

**COURSE
GUIDE**

**KHE 439
HUMAN KINETICS
CONTEMPORARY AND AFRICAN DANCE NOTATION**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the different approaches of notating and documenting dance. It will employ advance form of Leban notation to notate parts of the dancing body. Special emphasis will be on the exploration of symbolic movements and gestures in Nigerian/African dance forms and how to transform these African indigenous oral traditions and semiotic communicative processes into written documentation. Students will explore examples from Nigerian traditional dances to enrich their scope in dance notation, documentation and digitization.

INTRODUCTION

The primary uses of dance notation are historical dance preservation through documentation and analysis or reconstruction of choreography, dance forms and technical exercise. Dance notation system also allows for dance works to be documented and therefore potentially copyrighted. Dance notation approaches the body and its movement in an analytic, abstract and systematic way, using specific symbols for documenting movement. Not every written documentation of movement can be called dance notation, just as not every movement necessarily constitute dance.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- I Narrate historical perspective of dance notation
- ii. List the elements of dance
- iii List the importance of dance
- iv. State the characteristics of African dance
- v. State the uses of African dance steps and beats.
- vi. List the major muscles involved in dance movement
- vii. State the methods of reading and recording dance.
- viii. Demonstrate the skill in writing dance notes
- ix. Describe the symbols used in Leban notation

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

You need to read this course material carefully. You should read each unit with good understanding, as well as be able to practise the process of writing dance with symbols. You should be able to answer the self-assessment exercises in each of the units very correctly. This course material also provides you with references to relevant texts and links

that can enhance your understanding of the units in the modules' study units. There are 16 Study Units in this course divided into six modules.

The modules and units are presented as follows:

Module 1

Unit 1 Meaning and Definition of Notations

Unit 2 Historical Perspectives of Dance Notations

Unit 3 Types of Dance Notations

Unit 4 Prominent Notation Methods

Module 2

Unit 1 Dance Movement

Unit 2 Elements of Dance

Unit 3 Importance of Dance

Module 3

Unit 1 African Dance Forms

Unit 2 Characteristics of African Dance

Unit 3 Traditional Dances in Nigeria

Module 4

Unit 1 How to Read Dance

Unit 2 How to Write Dance

Unit 3 Dance Performance Review

Module 5

Unit 1 African Dance Notation

Unit 2 Count Beats in a Song

Module 6

Unit 1 Leban Notation

Unit 2 Dance Kinesiology

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

*(ctrl+ click) to open any of the links

[Ann Hutchinson Guest ©1984. New York: Dance Horizons Publications](#)

Cage, J. & Knowles, A. (1973). *Notations*. Reprint Services Corp. ISBN 0-685-14864-5

Drewes, Henner (2003). *Transformationen - Bewegung in Notation und digitaler Verarbeitung* in Fellsches, J (Ed.) Folkwang-Texte Bd. 18. Verlag Die BlaueEule, Essen. ISBN 3-89924-057-X

Hutchinson-Guest, A. (1989). *Choreographics: a comparison of dance notation systems from the fifteenth century to the present*. Rutledge ISBN 90-5700-003-2

Kahn, Stanley D. (1951). "presenting Kahnnotation: the K-Symbols for writing Tap Dancing"

Neagle, R. J. & Ng, K. C. (2003). *Machine-representation and visualisation of a dance notation* in Proceedings of electronic imaging and the visual arts - London July 2003.

<https://www.wikihow.com/Count-Beats-in-a-Song>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfwQ_7xqO7Y

PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

Your course materials have important dates for early and timely completion and submission of your TMAs and attending tutorials. You should remember that you are required to submit all your assignments by the stipulated time and date. You should guard against falling behind in your work.

ASSESSMENT

There are three components of assessment for this course:

Self-Assessment Exercises and assignments at the end of each study unit, Tutor-Marked Assignments and a written examination. In doing these assignments, you are expected to use the information gathered during your study of the course.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THE COURSE

This course material provides you the opportunity of reading and learning at your own pace, time and location. To get the best of experience, you will need to work with the material in the following logical order:

1. Read each Unit step-by-step as arranged.
2. As you read the material for each Unit, note the key points in each Unit.
3. Refer to the links and texts provided.
4. After reading, attempt the assessment exercise given at each step.
5. You should obey all the rules and guiding instructions. Facilitation: Online facilitation would be made available to provide you with the opportunity to interact with your tutor and your colleagues across the world.



**COURSE
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Module 1

- Unit 1 Meaning and Definition of Notations
- Unit 2 Historical Perspectives of Dance Notations
- Unit 3 Types of Dance Notations
- Unit 4 Prominent Notation Methods

Module 2

- Unit 1 Dance Movement
- Unit 2 Elements of Dance
- Unit 3 Importance of Dance

Module 3

- Unit 1 African Dance Forms
- Unit 2 Characteristics of African Dance
- Unit 3 Traditional Dances in Nigeria

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- Unit 1 How to Read Dance
- Unit 2 How to Write Dance
- Unit 3 Dance Performance Review

Module 5

- Unit 1 African Dance Notation
- Unit 2 Count Beats in a Song

Module 6

- Unit 1 Leban Notation
- Unit 2 Dance Kinesiology

MODULE 1

INTRODUCTION TO MODULE

Notation is a series or system of using symbols or signs as a form of communication. These symbols could represent numbers, amounts, or elements in something such as music and dance. The use of such symbols to represent dance movement can be traced to the second century. An understanding of dance notations is helpful in analyzing, writing and recording for preservation and copyrighting.

UNIT 1 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF DANCE NOTATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Human dance can simply be defined as the human body rhythmically moving through space and time with energy or effort while notations is the development of the ability to read and write dance notations and construction of a score of an original piece of choreography, and also of advanced dance steps. **Dance notation** is the recording of dance movement through the use of written symbols. Dance notation is to dance what musical notation is to music and what the written word is to drama. In dance, notation is the translation of four-dimensional movement (time being the fourth dimension) into signs written on two-dimensional paper. A fifth “dimension”—dynamics, or the quality, texture, and phrasing of movement—should also be considered an integral part of notation, although in most systems it is not.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- define dance notations
- state the primary uses of dance notations

- state the major problem of dance notation
- mention at least two popular dance notation

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

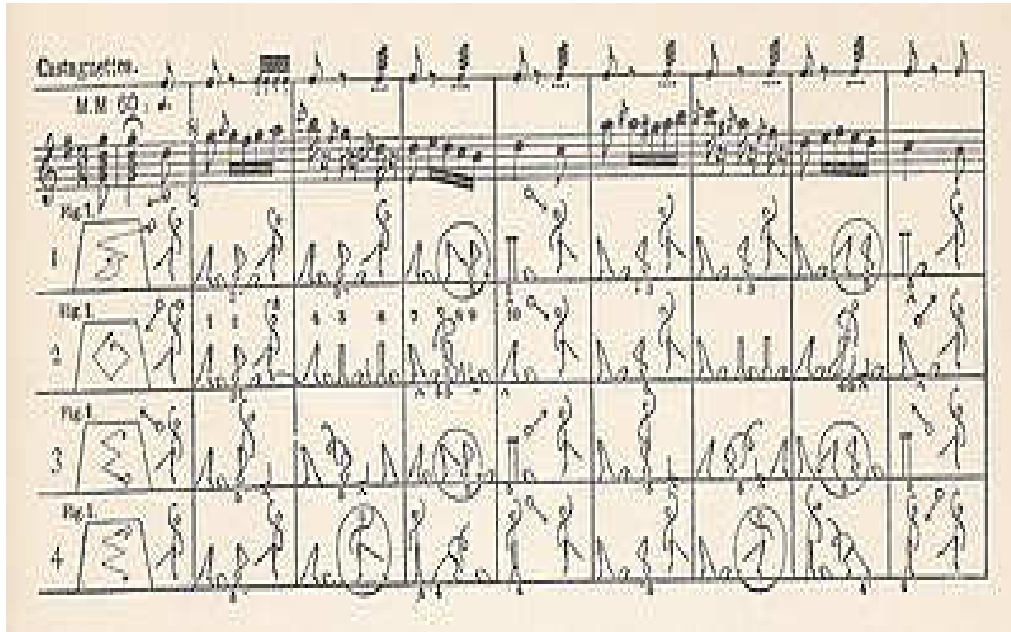
Dance functions in space and time with energy or effort. Dance engages the dancer's physical, mental and spiritual attributes when performing dance as a work of art, a cultural ritual, a social recreation, a health and wellness activity, or an expression of the person. A dance form initiates from physical movement, rhythm, content, style, aesthetics, traditions, and mental and spiritual meanings that may be artistic, creative, social, cultural, or religious. Dance forms can be designated into categories or genres: creative movement and creative dance; recreational dance, which includes folk, cultural, and social dance forms; concert dance forms; and dance fitness. A dance genre is a class or category of art or dance based on a set of stylistic criteria. Genre examples include ballet, modern dance, jazz, tap dance, and hip-hop. A dance form is a subcategory of a genre of dance. Examples of some dance forms in the recreational dance genre include line, round, and square dancing.

Dance as an art is a conduit of expression and communication—the message and the medium. It provides a structure that may be intricate, precise, casual, or personal through which the dancer expresses movement, style, and aesthetics. Dance is what entices you as a dancer in a continuous quest for knowledge about yourself in your changing relationship to the dance.

Dance can transport you from the studio, the gym, or the dance space to the theater or other performance spaces and on to the larger arenas of life. It is a part of society and academia and an important component of arts education. In one form or another, dance can be your lifelong partner that will enrich and fulfil you as a human being. Dance affords countless rewards to the audiences who watch performances, to the students you teach, and to the profession through the research you pursue. Whatever role you assume, the dance is nothing without the dancer, and neither can exist without dance education.

Notation is a series or system of written symbols used to represent numbers, amounts, or elements in something such as music and dance. The Leban notation staff is read from bottom to top. The space between the double bar lines at the bottom is for starting position. The double bar lines at the top indicate the end of the movement. In the first measurement, the form and high symbol is the length of two beat, it therefore takes two beats to perform. Other includes Eshkol – Watchman

movement notions and dance writing. Many dance notation systems are designed for specific types of dance. Over the centuries, many different devices have been used to capture dance steps in paper camera,



movement and form using methods such as graphic symbols and figures, path mapping, numerical systems, and letters and words notations. Several dance notations system have been invented many of which are designed to document specific types of dance while others have been developed with captions the broader spectrum of human movement potential. A dance score is recorded as dance notation which describes a particular dance. The primary uses of dance notations are historical dance presentations through documentation and analysis or reconstruction of choreography, dance forms and technical exercise. Dance notations systems allows for dance works to be documented and therefore potentially copyrighted.

There are several dance notation systems that are used today around the world: Leban, Benesh, Conte and other ones that are less known. The system developed by Rudolph Leban, known as Leban notation or kinetographyLeban, which has spread the most. The reason for this is that this way of notating dance works for recording any type or style of dance. Actually, it works for notating dance of any sort of human movement, which makes it a language with the potential of becoming a universal language.

Dance notation is to dance while musical notation is to music and while the written word is to dance. In dance, notation is the translation of four dimensional movement (time being the fourth dimension) into signs written on two dimensional paper.



The problem with all systems of dance notation is that few choreographers—and even fewer dancers—are literate in them. As currently practised, dance notation is mostly used only for the recording, rather than the creating and learning of dances. Given the present method of creating and learning dances in the studio, it is impossible for a choreographer to take an overall view of the work; it is difficult to make changes or to experiment in the way a composer can, because the choreographer is limited by the relatively short period of time allowed for rehearsals and by practical considerations such as the dancers' availability and fatigue.

Even the best system of notation cannot succeed completely, because it cannot alter the fundamental nature of dance. Like any other performing art, dance is essentially ephemeral, existing only at the time of its performance. It can never be properly recorded or preserved, since the way in which dancers interpret a work—their styles, technical abilities, and physical appearance—always change the work each time it is performed.

The primary uses of dance notation are historical dance preservation through documentation, and analysis (e.g. in ethno-choreology) or reconstruction of choreography, dance forms, and technical exercises. Also, dance notation allows a dance work to be documented and therefore potentially copyrighted.

There are two popular dance notation systems used in Western culture. They are Leban notation (also known as Kinetography Leban) and Benesh Movement Notation. Others include Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation and Dance Writing.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Which of the following is a key object in dance notations?

- (a) Symbols
- (b) Maps
- (c) Graph
- (d) Chart

(2) Which of these is not among the primary uses of dance notations?

- (a) Documentation
- (b) Analysis
- (c) Entertainment
- (d) Copyrighted

(3) What is the major problem of dance notation?

- (a) Translation
- (b) Publicity
- (c) Choreography
- (d) Illiteracy

(4) Which of these is the most popular dance notation?

- (a) Benesh
- (b) Leban
- (c) Green
- (d) Eshkol-Wachman

Answers

- (i) a
- (ii) c
- (iii) d
- (iv) b

4.0 CONCLUSION

Several notation systems are used only for specific dance forms. Examples of such systems include Shorthand Dance Notation for dances

from Israel, Morris Dance Notation for Morris dance, and Beauchamp-Feuillet notation for Baroque dance.

Many dance notation systems are specifically designed for European dance and, as a result, cannot effectively describe dances from other cultures. Examples of such non-European dances include the polycentric dances of many African cultures, where movement of the body through space is less important than form-changing movements.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the meaning and definition of dance notations. Also, we have made mention of the uses of dance notions. Likewise, some problems associated with dance notation and popular notation styles have been mentioned. The Self-Assessment Exercises have been provided to enable you rate your understanding and learning you have achieved reading the material in this unit. Reference material and pictorial illustrations have also been provided to broaden your understanding of the learning required in this unit.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Cage, J. & Knowles, A. (1973). *Notations*. Reprint Services Corp. ISBN 0-685-14864-5

Hutchinson, G. A. (1989). *Choreographics: a comparison of dance notation systems from the fifteenth century to the present*. Rutledge ISBN 90-5700-003-2

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UNIT 2 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES OF NOTATIONS

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	The Baroque Period (17 th – 18 th Century)	
	3.3 The Romantic Period (Late 18 th – 19 th Century)	
	3.4 20 th Century Development	
4.0	Conclusion	
5.0	Summary	
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment	
7.0	References / Further Reading	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dance recorded through pictures dates back to early dynastic Egyptian wall paintings, ancient Greek vases that depict dancing figures, and iconographic examples from many other early cultures. Verbal descriptions of dances have been found in India, notably in a book dating to approximately the 2nd century BC. In Europe during the 15th to 17th centuries, many treatises on dance were written in the form of descriptions often accompanied by illustrations. However, none of these can be clearly defined as a system through which actual dance movements (as opposed to positions) could be captured and subsequently faithfully reconstructed.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- explain the historical development of dance notations in the 15 - 17th Century
- identify some principal actors that contributed to the development of dance notation throughout the centuries under review
- explain major developments in the 20th Century

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

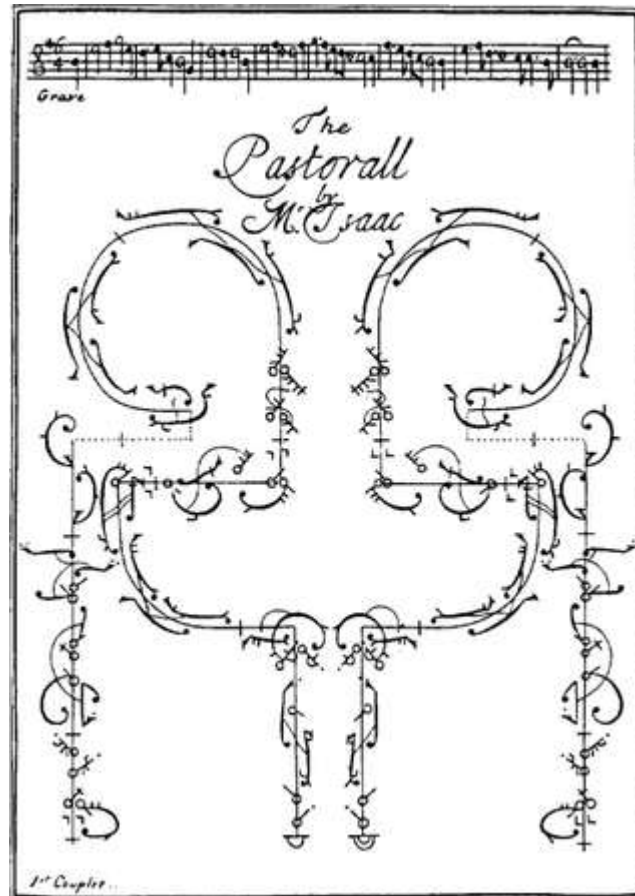
3.1 The Renaissance (Early 15th – Early 17th Century)

The first device to be considered a true notation system was found in Cervera, Catalonia (now part of Spain): two manuscript pages, dated from the 15th century, revealed the first use of signs to represent the letter abbreviations used in Renaissance Italy, France and Spain to record the popular bassedanses (“low dances”). These were letter abbreviations for the five well-known steps: *R* for *révérence*; *s* for *simple*; *d* for *double*; *b* for *branle*, and *r* for *reprise*. Dances were composed of a sequence of these steps in different arrangements.

In his book, *Orchesographie* (1588), the Frenchman ThoinotArbeau provided valuable descriptions of the dances of that period, placing the names of the dancers’ movements next to the vertically arranged music. His system, however, cannot be called a notation system as such, because no symbols were used.

3.2 The Baroque Period (17th – 18th Century)

At the French Court of Louis XIV, patterns traced on the floor were an important part of formal dances; drawings of these pathways, with signs added to indicate the steps used, were the basis of the first important, widely used dance notation system. Originated by the ballet teacher, Pierre Beauchamp, it was first published by his student, Raoul-Auger Feuillet in 1700 as *Chorégraphie; ou, l’art de décrire la danse* (“Choreography; or, The Art of Describing the Dance”). The system spread rapidly throughout Europe, with English, German and Spanish versions soon appearing. Well suited to the dance of that era, which featured intricate footwork, this notation became so popular at court and among the educated classes that, for a while, books of collected dances were published annually. Indications for the appropriate arm gestures were later developed to accompany the intricacies of the footwork. However, at the watershed of the French Revolution, when dance for the educated classes at the Royal Courts declined, the Feuillet system—which was unsuited to theatre dance with its greater range of movement—fell into disuse.



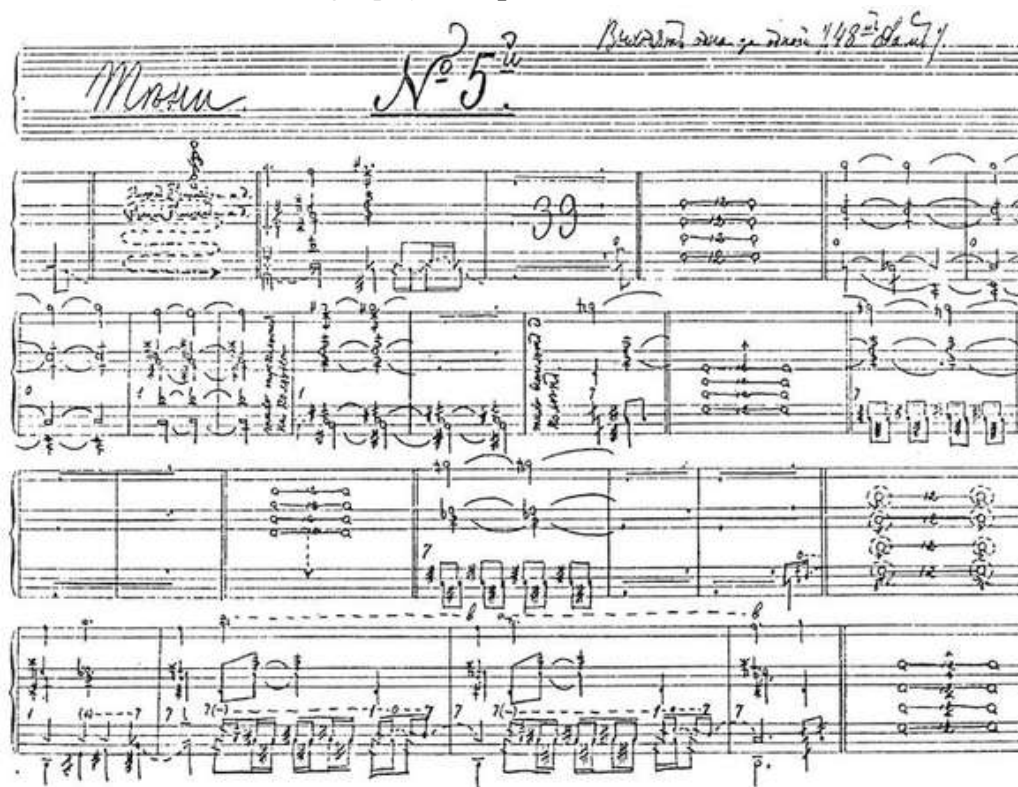
A page from *Chorégraphie; ou, l'art de décrire la danse* (1700), by Raoul-Auger Feuillet, with examples of the dance notation system originated by Pierre Beauchamp. Dance steps traced on the floor formed the basis of this system, which was the first important, widely used dance notation system.

