

**A Postpositivist Approach to Teaching
Dance**

A Study on Dance Pedagogy

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“My dance career started at the age of four...” is a quote repeated by many professional dancers. Four years old is a time when many parents will choose to put their children in dance lessons either as a way of socializing their children, having a few moments to themselves, or in the hopes that their child will become a dancing star. What is it that separates the children who grow up to have professional careers or a lifelong love of dance and those who find it mundane and uninspiring? Apart from natural talent and a passion for movement, a great teacher is usually behind that success. However, this begs the question, what makes a great teacher? How can a teacher be most effective in the progress of their student and how can they inspire their student to want to continue to dance and learn? What are the most effective methods of delivering corrections and feedback to students, and how is the relationship between the student and the teacher involved? These types of questions are important to ask when deciding how to teach your own dance class in order to be the most effective, efficient, and supportive teacher possible.

Questions like these are what inspired me to do my own research on the subject of dance pedagogy and the methods used to teach dance. Throughout a seven-month research study, conducted within my own classroom, I discovered interesting information about how I, as an instructor, can have a profound influence on my student’s progress and the areas in which they move forward. I have realized how important the student-teacher relationship is in how I deliver information to the class and how specific feedback can either help my students learn at an exceptional rate or close them off to progress. I have also learned how each dance classroom and situation is different and that being flexible and able to adjust how I teach is paramount to success.

Literary Review

Dance instructors today usually take a straightforward approach in teaching their students, particularly in ballet. The teacher will typically base his or her class off of one style or discipline of ballet, such as Cecchetti, an Italian technique, or Vaganova, a Russian style, and possibly add in a few other small influences from personal pedagogy. Very few ballet schools

will teach anything other than their preferred method of ballet, which is beneficial for some students and not for others. Especially in schools that do not primarily teach ballet, an orthodox teaching style may be more detrimental than helpful. Classical ballet training mainly uses repetition and rigorous training from childhood in order to obtain a specific aesthetic. For many children who are raised in a dance environment more focused on other areas of dance, competitions for example, the traditional ballet discipline may seem tedious, unhelpful, and unnecessary. The aim of my research was to break this mold and teach ballet in a way that was relatable to all dance students and make ballet something they value and enjoy.

In order to do this, it is important to first understand what dance and dance education are. As defined by Gayle Kassing and Danielle M. Jay, dance education is the education of the learner through the media of dance, dance making, and dance appreciation. Dance is the human body rhythmically moving through space and time with energy and effort. Dance engages physical, mental, and spiritual attributes and can be a “work of art, a cultural ritual, social recreation, or an expression of a person” (Kassing and Jay, 4). Kassing and Jay’s work suggests what to look for from students during dance instruction, such as proper technique. They inform readers on the subject of how to structure a dance class, regardless of style, in a constructive and organized way for both the student and the instructor. Their book’s description of the three types of learning, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, helps clarify ways of teaching and relaying information in ways that resonate with students. Additionally, Kassing and Jay’s techniques and ideas on “observing and analyzing the teaching and learning situation” demonstrate the usefulness of observational notes (34).

Researching innovative pedagogical ideas and philosophies was an integral part of my work. James H. Humphrey, leader in the field of physical education, provides an explanation of the ways dance can help children develop physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Humphrey also offers curriculum suggestions and ways to motivate students, intrinsically and extrinsically, in relation to his or her developmental stage. Extrinsic motivation is the application of incentives in an external way to achieve a desired performance, such as awards and treats.

Intrinsic motivation is more autonomous and requires the determination of the individual to maintain their performance (Humphrey, 63-64). Along these lines I also found it important to research the scientific developmental stages of the age groups I would be teaching, ages eleven through seventeen. Developmental psychologist John W. Santrock, helps readers to better understand the physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development that occurs in children during middle to late childhood, as well as, adolescence. This information, seen in appendix A, allowed me to appropriately assess the progress of my students in relation to what they are capable of at their developmental stage. This way I could be sure I was not pushing my students beyond their available cognitive, physical, and emotional limit while still keeping high expectations.

