHO, WHAT OR HOW DO YOU NEED TO MOVE WITH?

| BODY | ACTION | SPACE | TIME | ENERGY | RELATIONSHIPS |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| WHO? | WHAT? | WHERE? | WHEN? | HOW? | WHY? |
| A dancer | moves | through space | and time | with energy | using relationships |
| Body Parts <input type="checkbox"/> Hip <input type="checkbox"/> Leg <input type="checkbox"/> Arm <input type="checkbox"/> Feet <input type="checkbox"/> Neck <input type="checkbox"/> Knee <input type="checkbox"/> Head <input type="checkbox"/> Chest <input type="checkbox"/> Shoulder Body Shapes <input type="checkbox"/> Angular <input type="checkbox"/> Curved <input type="checkbox"/> Straight <input type="checkbox"/> Symmetrical <input type="checkbox"/> Asymmetrical | Travelling <input type="checkbox"/> Run <input type="checkbox"/> Hop <input type="checkbox"/> Skip <input type="checkbox"/> Slide <input type="checkbox"/> Walk <input type="checkbox"/> Leap <input type="checkbox"/> Jump <input type="checkbox"/> Gallop Stationary <input type="checkbox"/> Pull <input type="checkbox"/> Sink <input type="checkbox"/> Kick <input type="checkbox"/> Rise <input type="checkbox"/> Melt <input type="checkbox"/> Turn <input type="checkbox"/> Push <input type="checkbox"/> Float <input type="checkbox"/> Twist <input type="checkbox"/> Bend <input type="checkbox"/> Swing <input type="checkbox"/> Burst <input type="checkbox"/> Reach <input type="checkbox"/> Wiggle | Directions <input type="checkbox"/> Up <input type="checkbox"/> Down <input type="checkbox"/> Side <input type="checkbox"/> Back <input type="checkbox"/> Front <input type="checkbox"/> Around Size <input type="checkbox"/> Small <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Big Place <input type="checkbox"/> Self Space <input type="checkbox"/> General Space Levels <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> High Focus <input type="checkbox"/> Direct <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect Pathways <input type="checkbox"/> Curved <input type="checkbox"/> Zig Zag <input type="checkbox"/> Straight | Tempo <input type="checkbox"/> Slow <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Fast Meter <input type="checkbox"/> 4/4 March <input type="checkbox"/> 3/4 Swing Rhythm and Accent | Energy <input type="checkbox"/> Free <input type="checkbox"/> Light <input type="checkbox"/> Sharp <input type="checkbox"/> Bound <input type="checkbox"/> Strong <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth | Body Relationships <input type="checkbox"/> On <input type="checkbox"/> Off <input type="checkbox"/> Far <input type="checkbox"/> Near <input type="checkbox"/> Over <input type="checkbox"/> Under <input type="checkbox"/> In Back <input type="checkbox"/> In Front <input type="checkbox"/> Around <input type="checkbox"/> Through <input type="checkbox"/> Supported |