3.3 The Romantic Period (Late 18th - 19th Century)

In the mid-19th century, two important systems were published, both based on the idea of “stick figure” representation. That of the renowned French dancer and choreographer, Arthur Saint-Léon, illustrated in his book, *Sténochorégraphie*, was published in 1852. It combined slightly abstracted figure drawings with musical note indications for specific timing—not a surprising addition considering Saint-Léon’s musical background (he had been a child prodigy on the violin). His inclusion in his book of the *pas de six* from his ballet *La Vivandière* provided a valuable example of a Romantic ballet, and it has been studied and performed into the 21st century. The second of the two major mid-19th-century notation systems was that of the German dance teacher, Friedrich Albert Zorn, whose book, *Grammatik der Tanzkunst* (1887; *Grammar of the Art of Dancing*) employed a more directly pictorial stick figure, placed under the accompanying music to indicate timing. A highly respected dancing master, Zorn focused on

detailed descriptions of the exercises and steps required in dance training. He included a selection of dances, notably the *cachucha* solo made famous in 1836 by the Austrian ballerina Fanny Elssler.

The close affinity between music and dance made inevitable the idea of using musical notes to record movement. The first such system was developed by Vladimir Ivanovich Stepanov, a dancer of the Mariinsky Ballet in St. Petersburg. It was published in Paris with the title, *Alphabet des mouvements du corps humain* (1892; *Alphabet of Movements of the Human Body*). Stepanov's method was based on an anatomical analysis of movement and thus was applicable to the recording of any type of movement. Stepanov's method was adopted by the Mariinsky, where it was used to record the repertory. Of the scores notated during that period, many were incomplete, rapidly written notes intended as memory aids. The dancer and choreographer Léonide Massine learned Stepanov notation as a student at the Imperial School of Ballet and made use of it in developing his own choreographic theories. His *Massine on Choreography* was published in 1976.



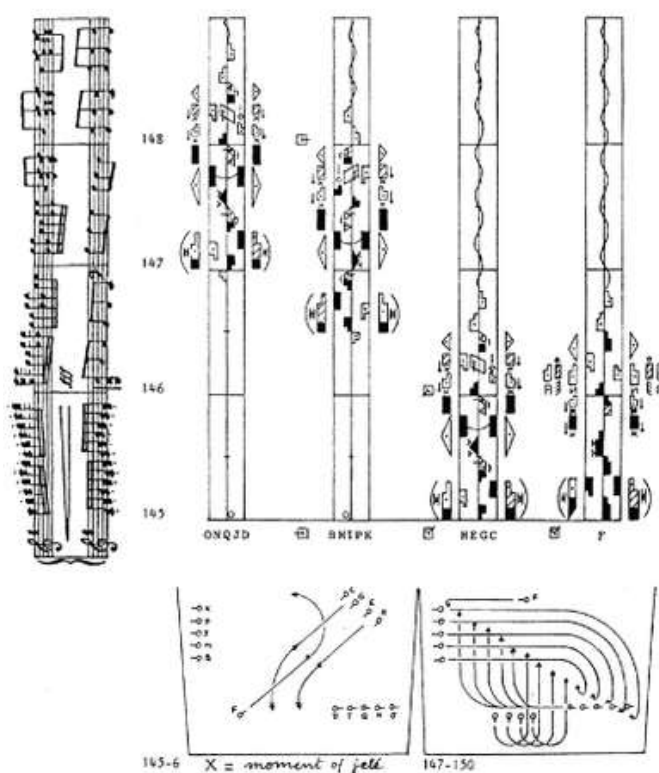
A page from *Alphabet des mouvements du corps humain* (1892), by Vladimir Ivanovich Stepanov, illustrating his dance notation system.

3.4 20th Century Development

Another student who learned Stepanov notation at the Imperial School was the legendary Russian dancer Vaslav Nijinsky, whose interest in it led to his own modification of the system, one that improved significantly on Stepanov's ideas, especially in the indication of directions and levels. During a period of inactivity when he was separated from the Ballets Russes, Nijinsky worked on his notation ideas and recorded every movement of his first ballet, *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (1912; *Afternoon of a Faun*). When in 1988 the code to his system was broken, this ballet could be revived in its authentic version—that notated by Nijinsky himself.

The 20th century was marked by the advent of abstract symbol systems, notably those of Margaret Morris and Rudolf Leban. Morris, a British dancer, teacher and choreographer, was also a movement therapist, which led to her anatomical approach to recording movement. She outlined her system in *The Notation of Movement* (1928); in addition to direction symbols, she provided separate signs for each movement of each part of the body. This was not an advantage in comparison with “alphabet” systems, in which the same basic type of movement is written with the same symbol for each part of the body.

Schrifttanz (1928; “Written Dance”), by the Hungarian-born dance theorist Rudolf Leban, provided the basis for the notation system that bears his name: lebanotation (also called Kinetography Leban). Leban had an eclectic interest in movement but found himself architecturally fascinated by its spatial aspects. Thus, his system initially depicted movement from a spatial perspective; an anatomical description was added later by others. It is an “alphabet” system in that each movement is “spelled out” according to the sequence of its basic components. A vertical three-line staff represents the body, the centre line dividing right and left. The shape and shading of the movement symbols indicate direction and level; their length indicates timing (duration); and their placement in the appropriate column on the staff indicates the part of the body that is moving. A particular strength of lebanotation is its ability to show precise gradations in the timing of movements. The system became widely used because it is applicable to all forms of movement. For decades lebanotation was refined by research practitioners working in a variety of different movement disciplines, not only ballet and contemporary choreographies but dance of different styles and cultures as well as gymnastics and other sports, remedial exercises, and even zoological studies.



A page from Rudolf Laban's *Schrifftanz* (1928), the origin of Labanotation which became the most widespread method of dance notation. Courtesy of Ann Hutchinson Guest

A number of other notation systems were invented in the 20th century. Pierre Conté, a French musician, wrote *Écriture de la danse théâtrale et de la danse en général* (1931; "Writing of Theatrical Dance and Dance in General"); his system combined musical notes with simple signs placed on an expanded music staff. In "Choroscript" (written in 1945 and unpublished), the American musician, dance teacher, and choreographer Alwin Nikolais indicated movement with modified musical notation symbols. Nikolais's movement analysis was based on labanotation, and he used a Laban-style vertical staff but in two parts, with torso and head indications placed separately on the right. *Kineseography* (1955), created by the dancer and choreographer Eugene Loring with D. J. Canna, incorporated an unusual movement analysis. This system used a vertical staff and simple signs to record four categories of movement: Emotion, Direction, Degree, and Special. It was used to record Loring's signature ballet, *Billy the Kid* (1938).

The system developed by the Israeli dance theorist Noa Eshkol and the architect Abraham Wachmann was first published in English as *Movement Notation* in 1958. It took an anatomical and mathematical

view of movement and initially had the aim of exploring the abstract shapes and designs of movement rather than recording existing dance patterns, which had been the primary goal of all previous systems. Numbers and a small selection of symbols are used to represent each possible physical motion. The full horizontal staff provides a space for each body segment. Eshkol's original aim was to create a method of recording her own choreography; however, the Movement Notation Society in Israel (the centre for this system) subsequently published books on folk dance, ballet, and other art forms and also illustrated the uses of the system in recording the movements of animals.

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Fingers 1-2 (↑)

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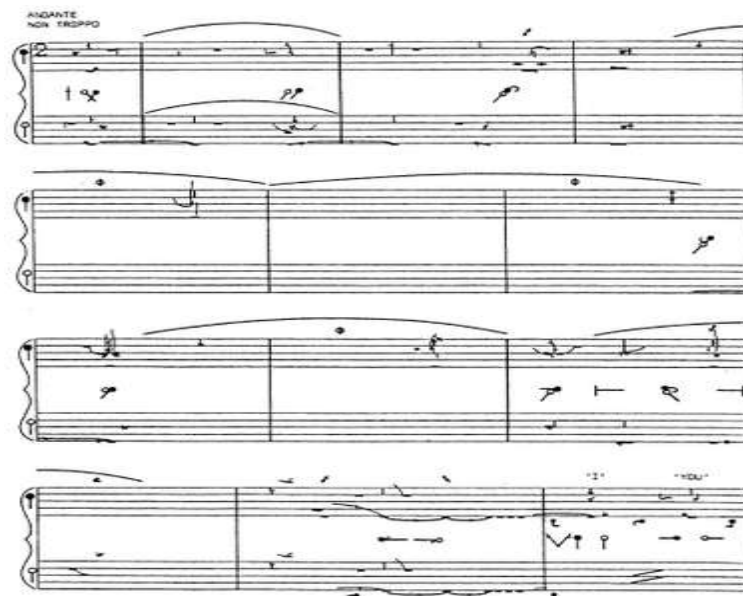
L.	(0)↑ Forearm														
	(0) Arm														
R.	(0)↑ Forearm				↑ ₃		R								
	(0) Arm			(3)g				(3)							
	Upper Body				(6)↓ ₁			(5)↑ ₁							
R.	Thigh				(3)S*			↑						(3)S*	
	[L Leg]			↓(+)S ^m											
	Foot			↓											
L.	Thigh			↓↑		(2)S		↓(5)		(+)S				(2)S	
	[L Leg]														
	Foot			↓											
	Weight			(2) (=)	(4)			(6)		(0)			(6)	(4)	
	Front	(0)	(7)	(6)		(5)		(4)		(5)		(5)	(6)		

An example of the dance notation system developed by Noa Eshkol and Abraham Wachmann.

Courtesy of the Movement Notation Society, Holon, Israel

Despite the introduction of abstract symbol systems, notation methods making use of stick figures continued to appear during the 20th century. The most successful of these was a visual representation system devised in the 1950s by the English artist Rudolf Benesh and his wife, Joan Benesh, a dancer with the Sadler's Wells Ballet (now the Royal Ballet). A matrix on a five-line horizontal staff represents the dancer from head to foot, seen from the back. Positions and movement lines are plotted on this matrix. Timing indications are placed above the staff. More complex movements that cannot be indicated visually on the staff are written with additional signs and numbers above the staff. Initially developed as ballet shorthand, it has proved very useful in recording the repertoires of ballet companies. The Benesh Institute was established in London in 1962. Following the example set in the 1960s by the Royal Ballet, many companies have hired trained Benesh notators. Computer

programmes for writing Benesh scores have been developed, and a centre for training notators and producing publications was established in the 1990s at the Centre National de la Danse in Paris.



An example of the dance notation system devised in the 1950s by Rudolf and Joan Benesh.

Courtesy of the Benesh Institute, London

In the United States a Laban notation score was first accepted for copyright protection in 1952. This event was a major breakthrough that afforded dance a protection it had not experienced until then. Subsequently, many notated scores were submitted for copyright registration. Notation systems were developed in other countries, such as Russia and Romania, where they were used to record traditional folk dances. One of the more significant of these was Roman notation, first published by the ethno-choreologist Vera Proca-Ciordea in 1956. A decade later the dance teacher and choreographer Theodor Vasilescu developed a different system to describe Romanian folk dances, with a view toward teaching them.

Efforts to document Korean dance movements include the method developed in North Korea about 1970 by the Korean choreographer U Chang Sop. His book, published in English as *Chamo System of Dance Notation* (1988), uses pictorially based symbols and additional abstract signs. In India during the 1970s, the classical-dance performer Gopal Venu devised a notation system with the aim of providing a shorthand for the many mudras (hand positions) needed in *kathakali* dance-drama. These are combined with pictographs of body positions. Manuscripts from the Han dynasty in China record dance

through pictures with a few symbols, none of which has been clearly deciphered. The first true notation system in China was *Coordination Method Dance Notation* (Eng. trans. 1987), created by Wu Ji Mei and her husband, Gao Chun Lin, in the early 1980s. Based on a logical movement analysis and placed under the (Western) music staff to show timing, it uses letters of the alphabet, numbers, and a few abstract signs and thus is typeable on a computer keyboard. It has been applied to dance forms, movement in sports, and physical education.

Although good, workable systems have been around for centuries, the use of dance notation has never been an integral part of dance study and practice, as musical notation is in the study of music. Writing a dance score inevitably takes time, as does writing a book or a symphony; the time spent learning to read and write notation was often seen as wasted. Until the development in the 1960s of the simple Motif Notation (related to Labanotation) and its application in the Language of Dance teaching method, in which the basic movement “building blocks” are explored, notation was not included in a child’s introduction to movement; dance was still taught solely by imitation. The study of Labanotation includes an investigation into movement that not only enriches a dancer’s understanding of movement but also provides dance students with access to the scores of significant works of the past.

Kahnotation was developed from 1930-1950 and published in 1951 by Stanley D. Kahn. The notation focuses on notating weight change in time and the various types of anatomical moves used in tap dance.

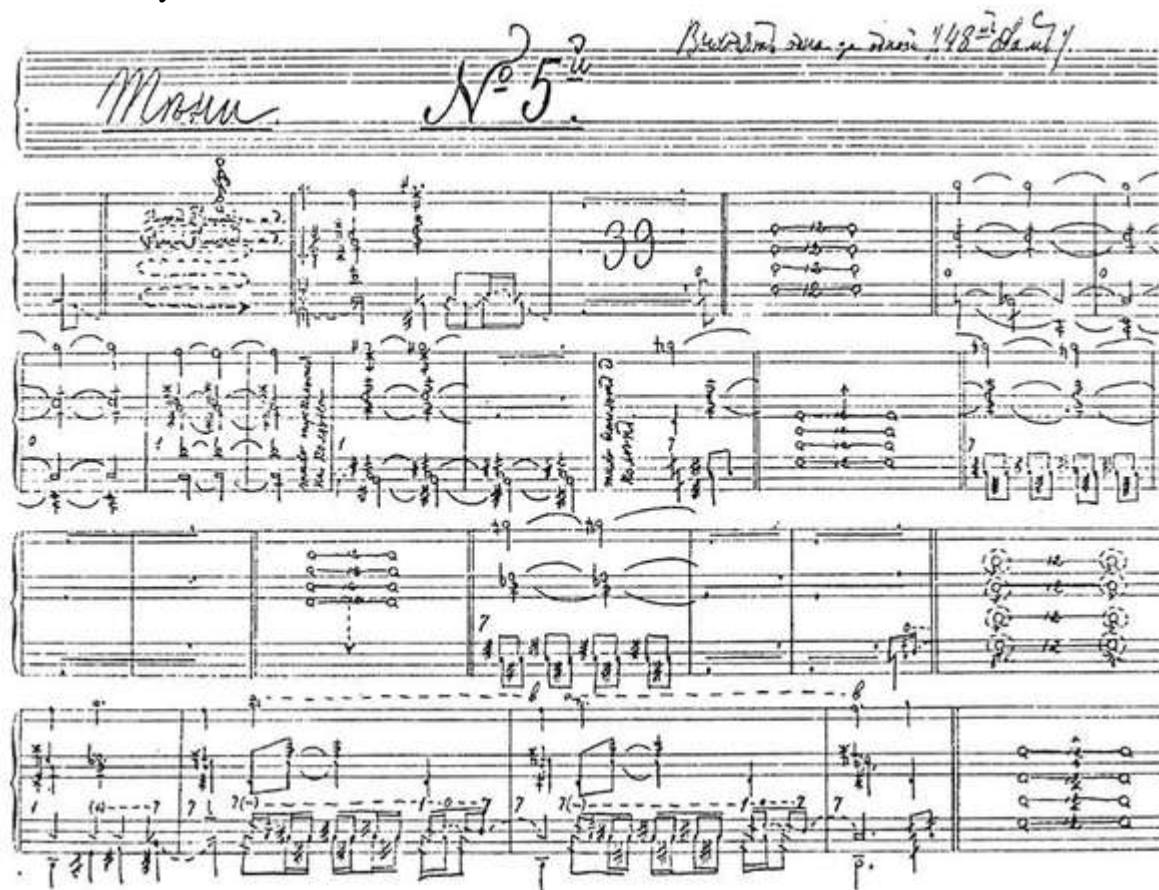
In 1948, Hanya Holm became the first Broadway choreographer to have her dance scores copyrighted, for her work on *Kiss Me Kate*.

In 1975, Ann Hutchinson Guest reconstructed choreographer Arthur Saint-Léon's *Pas de Six* from his 1844 ballet *La Vivandière*, along with its original music by composer Cesare Pugni, for the Joffrey Ballet. The piece was reconstructed from Saint-Léon's work, which was documented using his own method of dance notation, known as *La Sténochorégraphie*.

In 1982, the first computerized notation system—the *DOM* dance notation system—was created by Eddie Dombrower for the Apple II personal computer. The system displayed an animated figure on the screen that performed dance moves specified by the choreographer.

Since dance is a performing art, the survival of any dance work depends either on its being preserved through tradition or on its being written down in some form. Where tradition is continuous and uninterrupted, changes in style and interpretation (inevitable when different dancers

perform the same material) may be corrected and the dance preserved in its original form. But when a tradition is broken (if, for instance, the cultural traditions of one ethnic group encroach on those of another), then dances may not only change radically but may even disappear. For this reason methods of recording dance are important in the preservation of its history.



A page from *Alphabet des mouvements du corps humain* (1892), by Vladimir Ivanovich Stepanov, illustrating his dance notation system.

Evidence of dance records dates to the ancient Egyptians, who used hieroglyphs to represent dance movements. In India the earliest book discussing dance, the *Natya-sastra* ("Treatise on the Dramatic Arts"; variously dated from the 2nd century BC to the 3rd century AD), still survives. This work, which is sacred in Indian culture, codifies dance into a series of rules determining the gestures used to depict different themes and emotions. The *Bharatanatyam*, a classical dance form based on this treatise, is a good example of a dance tradition that has survived unbroken for many centuries. It only began to founder during the 19th century, partly because Westerners and Indians alike began to deplore its associations with prostitution, but was saved from disappearing altogether when it was developed into a concert form at the beginning of the 20th century. One reason for the long survival of

the *Bharatanatyam* was its importance in religious ceremonies of Hinduism; in addition, when Indian dances were rarely being performed and were in danger of being lost or of degenerating beyond recognition, the *Natya-sastra* provided a record of traditional principles and styles for their later revival. Even today, not all dance instructors are familiar with these principles, and purists still fear that certain dances are in danger of disappearing or being completely distorted.

The advent of film and particularly in the 1970s of video recording overshadowed notation. Video has immediate appeal to dancers because it requires no lengthy study. Through experience, however, members of the dance world have come to recognize its limitations. The image is often not clear, and costumes or other dancers often block the view. A video is a record of a particular performance in which the dancers may have made mistakes (which is frequently the case); the viewer is unable to recognize the difference between the dance performance and the dance itself. Learning from video too often results in the personal mannerisms or mistakes of one dancer being picked up and exaggerated by another, which thus distorts the choreography. In contrast, the notated score is a record of the work itself in the same way that a musical score represents the work, not an individual's performance of that work. In a score all aspects of choreographic detail—use of stage space, the relationship of performers to each other and to the music, and the choreographer's development of movement themes—can be easily studied.

Although its use in the dance field has spread more slowly than many dance historians anticipated, notation remains an essential tool. In addition to accurately recording a working choreographer's movement concepts, it uniquely enables the faithful preservation of past works—a major concern in the dance world. In music, scores from centuries past have preserved classic works, which modern composers may wish to modify, rearrange, or parody without loss of the originals. In dance, reliance on memory has resulted in an accumulative distortion of the originals. Without notation, unintentional changes soon become the known version, and the viewing public has no idea of the loss of authenticity.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Where was the first device of dance notation documented?

- (a) Italy
- (b) Spain
- (c) France
- (d) India

- (ii) Why was the work of Thoinot Arbeau not considered a notation?
 - (a) No symbols
 - (b) Too much symbols
 - (c) Few symbols
 - (d) Ineligible symbols

- (iii) Which is the first widely used notation system?
 - (a) Beauchamp
 - (b) Feuillet
 - (c) Auger
 - (d) Raoul

- (iv) Apart from Rudolf Laban who else was involved with abstract notation symbols?
 - (a) Margaret Morris
 - (b) Vaslav Nijinsky
 - (c) Leonide Massine
 - (d) StepanovMarinsky

Answers

- (i) b
- (ii) a
- (iii) a
- (iv) a

4.0 CONCLUSION

Having read this unit and successfully completed the self-assessment exercises, it is assumed that you have attained understanding of the historical development of Dance notations and should be able to relate it to others.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we have discussed the historical development of dance notations from 2 BC to the modern day. You must have taken note of some principal actors that contributed to the development of dance notation throughout the centuries. Most importantly are significant events in the 20th Century that have contributed to the spread of notations even in other discipline apart from physical education and choreography. The Self Assessment Exercises have been provided to enable you rate your understanding and learning achieved reading this

Unit. Online links have also been provided to broaden your understanding of the learning required in this unit.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

(i)

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UNIT 3 TYPES OF DANCE NOTATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Types of Dance Notations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The primary use of Dance Notations is the preservation of classical dance documentation. It can be further used for analysis and reconstruction of choreography and dance forms or technical exercises. Many different forms of dance notations have been created but the two main systems used in Western culture are Labanotation (also known as Kinetography Laban) and Benesh Movement Notation. Eshkol-Wachman Movement Notation and Dance Writing are also in use, but to a lesser extent. A lot of research work can be noticed dedicated especially in the area of dance notation and its standardization especially, Labanotation followed by Latin American dance styles and then Indian classical dance. Latin American dance styles like Ballroom, Foxtrot, Waltz has been used successfully for several research attempts while Indian classical dances like Bharata Natyam, Kutchipudi, Odissi, etc. have relatively fewer research attempts. Dance Notation Bureau in New York has been working for more than six decades to disseminate dance scores recorded with this system. The resulting archive provides scholars, dancers, students, performers and the public with an easily accessible detailed record of choreography that allows dances to be studied.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- describe at least two types of dance notations
- differentiate between Benesh I and Benesh II notations
- identify the vertical staff in a dance notes
- highlight the basic actions of action strike notations
-

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Types of Dance Notations

i. Baroque Dance Notation

In 1680, Pierre Beauchamp invented a dance notation system for Baroque dance. This system, known as Beauchamp-Feuillet notation, was published in 1700 by Raoul-Augier Feuillet and used to record dances throughout the eighteenth century. It is a system that is nowadays used for the reconstruction of those dances only, but no more scores are being written by the means of it. This notation is actually limited for writing dance as it is made up of signs that describe codified steps. Therefore, it is only useful to read the French baroque dance and in an extremely simplified way they are not notated at all, for example;

ii. Benesh Movement Notation

Benesh Movement Notation, also known as Benesh Notation (BN), is a dance notation system used to document dance and other types of human movement. It was invented by Joan and Rudolf Benesh in the late 1940s. The system uses abstract symbols based on figurative representation of the human body. It is used basically to teach ballet dance. Benesh Notation is recorded in a five line staff from left to right, with vertical bar lines which mark the passage of time. Because of its similarity to modern staff music notation, Benesh Notation can be displayed alongside and in synchronization with musical accomplishment.

iii. Motif Notation

Motif dance notates your ideas using movement alphabet, the prime actions of which all movement is comprised, uncovered and was developed by Dr. Ann Hutchinson Guest. It uses the language of dance approach to teaching and learning dance, clarifying your performance technique and adding that incredibly important and often missing aspect of dance training, integrating thinking, dancing and feeling instantaneously.

iv. Dom Dance Notation

In 1982, the first computerized notation system – the DOM Dance Notation System was created by Eddie Donbrower for the Apple II personal computer. The system displayed an animated figure on the

screen that performed dance moves specified by the choreographer. An advance of this system of notation is called MOCAP (motion capture), where specialists place sensors all over the dancer. These track and record the movement, allow them to be mapped on a computer screen in real time as virtual skeleton for easy rotation.

v. **Action Stroke Dance Notation (ASDN)**

Action Stroke Dance Notation is a Dance Notation system that was invented by Iver Cooper. It was designed for uniting the notations, which primarily consists of “action strokes” that represent one of the three basic actions.