Since a significant portion of the study was based on whether or not my students made noticeable improvements through my instruction, it was important for me to understand how to evaluate my students. Kassing and Jay and Humphrey all provide useful methods of doing so. I also referred to research done by Gwendolyn Hamm and Mary Deane Sorcinelli, as well as Carol A. Wood and Susan Gillis-Kruman. These scholars offer explicit ideas on how to define improvement in a dance class and provide samples of evaluation forms and grading systems. Wood and Gillis-Kruman also discuss specific structures and strategies to help instructors make class more accessible to those unfamiliar with dance or a particular dance style, such as consolidating information and using imagery (78).

Another essential aspect of this study was how I conducted my research. Dance, being an inherently subjective field, proved very difficult to research in a scientific way. Each person may have different opinions on what they think is correct, or important to teach. There is not one way to move, there are many. As a result, I took a different approach to conducting this study. I used a postpositivist approach to researching my subject of dance instruction. Positivist research is commonly considered the traditional method of research, and is also known as the scientific method (Green and Stinson, 93). Soon after beginning my study, I realized that researching in a strictly scientific way would severely inhibit me from drawing reasonable and comprehensible

conclusions. Dance is a subjective art, as is the structure of every dance class and the methods used by each dance teacher.

I was pointed toward trying a postpositivist approach instead. Through the direction provided by Jill Green and Susan W. Stinson in their paper *Postpositivist Research in Dance*, I was able to find a much broader range in the possibilities of my research. Green and Stinson define postpositive research as “the extension of the scientific method to the study of human beings” (91). It allows for more flexibility in the framework of research to account for different opinions, human error, and the idea that there may be more than one conclusion to a research question. Every classroom is different. My research may have had dissimilar conclusions if I had different students, was teaching jazz rather than ballet, or if I was teaching in a city rather than the suburbs. As a result, I needed to look at my results and interpret them in the context of my situation rather than try to prove or disprove a hypothesis. However, this does not make my conclusions any less credible. The results have merit because they are adaptable and relatable to other situations within the field of dance instruction. This study is relevant within the dance field and presents a new opinion to a vaster bank of generalizable knowledge in dance pedagogy (Green & Stinson, 96-98).

Objectives

The goal of my research was not only to teach students proper ballet technique, but to also refine my own teaching skills. My aim was to discover what techniques work best in presenting information to my students, and how to create a comfortable and fun learning environment that was also structured and disciplined. Exploring the appropriate student-teacher relationship, the process of forming and planning a class, as well as the delivery of steps and technique during class, were of the utmost importance. As such, the documentation of my own progress, as well as that of my students, will provide the field of dance instruction with another, valuable perspective on effective methods of teaching movement.

My overall questions were about the teaching process itself. As a teacher, what is the best way to deliver information to my students? What is the best way to deliver corrections and constructive criticisms? How can I, as the teacher, be most effective in my students' progress in and out of the classroom setting? What is the best way to evaluate and track progress? Is it in actual performance, ability to do the steps, or in gained confidence and understanding of the discipline? The following study provided many answers to these questions.

Methods

In September 2012 I began my research at Pickerington Dance Academy in Pickerington, Ohio. This dance academy is considered a “competition school,” primarily focusing on the preparation of its most advanced students to compete in various local dance competitions in the techniques of jazz, tap, and lyrical dance. I was hired as a dance instructor at this school, where I would teach primarily ballet classes. I chose my two most advanced classes, one called the “Senior Competition Line Ballet Class” and the other called the “Junior Competition Line Ballet Class” as the subjects of my research. For the purposes of this paper I will refer to these as my Senior and Junior classes respectively. I chose these two classes not only because they were the most advanced dancers, but also because they were classes I taught twice a week at hour and a half intervals. This gave me ample time to carry out my study and try as many methods and ideas as possible throughout the course of my research. The study was seven months long. This allowed a sufficient amount of time to work with my students, my new methods of teaching, and an extended period of time to observe student progress.

