

Arts Assessment For Learning

DANCE — 6TH, 7TH AND 8TH GRADES

ACTION PLAN: AFRICAN DANCE UNIT

Who (the class or group I will focus on):

- IS 259: William McKinley JHS, Class 603 (6th Grade)

Inquiry question:

- Does the use of a criteria checklist combined with self-assessment help students improve the movement quality of phrases they have created?

Student learning goals:

1. **Dance Making: *Choreograph*:** Students create a dance with peers, demonstrating the ability to: clearly express the intent of the dance, use original movement motifs informed by the genre studied, and show initiative and independence in rehearsals.
2. **Dance Making: *Respond, Reflect, and Revise*:** Students show and discuss dance studies in progress, using agreed upon criteria to address the choreographers' intention and how it might be improved.

Identify indicators from the *Blueprint* aligned with the student learning goals:

- See **Student learning goals**

What formative assessment strategy I will put into practice:

- A student-generated checklist of criteria stating the characteristics of exciting and clear movements, self-assessment within small groups, and teacher feedback during class practice

Why this strategy will help my students achieve or improve the above goals:

- Students will practice their dance-making skills and be able to make decisions in groups on how to improve the quality of their self-created movement phrases.

How I plan to implement this assessment strategy in my practice and/or lessons:

- Identify learning targets with clear criteria
- Give and receive feedback (teacher, student peer and self)

Arts Assessment For Learning

- Provide opportunities for revision
- Plan and adjust my own instruction based on feedback
- Embed in scaffolded learning experiences within a one month unit

When I plan to implement this strategy (at which point in the teaching/learning cycle or unit plan):

This plan will be implemented during a one month unit on the introduction to African Dance. Class meets three times a week. The specific learning experiences during the unit are as follows:

- **Week 1:** Students will learn an African dance choreographed by the teacher, incorporating various movements depicting work done in an African tribe. Students will discuss the qualities that are shown in African dance and learn new vocabulary: polyrhythmic, bent knees, isolation of body parts, percussion.
- **Week 2:** Students will form small groups and be given a performance task sheet (see Protocols). Students will choose an area of work such as *farming*, *hunting*, *housework*, or *fishing*. Within each area, students will have choices of actions they will depict in their dance. Students will be encouraged to count the beats of the music and focus on making clear and simple movements.
- **Week 3:** Students will share their dances with their classmates. The class will discuss criteria which will make their dances even better. The teacher will record the students' ideas and create a handout (see Checklist). Students will review the criteria in groups and choose areas they want to improve in their own dance. The teacher will videotape as the students verbalize their plan. Students will share ideas, and rehearse their changes. The teacher will circulate and provide feedback to the students. Students will be given the opportunity to share their dances with the class. The teacher will videotape student dances.
- **Week 4:** Students will discuss within their groups what worked well and what didn't work so well regarding the changes they made. They will have a chance to decide if they will keep their changes and how to improve them. Students will rehearse their final dances and perform once again. The teacher will videotape the dances. Students will write a written reflection in groups discussing the performance task and African dance unit (see Resources).

Arts Assessment For Learning

Evidence of effectiveness of this assessment strategy:

Students will create a 32 count dance phrase based on movements depicting work in an African tribe, perform their dance on the beat of the music, and work cooperatively with their groups during rehearsal time. Specifically,

- Students will be able to make decisions on how to improve their phrases and implement the changes to their dance.
- Students will be able to perform the movements that their group created.
- Students' movements will demonstrate an energetic quality and the actions should be clear to the audience.