A support gesture that takes weight (hop or step)

A touch gesture (makes contact without taking weight)

An air gesture (makes no contact)

Scoring: A dance score has five sections

General – describing the general movement of the dancer

Leg (or staff) – indicating movement of the legs and feet

Arm (or staff) – indicating movement of the arm and hands

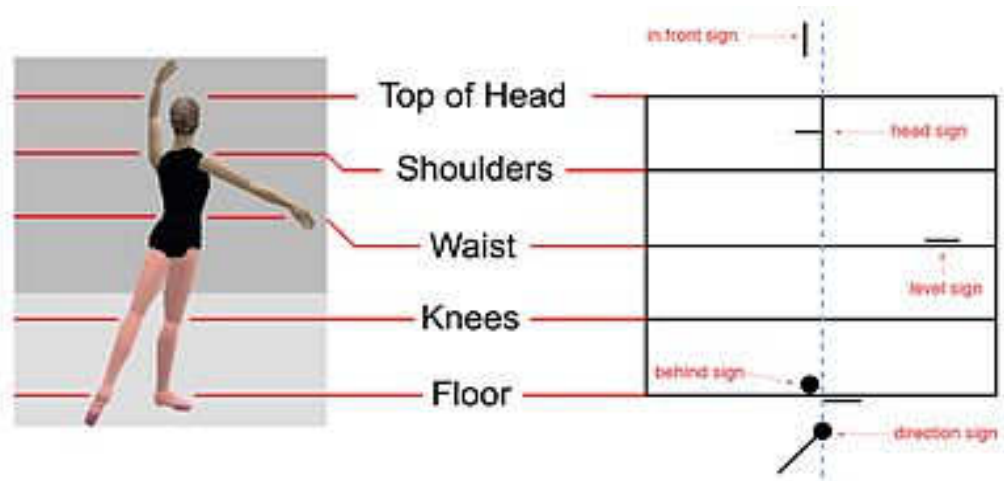
Trunk – indicating movement of head, neck, chest and pelvis

Note – detail explanation of the movement

vi. **Benesh II**

Benesh notation plots the position of a dancer as seen from behind, as in the dancer is super-imposed on a staff that extends from the top of the head down to the feet. From top to bottom, the five lines of the staff coincide with the head, shoulders, waist, knees and feet. Additional symbols are used to notate the dimension and quality of movement. A frame is one complete representation of the dancer.

A short horizontal line is used to represent the location of a hand or foot that passes through the coronal plane which extends from the sides of the body. A short vertical line represents a hand or foot at a plane in front of the body, whereas a dot represents a hand or foot at a plane behind the body. The height of the hands and feet from the floor and their distance from the midline of the body are shown visually. A line, drawn in the top space of the staff, shows the position of the head when it changes position. A direction sign is placed below the staff when the direction changes.



vii. Green Notations

Developed by Doris Green, Green notations is an innovative musical system for notating the percussion instruments of African ensembles. This system is the only system that aligns the compounding dance movement in a single integrated score; as such, the music and dance of African countries can be transferred from oral traditions into written documents. With this system, the music and dances of Africa can be written and reproduced from a print source.

viii. Leban Notation

This is a record of facts, the framework of the movement, so that it can be reproduced. The symbols are placed on a vertical staff, the horizontal dimension of the staff represents the symmetry of the body, and the vertical dimension represent time passing by (*see details in Module six*). Staff: the staff (US) or stare (UK) is a set of five horizontal lines and four spaces; each represents a different musical pitch. The lines and spaces are numbered from bottom to top, the bottom line is the first line and the top line is the fifth line.

Bar: a bar is a segment of time corresponding to specific number of beats in which each beat is represented by a particular note value of the boundaries of the bar and indicated by vertical bar lines.

Vertical line: a vertical three-line staff represents the body, the centre line diving right and left. The shape and shading of the movement symbols indicate direction and level, their length indicates timing (duration) and their placement in the appropriate column on the staff indicates the part of the body that is moving. **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

EXERCISES

- (i) Why is Lebanotation widely accepted form of notation?
 - (a) Staff are complex
 - (b) Uses motion pictures
 - (c) Easily adapted to other culture
 - (d) Highly visible

- (ii) Which notation plots the position of the dancer from behind?
 - (a) Green
 - (b) Leban
 - (c) Benesh II
 - (d) Baroque

- (iii) Which of the following is not part of notation staff?
 - (a) Shape
 - (b) Vertical lines
 - (c) Bar
 - (d) Time

- (iv) Which is not included action strike notation in this list?
 - (a) A support gesture that takes weight (hop or step)
 - (b) A touch gesture (makes contact with weight)
 - (c) An air gesture (makes no contact)
 - (d) A touch gesture (makes contact without taking weight)

Answers

- (i) c
- (ii) c
- (iii) d
- (iv) b

4.0 CONCLUSION

What we have covered is not an exhaustive list of the different types of dance notations. However, having read this unit and successfully completed the Self-Assessment Exercises, it is assumed that you have attained basic understanding of some types of dance notations. You can now explore others with the eyes of understanding.

5.0 SUMMARY

So far, we have covered some types of dance notations such as Baroque, Benesh I and II, Motif, Dom Dance, Action Dance Stroke, Green and Leban. The Self-Assessment Exercises have been provided to enable you master the basic concepts covered. The reference provided will help

to broaden your scope on other types of dance notations not covered in this unit.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

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UNIT 4 PROMINENT NOTATION METHODS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The absence in the West of any reliable form of notation until the 20th century resulted in a relative paucity of dance traditions when compared to other art forms. While the music, art, and literature of many centuries past are available today, either in the original or in a reproduced form, there is no complete record of any of the ballets choreographed before the 19th century. Even those works that form the backbone of ballet's classical tradition (*Swan Lake*, *Giselle*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*, for example) have not survived in forms that fully resemble the original choreography.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the emergence of track drawing system of dance notations
- state the disadvantages of some early method of dance notations
- explain the 20th century innovations in dance notations

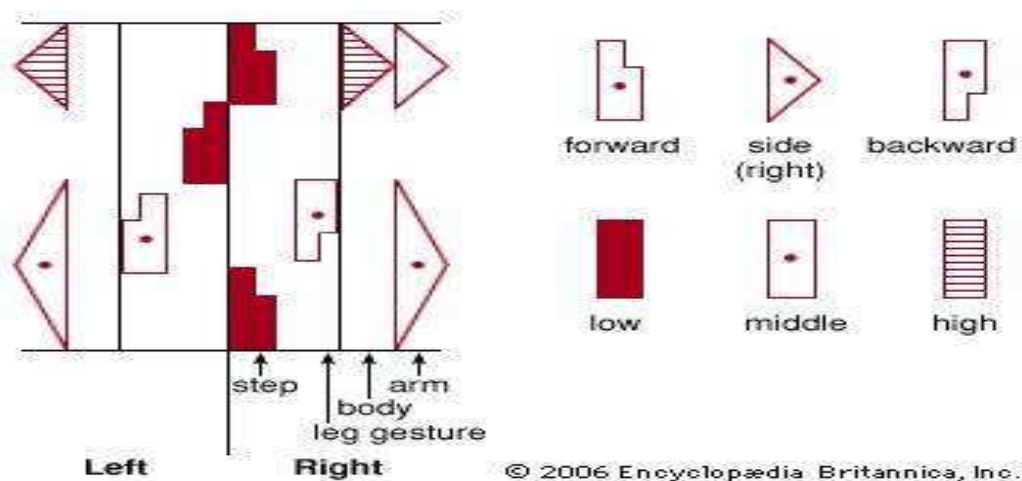
3.0 MAIN CONTENT

During the Renaissance, dances were recorded through a simple form of verbal abbreviation, with one letter standing for each individual step—as in 'B' for *branle* or 'R' for *révérence*. This method was adequate because the dances of that time were simple and the individual steps were well known. By the 17th century, the increasingly complex floor patterns of certain dances, particularly those of the Court ballets, led to the emergence of track-drawing systems, the most sophisticated of which was published in 1700 by Raoul-Auger Feuillet in

his *Chorégraphie, ou l'art de décrire la danse* (“Choreography, or the Art of Describing the Dance”). Feuillet’s work recorded foot positions and combinations of steps as well as floor patterns, but it was unable to register movements in the upper part of the body.

Subsequent ballet masters turned to a form of notation using stick figures, the first of which was *La Sténochorégraphie* (“The Art of Writing Dance”), published in 1852 by the French dancer and choreographer, Arthur Saint-Léon. The disadvantage of this system was that it could not record the timing or musical coordination of movements, so that later attempts to produce a system were based on musical notes that would give not only anatomical detail but also the duration of the movement. In the 19th century, the most advanced system of this kind was published in *Alphabet des mouvements du corps humain* (1892; “Alphabet of Movements of the Human Body”), by Vladimir Stepanov, a dancer at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. Stepanov’s system was used to record many ballets in the Mariinsky’s repertoire; the recordings were the basis of subsequent reconstructions of those ballets by the Sadler’s Wells Ballet in London.

Stepanov’s system still had many disadvantages, one of the most significant being that it was strongly geared toward ballet and could not accommodate the wider range of movements being developed through modern dance techniques. In 1928, Rudolf Laban, a Hungarian dancer, teacher and choreographer, developed a complex series of principles for analyzing the full range of human movement. His system for recording movements in dance—widely known as Labanotation—had the advantage of being able to record not only the positions of the body and the pattern of the steps but also the way in which movements should be executed (i.e. whether they should be relaxed or forceful and where the accent of the movement should lie).



Key to labanotation symbols. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

Choreology, developed by Joan and Rudolf Benesh in 1955, is based on a more clearly visual rather than symbolic form of notation. It is written on a five-line staff, recording the dancer's position as viewed from behind. The top line shows the position of the top of the head; the second, the shoulders; the third, the waist; the fourth, the knees; and the fifth, the feet. Special symbols such as lines, dots, and crosses indicate what each part of the body is doing—for example, whether a limb is straight or flexed and in which direction (to the side or front or in a circle) each part is moving. Other symbols show the quality or dynamics of the movement, its rhythm and accent, and the group formations of the dancers. In 1958, Noa Eshkol and Abraham Wachmann proposed a mathematical system in which movement (of the joints, for example) was analyzed anatomically, in degrees of circular movement in either positive or negative directions, with positions of the body being fixed in relation to two coordinates.



An example of the dance notation system devised in the 1950s by Rudolf and Joan Benesh. Courtesy of the Benesh Institute, London

Video recording is more readily accessible than written notation, though it fails to represent the three-dimensional nature of dance and is unable to record movements when one dancer is concealed behind another. It

may be useful when used in tandem with some form of written notation, particularly as it can provide a record of how individual dancers interpret particular roles.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. Feuillet's work recorded the following except
 - (a) Foot positions
 - (b) Movement in the upper part of the body
 - (c) Combination of steps
 - (d) Floor patterns

2. La Stenochoregraphic (the art of writing dance) was published by
 - (a) Saint Leon
 - (b) Raoul Auger
 - (c) Vladimir Stepanov
 - (d) Rudolf Laban

3. Noa Eshkol and Abraham Wachman proposed the mathematical system in which movement of the joints was analyzed in what year?
 - (a) 1955
 - (b) 1928
 - (c) 1958
 - (d) 1892

4. In choreography, the top line shows the following positions except
 - (a) The head
 - (b) The shoulder
 - (c) The back
 - (d) The knee

Answers

1. b.
2. a.
3. c.
4. ?

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit you have learnt about prominent methods adopted for dance notations and the weakness that some had that resulted in its discontinuation of use.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the nature of the game of hockey, the field of hockey, the fundamental skills in hockey and the terminologies used in hockey. The Self-Assessment Exercises you attempted were meant to provide you opportunities of testing your understanding and amount of learning you have achieved after having studied this unit. The links and reference texts that have been provided were meant to broaden your knowledge and understanding required in this unit.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING Dance Heritage Coalition (2006). Documenting dance: A practical guide. Washington DC: Dance Heritage. [https://DocumentingDance.pdf \(dance-usa.s3.amazonaws.com\)](https://DocumentingDance.pdf (dance-usa.s3.amazonaws.com))

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MODULE 2

INTRODUCTION TO MODULE

The ability to write dance notes depends strongly on your attachment to dance and music. An understanding of the movement pattern, level and elements of dance is crucial for the internalization of the abstract message conveyed in dance steps and beats. In this module, we shall focus on movement pattern, five elements of dance and the importance and benefits derivable if we understand dance.

UNIT 1 DANCE MOVEMENTS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Basic Steps, Formations Ballets and Modern Dance Techniques
 - 3.2 Dance is a Stream of Body Movements
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Action is any human movement included in the act of dancing – it can include dance steps, facial movements, , gestures, and even everyday movements such as walking.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- describe the three levels of dance movement
- explain the styles of dance movement
- perform the basic steps and formation used in dance

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Dance is a Stream of Body Movements

Dance is made up of streams of movement and pauses and movement of relative stillness. Dancers may use movements that have been choreographed or traditional dances taught by others who know the

dance: there are three levels in dance movement – high, middle and low (when you say high, this means that the distance would be far from the floor, medium means you are midway towards the floor, while low means that you have to be almost directly on top of the floor). When people talk about the levels in dance movement, they basically mean the different physical aspects that the dancer reaches while he/she is dancing. Dancing uses different body movements such as stretching, bending, twisting, jumping, swinging, swaying, shaking and collapsing. Dance is the movement of the body in a rhythmic way, usually to music and within a given space, for the purpose of expressing an idea or emotion, releasing energy, or simply taking delight in the movement itself.

Movement can also be improvised, meaning that the dancers make it up on the spot as they spontaneously dance. Movement that travels through space is broadly called locomotor movement in contrast to axial movement, which occurs in one spot.

Bend – Plier,
Stretch – Etendre,
Rise – Relever,
Jump – Sauter,
Turn – Tourner,
Glide – Glisser,
Dart – Elancer.

3.2 Basic Steps, Formations Ballet and Modern Dance Techniques

The style and movement of classical dance is noted in five turned-out positions of the foot:

- (1) heels touching and feet forming a straight line
- (2) heels apart and feet forming a straight line
- (3) one foot in front and the other with the heel against the instep
- (4) feet apart, one in front of the other and
- (5) one foot in front of the other with the heel against the joint of the big toe

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. What does high level of dance mean?
 - (a) Mid-way towards the floor
 - (b) Directly on top of the floor
 - (c) Distance under the floor
 - (d) Distance far from the floor

2. Dance uses the following body movements except
 - (a) Swimming
 - (b) Jumping
 - (c) Swinging
 - (d) Twisting

3. Movement that travels through space is called
 - (a) Lancer movement
 - (b) Locomotive movement
 - (c) Glisser movement
 - (d) Locomotor movement

4. The style and movement of classical dance is noted as follows except
 - (a) Heels touching and feet forming a straight line
 - (b) Head touching your knee
 - (c) Feet apart, one in front of the other
 - (d) Heels apart and feet forming a straight line

Answers

1. d
2. a
3. d
4. b

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit you have read and learnt the basic steps and formation used in dance, styles of dance movement and levels of dance movement. Links and texts provided in this unit are meant to broaden your understanding of requirements in this unit. It is expected that you practise these styles in your spare time to get accustomed to then for your personal enjoyment and pleasure. The Self-Assessment Exercises will give you information at your own level of understanding of this course.

5.0 SUMMARY

The information and learning provided you in this unit should enhance your understanding of the levels, styles, steps and formation. Knowledge gained in the unit should be useful in practical application as may be required for everyday life outside the class room situation.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 ELEMENTS OF DANCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Body
 - 3.2 Action
 - 3.3 Space
 - 3.4 Time
 - 3.5 Energy
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The elements of dance are the foundational concepts and vocabulary that help students develop movement skills and understand dance either as artist or scientist. The acronym BASTE helps students remember the elements. There are five fundamental compositional elements of dance that all creative movements have in common. This can further be broken down into Body – Action – Space – Time – Energy. Being able to identify and understand these core characteristics can help you when talking about a dance performance or can help you get your own message across through movement.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

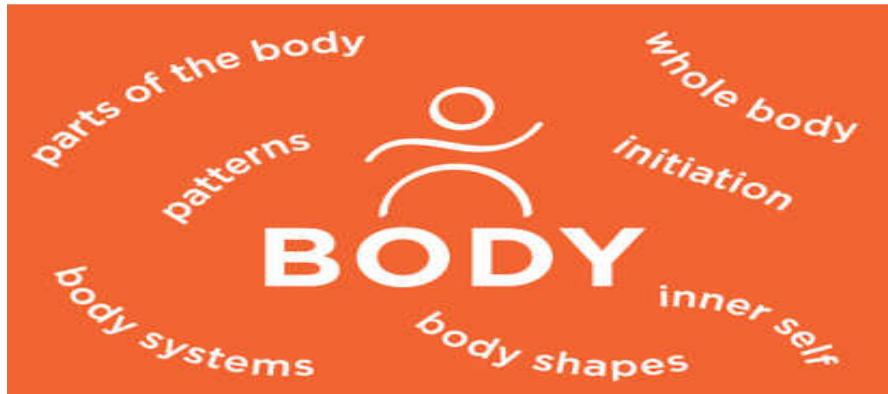
By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Use the Body analysis tool to understand clear description of dance
- Use the Action analysis tool to understand clear description of dance
- Use the Space analysis tool to understand clear description of dance
- Use the Time analysis tool to understand clear description of dance

- Use the Energy analysis tool to understand clear description of dance

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Body



In dance, the body is the mobile figure or shape, felt by the dancer, seen by others. The body is sometimes relatively still and sometimes changing as the dancer moves in place or travels through the dance area. Dancers may emphasize specific parts of their body in a dance phrase or use their whole body all at once. When we look at a dancer's whole body we might consider the overall shape design; is it symmetrical? twisted? What part of the body initiates movement? Another way to describe the body in dance is to consider the body systems—muscles, bones, organs, breath, balance, reflexes. We could describe how the skeletal system or breath is used, for example? The body is the conduit between the inner realm of intentions, ideas, emotions and identity and the outer realm of expression and communication. Whether we are watching dance or dancing ourselves, we shift back and forth between the inner/outer senses of body.

Please click on the link below to watch this video after you provide answers to the

SAQ1:https://www.elementsofdance.org/uploads/1/2/6/3/12634389/ken_na_guinea_-_computer_734.mp4

3.2 Action



Action is any human movement included in the act of dancing— it can include dance steps, facial movements, partner lifts, gestures, and even everyday movements such as walking. Dance is made up of streams of movement and pauses, so action refers not only to steps and sequences, but also to pauses and moments of relative stillness. Dancers may use movements that have been choreographed or traditional dances taught by others who know the dances. Depending on the dance style or the choreographer's decision, dancers may also revise or embellish movement they have learned from others. Movement can also be improvised, meaning that the dancers make it up "on the spot" as they spontaneously dance. Movement that travels through space is broadly called locomotor movement in contrast to axial movement, which occurs in one spot. Understanding and discussing action does not require extensive dance terminology since movement can be categorized and described according to its qualities. For example, while a “sashay” in American Square Dance might be called a “chassé” in Ballet or an “undercurve” in Modern Dance technique, we can also describe it as a “slide” since that essential characteristic is present in all those steps.

Please click on the link below to watch this video after you answer the questions attached to SAE2:

https://www.elementsofdance.org/uploads/1/2/6/3/12634389/chvala_big_-_computer_379.mp4

3.3 Space



Dancers interact with space in myriad ways. They may stay in one place or they may travel from one place to another. They may alter the direction, level, size, and pathways of their movements. The relationships of the dancers to each other may be based on geometric designs or rapidly change as they move close together, then apart. Even when a dancer is dancing alone in a solo, the dancer is dynamically involved in the space of the performing area so that space might almost be considered a partner in the dance. Dancers may focus their movement and attention outwardly to the space or inwardly into themselves. The line of travel may be quite direct towards one or more points in space or indefinite and meandering.