There were seven students, ages eleven to thirteen, in the Junior class, and six students, ages twelve to seventeen, in the Senior class. This class size was both small enough to allow for individual attention to each student and large enough to warrant general group corrections and feedback. I was aware that my students had not been thoroughly trained in ballet. Before I arrived, the students had not had a formal ballet teacher and had only been required to take ballet in order to remain on the competition team. Therefore, before I became the instructor, ballet was

not valued by the studio and was not taken as seriously as other dance forms, such as jazz and tap. This was not because the instructors at Pickerington Dance Academy did not find ballet useful, but rather because ballet is not a dance form the students compete. As a result, more time was spent working on jazz, tap, and lyrical, rendering ballet as unimportant and irrelevant in the minds of the students. In order to be successful in my study, I knew this mentality had to change. I began the year by requiring my students to wear a solid colored leotard, preferably black, along with pink, black, or tan tights. Their hair also had to be secured into a bun or hairstyle that kept hair neatly away from the face. This had not been the norm previously, and immediately gave the classroom environment a new attitude. The class atmosphere changed from being sloppy and flippant to orderly and disciplined. This was a good first step in demonstrating that a neat appearance is reflected in the quality of dance.

My main method for keeping track of both my own progress and that of my students was in the form of observational notes. According to Kassing and Jay, “constant observation provides a teacher with feedback for the student, teaching strategies, classroom management, and formative and summative evaluations of each student in the class” (34). I kept an observational journal in which I took notes during every class session. This included general observations that encompassed everything that went on before, during and after class, as well as ongoing information about my process. Included were technical observations about the execution of the students’ movement, and kinesthetic observations on the practical application of kinesiology to dance technique (Kassing & Jay, 34-40). I also took notes about the concepts and technical elements I introduced in my class and the way my students responded to these new ideas. Additionally, I formed a syllabus for each class. Although typical syllabi create plans for each class in a time-line fashion, I composed my syllabi based upon the major concepts and themes that I wanted my students to understand throughout the course of our time together.

Ballet classes are all structured in a similar fashion. Dancers begin at the barre with pliés then continue onto tendus, dégagés, rond de jambe, frappes, fondues and grand battement exercises. Dancers then begin center work with an adagio, followed by movement across the

floor, including pirouettes and both petite and grand allegro. With the structure of these classes already in place, I had leeway to tailor the other elements of my class to my choosing. As part of my research, I chose to focus on specific major themes and concepts that were not only the basis for ballet, but other dance forms as well. This way I could show my students how relatable ballet was to the other dance forms that they study. By showing this comparison, and linking ballet technique with the other forms of dance, the concepts that were introduced became much more accessible to the students. More importantly, the students became more engaged and responsive once given this practical application.

I focused on basic concepts and themes such as the use of plie and tendu, the articulation of the feet and legs, épaulement, and ballet vocabulary throughout each class. However, each week's emphasis was placed on one of the following specific elements: Kassing and Jay's three styles of learning (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), precision and energy efficiency, alignment and placement, dance expression, strength and stability, resistance and control, and total body integration. Each lesson plan was the same for both Junior and Senior classes, and I would simply modify the steps to the needs of the particular class. On certain weeks, however, the concepts in the syllabus were primarily for my benefit as an instructor. These themes included internal and external motivation, feedback and corrections, as well as imagery. I recorded the methods I used in class, along with the successes and failures of both my students and myself. Additionally, I noted overarching corrections for my students, answers to research questions, and other pertinent information. With these notes, I was able to pinpoint what were the most effective ways for the students to learn and improve.

Another important tool I used in my research was video documentation. I took two videos during the course of my research. The first was filmed in the beginning of my study. I recorded each class in full, with steps and combinations appropriate to my students' level at the time. Then, at the end of the study I recorded another class session for both my Juniors and Seniors to document their progress. For the latter video I gave exercises that were more difficult than those in the former video because my students progressed to a more challenging level of ballet. By

comparing the two videos, I had tangible evidence demonstrating where students had improved and what areas still needed work.

For additional benefit, students were given surveys and questionnaires at random intervals throughout the project. Some were taken in a verbal interview setting and others using written forms. There were a total of three verbal surveys in which I asked the class a question to which they could voluntarily respond. The first survey was during the first lesson, as a way for me to become familiarized with each student. They were asked to provide their name, age, favorite style of dance and their feelings about ballet. From this information I could assess the best way to approach the new students in class. The second oral interview was taken at the four-week mark. During this survey the students were asked to give an opinion on how the class was progressing thus far. I wanted to know what my students thought about the difficulty level of their lessons, and what they liked and disliked about the class. This survey allowed me to make adjustments to my teaching methods and class format early on in my study and prepare new techniques. A third verbal questionnaire, given in during the seventeenth week, posed two questions to my students. The first pertained to a ballet we had watched on video. I wanted to know their observations after watching other dancers perform ballet. What did they notice about the performance techniques, and how could they apply these techniques to their own dancing? Along with feedback on the video, I was also curious to find out how my use of imagery in teaching had affected my students thus far. I often used imagery while teaching; however, its effectiveness was difficult to gauge. I was interested to know if my students noticed my use of imagery, and, if so, was it useful for them when learning new ballet concepts.