Dancers may also orient their movement towards objects or in relation to natural settings. Sometimes dances are created for specific locations such as an elevator or on a raft in a lake for site-based performances. Spatial relationships between dancers or between dancers and objects are the basis for design concepts such as beside, in front of, over, through, around, near or far.

3.4 Time



The keyword for the element of time is *when?* Human movement is naturally rhythmic in the broad sense that we alternate activity and rest. Breath and waves are examples of rhythms in nature that repeat, but not as consistently as in a metered rhythm. Spoken word and conversation also have rhythm and dynamics, but these timing patterns are characteristically more inconsistent and unpredictable. Rhythmic patterns may be metered or free rhythm. Much of Western music uses repeating patterns (2/4 or 3/4 for example), but concepts of time and meter are used very differently throughout the world. Dance movements may also show different timing relationships such as simultaneous or sequential timing, brief to long duration, fast to slow speed, or accents in predictable or unpredictable intervals.

Time may also be organized in other ways including:

- **Clock time:** The dance is based on units of seconds, minutes, and/or hours. For example, a certain section of a dance may be assigned a time such as 30 seconds into which all the choreographed movement must fit. A performance in a public setting may be set up to repeat continuously between 12:00 noon and 1:00 pm.
- **Sensed time:** Dancers pick up on each other's timing such as gradually increasing from a walking tempo to a running tempo by cueing off each other rather than a music score. Another example happens when dancers hold a group shape then spontaneously move out of it based on the group's organic impulse.
- **Event-sequence:** An internal or external event signals a change such as repeating a travelling phrase over and over until everyone arrives at a corner of the stage. You also see this at sports events when a touchdown triggers a dance cheer.

Dancers may take sight cues from each other to start the next phrase or listen for music cues. They may even take cues from an event such as a train whistle during an outdoor dance performance. The inherent rhythms in our movement and our aural landscape are a rich source of variation in dance.

Please click on the link below to watch this video after you answer the question attached to SAE4:

https://www.elementsofdance.org/uploads/1/2/6/3/12634389/fricke_shape_of_wind_264_656x480_426.mp4

3.5 Energy



Energy is about *how* the movement happens. Choices about energy include variations in movement flow and the use of force, tension, and weight. An arm gesture might be free flowing or easily stopped, and it may be powerful or gentle, tight or loose, heavy or light. A dancer may step into an arabesque position with a sharp, percussive attack or with light, flowing ease. Energy may change in an instant, and several types of energy may be concurrently in play. Saying that a dance "has a lot of energy" is misleading. ALL dances use the element of energy, though in some instances it may be slow, supple, indirect energy - not the punchy, high speed energy of a fast tempo dance. Energy choices may also reveal emotional states. For example, a powerful push might be aggressive or playfully boisterous depending on the intent and situation. Some types of energy can be easily expressed in words, others spring from the movement itself and are difficult to label with language. Sometimes differences in the use of energy are easy to perceive; other times these differences can be quite subtle and ambiguous. Perhaps more

so than the other elements, energy taps into the nonverbal yet deeply communicative realm of dance.

Please click on the link below to watch this video after you answer the question attached to SAE5:

https://www.elementsofdance.org/uploads/1/2/6/3/12634389/kshoy_exc_erpt_-_computer_466.mp4

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

- (i) Another way to describe the body in dance is to examine the _____
- (a) Frame
 - (b) Skeleton
 - (c) Organs
 - (d) System
- (ii) How can dance action be improvised?
- (a) From others
 - (b) On the spot
 - (c) Reading
 - (d) Watching dance videos
- (iii) Which is an exception when giving consideration to space utilization?
- (a) Relationship
 - (b) Pathway
 - (c) Sound
 - (d) Direction
- (iv). What is the key word in the element of time in dance?
- (a) Why
 - (b) Where
 - (c) How
 - (d) When
- (v). Which class of dance does not require the use of energy?
- (a) Classical
 - (b) Traditional
 - (c) None
 - (d) Religious

Answers

- (i) d
- (ii) b
- (iii) c

- (iv) d
- (v) c

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have carefully discussed the five elements of dance (BASTE), you must have gained a grasp of what each element contains using the pictorial illustration to summarize them. The attached video links provided an opportunity for thorough understanding to enable you note points of emphasis required for notations.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have the five elements of dance that are applicable to any dance situation known to man. They are Body, Action, Space, Time and Energy. The Self-Assessment Exercises have been provided to enable you get the basic concepts in each of the element. The references provided with attached online links will expose you to some practical assignment and other related videos that will assist you in internalizing the elements for future application.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

- (i)

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 IMPORTANCE OF DANCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dance is more than the exploring of different ways to make a shape or learning a series of steps of music; it is a way of moving that uses the body as an instrument of expression and communication. Through dance, students learn team work, focus and learn improvisational skills. Dance awakens new perceptions in learners which help them learn and think in new ways.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- list at least five popular contemporary dance styles
- mention at least six health benefits of dancing regularly
- explain the importance of dancing across age brackets

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

Children need to express and communicate their idea and to be given the opportunity to make creative decisions, even at a young age. This decision making promotes self-esteem and independent thinking for children. Learning the movement of others helps expand the child's movement vocabulary while creating one's own movement and put the child in a teaching role and give him/her the chance for him/her voice to be heard. Giving the students the freedom of making choices within a structure encourages them to reach beyond what comes easy to them and use their imagination, thus allowing them to test their own personal boundaries.

Dance also enables students to better understand themselves and the world in which they live. Arts teachers often teach children to recognize the contribution of all cultures to the fabric of our society and increase the understanding of diversity and values of all people. Dance lends itself well to this task through traditional dances and creating new ones

based on children's ideas. Dance also enhances skills of perception, observation and concentration which will undoubtedly help students in all of their school subjects.

Dance has been a part of human culture since the very earliest communities and civilizations. Since then, dance have changed, emerged and evolve into what is called contemporary dance. There are many styles of dance to choose from, each with its own attractions. Popular styles of dance include:

- Ballet – mostly performed to classical music, this dance style focuses on strength, technique and flexibility
- Ballroom dance – this involves a number of partner-dancing styles such as the waltz, swing, foxtrot, rumba and tango.
- Belly dance – originating in the Middle East, this dance style is a fun way to exercise.
- Hip-hop – performed mostly to hip-hop music, this urban dance style can involve breaking, popping, locking and free-styling.
- Jazz – a high-energy dance style involving kicks, leaps and turns to the beat of the music.
- Pole dance – has become increasingly popular as a form of exercise. It involves sensual dancing with a vertical pole, and requires muscle endurance, coordination, and upper- and lower-body strength.
- Salsa – involving a mixture of Caribbean, Latin American and African influences; salsa is usually a partner dance and emphasizes rhythms and sensuality.
- Square-dance – a type of folk dancing where four couples dance in a square pattern, moving around each other and changing partners.
- Tap dance – focuses on timing and beats. The name originates from the tapping sounds made when the small metal plates on the dancer's shoes touch the ground.

There are so many reasons why dance is important to the health and development of our young people. Above all, children need to move! Any way to get kids moving on their feet is a must (especially in a digital era). Dance burns calories, strengthens muscles, improves balance, increases flexibility, and gives the heart a good workout. Dance has also been proven to increase cognitive development. Current research documents the importance of exercise on the brain and supports what dancers have always known – the body and mind are connected in vital ways.

Utilizing dance in academics also helps children develop skills that are necessary for learning such as creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration. Through the creative process, students are encouraged to use their imagination, collaborate with their peers to solve problems and discover multiple solutions to challenges.

There are many forms of dance, from ballroom to barn dancing and disco to morris dancing. Dance has always been a part of human culture, rituals and celebrations. Today, most dancing is about recreation and self-expression, although it can also be done as a competitive activity. Dancing is an enjoyable way to be more physically active and stay fit. Dancing can be a way to stay fit for people of all ages, shapes and sizes. It has a wide range of physical and mental benefits including:

- improved condition of your heart and lungs
- increased muscular strength, endurance and motor fitness
- increased aerobic fitness
- improved muscle tone and strength
- weight management
- stronger bones and reduced risk of osteoporosis
- better coordination, agility and flexibility
- improved balance and spatial awareness
- increased physical confidence
- improved mental functioning
- improved general and psychological wellbeing
- greater self-confidence and self-esteem
- better social skill

Dancing provides many great benefits and, while it is not possible to list them all, some of the greater benefits are listed below:

1. Dancing allows one to express oneself: Dancing allows people to express how they feel at a given moment. Anyone observing a mother swaying around her house with her baby tucked safely in her arms knows she is experiencing a moment of intense love for her baby while exercising a tender embrace while caught up in the dance. When a couple is dancing to a slow song and they look into each other's eyes and smile, it is not difficult to realize they feel strong emotions for each other, regardless of whether it is love or lust. On another note, dance is an expression of art, in that it appeals to the emotions. For example, a girl who pirouettes across a stage while performing ballet appears graceful and elegant to many people, thus emotionally appealing. A woman who dances slowly in the arms of a man she loves seems enchanted, which brings happiness and, for some people, tears of joy.

Break-dancing involves fluidity of movement which cheers the crowd. Synchronized background dancers performing the same moves at the same time create excitement and enthusiasm which liven up a crowd, especially if accompanied by upbeat music. However, an important point to remember is that just because many people enjoy the dances they witness, that doesn't mean everyone is affected the same way. People interpret things differently and, as a result, their emotional responses will differ. As an example, let's re-visit the little ballet dancer mentioned above. While most of the audience may be enthralled with her graceful performance, for a mother looking on who has lost her daughter, there may be a feeling of sorrow mingled with the joy and awe of the moment.

2. A sense of community is found within the dance: People come together through dance. It provides entertainment for people of all ages, races, and backgrounds. They enjoy time spent together in a positive, upbeat environment. They are energized and inspired by other dancers in their midst. The more adventurous dancers may try to emulate the moves of others, which provides another sense of entertainment and draws people together.
3. Dancing provides physical/mental refreshment and relaxation: Dancing helps bodies and minds relax as the music and surroundings take people away from their anxiety and frustration for a while. Mentally, they unwind and have fun, sharing a laugh or two. As their minds relax, their bodies follow. Their muscles loosen up and tension and stress melt away.
4. Laughter and fun—dancing can provide a lot of entertainment: A baby who giggles as his parents take turns dancing him around the house provides a source of entertainment while bringing a sense of joy and peace to the home. On another note, when people are laughing and trying to keep up with the moves involved in line-dancing, they are being entertained. If they are new at line-dancing, they may be providing entertainment for others. Their willingness to get on the floor and join in with the others, regardless of whether they embarrass themselves, says a lot. They have lots of energy, spunk and determination, and they are willing to prove it on the dance floor.
5. Dancing is a form of exercise: Dancing is a great form of aerobic exercise since it works many muscles in the body. Muscles become stretched, conditioned and toned while the heart rate increases, pumping blood at a faster rate. As bodies feel the benefit of a workout during the cool-down period, it is a good practice to have a few moments to rest after dancing, especially if it was a fast dance. Between dances, stretch out leg and arm muscles or, at the very least, sit in a chair and totally relax while rolling the neck slowly around, and then in a slow back and forth motion to release tension which may have built up in the back of

the neck. A great benefit of exercise is that afterward, there is often an improvement in a person's disposition, so it is a win-win situation all the way around.

6. Dancers find inspiration and motivation as they become lost in the dance.
7. Dancing allows professional dancers to form affiliations: Professional dancers form affiliations. Some of these people will be seen on stage as background dancers while a singer or group is performing. Sometimes singers themselves dance as part of their performances. Sometimes a dancer may only be known in a limited number of circles until someone in an audience pays close attention. Overnight, or so it seems sometimes, a dancer goes from an "unknown" to a "star." Dancing can't help but enhance a performance, and the audience cannot help but pay attention.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Sufficient evidence abounds in literature that supports the numerous benefits and importance of dance to everyday living. This evidence provides richness and diversity of options and opportunities and the appropriateness to many cultural situations. Giving the magnitude of options that dance offers it is suitable to all who find dance occupying a prominent role in their wellbeing.

6.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the importance and benefit of dance, so you are motivated to take it more seriously with regular practice required for familiarity with beats and strokes for notations. You are encouraged to increase your understanding of the content of this unit by looking through the links and texts attached to the unit. Your level of understanding of this unit is indicated by how much you have performed in the in the Self-Assessment Exercises.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

(i)

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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MODULE 3**INTRODUCTION TO MODULE 3**

African dance forms are many with complex dance steps which make writing dance notes very difficult. In this module, we shall review some dance forms and major characteristics common to most African dances with a unit dedicated to Nigerian dances.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bg100x2SQiM>

UNIT 1 AFRICAN DANCE FORMS AND CHARACTERISTICS**CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Types of Dance
 - 3.2 Types of African Dance
 - 3.3 Characteristics of African Dance
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The oldest and most indigenous form of African dance is Traditional dance. There is an inseparable relationship between the dance and the music. The music to these dances is rooted in drum languages, which are replicas of the spoken languages of the people. Therefore, the category of Traditional African dance has as many different “Tradition” as the spoken languages of the people. These dances are based on activities that the people choose to remember wherein they create and set the movement to their music. A happening or event must occur before a dance can be created.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpJ_S2VCk4w

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the different forms of dances in Africa

- describe the common characteristics of African dances

- identify meaning of dance using pictorial illustration

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Types of Dance

Neo-Traditional Dance: This form of dance includes all dances that make use of elements of Traditional dance, but not necessarily in the same context as they are found in the traditional culture. Traditional dances are performed outside the context of social ceremonies. Some examples are folk operas, auditorium performances, class and other forms of entertainment. Therefore, when you see the National Ballet of Senegal or Guinea on stage, those dances are essentially Neo-traditional dances as they have been altered to fit the proscenium stage. The dances have already been taken out of their context of the traditional setting. Since they are based on a happening that the people choose to remember, they are pieces of history re-enacted through movement, communicated by the musicians and acted out by the dancers

Westernized Popular Dance: Dances in this category have combined movements of African dance with non-African dances, using instruments that are not African, or combining Western instruments in the ensemble. In this category, one loses the relationship between music and dance since the instruments can no longer instruct the dancer what movements to make. The melodic style is closer to that of Western music than African music. This category includes a number of African social dances such as Juju music, Highlife, and Senegalese Mbak. In these social orchestras there is a mixture of instruments such as Western guitars, keyboards, and horns.

Borrowed Western Dance: Music in this category includes Rap, Disco and Hip-Hop. The dances associated with these forms of music are borrowed from the Western world and imported into Africa.

Conservatory Dance: This category of dance includes ballet and modern music, which are European forms of movement that are imported into Africa.

In Africa, dance serves a complex diversity of purpose. Each performance normally reflects the communal values and social relationships of the people. Unlike all dance traditions of the world, the polycentric nature of African dances set it apart from all other dances. This implies that a dancer's body is not considered to be one single unit but instead, is divided into several segmented areas which are able to respond to the different rhythms within the music.

3.2 Types of African Dance

African dances reflect life; life's fleeting nature and its diversity. These dances are of different types and they reflect the ways of life of Africa.

Warrior Dances: Are a depiction of the men who fought in battles, so the dance involves warfare movements like “stabbing moves.”



Coming of Age Dances: This dance is an act of initiation into adulthood. It is seen as a means to boost confidence of the young men and women and also a means to welcome them into the new phase of life (Rite passage dance).



Welcome Dance: Are performed to greet and pay due respects to a visitor. It is also one of the ways to showcase the talent and potential of the tribe to the visitor (yabara dance).



Love Dance: Is a depiction of love and it is performed on occasions celebrating unison and love. Being celebratory in nature, the performances are preserved for wedding anniversaries and tribal rituals. It is called Nmane in Ghana.

Dance of Possession and Summoning: Are the most common and popular forms of African folk dance. Most of the indigenous tribes perform this dance for calling spirits. These spirits are worshiped by many tribes. Some tribes also perform this dance type during the time of war or a drought in the belief that this will bring them good fortune.

3.3 Characteristics of African Dance

African dance is also characterized by the clapping of hands and stamping of feet, maintaining a steady rhythm that is always accentuated by the singing voices of the tribe, all the while dancing. Most African dances use different gradations of energy to perform a movement, which often adds dynamic quality to the movement. Specifically, six qualities of African dance are: sustained, percussive, swinging, suspended, collapsed and vibratory.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWqt_OsTtPk

Another primary characteristic of African dance styles is the presence of drumming, rhythmic pattern expressed in foot patterns.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. A type of dance that depicts how men fought in battle is
 - (a) Conservatory dance
 - (b) Welcome dance
 - (c) Coming of age dance
 - (d) Warrior dance

2. A typical example of a welcome dance is
 - (a) Yabara dance
 - (b) Rite passage dance
 - (c) Nmane dance
 - (d) None of the above

3. Which category of dance is the ballet and modern dances included?
 - (a) Borrowed western dance
 - (b) European dance
 - (c) Conservatory dance
 - (d) African dance

4. Which of the following is the oldest form of African dance?
 - (a) National ballet of Senegal
 - (b) Guinea ballet
 - (c) Senegalese Mbak
 - (d) Traditional dance

Answers

1. d
2. a
3. c
4. d

4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has provided you information and learning on African Dance forms and their characteristics with video support. The Self-Assessment Exercises provided you with opportunities of testing your understanding of the materials in this unit. Texts attached and online links are meant to help you with needed information beside that which the unit material has given you.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have been introduced to African dance form that will prepare the background for writing notes in African dances. Further, knowing the meaning attached to the dance form will assist you in selecting symbols that will make your notes development much easier. Endeavour to go through all the texts and online links that have been provided you in this unit

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 TRADITIONAL DANCES IN NIGERIA AND MEANING

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a country with a lot of tribes – each of them varying in culture and tradition. The way the Igbo dance is far different from the way Hausa dance. Each tribe is unique in tradition and ways of life. There are various aspects of cultural differences, most of them symbolically representing the same things but done in completely different contexts. This unit will highlight some dance forms in Nigeria with the hope of understanding their significance with notes and beats in mind.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- state five types of dance in Nigeria
- identify the sources of dance
- use pictures to trace dance origin

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

One major aspect of culture which Nigerians love a lot is dance. Nigerian cultural dances have a way of unifying the people in one way or another and sometimes telling stories via accompanying music. These stories may differ from tribe to tribe and most often reflect on victory, beauty, honesty, love, war and the like. Let us take a journey to a few tribes in Nigeria where we picked out a few popular cultural dances and a little history about these dances.

The Ukwata Dance: The Ukwata dance is one of the dances of the Abbi people of Delta State. It is performed during the Ukwata Festival. It comes with religious aspects that include dances and rituals to worship the gods. Throughout the festival, women make bonfires to keep evil

spirits at bay. Toward the end of the festival, the Egwu, Igba and Ukele dancers dress in marine colours and wear costumes representing aquatic creatures like crocodiles, alligators, fish and iguanas. The dance patterns they form represent the origin of these aquatic creatures while suggesting the dance of mermaids.

Image: HowNG



The Adamma Masquerade Dance: This dance has a major character — the Adamma masquerade, who is dressed in female attire but wiggles her body like that of a man. While the masquerade itself is feminine, most of the dancers are males. It is also noted that while the majority of the masquerades in Igbo land represent spirits, Adamma is believed to have none as the maiden spirit has no spiritual value like most masquerades.



Image: Nnewi Info

The Ekombi Dance: Ekombi is a traditional dance amongst the Efik people of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. The movements of the

dance are derived from the motions of the ocean. It is a graceful dance with incredible footwork, it is a dance of peace and happiness. Ekombi shows a woman's beauty and femininity.



Image: Global Peace Production

The Bata Dance: The Bata dance is prominent in the western region of Nigeria, home to the Yoruba tribe. It is associated with Sango, God of Thunder, who is believed to be athletic and overtly acrobatic. The dance emerged out of the need to soothe a king with a fiery and tempestuous nature. The dance is not fully achieved without the music from the bata drums, *ilu bata*.



Image: Jeremy Varner

The Koroso Dance: The dance, which from inception hinged on a particular pattern of steps and body movement, has evolved over time. The dance is a combination of movement from various traditional dances of the Fulani and Hausa people of Kano State, with the name derived from the rattle tied around the dancers' legs.



Image: Kannywood

The NkwaUmu-Agbogho Dance: This is also known as the “Maiden dance,” and is synonymous with young maidens of marriageable age. It also helps the younger girls to keep their minds occupied and to abstain from sexual activities before marriage. The dance is a sight to behold and involves rhythmic movement from the chest and waist. It is also a seductive dance as they flirtatiously flaunt their bodies in seductive manners to attract suitors.



Image: Imo Online

Ohogho Dance: The Ohogho dance comes from the Benin culture and belongs to certain strong and healthy age groups. It is a religious dance that has its dancers wearing the waist gown – *ebuluku* and dance in circles with gongs or bells in their hands and a bowl with burning medicinal leaves. It wards off evil and forms a part of major religious ceremonies.



Image: Nigeria Bulletin

Gese Dance: Gese is a religious dance that originated from the Yoruba land of western Nigeria and gets its name from a type of drum. Its famous sources come specifically from the towns of Okeigbo and Ifetedo in the southwest region of Nigeria. It is grounded in complex drum rhythms that only trained dancers can expertly perform in a way that truly represents the religious customs of the people. The movements represent a holistic view of life that is enshrined in the people's religious practices. Gese dancing is also used to praise various Yoruba gods; each deity has its own drum beat that dancers move to as they honour their god.