For the written surveys, I developed two questionnaires for my students to fill out. One was given at our halfway point in December, with five questions for the students to answer. Each question was designed to not only mark their progress in my class, but to also address my progress as a teacher. The first question asked if and how my ballet class differed from previous ballet classes they had taken. I then asked once again about the difficulty level in the class and whether they felt it was appropriate for their group. I also inquired about how they assessed their

improvement up until that point, what they enjoyed about the class, and what they would change. The second written survey was given in the last week of the study. This was more of a self-evaluation than a questionnaire. Self-assessment of students in a dance class is very important because it allows them to evaluate themselves in relation to movement (Hamm & Sorcinelli, 38). I also thought it would be interesting for them to take an inward look at their own progress throughout the year and express to me in what ways they felt they had improved or fallen short. This self-evaluation consisted of a grading scale from one to five, with one being poor and five being excellent, in six different benchmark areas. Benchmarks, which help emphasize key concepts and themes, were used in order to mark improvement (Hamm & Sorcinelli, 38-39; Wood & Gillis-Kruman, 76). The benchmarks most relevant and useful for my study were general ballet technique, musicality and rhythm, alignment and placement, precision and energy efficiency, resistance and control, and total body integration. On the self-evaluation, students were first instructed to grade themselves on these benchmarks in relation to where they believed their technique was in the beginning of the study. In a second section, they were to grade themselves in relation to where they thought their technique was at the end of the study. The last section asked students to make final comments on the teaching styles, corrections, feedback, and their relationship to the teacher in this class.

Since benchmarks were an integral part of analyzing my data, it is important to understand the details of each benchmark. General technique included the basic elements of ballet such as turnout, extension of the leg, turning and jumping ability, and dance vocabulary. Musicality and rhythm referenced how well the dancer could count the music while dancing to it and filling out the music, or dancing to every beat. Alignment and placement, along with precision and energy, were very important units in my study and refer respectively to the correct positioning and “squareness” of the body while dancing, and how clear and articulate the movement was. Resistance and control dealt with the use of strength and control in the body while dancing. This benchmark also involved the use of proper muscles such as the ideas that the action of the muscle is to pull not push, and that muscles oppose gravity to produce movement

and maintain a position (Kassing & Jay, 37). The last benchmark, total body integration, is an umbrella term used to incorporate all of the themes and concepts we had talked about during my study into movement practice. This includes the use of muscles, épaulement with head and arm movement, proper placement, precision, and proper technique. I described it to my students as taking all of the puzzle pieces of ballet we had been working with and putting them together into one big, beautiful puzzle.

Results and Discussion

By taking a postpositivist approach to analyzing my data, I was able to freely draw conclusions on my research. Since most of my data was qualitative and not quantitative, I could look at all of my data and make discoveries based on what I saw rather than what was proven. I was also open to the possibility that my findings would be different than the findings of others doing a similar study because my circumstances were very particular to my study. What I concluded is only the beginning of what could be hundreds of possible answers to the questions I posed, which in itself is thrilling (Green & Stinson, 91-98).

Video Documentation and Benchmark Assessment

The most telling results came from video documentation. Supported by observational notes as well as the surveys and questionnaires, the videos showed concrete “before and after” footage from the study. This was the least subjective element of the data because, even to an outside viewer who was not educated in dance, obvious changes and improvements could be observed in the dancers from the first “before” video to the second “after” video. I will be referring to the video taken in the beginning of my study as video A, and the footage from the end of my study as video B. By looking at these videos side by side, I was able to chart changes in characteristics of the movement based on what exercise they were performing and the benchmarks used to assess them (Appendix B). By looking at changed movement execution in my students I was able to judge how effective my teaching style and methods were for my students.