Image: Wikipedia

The Ikipirikpi-ogu (War Dance):

This dance is synonymous with warriors and is usually performed to welcome soldiers back from tribal wars. In those days in Igbo land, as akin to other traditional settings and societies, communities usually engage in wars and conflicts with other neighbouring communities. Thus, to welcome the warriors who went to defend the community, this dance is enacted — as a sign of solidarity, and to give the warriors a sense of belonging and fulfilment after carrying out the duty of defending the community. Today, it is purely symbolically done to show the prowess and valour of a community and its triumph over collective challenges.



Image: Umu Igbo Alliance

The Swange Dance: The Swange is a form of urban recreational dance among the Tiv of Benue State, Nigeria, in which men and women dance together. This dance uses the circle formation familiar in village dances and adapts traditional musical themes to highlife rhythms played on a combination of Tiv and Hausa instruments. The climax of the evening is provided by a solo dancer who improvises freely, using movements from many styles.



Image:

Scan

News

Nigeria

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. The movements of the Ekombi dance is derived from
 - (a) A woman's beauty and femininity
 - (b) Motions of the sea
 - (c) Motions of the wind
 - (d) Cross River State, Nigeria

2. The Bata dance is synonymous with the
 - (a) Igbo
 - (b) Hausa
 - (c) Efik
 - (d) Yoruba

3. Which of these dances is referred to as a war dance?
 - (a) The Ikpirikpi-ogu dance
 - (b) The Swange dance
 - (c) The Gese dance
 - (d) The Ohogho dance

4. The Ukwata dance is used by the Hausa during festivals

(a) True

(b) False

(c) None of the above

(d) All of the above

Answers

1. b
2. d
3. a
4. b

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, you have been given information on some Nigerian dances. The unit also provided you with brief notes on significance of such dances to the people, the tutor-marked assignment questions were meant to arouse your interest and guide your reading of the unit. The attached references should help you with relevant additional information as needed in this unit.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have read and learnt about some Nigerian dances across the tribes; the list is not exhaustive. It is important for you to get yourself familiarize with the steps and beats of the dances to enable you learn how to make notations from them. The texts and online links attached to this unit when consulted with attention, should further your understanding.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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<https://www.legit.ng/1187993-traditional-dances-nigeria-meaning.html>

<https://lists.ng/top-13-nigerian-dances-of-all-time/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14xU_R1Invw

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyPKaf8ncxM>

MODULE 4 HOW TO READ DANCE

INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of this course is the ability to read and write dance notation both for contemporary and African dances. The previous modules were designed to get you acquainted with different dance forms to make careful interpretation of dance moves for notation easier. In this module, we shall be paying specific attention to dance reading, writing, recording and pre-viewing.

UNIT 1 HOW TO READ DANCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Dance Is a Body Movement
 - 3.2 Dance Score
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Dance reading is one of the most technical aspects of this course that requires careful attention and to read in-between-the lines and noting the key words used. Before you proceed further please watch this video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzCzGMBv-7Y&t=167s>

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- prepare a simple dance measure
- identify the features of dance script
- practise reading dance score

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Dance Is a Body Movement

Dance is the movement of the body in a rhythmic way, usually to music and within a given space, for the purpose of expressing an idea or emotion, releasing energy, or simply taking delight in the movement itself.

The Leban notation staff is read from bottom to top. The space below the double bar lines at the top indicates the end of the movement. In the first measure, the forward high symbol is the length of two beats; it therefore takes two beats to perform.

In dance, a measure is one of the several short parts of the same length into which a piece of music is divided. A measure is usually “musically paired” with a second measure. These two measures equal a total of 8 counts, which is why dancers count in set of 8. 8 counts keep track of the beat and tempo, but break up the song into manageable sections. One set of 8 is like a sentence. After every 8 count, another 8 count begins, then another, and another. Dancers can find the beginning of an 8 count by identifying the [downbeat](#), (the strongest accent of the measure).

A dance script will have the following features:

- Identification of the main theme and stanza wise themes.
- Identifying the manifestation of the theme as instances/events taken from real life
- Identifying the characteristics involved in the events and their actions
- Creating and settings through the actions of the chorus
- Sequencing the actions
- Maintaining proper layout of the scripts
- Using appropriate expressions for capturing the actions and movements of the characters and the chorus.

3.2 Dance Score

The utility of a dance score is not only to preserve choreographies in a way that someone else can dance them later. However, if you are using a score with this purpose, the answer is yes. Dancers are expected to learn it by heart. This fact makes a lot of people think that writing dance is not very practical, because videos would do the work faster.

The main function and richness of writing dance scores lies in the practice of analyzing the movement. This activity creates a whole new

imaginary space in the dancer or choreographer's mind. In this sense, producing scores is more like the way of expanding your creative tools and options and there is no mechanism that replaces its possibilities.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. The Leban notation staff is read from
 - (a) Left to right
 - (b) Bottom to top
 - (c) Top to bottom
 - (d) Right to left

2. The space below the double bar lines at the top of the Leban notation indicates;
 - (a) The end of the movement
 - (b) The beginning of the movement
 - (c) A break in movement
 - (d) None of the above

3. In dance, measures are musically paired to equal a total of
 - (a) 5 counts
 - (b) 6 counts
 - (c) 7 counts
 - (d) 8 counts

4. The following are features of a dance except
 - (a) No main theme and stanza wise themes
 - (b) Sequencing the actions
 - (c) Maintaining proper layout of the scripts
 - (d) Creating and settings through the actions of the chorus

Answers

1. b
2. a
3. d
4. a

4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has given you information on technical aspects of dance reading. The information obtained from the unit is meant to enrich your knowledge and understanding of measurement, script writing and scoring. The self-assessment exercises should re-enforce your knowledge of dance reading. To make your practice more enjoyable, find the drum or bass instrument in the music if there is one. It helps create a pulse that repeats throughout the song. Think of it like a heartbeat and try clapping at the same time as the steady beat. Listen for the downbeat. Begin counting at 1 on the downbeat. Listen to a wide variety of music when practising your count.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit which you are completing focused on dance reading which is similar to music reading. The online links provided in this unit are meant to support your learning, and broaden your sources of knowledge in dance writing. You are encouraged to make reference to these online links with good attention.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

Bobzin, L. (2018). Counting in dance classes. Niles, IL: Viking gymnastics & Dance. <https://www.vikinggymnastics.com/5678-counting-dance-class/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beat \(music\) - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beat_(music) - Wikipedia)

UNIT 2 WRITING DANCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Dance is a Form of Human Communication
 - 3.2 Writing about Dance
 - 3.3 Dance Performance Review
 - 3.4 How to Write a Dance Performance Review
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Until recently, the materials for appreciating dance have not been available in an easily accessible form. The proliferation of films and video-tapes devoted to dance, not to mention televised performances, makes a difference here. In this unit, we are going to focus on how to preserve dance through writing and also do performance review for others. Please click to watch this video on how to write dance https://youtu.be/IPBDKPYN_TM

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOME(S)

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- list and describe elements that are common to arts and dance
- identify and explain dancing formal qualities
- explain six steps in dance writing
- evaluate dance performance review

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Dance is a Form of Human Communication

Many people think of dance as human communication at its most basic level. Some form of dance can be found in every culture, regardless of its location or stage of development. It is easy to see that dance is a natural, universal human activity. How is dance unique?

- For one thing, dance focuses on the human form, i.e. human bodies moving through time and space, shaping space as it were, reminding us of kinetic sculpture
- Also, abstract dance especially calls attention to visual patterns, reminding us of abstract painting.
- We also notice that dance calls attention to narrative, reminding us of drama.
- By the same token, we notice that dance is intensely rhythmic, unfolding in time, reminding us of music.

Basic Movements: Modern dance utilizes four basic movements or activities: bend, stretch, twist and rotate. To add weight, dancers accentuate movements in terms of space and time. To add color and texture, dancers accentuate movements in terms of ebb and flow. Via these movements, then, dances suggest mind, feelings (emotion), and body.

Subject Matter: Dance is an art of time and space. It utilizes many of the elements that can be found in other arts. Examples are:

1. Dance takes as its subject matter **abstract motion**, i.e. shapes and patterns.
2. Also, dance takes as a pervasive subject matter, **feelings**: The body exhibits feelings less abstractedly than music, i.e. the feelings are "embodied." The choreographer- who creates the dance- interprets the feelings for us. In this way, we understand these feelings--and ourselves--with greater insight.
3. Dance also explores **states of mind**. Feelings, such as pleasure and pain, are relatively transient; however, states of mind, such as attitudes, tendencies that engender feelings, endure for a longer period of time.
4. **Narrative** provides a subject matter for many dances.
5. **Form**: Dance takes as its subject matter moving visual patterns, feelings, states of mind, and narrative, in various combinations.

To enjoy the dance, we have to develop a memory of those movements. We do this by noticing the repetitive movement and the variations on those movements. We notice how the dance builds tension--by withholding movements we think should be repeated. Thus, repetition or the lack of it, serves as an important "shaping" feature of the dance.

We can identify a number of formal qualities:

1. **Repetition**: The repetition of movements might be patterned on the repetition in the music. The musical structure of A-B-A is common. Often, the movements performed at the beginning are

developed, enlarged and modified in a later section, and then are repeated at the end, so as to help the viewer understand the full significance of the development.

2. **Balance:** Choreographers employ a number of techniques to give their dances balance. First, the dancers balance themselves across the space allotted to them. Second, they might give the dance centrality of focus, so that we see an overall shape. Third, the most important dancers take up centre stage. Thus, we detect balance in terms of the relationship between the main dancers and the subordinate dancers, and between individual dancers and the group.

Appreciating dance involves developing an eye for the ways these movements combine to create individual works. Modern dance develops a slightly different vocabulary.

3.2 Writing about Dance

In writing about dance, we share our insight into the artfulness of a work; our task is to identify the artistic qualities which make up the work in question. This means helping readers perceive the form of the work, and thereby appreciate its content. Much more is required than such expressions of personal taste as: "I don't know anything about dance, but I liked it" or "I didn't like it."

Of course, **the ephemerality of dance** makes reviewing three-dimensional moving images exceptionally difficult.

1. A rather good place to start is to consider the **title**, as a device for directing or mis-directing the attention of the audience. For example, Kurt Jooss' *The Green Table* features a Dance of Death in eight scenes (first performed in 1932): the movement of the figures (dressed in formal attire: top hat and tails) around a very long board-room table covered with regulation green cloth represents the endless and futile conferences of European politicians during the inter-war years, i.e. mobilization, combat, war profiteering, movement of refugees, and so on. All the time, Death is featured in the background dancing out the rhythm of the ballet.

We should not forget that a dance comes across all at once; that is, it is fully comprehensible, no matter what we as observers bring to it in terms of concepts, interests, and so on.

2. **Programme notes**, which may or may not outline the origins of the work, the choreographer's intentions, methods of presentation etc.

A case might be made for the following argument: dance poses an even greater challenge, i.e. dance too exists in three-dimensional space: moving shapes and transient patterns unfold from one moment to the next.

Again: the basic material out of which dancers shape their works is **movement**, i.e. in terms of bending, stretching, twisting and rotating movement, to express their minds, emotions, and bodies. Individual movements vary in quality, according to the space in which they are executed, the time taken to execute them, and the weight given them.

In other words, movements acquire **colour** and **texture** according to whether they ebb or flow, whether they are bound or unbound. Such patterning as the straight line/chorus line say or the circle shape movement in unique ways, i.e. giving it solidarity or wholeness as opposed to the sense of fragmentation no patterning at all might convey.

5. It goes without saying that different **dancers** bring different qualities to their performances such as flexibility and fluidity.
6. The piece as a **composition**: this means "getting inside" the dance.

3.3 Dance Performance Review

Dance performance review is a kind of written critique that is aimed at evaluating the techniques, atmosphere and aesthetics of concert dance. Dance performance is usually supported by a set of music and can be a part of theatrical performance review which should analyze body, plasticity, movement, music, space and time.

3.4 How to Write a Dance Performance Review

- In the introduction, give a general description of the dance performance.
- In a few sentences, describe the atmosphere that created the performance and put emphasis on three characteristics that attracted the most attention.
- Evaluate the costume design, light decorations and musical accomplishment.
- In the next paragraph, try to interpret the dance, describe the elements of the dance and how it contributed to the overall performance.
- Evaluate the input of the dancers in the performance.
- Describe how dancers interacted with music and each other.
- Share your own vision of the dance performance.
- Focus on the most impressive movements.

- Describe strengths and weaknesses of the dancers' performance, organization, choreography, and all production elements.
- In the conclusion, sum up your impressions about the performance.
- Correct the mistakes and edit your final draft.
- Make sure that your position is not biased and all your statements are supported by the evidence.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. In writing a dance, we share our insight into the artfulness of a work
 - (a) True
 - (b) False
 - (c) None of the above
 - (d) All of the above
2. A good means/device for directing or misdirecting the attention of the audience is the
 - (a) Dance movement
 - (b) Pauses in-between movements
 - (c) Title of the dance
 - (d) None of the above
3. One of the following is not necessary for expressing personal taste in dance writing
 - (a) Sculptural features
 - (b) Technical aspects
 - (c) Program notes
 - (d) Choreographer
4. The basic focus of dance writing is
 - (a) Movement
 - (b) shapes
 - (c) Music
 - (d) Composition

Answers

1. a
2. c
3. d
4. a

4.0 CONCLUSION

Every writer who writes about dance faces some problems: what we cannot describe to ourselves tends to pass us by as part of the formless unknown: what we do not notice we cannot attend to. For us, to effectively write about dance, we must be interested and passionate about the details conveyed in this unit so that we can do an effective dance performance review.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have studied the basic elements that are common to arts and dancing. You have also been taught formal dancing qualities and hints on dance writing to facilitate dance review. Having read carefully through the unit and making consultations with the attached texts you should, by now, have a broad understanding of the details of dance writing. You may need to go over this unit again for clearer understanding.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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Coton, A.V. (1975). *Writings on Dance, 1938-69*. London: Dance Books.

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Redfern, B. (1975). "Developing Critical Audiences in Dance Education." In *Collected Conferences Papers on Dance*. Warwick: University of Warwick Arts Centre, ii, 59-76.

Taplin, D.T. (1979). "On Critics and Criticism of Dance." In *New Directions in Dance*, (ed.) D.T. Taplin. Toronto: Pergamon Press. 77-91.

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MODULE 5 AFRICAN DANCES

Unit 1 African Dance Notation

Unit 2 Count Beats in a Song

UNIT 1 AFRICAN DANCE NOTATION**CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 African Dances
 - 3.2 Sutton Dance Writing
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

African dances are as varied and changing as the communities that create them. Although many types of African dance incorporate spirited, vigorous movements, there are also others that are more reserved or stylized. African dances vary widely by region and ethnic community. In addition, there are numerous dances within each given community. At the same time, there is a great deal of similarity in the role dance plays in each African community. African communities traditionally use dance for a variety of social purposes. Dances play a role in religious rituals; they mark rites of passage, including initiations to adulthood and weddings; they form a part of communal ceremonies, including harvest celebrations, funerals, and coronations; and they offer entertainment and recreation in the forms of masquerades, acrobatic dances, and social club dances. Most traditional African dance can be divided into three major categories: ritual dances, ceremonial dances, and griotic dances (dances expressing local history). However, preserving these dances has remained an issue for concern for educators and researchers.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss why action stroke can be used to notate African dances
- explain the procedure of sutton dance writing
- explain the importance of dance short hand

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 African Dances

African dances are among the oldest dance traditions in existence; their structure is uniquely different because the movement therein is inseparable from the music that governs the movement. The music is associated with the spoken language of the people which makes it virtually impossible for outsiders to comprehend the music of different African countries. There is no dance that is not accompanied by some form of music, from the voice of orchestras to different percussive instruments. Lebanotation was not able to write the accompanying music of dance, because the music is inseparable from the dance.

Action Stroke Dance Notation (ASDN) is a dance notation system that was invented by Iver Cooper. Designed for fast writing, the notations primarily consist of "action strokes" that represent one of three basic actions:

- A support gesture that takes weight (e.g. hop or step)
- A touch gesture (makes contacts without taking weight)
- An air gesture (makes no contact)

A dance score has five sections:

- General - describing the general movement of the dancer
- Leg (or staff) - indicating movement of the legs and feet
- Arm (or staff) - indicating movement of the arms and hands
- Trunk - indicating movement of head, neck, chest and pelvis
- Notes - detailed explanations of the movement

Scores are read from bottom to top. The horizontal dimension represents body symmetry and the vertical dimension represents time. ASDN employs abstract symbols and is visually similar to Motif Description, a subset of Leban notation that is also designed for speed of writing.

3.2 Sutton Dance Writing

Dance Writing is a way to read and write any kind of dance movement. A stick figure drawing is written on a five-lined staff. Each line of the staff represents a specific level. The bottom line of the staff is called the Foot Line. It represents the ground. The next line up is the Knee Line, which is at knee level, when the stick figure stands straight. The next line up is the Hip Line, and after that, the Shoulder Line:

Levels: When the figure bends its knees or jumps in the air, it is lowered or raised accordingly on the staff. The five-lined staff acts as a level guide. Figures and symbols are written from left to right, notating movement position by position, as if stopping a film frame by frame.

3-D Symbols: When more detail is necessary, special 3-D Symbols, representing the third dimension, are written under the stick figures. There are two rows of 3-D Symbols. The round circles picture the head as seen from above, providing an "overhead view". The spokes projecting from the circles show the direction of the limbs in relation to the center of the body. The first row of small symbols represents the overhead view of the arms and upper body. The second row of large symbols represents the overhead view of the legs and lower body:

Music Counts: Counts coordinating with the written music are placed above the staff and the dance is divided into dance measures. Or the dance can be written directly under the musical notes:

Dance Writing Shorthand: Dance Writing Shorthand enables the writer to write movement at the speed it occurs. Similar to secretarial shorthand, it is a shortened version of the stick figure that, with special training, is written without looking at the hands. An entire solo dance can be captured in "first-draft" form using the Shorthand. The Shorthand notes are later transcribed into detailed Dance Writing. Once one is skilled in Dance Writing, it takes about 20 hours of special training to learn the Shorthand. In the late 1970s, hundreds of dance students in the Boston Conservatory of Music's Dance Department learned the Shorthand with success.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. Action Stroke Dance Notation (ASDN) was invented by
 - (a) Osborne H.
 - (b) Iver Cooper
 - (c) Coton A. V.

- (d) Lee Jacobs
2. ASDN scores are read from
- (a) Left to right
 - (b) Top to bottom
 - (c) Bottom to top
 - (d) None of the above
3. The vertical dimensions in ASDN represents
- (a) Symmetry
 - (b) Time
 - (c) All of the above
 - (d) None of the above
4. Lebanotation was not able to write the accompanying music of dance because
- (a) The music was separable from the dance
 - (b) The music was too slow
 - (c) The music was too fast
 - (d) The music was inseparable from the dance.

Answers

- 1. b
- 2. c
- 3. b
- 4. d

4.0 CONCLUSION Having read this course and successfully completed the Self-Assessment Exercises, it is assumed that you have attained a clear understanding of the basic information required to write script for any African dance.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt why it is important to document African dances on paper. Also, we have made mention of the three ways that can be easily achieved. The self-assessment exercises have been provided to enable you rate your understanding and the learning you have achieved reading this Unit. Online links have also been provided to broaden your understanding of the learning required in this unit.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

Green, D. (1985). African oral tradition literacy. *Journal of black studies*. 15(4): 405-425 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2784209>

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Warburton, E. C. (2000). The dance on paper: the effect of notations use on learning and development. *Journal of research in dance education*. 1(2): 193-213

https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/african_dance

UNIT 2 **COUNT BEATS IN A SONG**

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Whether you are a dancer, a musician, or just a music-lover, you should know that rhythm is an important foundation of any song, and you have probably heard the term, ‘beat.’ A beat is the basic unit of rhythm, the underlying steady pulse of the song, the part that makes you tap your feet. With a little practice and a basic knowledge of music theory, anyone can learn and count beats in a piece of music.

Please watch the video links posted on the reference section.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- mention the various methods of counting the beats
- explain the procedure involved in using music sheet
- describe the process of using time signature
- differentiate between time signature and using music sheet

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

Method A: Listening by Ear

Eliminate distractions. When trying to listen for a beat by ear, make sure you give the piece of music all your attention. Use headphones or move to a quiet environment with no noise interruptions.



Pay attention to the lower instruments, like the drums. If you are trying to listen for the basic beat of a song, tune out the top instruments like lead guitar or vocals. Try listening for the bass instruments, like the bass guitar or bass drum.

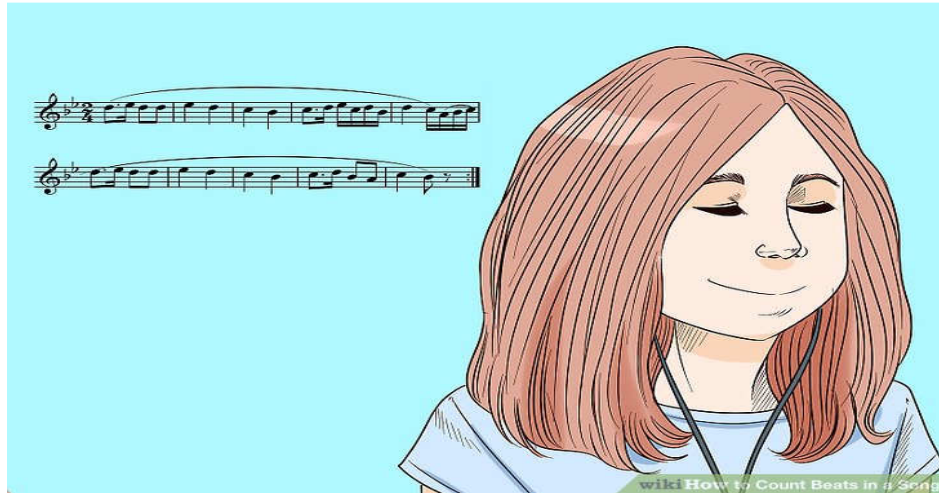
If you are listening to a digital recording, try turning up the bass so that you can hear it more easily. In a song, the bass line often carries the steady beat. Ignore the complex rhythm and melody. Try to pick out what feels like the heartbeat of the song.