I found a significant improvement in general technique. My students had entered my classroom with little knowledge and understanding of basic ballet technique. In video A, it was clear that no students in either class knew the importance of using ones turnout muscles to engage the leg while dancing, nor did they understand how to use their abdominal muscles to hold their body tall and straight, or their upper back muscles to hold their arms light and extended away from their bodies. All of these muscular concepts are very important basics in ballet technique that must be understood before any steps can be given. In all, it was the basic kinesthetic, or body awareness principles that were lacking in students' dancing at the beginning of the year. This can be seen in the video through their swayed backs, unengaged abdominal muscles, turned in legs, bent knees, non-pointed feet, and arms whose elbows are pointing toward the floor.

In video B, this basic understanding of general technique had significantly improved. The engagement of turnout was clear and the uses of other muscle groups were present as well. This could be seen in the increased number of turns they were able to perform, the height and power in their jumps both big and small, as well as the height at which students could hold their leg extension. Their arms were also held more softly, yet still strong, in a way that allowed for proper use and gave a more pleasing aesthetic appearance. Video B showed students who were much more aware of their technique and who could now utilize this new understanding of ballet to progress forward. I was also able to make the technique used in the classes gradually more challenging and complex as the study continued. There is, however, much more to be learned, especially in regards to constant use of turnout and articulation of movement, but it was clear that my students have the drive and ability to continue to improve.

There was an obvious lack of clarity and precision in the exercises the students were performing in video A. Ballet is meant to be clean and exact. However, the students in video A did not demonstrate clear positions, such as first and fifth position during exercises, and their combinations were blurred and careless. Proper upper body movement was negligible in video A, and extra movement in the hips and ribs muddled the combinations. Added, undefined

movement was a distraction for both the audience and the dancer. This also affected how much energy students exerted during a step. It takes a significantly higher amount of energy to perform extra hip and upper body movement when performing an exercise. This wastes energy that could be better placed in leg or arm movement. However, the amount of excess movement visible in video B was considerably reduced. The students demonstrated more pristine positions that were fully reached and not disregarded, and clearly used strong core muscles to support the body while dancing. This was more prevalent in the upper body than in the hips, but improved understanding of this concept was clear. Video B also revealed that the students were more precise when moving slowly.

Body alignment and placement were also concepts I took notice of in both films. My students had previous understanding from other dance training of what is meant to be properly aligned or have a “square body” where the hips, ribs, and shoulders remain in mostly parallel alignment, however; they had not been taught how to execute this placement properly. Students had formed bad habits, especially in leg extension, in which they would use their gluteus maximus and thighs to lift their legs rather than turnout muscles and hamstrings. This habit, particularly when lifting the leg directly to the side or in reaching a retiré, caused the hips to displace and the spine to become crooked. While it may feel easier to lift the leg this way, it is not aesthetically pleasing. Also, keeping the pelvis directly underneath the shoulders, as well as keeping a straight spine in any step, makes movement much more clear. This helps in preparations for turns and jumps as well as allows for a much more stable base for balancing.

After reviewing video A at the start of the study, I knew alignment and placement would be an area that needed particular attention. Lessons focused specifically on alignment and placement for three weeks, and, after comparing video B to video A, I knew we had made great progress. It is, however, hard to break bad habits. While most combinations, like those done at the barre, demonstrated strong, proper alignment, other combinations, for example in the center without the barre, still showed evidence of displaced hips and swayed spines.

Another longer unit in this study that required specific attention was resistance and control. These are not ideas specifically articulated in a typical ballet class and are not concepts my students were familiar with. This idea refers to the proper use of muscles in the body to control and stabilize movement. There is an element of resistance in ballet, an almost taffy-like quality that elevates movement from being too soft to being strong and powerful. In video A, the students danced each step with a soft and meek air where there was no strength or power exhibited. There should always be a pull of the muscles occurring, and video A showed that my student's muscles were unengaged. The improvement seen in video B was noteworthy. This is a very difficult notion to understand and to see students understand where to use resistance and control in the smallest degree was encouraging. Resistance and control was most noticeable in their extensions, which now exhibited an element of strength. Simply by resisting gravity and using their muscles effectively, the student's extensions improved and they were able to fill out the music. The students still needed to apply resistance and control to bigger and faster movements, but it is now a plausible goal.

Musicality was an area I was confident in when the study began. The students were already being evaluated on musicality in the competitions they attend; therefore, it was already an area of focus at Pickerington Dance Academy. My students, as displayed by video A, could already count music well and keep up with most tempos and measure changes. What they did not understand however, was how to fill out this music. By this I mean using every count of the music and never finding a stopping place in the movement. Dancers should always feel like they are growing in the movement so that it does not become stagnant. This gives dance an added dynamic quality. Video B displayed an enriched use of the music, and the student's ballet work was more fluid and visually pleasing.

Total body integration was a main goal for overall improvement. I aimed for my students to be able to recognize how to integrate all of the concepts we had focused on in the study at one time. I did not delve into this concept until the end of my research because I needed to be sure my students had a strong base of knowledge before tackling this difficult concept. At the start of

the study they did not have any idea what total body integration was. Video A showed a lack of épaulement, or opposition in the body that allows for expression in balletic movement, no assimilation of the arms or head into movement, and the inability to focus on more than one theme at a time. Without these elements dancers can have an almost robotic look. It was easy to see when students were focusing on one concept, like turnout, over another. This left elements, such as arm position or articulation of the feet overlooked. Even though total body integration was still a new idea when I filmed video B, there were still noticeable improvements, particularly in the use of épaulement. There was much more expression in the use of the arms and head, which was previously very difficult. There were still moments of disconnect, but this is a concept that can be worked on for the remainder of their dancing career.

By watching the videos consecutively and in constant comparison, I noticed that my students had improved much more so in barre work than in center and across-the-floor work. They exhibited much better alignment, precision, and total body integration at the barre than in their center work, and were able to engage important muscles more easily at the barre. I have drawn two conclusions as to why this occurred based on my observational notes and surveys. First, I spent most of my class time at the barre. The barre is the most important part of class because it helps a dancer establish a solid core, as well as warm up before approaching the more difficult task of center work. My tendency was to spend more than half of the allotted class time at the barre, leaving less time to practice in the center. Second, I deduced that my dancers had shown more improvement at the barre than in center work because they were still in the process of building their strength. The barre provides stability for the dancer to hold onto while moving, and this assistance is not present in center work. In the center, the dancer must rely on his or her strength to for support. The students were still in the process of building strength, and because my students now have such a strong work ethic at the barre, as seen in video B, development in center and across-the-floor work could happen, given more time.

Teaching Methods

After studying the improvements observed in both classes, I was able to analyze my teaching style and its effect on student's progress. By reviewing observational notes, surveys and questionnaires taken during the study, I was able to discover which teaching methods I used worked, and which ones were not as effective.

The most important element in pedagogy was my relationship with my students. The student-teacher relationship is very delicate. As a teacher, it is of the utmost importance to establish rapport with students before attempting to help them learn. Students need to know that they can trust the teacher, especially in an environment as delicate as a dance classroom, where body and appearance are under constant criticism. Upon my arrival, I made it clear that I wanted to help my students improve their ballet technique. I helped them see how important ballet was to their overall training and made sure I was able to relate to them. This helped my students respond to me in a way better than I imagined. I found that even though I was strict and had high expectations, my students had a respect for me that aided in their own improvement. Throughout the study, this student-teacher relationship strengthened. My students now feel comfortable asking questions or sharing humorous moments. As relationships strengthened, the atmosphere of the classroom became comfortable, friendly, and productive. Gaining my students' trust enabled me to address corrections and feedback more directly. I knew that my students understood why I was giving these corrections and were willing to accept the feedback. However, on rare instances, I felt the relationship had crossed the very thin line between being a friend and being an authority figure in the classroom. Occasionally, time was wasted talking about irrelevant information, or students acted in a lax fashion unsuitable for a ballet classroom. It was necessary, at times, to remind them that I was their teacher. On occasion, when I reprimanded the class, there was a tendency for students to close themselves off to criticisms I gave due to maturity and age level. These instances were unhelpful and could reverse progress.