Listening to the drum line is the best way to count the beats. In country and rock music, you can typically hear the bass drum on beats 1 and 3 and the snare on 2 and 4. In pop, funk and house music, the bass drum is generally played on all 4 beats, which is referred to as "four on the floor."



3 Listen to phrasing. A musical phrase is a segment of music that sounds complete in and of itself, often only a few measures long.^[3] Practice listening to natural phrasing in music.

Think of listening to a song as though you were listening to a conversation. Where would the breaths be? What sounds like a musical “sentence”? Try counting these smaller sections of the music to find where the downbeats fall.



4 Say it out loud. Again, use your words, or tap your feet along to the beat that you feel. If you are not on the beat, practising out loud will make it more obvious and easier to get back on track.



5. Start with songs you know well. Familiarity with a song will make it easier to find the underlying beat or pulse. Likely, you already have an underlying understanding of where the beats fall. In learning to find rhythm, repetition is key.



6. Move along with the music. You can walk, jog, or dance to the song. Your body will probably naturally land on the ground on the beat. Check out John Travolta in "Staying Alive" if you want to see an example:

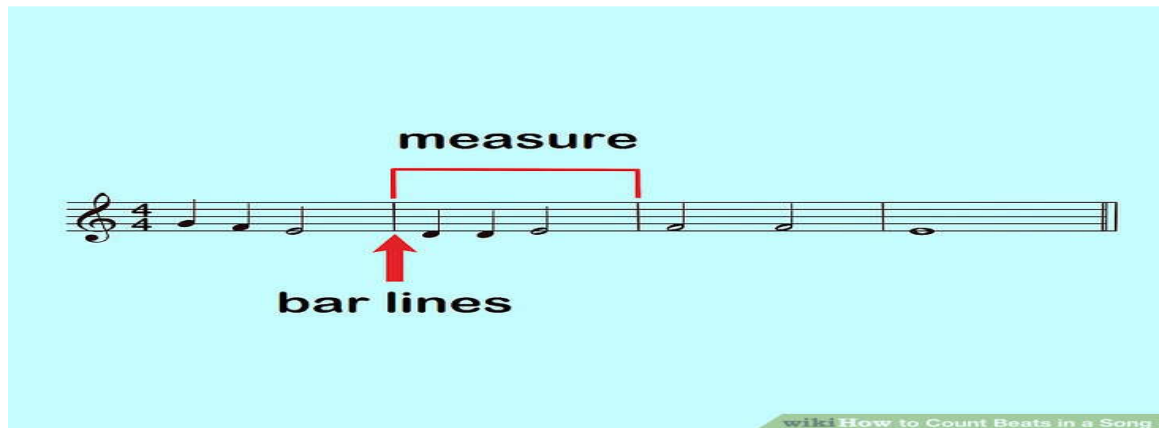
Method B: Using Sheet Music **1. Know your rhythms.** Before you can begin to count in music, you need to understand how long an individual notes or rests lasts. Notes are the periods of sound in a song, and rests represent the lengths of the silences in a piece of music.

A whole note lasts for 4 beats. A half note lasts for 2 beats. A quarter note lasts for 1 beat. An eighth note lasts for a half of a beat. A sixteenth note lasts for a quarter of a beat.

Rests follow the patterns of the notes. For example, a half rest is a silence that lasts for 2 beats.

A dot next to a rest or a note means that the note or rest is increased by half its value. For example, a dotted half note lasts for 3 beats.

2. Measure it. Make sure you understand that every piece of music is divided into parts called 'measures' or 'bars.' This will help you count beats. Every measure in a piece of music has an equal number of beats.



3. Determine the time signature. The time signature appears at the beginning of every piece of music as a fraction. It may change throughout a song, and if it changes, the new time signature will appear at the beginning of a bar.



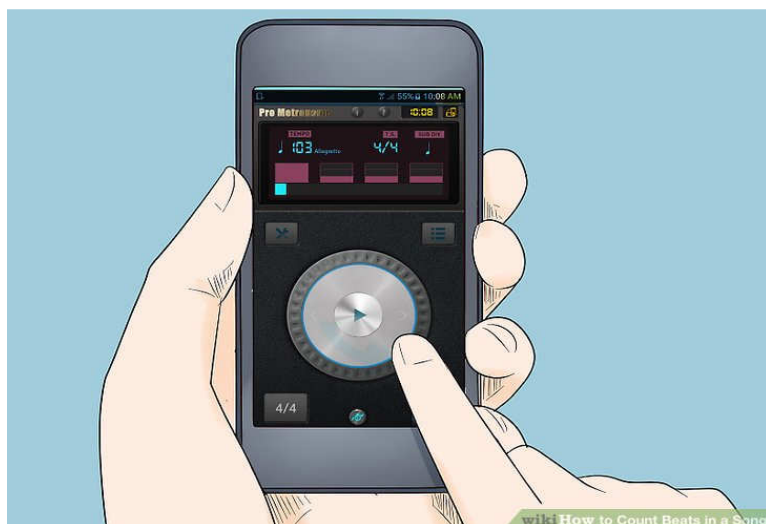
4. Use your words. As you read sheet music, articulating the beats in a song makes them easier to understand and keep track of. For eighth notes, use “and.” Say, “one-and-two-and-three-and-four.” For sixteenth notes, use “e” and “a.” Say, “one-e-and-a-two-e-and-a-three-e-and-a.”

In a song, the downbeat is the first articulated beat in a bar. For example, the “one.” Make sure you find and articulate this first.

The upbeat is the “and.” For example, if you are tapping your foot to a beat, the upbeat is the time when your toes are in the air.

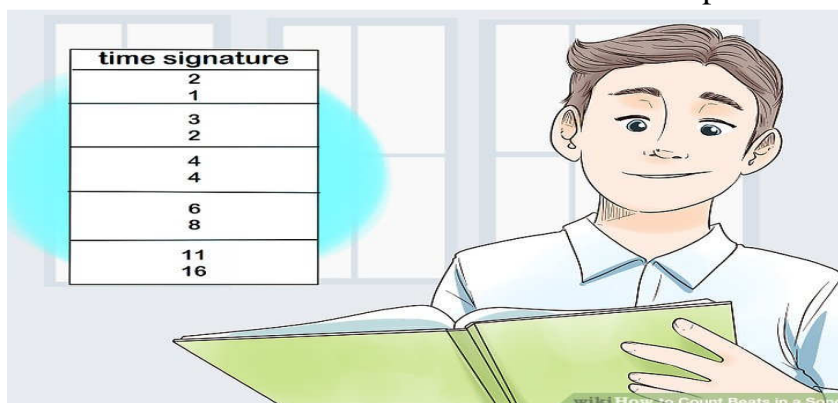


5. Use a metronome. If you know the time signature of a piece, a simple way to help keep a steady tempo while counting beats is to use a metronome. A metronome gives a regular ticking sound with a set rate of beats per minutes. Many free metronomes can be found online.



Method C: Determining Time Signature

1. Understand the importance of time signatures. To count the beats in a piece of music, you must understand the 2 components of rhythm: meter and tempo. Tempo is simply a description of how fast or slow a piece of music is. Meter is the regular pattern of beats in a song and how those beats are stressed. Time signatures look like fractions that describe the meter of a piece of music.



The top number tells you how many beats will be in each measure. The bottom number tells you what kind of note each beat is. For instance, if the bottom number is 1, that means whole notes and if the bottom number is 2, that means half notes. Similarly, 4 means quarter notes and 8 means eighth notes.

2. Practice counting simple time signatures first. Time signatures can represent simple time, compound time, or complex time. Counting simple time first will help you familiarize yourself with the process of figuring out and understanding the time signature.


Simple time can be duple, triple, or quadruple, which means the top number will always be 2, 3, or 4.

Unlike compound time, in simple time, you feel the beat in multiples of 2. This means that you can divide each note in each bar into 2. For example, in 2/4 time, the 2 quarter notes per bar can each be subdivided into 2 eighth notes. The natural accent falls in multiples of 2 or 3.

Tap your feet. When figuring out the time signature by listening to a song, pay attention to the beat of the bass line. Try to determine whether or not the pulse you hear can be naturally divided into 2. Listen to determine a repeating pattern of rhythm, and count how many notes occur between each repetition.

Remember common time signatures. A lot of Western music uses 4/4 time, so when in doubt, try counting in 4/4 and see if it fits. Familiarize yourself with other time signatures. For example, 3/4 has a waltz feel to it.

time signature
6, 9, 12



wikiHow to Count Beats in a Song

3. Count in compound time. Unlike simple time, compound time is felt in groups of three.^[10] For this reason, the dotted note often defines compound time. The top number of a compound time signature is always 6, 9, or 12.

In compound time, divide the top number by 3 to get the number of beats in a bar. The units of the beats are found in the bottom number. For example, in 6/8 time, there are 2 beats per measure, and each beat lasts 3 eighth notes, or a dotted quarter note.

The common children’s song “Row Your Boat” can be counted in 6/8 time, beginning with 2 dotted quarter notes in “row, row.” Try tapping your feet while you sing this song to understand how compound time feels.

time signature

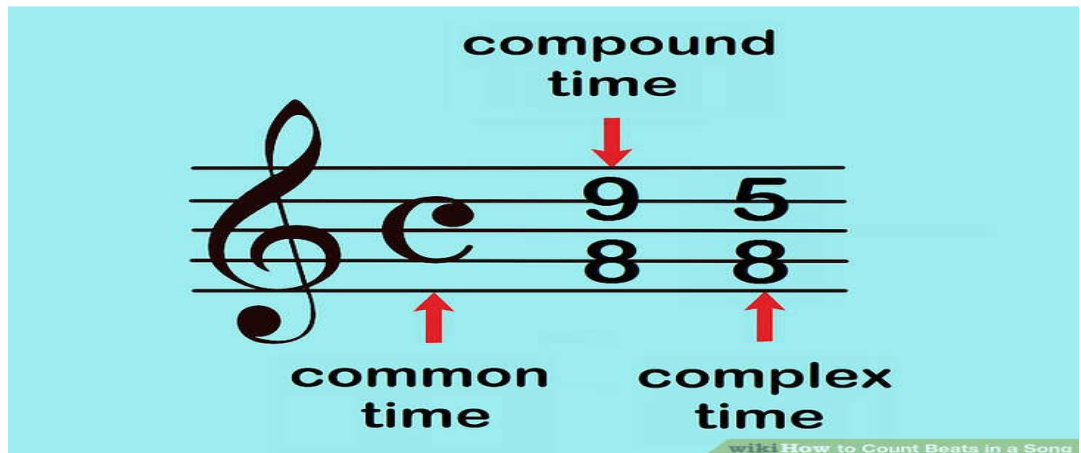
4
4

wiki How to Count Beats in a Song

4. Know that complex time signatures sometimes occur. This means a time signature doesn’t fit into the double, triple, or quadruple categories. For example, 5/8 is a complex time signature because of the odd number 5.

It is easiest to look at complex time signatures as a combination of simple and compound time signatures. For example, in 5/8, there is one simple beat (two eighth notes) and one compound beat (three eighth notes). The order these beats appear in the measure doesn’t matter.

When you listen to a song that utilizes a complex time signature, you will notice that some of the beats subdivide into two and some into three. Use your simple and compound counting skills to keep track of complex meters.



Dance notation is the symbolic representation of human dance movement and form, using methods such as graphic symbols and figures, path mapping, numerical systems, and letter and word notations. Several dance notation systems have been invented, many of which are designed to document specific types of dance. A *dance score* is recorded dance notation that describes a particular dance.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. In order to detect the beats of a song
 - (a) Pay more attention to lower instruments like the drums
 - (b) Tune out the top instruments like lead guitar or vocals.
 - (c) Try turning up the bass
 - (d) All of the above
2. Repetition is key to finding rhythm
 - (a) True
 - (b) False
 - (c) All of the above
 - (d) None of the above
3. An eight note lasts for
 - (a) A quarter beat
 - (b) A beat
 - (c) A half beat
 - (d) 2 beats
4. To count the beats in a piece of music, you must understand the 2 components of rhythm
 - (a) Time and signature
 - (b) Meter and fraction
 - (c) Tempo and meter
 - (d) None of the above

Answers

1. d

2. a

3. c

4. c

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit you have read and learnt some basic techniques of counting beats in music in order for you to remember them when making notations. The information and knowledge you acquired from this unit and consultations you made going over texts and looking over online video links were meant to enhance your understanding of dance counts. Your performance in the Self -Assessment Exercise will indicate to you your strength and weakness in the unit. You are therefore encouraged to go over the unit with more careful detail attention.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit you have successfully learnt what is needed for you to know concerning method of counting beats. You may be called upon in dance preview situations to record the number of beats in a dancing competition.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JM-ipzpSFa4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWJml61Nrh0&t=56s>

Dong, Y., Lin, J., Chen, Y. & Lee, W. Y. (2017). Beat counting system empowered by mobile device to assist Salsa Dancers. IEEE 14th International conference on mobile Adhoc and sensor system.

Harwick, B. *et al* (2017). Tools for learning dance skills.
<https://www.openphysed.org>

Weikert, P. S. (1997). Teaching folk dance: Successful steps. Miami: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation.

MODULE 6 LEBANOTATION SYMBOLS, DANCE AND KINESIOLOGY

Unit 1 Lebanotation Symbols

Unit 2 Dance and Kinesiology

UNIT 1 LEBANOTATION SYMBOLS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Lebanotation Symbols
 - 3.2
- 540 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6,0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Lebanotation is a structured system for analysing and recording of movements with symbols. In this module we shall discuss the symbols in details and see how we can use the symbols to represent muscles that are actually responsible for the movements.

It is a system of analysing and recording of human movements. The original inventor is the Austrian-Hungarian Rudolf von Leban (1879-1958), an important figure in European modern dance. He published this notation first 1928 as "Kinetographie" in the first issue of "Schrifttanz". Several people continued the development of the notation including Ann Hutchinson in the USA (known as "Lebanotation") and in Germany, Albrecht Knust, (known as "KinetographieLeban,") among others. These two systems differ a little in writing and analysis (approximately 5%): they could not agree to a common system (I support Lebanotation).

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- list all the symbols representing parts of human body used in dance
- describe the alphabetical representation of key signatures
- explain the path and floor plan of lebanotation

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

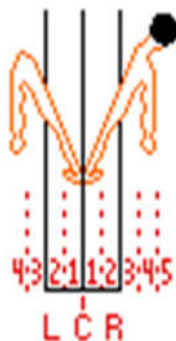
3.1 Lebanotation Symbols

In Lebanotation, it is possible to record every kind of human motion. Lebanotation is not connected to a singular, specific style of dance (unlike other dance notations e.g. Benesh Notation is based on English classical ballet). The basis is natural human motion, and every change from this natural human motion (e.g. turned-out legs) has to be specifically written down in the notation. Actually, this text contains some pictures with turned-out legs, without writing it down in the notation - this is not correct but I have done it to keep the scores as small as possible. For all pictures showing the ballerina, you have to use the Ballet-Key Signatures.

This text describes Lebanotation in the form of "Structural Description," which is a way of writing which tries to record every aspect of motion as precisely as possible. There are two other systems of writing: "Motif Description" and "Effort-Shape Description". Motif Description is a kind of simplified "Structural Description" - you only write down what you think of as important. You could write it, for example, as a kind of forward directed movement without saying if you creep or jump. Effort-Shape Description is used to record the energy content of a motion. It is used in industrial research as well as in physiotherapy and psychotherapy.

Staff: The Columns – Which Part of the Body?

Similar to music notation, Lebanotation uses a staff. It consists of three lines that run vertically. The score is read from the bottom to the top of the page (instead of left to right like in music notation). This has the advantage that anything that happens on the left side of the body could be written on the left side of the staff and anything that happens on the right side of the body could be written on the right side of the staff.



L =	Left side		
C =		Centre	line
R =		Right	side
1 =		Support	column
2 =	Leg	gesture	column
3 =		Body	column
4 =		Arm	column
5 =	Head column		

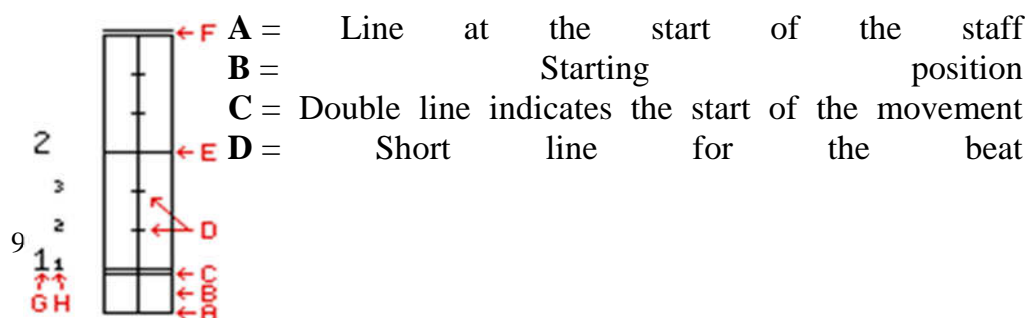
Column 1 the support column has the special function of recording transference of weight (e.g. steps). Every change of the centre of weight is recorded in this column. This column also keeps track of which part of the body carries the weight (by default: the foot), and also the absence of a weight carrying body part (jump). If no part of the body is carrying weight this column is empty.

All other columns are used for recording gestures. Gestures are all movements taking place without carrying weight on this part of the body. Is the leg, for example, extended to the side in the air and should be now carried to the back? This action is notated in column 2. While in the support column an empty space means absence of weight; an empty space in all the other columns means absence of movement in the specific part of the body, then this part of the body keeps its relation to the part of the body it is attached to.

You can add as many columns on both sides of the staff as needed. To describe which part of the body is recorded in the individual column, a presign is added to the movement. In column 1, 2 and 4, usually no presigns are needed. If no body part presign is in this column, it is assumed that in column 1 the weight is carried by the foot; in column 2 the leg gestures are recorded and in column 4 the arm gestures are recorded (If someone is walking on the hands a hand presign would be added to the movements recorded in column 1).

Structure the staff

To structure the staff different types of lines are used (similar to the bar lines in music notation). The individual beats in a bar always use a constant amount of space on the paper (in opposite to music notation where the space used on the paper is dependent how many space is needed to write down the notes).



E = Bar line

F = Double line indicates the end of the movement

G = Large numbers for the bar

H = Small numbers for the beat (only in the first bar)

If there is no specific starting position the staff starts at

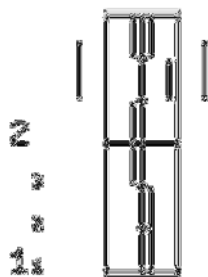
C. If more than one staff is needed to record a longer movement sequence, then a single bar line is placed at the end of the individual staff to indicate that the movement sequence is continued on another staff. On the beginning of the staff where the sequence is continued there is also only a single bar line.

There are some other signs used to structure the staff, like artificial bar lines and different kinds of repetition signs.

Time, Direction Signs, Position Signs

In the different columns of the staff, symbols are written to indicate in which direction the specific part of the body should move. The length of the symbol shows the period of time the movement takes, from its very beginning to its end.

The Timing - When (does it happen)?



Unlike music notation, Lebanotation has no special symbols for the time a movement takes. Instead of using symbols, Lebanotation indicates the time a movement takes by the length of the symbol (or for jumps the length of the gap in the support column).

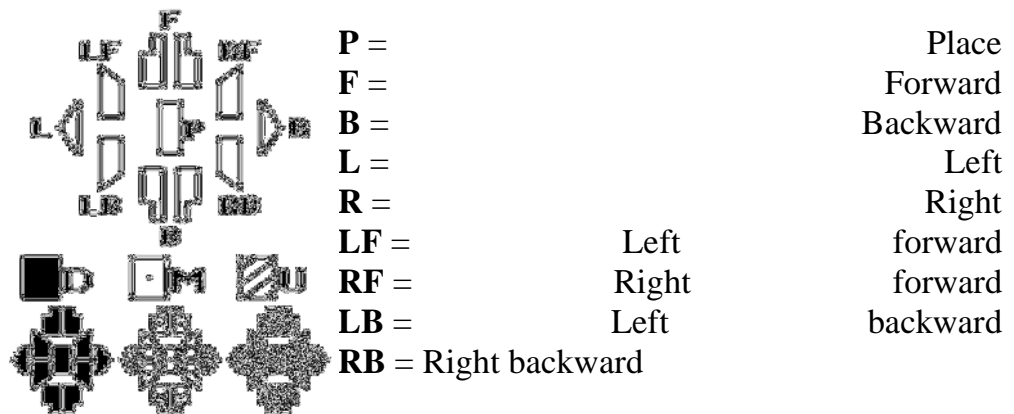
Here is a sample of the simplest way of recording movement - the action stroke. The action stroke only indicates that an action takes place in a specific part of the body and over what period of time this action takes place. In this example, first a transference of weight to the right foot takes place in bar one: beats one and two. Then next in bar one: beat three and bar two: beat one, a transference of weight to the left foot takes place. Next in bar two: beat two, the support column is empty therefore a jump occurs, simultaneously the right leg performs a gesture and the arms are moving (slightly longer than till the start of beat three).

At the end, an action in the support columns of both legs occurs therefore the weight rests on both feet.

The Direction Symbols - What (happens)?

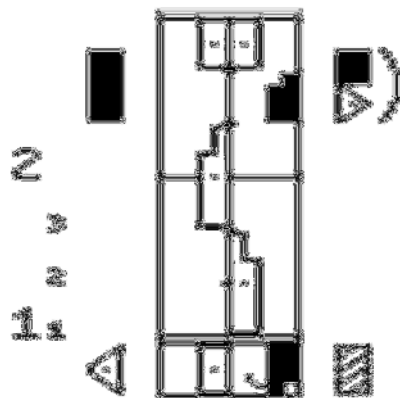
To indicate into what direction a movement occurs, direction symbols are used. The basic symbols are allowed to indicate the direction of the movement in angle increments of 45 degrees. Using more complex symbol combinations, it is possible to divide the directions more precisely using intermediate directions (allowing a resolution of 22.5 degrees or 15 degrees or 7.5 degrees steps).

There are nine horizontal direction symbols derived from the rectangle.



The signs are modified by three kinds of shadings to indicate the vertical dimension.

U = Up, high - the sign is hatched.
M = Middle - a point is added in the middle of the sign.
D = Down, low - the sign is shaded black.



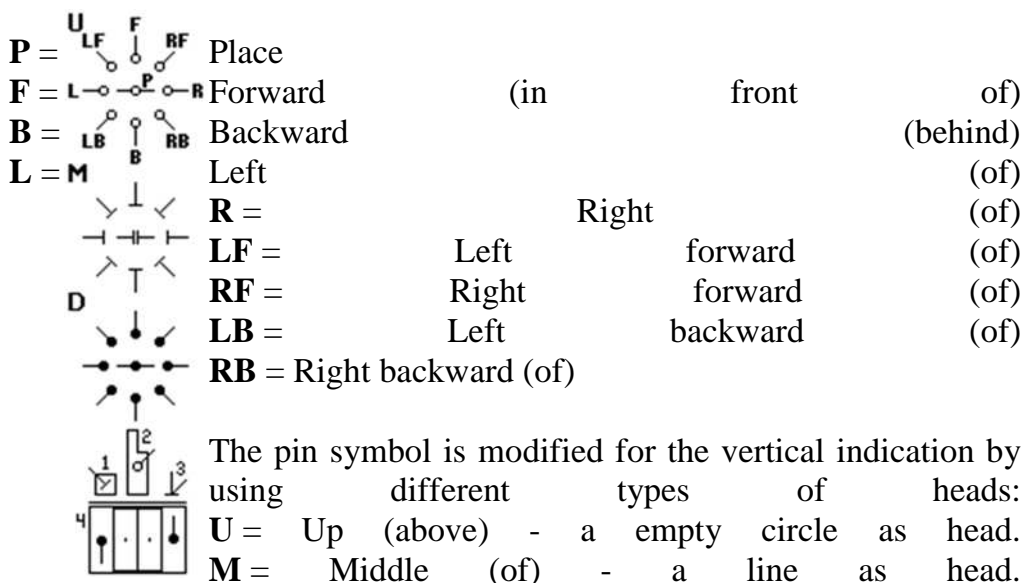
Here again the example, now including direction symbols. In the beginning I added a starting position. The person is standing on the left leg, the right leg is directed diagonal low to the back (the small hook on the sign modifies the direction in the way that the toe has contact to the ground - the sign is placed in the gesture column therefore no weight is

on that leg). The right arm is directed straight up, the left arm is directed to the left side. The double line separates the starting position from the movement sequence.

The person takes a step forward onto the right leg in a middle level (normal stepping) and a step forward onto the left leg in a middle level. Next the person jumps from the left leg onto both legs. During the jump the right leg is moved diagonal forward low (45 degrees) and the arms are moved from the starting position to straight down. For the right arm, which started straight up it is necessary to write the movement over the right side because one rule of Lebanotation says any movement occurs on the shortest way (here: straight down the body). Therefore I wrote the signs for side right and place down and I added a bow to the symbols that means the movements should occur as one movement.

The Relationship Pins

The relationship pins are used to show relations in space. They are similar to the direction signs. The orientations of the pins indicate the horizontal directions, and the heads of the pins show the vertical directions.



D = Down (below) - a black circle as head.
 NOTE: The relationship pins are used in different ways:
1 = As sign showing the direction in the room. The pin is written inside a square.

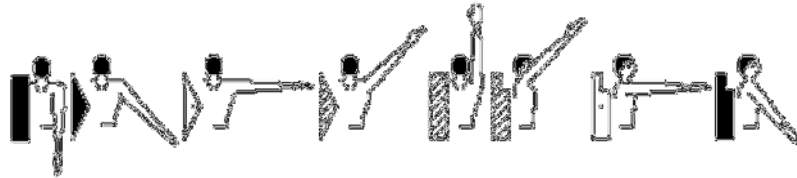
2 = As intermediate position. The pin modifies the direction of the direction symbol 1/3 into the direction shown by the pin. The pin is written inside the direction symbol. Sometimes it is necessary

to keep a blank space inside filled direction symbols to make the pin readable.

- 3 = It is possible to show intermediate positions by merging two pins together (Mostly used for room directions).
- 4 = As relation between two parts of the body (and in relation to the centreline of the body). Then the pin is placed beside the specific part of the body (here: the right foot is in front of the left foot - fifth position). This way it is for example possible to describe if the right arm is in front of the body or behind the body when directed to the left.

Arm and Leg Gestures

Gestures, as mentioned earlier, are all movements of parts of the body which carry no weight. In the use of the direction symbols introduced above it is assumed that each movable part of the body has a point of attachment and a free end. The free end is now moved relative to the point of attachment in the direction described by the direction symbol.



Arm gestures and the direction symbols

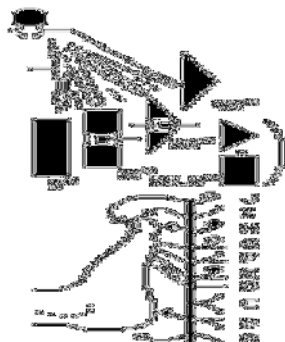
From left to right: place low; side low; side middle; side high; place high; front high; front middle; front low.



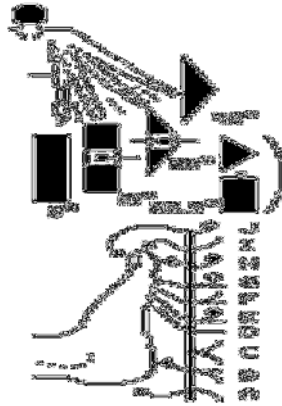
Leg gestures and the direction symbols

In the leg gestures place low is usually only possible in jumps - otherwise the floor is in the way (provided the leg is not contracted). All other symbols are used similarly to the arm gestures.

Arm gestures and intermediate directions



If the resolution of 45 degrees to course, write down the movement as exactly as necessary, intermediate positions can be used. A pin is added to the direction symbol to get a deviation of 1/3 into the direction shown by the pin. 22.5 degree - the point written in front of the second sign means - halfway into the second direction (both signs are connected by a bow). In using both - pins and halfway directions it is possible to get a resolution of 7.5 degrees.



Floor contact of the foot in low gestures

By using specific hooks on low direction symbol it is possible to indicate that the leg is not in the air at 45 degrees, but that a specific part of the foot has contact to the floor.

- A** = Full heel,
- B** = 1/2 heel
- C** = Full foot
- D** = 1/8 ball,
- E** = 1/4 ball,
- F** = 1/2 ball,
- G** = Full ball
- H** = Pad of toe,
- I** = Full toe,
- J** = Nail of toe

The limbs are not always straight, to show a specific degree of contraction and elongation or folding and unfolding there are

specific space measurement signs written in front of the direction symbols - more below.

Centre of Weight and Transference of Weight

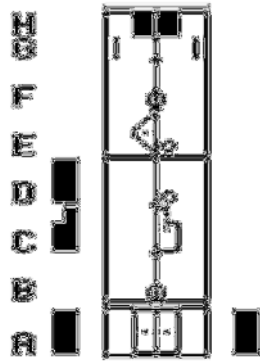
Column 1 of the staff (the support column) keeps track of everything what happens to the centre of weight and which part of the body is carrying the weight.

In principle, only five things could happen:

1. Everything stays as it is.
2. The centre of weight is shifted.
3. The weight is transferred - steps.
4. No part of the body carries weight - jumps.
5. The centre of weight rotates - turns.

Hold Weight (body hold)

If in the centre of weight everything should stay as it is or if a part of the body now carrying weight should continue in doing so - a hold weight sign is used.



A = The weight is on both feet, the legs are straight. Both arms are directed to place down.

B and **F** = If the weight should stay on both feet (or on both sides of the body on a weight carrying part of the body) a hold weight sign (the small circle) is written onto the middle line.

C = Any activity in one of the support columns (or a activity in the gesture column related to the hold sign) cancels the hold sign.

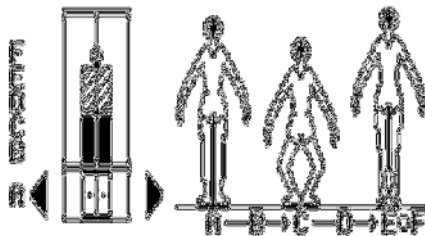
D = If the weight should remain on one part of the body the hold sign is written in the support column.

E = If the weight should be transferred from one leg to both legs a hold sign is written in the support column already carrying weight.

G = A activity in the gesture column related to the hold sign without a action or a hold sign in the support column shows a jump.

Shifting the Centre of Weight

A body is in balance as long as the centre of weight is above the area on ground bound by the floor contact of the weight carrying body parts. Inside this area the centre of weight can be shifted horizontal and vertical. Usually this happens vertically by contracting and extending the weight carrying body parts.



A = Starting position: The centre of weight is in a middle level, it rest on both legs (=>the legs are straight). The arms are side low.

B = The centre of weight is shifted to a low level. To achieve that, the legs have to be contracted.

C = The centre of weight has reached the low level.

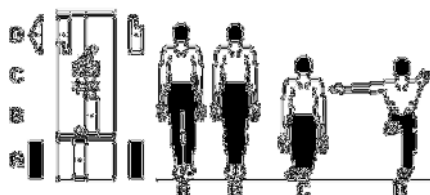
D = The centre of weight is shifted to a high level. To achieve that the legs have to be extended and the foot take a half point position (standing on the ball of the foot).

E = The centre of weight has reached the high level.

F = The small circle is the hold weight sign therefore the space at the end of the score is no jump, the weight remains where it is (on both legs).

Transference of Weight - Steps

The weight could be transferred to either additional, less or different parts of the body.



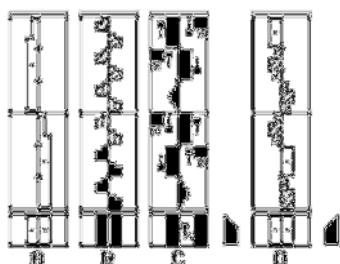
A = Starting position: The centre of weight is in a middle level, it rest on the left leg. The right leg carries no weight there is no floor contact (it is slightly lifted). The arms are placed low.

B = The weight is transferred from the left leg to both legs. To achieve this, the right leg gets floor contact and shares the weight.

C = The weight is transferred to the front high on both knees (The body part sign in front of the direction signs in the support column indicate this).

D = The weight remains on the right knee. The left leg is raised to middle back. The right arm is carried to middle front, the left arm is carried to middle side.

Steps are transferences of weight from one part of the body to another part of the body (e.g. in walking - from one foot to the other foot).



A = Very slow steps (one half step per bar)

B = Very fast steps (one step per quarter note) first in low level - with bend knees (in Plié) like Groucho Marx. Next, in middle level - normal steps. In the end, in high level - steps on half point.

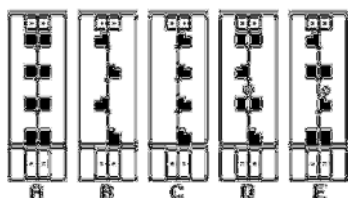
C = Balancé: The right leg steps to the right side into the Plié. Step on the left leg into the Plié in place in front of the right leg (indicated by the pin) - simultaneously the right leg sur le cou-de-pied back (the small x in front of the leg gesture is a Space measurement sign). Step on the right leg in place into Plié back - simultaneously the left leg sur le cou-de-pied front. In the next bar everything to the other side.

D = Minuet step: Arms diagonal front low. Step onto the right foot half point. Lower to full foot. Three small (half-) steps left, right, left - on half point. In the end lower to full foot.

Jumps

While jumping, no part of the body carries the weight - therefore the support column is empty.

There are five basic forms of jumps:

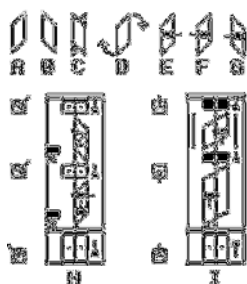


- A** = **Jump** from both feet to both feet.
B = **Leap** from one foot to the other foot.
C = **Hop** from one foot to the same foot.
D = **Assemblé** form one foot to both feet.
E = **Sissonne** from both feet to one foot.

The length of the space shows the height of the jump. If the legs should do something special while in the air (e.g. be carried to the side) this is written into the gesture columns.

Turns

Turns could occur around different axes. Most the time rotations are done around the vertical axis. A wheel rotates around the left-right axis. If a human is doing a cartwheel he rotates around the front-back axis. These are the signs for turns around the vertical axis:



- A** = Turn to the right.
B = Turn to the left.
C = Turn left or right (or untwisted state for gestures).
D = It is easy to remember the direction of the turns if you think of such arrows on the outer corners.
E = The degree of the turn is shown using pins. Here 1/4 turn to the left.
F = A 3/4 turn to the left.

G = A 1/4 turn to the right - the pin is dependent on the direction of the turn.

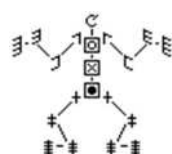
H = Here a example for a short sequence: starting position - fifth position (indicated by the pin beside the support column) right leg front. The body is directed into the diagonal - "croisé" (indicated by the pin left beside the staff inside the small square). A 1 1/4 turn to the right on the right leg, left leg sur le cou-de-pied, ending in the fifth position - right leg front - "effacé". Next a double turn on the right leg to the left - the rest as before.

I = Fifth position right leg back, half turn to the right on both foot (the sign for the turn is in both support columns). Now the right leg is in front (as result of the turn), Plié, jump performing a half turn in the air (action strokes in the leg gesture columns + turn on both support columns = turning jump), the movement ends in Plié.

Body parts

To record the movements of a specific part of the body an additional column is used and in front of each action in this column a body part sign or a "the same" sign is written. Lebanotation offers a differentiated system to label every single part of the body.

Here are some signs to describe which part of the body should move:



Join

A =

B =

C =

D =

E =

F =

G =

H =

I =

J =

K =

L =

M =

N =

O =

P =

Q =

R =

S =

T =

U =

V =

W =

signs:

Head

Right shoulder

Right elbow

Wrist of right hand

Right hand

Right fingers

Right thumb

Hip

Knee

Ankle

Foot

Toes

Right knee

Neck

Arm

Leg

Right upper arm

Right lower leg

Chest

Waist

Pelvis

Shoulder section

Whole torso

Limbs:

In adding a double line to a join sign a limb sign is generated.

N = Neck **O** = Arm **P** = Leg

Q = Right upper arm **R** = Right lower leg

Body **areas:**

In adding a box a specific area of the body could be described.

S = Chest **T** = Waist **U** = Pelvis **V** = Shoulder section **W** = Whole torso

By adding pins a specific surface of body areas could be described.

X = Upper front of chest

Area, Surfaces and Edges of Hands and Feet:

A open box is used.

Y = Palm or sole of foot

Z = Thumb or big toe edge.

There are additional signs to describe specific parts of the body, e. g. parts of the face, parts of the hand or parts of the foot.

Quantity Signs - How (is something done)?

If nothing special is annotated, all movements should be done normally. By using space measurement signs this can be modified. If the movement is accented (e.g. clapping hands) accent signs are used. If a special overall style of movement is recorded key signatures are used.

Space Measurement Signs

To record if the steps are long or small, if the arm or legs are bend or extended space measurement signs are used.

1,2,3,4,5,6 = degree of the sign - from slightly in the first degree to totally in the sixth degree (e.g. a arm gesture using sign **A1** in front of the direction sign is performed with slightly rounded arms).

	1	2	3	4	5	6
A	X	X	X	X	X	X
B						
C	X	X	X	X	X	X
D	A	A	A	A	A	A
E	△	△	△	△	△	△
F	∪	∪	∪	∪	∪	∪
G	X	X				X
H	X	+	v	<	J	J

A = Narrow, small distance, shortened, contracted

B = Wide, large distance, stretched, extended

C = Folding

D = Unfolding

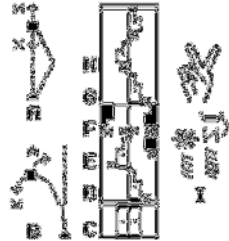
E = Joining - for lateral movements

F = Spreading - for lateral movements

It is possible to add specific directions to the signs. Lines are added to the narrow and wide sign, the other signs are turned into the specific direction.

G = Narrow 1. degree over front; - over front right;

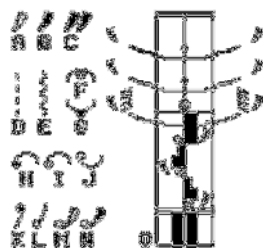
Wide 1. degree over back; - over left.
H = Folding 1. degree over front; - over front right;
 Unfolding 1. degree over back; - over left.
I = Three dimensional contraction (e.g. making a fist)
J = Three dimensional extension



A = Limbs marked by a narrow or wide sign are contracted or extended along a straight path.
B = Limbs marked by a folding or unfolding sign are folded or unfolded along a (based on the main direction of the limb) curved path.
C - H = Example for the use of the narrow or wide sign:
D = Step with slightly bent knee onto the right leg (the degree of the contraction - the distance of the centre of weight to the floor is described by a narrow or wide sign beside the direction sign. The direction sign is shaded to indicate the approximate level of support).
E = The same with the left leg, the right leg sur le cou-de-pied.
F = Jump - both legs are straightened (wide sign in front of the direction sign) right leg front low, left leg back low - both leg are slightly close together (narrow sign beside the direction sign).
G = Landing on the right leg knee slightly bent (narrow sign beside the direction sign).
H = Two (in terms of space) short steps (narrow sign in front of the direction sign).
I = Sample for the analysis of a hand gesture: The hand is three dimensionally fully contracted, the index and the middle finger (points on the finger sign) are extended and spread.

Accent Signs

To describe the dynamics of motion accent signs are used.



A = A slight accent (only a soft or no sound appears if one part of the body touches another part of the body).

B = A strong accent (a sound appears if one part of the body touches another part of the body).

C = A stronger accent could be expressed by two or more accent signs.

D = Passive motion.

E = Shaking motion.

F = Uplift, buoyant.

G = Weighty, heavy - as reaction to the pull of gravity.

H = Strong.

I = Gentle.

J = Relaxed.

K = Emphasized.

L = Unemphasized.

M = Resilient.

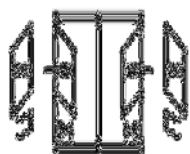
N = Strong resilient.

O = A example of the use of accent signs:
Three short stamping steps, followed by three claps of the hands
(for bows see below).

Key Signatures

To define a specific global style - key signatures are written in front of the score.

Here for example the key signature for ballet:



The legs are turned out and straightened; the elbows are slightly turned inward and rounded.

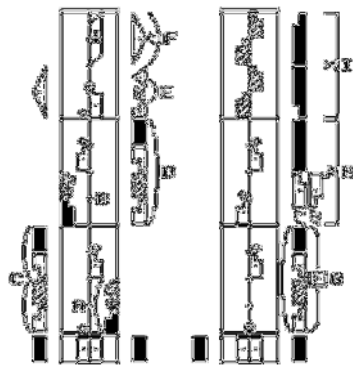
The key signature is enclosed by double lines. The key is always in affect if nothing different is written. If something in the score should be done as written without using the key, a * (asterisk) is used.

(Connection-) Bows

To write a connection between two things - Lebanotation uses (as in musical notation) bows.

Vertical Bows

Vertical bows show that actions are done simultaneous, show phrasing, include body parts or add specific aspects to the movement.



A = A round bow ("simultaneous action bow") connecting different parts of the body in the same column show that actions are done simultaneous (here: leg diagonal front low and simultaneous the foot diagonal front up - "flex").

B = Without a bow actions in the same column are done one after the other (here: first leg diagonal front low, next foot diagonal front up).

C = A round bow ("phrasing bow") connecting the same part of the body show the phrasing of the movements (here: arm starting at low over front to up, next arm from up over back ending low).

D = The same but now in one instead of two phrases.

E = Here the "simultaneous action bow" show two movements overlapping in time (here: arm to front - already in the second half of the arm movement the lower arm starts moving to left side middle, in the second half of the lower arm movement the rest of the arm moves no more).

F = A body part sign inside a round bow shows the leading part of the body for this movement (here: the elbow is leading the turn).

G = A bow with round corners includes a specific part of the body into the movement (here: the shoulder is included into the arm movement).
H / I = A bow with rectangular corners adds a specific aspect to the movement (here: **H** all movements are accented and **I** all movement are short in terms of space).

Horizontal Bows

Horizontal bows show a connection in terms of space. There are basic forms of horizontal bow showing a short term connection in terms of space:



A = Basic form of the bow for "address" - if someone looking or pointing to someone or something, this bow is used.

B = Basic form of the bow for "near" - something is in terms of space near without touching it.

C = Basic form of the bow for "touch" - something is touching something (e.g. the clapping of the hands above).

D = Basic form of the bow for "support" - if someone or something is lifted or a part of the weight is taken this bow is used.

The basic forms of bows are modified in several ways:

E = Using a space measurement signs - The narrow sign shows a maximum of closeness (e.g. touching of the hand means grabbing).

F = Using double lines - for a passing or sliding movement (e.g. wipe the hands).

G = Using a "hold" sign - for a lasting connection in space. This connection lasts till explicit cancelled.

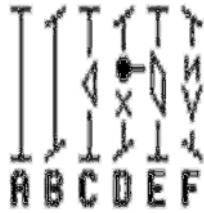
Paths, Floor Plans

There are two ways of recording paths and positions in space, direct inside the staff or in complex situations using floor plans.

Paths

Movement paths are directly written into the staff, most the time they show as floor paths how the whole body is moving in space. It is also possible to use paths for specific parts of the body. Floor paths are

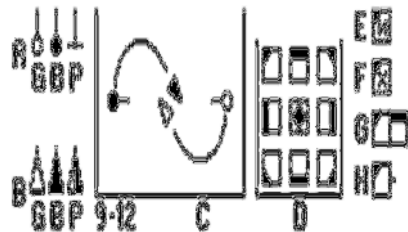
written into the rightmost column of the staff. The normal case: straight paths are normally not explicit written.



- A = A straight path.
- B = A rounded path turning to the right.
- C = A straight path to the left.
- D = A small quarter circle to the right.
- E = Turning on a straight path (e.g. a waltz).
- F = A increasingly getting larger round path (spiral) to the left.

Floor Plans

Floor plans are written below or beside the staff to get a fast overview of the movement in the room and to describe complex situations. Sometimes, in critical situations they are written in minimized form inside the staff.



- A = Symbols for the starting position of the actors (**G**irl **B**oy **P**erson).
- B = Symbols for the ending position of the actors (They are used if it is necessary to show the end position).
- C = An example for a floor plan. The rectangle is opened to the audience. The bar numbers are written below the floor plan.
- D = Signs for notating the positions in the room.
- E = A wide sign added to a position sign show a position outside the stage.
- F = A narrow sign added to a position sign show a position near to the centre of the stage.
- G = To get in-between positions two signs are used.
- H = Pins added to the position signs further divide the parts of the stage.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. All columns of the Lebanotation are used for recording gestures except
 - (a) Support column
 - (b) Body column
 - (c) Leg gesture column
 - (d) Head column

2. Lebanotation has special symbols for the time a movement takes
 - (a) True
 - (b) False
 - (c) None of the above
 - (d) All of the above

3. The orientations and head of the relationship pins in Lebanotation shows
 - (a) Forward and backward directions
 - (b) Horizontal and vertical directions
 - (c) Right and left directions
 - (d) None of the above

4. All movements of parts of the body which carry no weight can be referred to as
 - (a) Directions
 - (b) Symbols
 - (c) Gestures
 - (d) All of the above

Answers

1. a
2. b
3. b
4. c

4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed extensively all the symbols and their meaning as used in lebanotation. These symbols can be used to write

any type of dance. Take time to physical make a sketch of each of these symbols as you practise how to internalize so as to understand how to maximize its use in creating notes for African and more specifically Nigeria dances.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have explained how symbols can be acquired and developed and used, such as staff, direction, relationship pins, arm and leg gesture, centre and transference of weight, jumps, turns, body paths, bows path and floor plans. You are reminded that theoretical knowledge is not all you need, you are therefore encouraged to have the practical acquisition and demonstration of the skills. Endeavour to go through all the Self-Assessment Exercises and online links that have been provided you in this unit.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

- El Raheb, K. & Ioannidis, Y. (2012). "A Lebanotation Based Ontology for Representing Dance Movement." *Gesture and Sign Language in Human-Computer Interaction and Embodied Communication. Lecture Notes in Computer Science.* 7206. pp. 106–117. [doi:10.1007/978-3-642-34182-3_10](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-34182-3_10). ISBN 978-3-642-34181-6.
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UNIT 2 DANCE AND KINESIOLOGY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Intended Learning Outcomes

- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Dynamic (Isotonic) Muscle Contractions
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References / Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The term, kinesiology, is used to define human movement. Dance kinesiology is the study of human dance movement. To understand how dance movements are accomplished and how muscles work to do this, dancers must first know about the law of approximation. This law means that muscles can only pull their ends towards each other (shortening or contracting) and not pushing them away.

2.0 INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- list at least 10 muscles involved in African dances
- state the functions of muscle to dance moves
- discuss the role of muscles in dance notation

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Dynamic (Isotonic) Muscle Contractions

There are two types of dynamic muscles

(a) Concentric “towards the centre” (b) Eccentric “away from the centre”

Static (Isometric) Muscle Contraction

Movers (Agonist)

- (b) Antagonist
- (c) Synergist (Neutralizers)
- (d) Stabilizer (Fixators)

The following are things that dancers should be noticing while they are dancing:

Which muscles are engaged? Which are resting? Which are helping supporting me? Which are stabilizing me?

Where are you sending your energy? What muscles do you need to engage in order to achieve the movement goal?

What are my agonists and antagonists? Where are they? What are they doing?

Which muscle is shortening right now? Which muscle is waiting to lengthen? Can you visualize this happening?

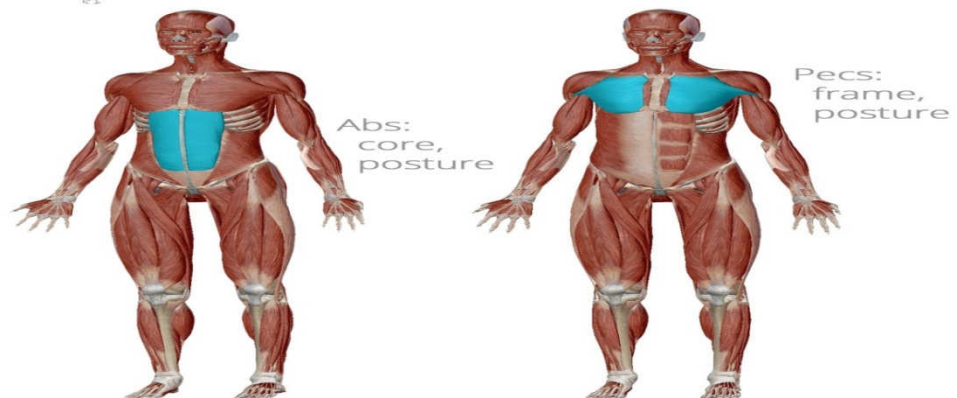
Do you realize that if some muscles were not engaged at all times, you would be a heap of bones and muscles on the floor?

Once dancers start understanding how their muscles work, their mental power will drastically change their dancing. Any form of dancing requires muscles to be used in various ways. Often we try to get those muscles to do things they are simply not used to, which can lead to strain or injury. Here is a handy guide to help you prepare your muscles for ballroom dancing.

Understanding which muscles are used when dancing with a partner and how to train them for the work they have to do help make your dancing look effortless and with better technique. Before beginning any exercise routine, make sure to consult with a doctor and work with an expert to determine what your body can safely handle.

The Frame: The frame is a key element used by both partners to create the upper body shape in ballroom dancing. In the Latin, Rhythm and Smooth dances, the frame is slightly further away from the partner but moves dynamically at all times. In the ballroom dances, the frame holds the partner with elevated arms and open chest. A number of key muscles are used to create and maintain a strong frame.

Delta  DANCE

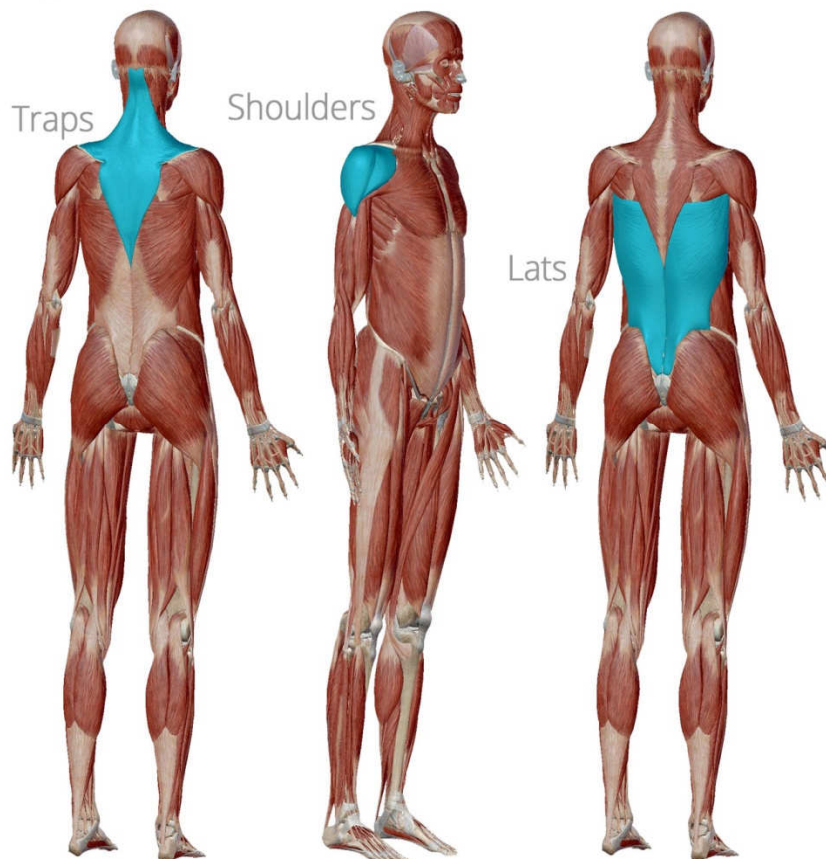


THE CORE: Core muscles include the abdominal muscles (Rectus Abdominis and Transversus Abdominis). To some extent, these include the muscles that surround the abs (Obliques), but we will discuss those later. Without a strong core, you won't have good posture and you won't be able to create powerful forward or back movement, since the frame depends on the core to hold steady during such movement. Pull your belly button in towards the spine and lift the rib cage to engage the core. To strengthen your core, do exercises such as Crunches, Side Bridge, Oblique Heel Touches, Leg Raises, Flutter Kicks and Mountain Climbers.

PECS: The Pectoralis Majors are the muscles that cover the upper area of the rib cage. These are critical for maintaining good posture and for stretching effectively in the ballroom dances.

[To strengthen your Pecs, great exercises are: Pull Ups, Push Ups, Bench Press and Flys.]

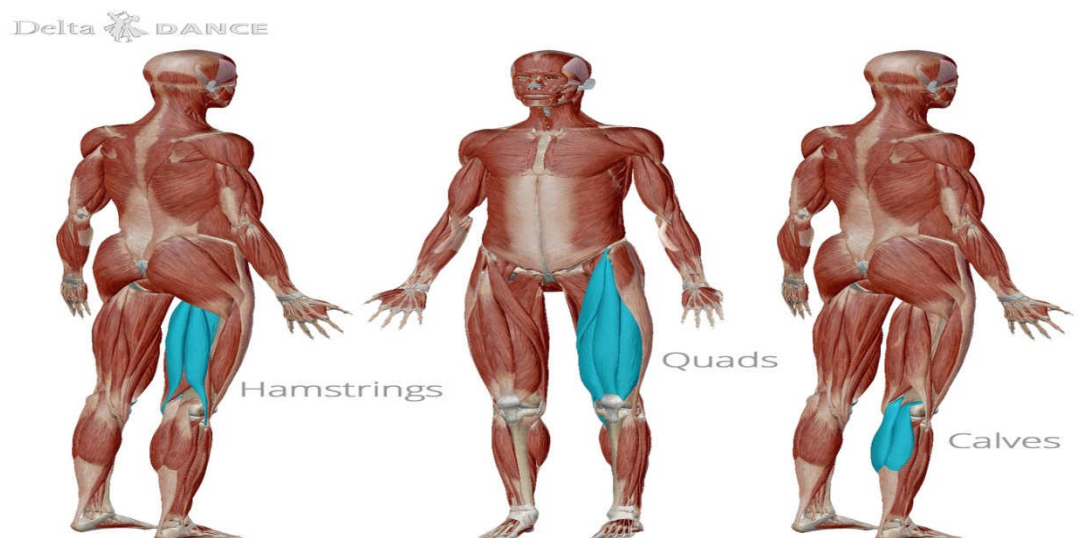
Delta  DANCE



TRAPS AND LATS: The Trapezius muscles connect the back of the neck to your shoulder blades. The Latissimus Dorsi muscles connect the shoulder blades to your hips. These are used to keep your arms in position when they are raised up. When these are strong, you can hold your arms level with less effort or fatigue, and you can keep your shoulders from rising up or hunching forward. In Latin, Rhythm and Smooth, you will engage the Lats as you extend your arms to the sides, as the action begins in the back and then extends to the elbow and finally to the hand. It is similar to how you throw a Frisbee.

To strengthen these muscles, use exercises such as Pull ups, Pull downs, Bent over row, T-Bar row and Seated row.

SHOULDERS: Shoulder muscles include the Deltoids, Infraspinatus and Teres, which all work together to help you elevate your arms while keeping your shoulders level. To strengthen your shoulders, use arm raises with light dumbbells, Rear Delt Row, Shoulder Shrugs, Upright Row and, of course, the Overhead Press. Be careful with the latter as you can easily damage your shoulders by exceeding the weight they can handle. Use very light weights to determine what they can handle to avoid rotator cuff injury. Also, make sure you work both the front, middle and back parts of the shoulder for balanced shoulder ability. Many people just do one shoulder exercise which only works one part of this complex muscle.



Leg Muscles

The legs are the dancer's main action tools so when these are strong you have more power and better leg action potential in your dancing. As I've written about in a previous unit, ballroom dancing is based on walking actions, so you need to strengthen the muscles used for walking. These include the following:

QUADS AND HAMSTRINGS: The Quadriceps are actually a reference to a bundle of several vertical muscles that run down the front of your legs. These include the Vastus Lateralis, Vastus Medialis, Rectus Femoris and others that work together to create forward and back leg action. These muscles are necessary to lift or bend the knee. Do a movement such as a man's Contra Check and hold it for a long time to quickly feel exactly where these muscles are.

HAMSTRINGS: Is a common name for another bundle of muscles that run down the back of the upper leg. These include the Adductor Magnus, Biceps Femoris and Semitendinosus. As the Quads in front engage, the Hamstrings assist as partners to balance the use of your leg for walking, running or bending the knee.

To work these muscles, use exercises such as Step Ups, Lunges, Back Squats (careful with these!), Deadlifts and Leg Presses. Leg Curls are good for the Hamstrings. We don't recommend Leg Extensions, even though you find those machines in every gym, as these can easily cause damage.

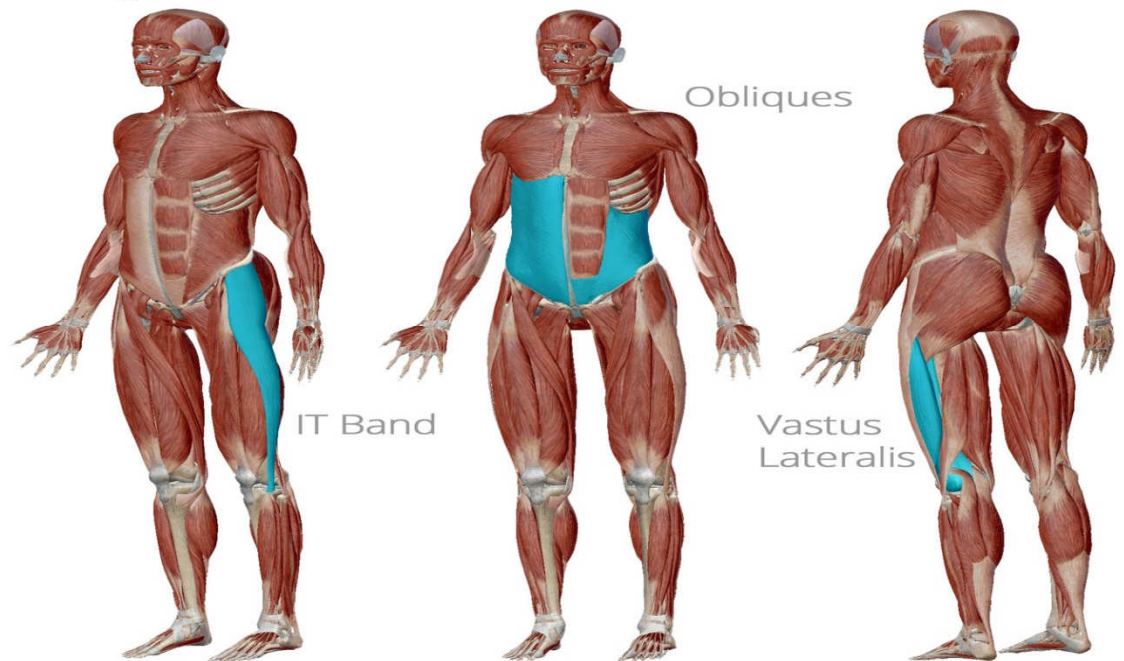
CALVES: Officially referred to as the Gastrocnemius, the Calf Muscles are vital for creating rise and fall action and for proper leg action in the Latin and Rhythm dances. Well-developed calves not only look great, but also will make your actions look light and easy, especially in fast dances like Quickstep and Jive. The calves are the main tools for allowing you to push away from the standing leg while creating a grounded look that pushes down into the floor to keep you stable.

To exercise the calf muscles, do Calf Raises which can easily be done on any staircase just by placing the heels past the edge of the stair and lifting yourself up and down.

FEET: The feet have muscles too! Without the Flexor Digitorum Brevis that run along the bottom of your foot, you will not be able to flex your foot. One way to strengthen your feet is to walk on uneven surfaces with flexible soled shoes like Vibram Toe Shoes which protect your feet but

force those muscles to constantly flex and work to create stability. These muscles are also engaged when you do Calf Raises.

Delta  DANCE



Rotational Muscles

Another group of muscles that are critical for good dancing are those used to help the body twist around the spine. Without rotational muscles, your dancing would look flat and lifeless, and you would not be able to keep your centre connected to your partner in ballroom dances.

OBLIQUES: There are both internal and external Obliques, which are strong muscles connecting the front of your body to the back. As you contract one side, your body will twist in that direction. Some dances, such as Tango, require a lot of highly engaged use of the Obliques to keep your centre to your partner while maintaining the movement in a different direction. Figures such as the Chase and Fall Away Whisk maximize the availability of your Obliques. If these are not strong, your ability to do those figures is impacted. To work the Obliques, do twisting core exercises like Russian Twists, Side-to-Side Crunches and Side Bridge.

ILIOTIBIAL BAND: Though not actually a muscle, this long band of connective tissues, also referred to as the IT Band, runs from your hip to

the knee along the outside of your leg. This includes the Tensor Fascia, which is the upper third of the band.

VASTUS LATERALIS: This muscle is located directly under the IT Band, and allows the leg to swing to the side. It is essential in creating a strong swing action in dances like the Waltz, Viennese Waltz, Foxtrot and Quickstep. Side Lunges are a great way to strengthen the IT Band and Vastus. Make sure to do a lot of stretching as well, including Hip Flexor stretches so that your workouts, which contract these muscles, are balanced by stretching which releases and expands the muscle's movement ability.

ADDUCTOR AND ABDUCTOR: The Adductor is located on the inside of the thigh, while the Abductor is on the upper outside of the thigh. These work together, opposing each other, to allow the legs to move sideways. While many gyms contain machines especially designed to strengthen these muscles, it is generally accepted that they are not very effective. The best way to strengthen these muscles is through actual dance movement, especially lunge type lines including the Over Sway, Throw Away, and Spanish Drag.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

1. Which muscles connect the back of the neck to the shoulder blades?
 - (a) Latissimus Dorsi
 - (b) Deltoids
 - (c) Trapezius
 - (d) Infraspinatus

2. The best way to strengthen the adductor and abductor muscle is through actual dance movement such as
 - (a) Spanish drag
 - (b) African dance
 - (c) Traditional dance
 - (d) All of the above

3. Which muscle is responsible for being able to flex the foot?
 - (a) Oblique
 - (b) Digitorum Brevis
 - (c) Vastus laterals
 - (d) Pectoralis

4. The following exercises can be used to strengthen your core except
- (a) Crunches
 - (b) Leg raises
 - (c) Flutter kicks
 - (d) Sit and reach

Answers

1. c
2. a
3. b
4. d

4.0 CONCLUSION

After having completed reading through this unit and making reference to video links and texts provided, it is assumed that you have learned and gained knowledge which you are required to have in the unit. The Self-Assessment Exercises you answered satisfactorily will indicate to you the amount of learning you have achieved in the unit. You are encouraged to discuss with your mates how you can design dance symbols for muscles used in African dances.

6.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the kinesiology of dance. You have equally learned the various roles played by different muscles in dance movement. It is hoped that you will discuss with your mates how to generate symbols that will be generally acceptable for explaining dance notation anatomically and physiologically.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

7.0 REFERENCES / FURTHER READING

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