This being said, the way I spoke to my students and what I said to them was critical. I found that when I gave instructions that were not explicit, my students were unresponsive, especially when I introduced a new theme to the class. When students were unsure of what I was

talking about they could not find relevant questions to ask me in order to understand the concept better. Instead, I had to be sure that I was being clear and articulate in explanations and corrections. Demonstrating movement with my body while explaining new concepts was an important addition. Feedback and its use in my class was a vital part of my study. Feedback is considered by some to be “the most important variable in controlling performance and learning” (Humphrey, 65). I had to find the distinction between not enough feedback, feedback that was not specific enough, and too much feedback. Wood and Gillis-Kruman warn against too much feedback because overloading a student with too much information can confuse a learner. If the teacher is also providing feedback after each movement, then the student begins to rely on the teacher for information rather than relying on their own introspective sense (78-79). Originally, I was not aware that these effects might occur because of excess feedback, and, as a result, saw some negative effects. Particularly during my unit on total body integration, I observed that my students could remember to use this concept only after I reminded them. If I did not mention total body integration however, things like *épaulement* or the use of both precision and alignment at the same time would once again become separate ideas. I had to learn to hold back on this type of corrective feedback in order for my students to learn to rely on their own memory, which had begun to show positive effects.

Corrections were an integral part of giving feedback. Sometimes it would seem as if I would give a correction repeatedly, and still my students could not exhibit the correct movement. It took several different methods of approaching this problem to figure out why corrections were not being applied. Explaining myself constantly did not seem to help, nor did having students reiterate the concepts for me. There was progress when I demonstrated the steps myself, but I found the most improvement when the students performed the correct techniques themselves and I physically maneuvered their bodies into the correct position. This also worked if I had the student demonstrate the incorrect movement and gave them verbal instructions in order to reach the correct position. This way they could sense in their own body how a movement should feel. Physical contact was also helpful in instruction because, once again, it permitted students to

experience exactly how a position or movement should feel in their body. This allowed muscle memory to occur. I did, however, have to ask students' permission to physically manipulate their body into the correct position. In our current society it is too presumptuous to assume that this notion of touching is appropriate, especially within a classroom setting. If a student did not want to be touched, I had to find another way of addressing the situation.

Use of feedback and corrections also tied into my use of motivation. Humphrey explains the importance of using extrinsic and intrinsic motivators (63-64). As a result, I built a unit into my study in which my students and I focused on how we could remain motivated in class. I first tried extrinsic motivation. The students were told that if they worked extremely hard, with no distractions or misbehaviors during that class time, they would be rewarded with a fun jazz combination. They responded to this immediately and worked hard to ensure they would learn something fun and familiar to them. I also tried candy rewards, which proved to be successful. Another week, I tried intrinsic motivation. I first had to find what could motivate them internally. Since I knew the importance the students placed on scoring well at competitions, I told them that if they continued to work hard in ballet, they would improve in their other areas of dance. I explained how ballet technique translated to all other styles of dance, and provided a strong foundation for other techniques. The relation of ballet to jazz, lyrical, and tap resonated strongly with my students and motivated them to work hard in my class. The prospect of possible success in competition and furthering their own technique was something they all understood, even if ballet was something they did not. It is also necessary to note that the sheer enjoyment of dance is another form of intrinsic motivation that was heavily emphasized during the study.

Imagery was another prominent method used in my class. It is essential to a dance class and for this reason I used it often. Despite its common use, I was still curious how imagery was affecting my own students. I administered a verbal questionnaire, which specifically asked if imagery did or did not benefit my students. The result was unanimous; all of my students not only noticed the use of imagery during class, but also found it extremely helpful. The students commented that they could use given images as examples or references to which they could

compare movement. This helped them think about the way movement should feel and look. Students also liked the images because they were fun. “We’re young!” remarked one of my students, “Fun images are much better than French.” Other students commented that using images helped them remember movement better and made corrections easier to apply. However, I had to be sure that I was using appropriate images. Incorrect or irrelevant images could inhibit students’ progress, especially since my students were using imagery so heavily. It was also helpful to provide many images for one step. This way, if one image did not relate with some students, hopefully another image would. Variety provided more opportunities for success.

The most significant discovery I made about my teaching methods was that a traditional ballet syllabus does not work for all students, mine in particular. As mentioned previously, most ballet instructors will typically base their class on one style or discipline of ballet. My students were not typical ballet students. They came from a school where ballet was valued less than dance styles in which they competed. Forcing a traditionally strict and difficult ballet technique on them was not only unproductive, but also seemed unfair and unreasonable. As a result, I used my study to form a different way of instructing ballet. After trying various methods, I found it most beneficial to focus instruction on the larger concepts in dance that can be used across styles and not just ballet. I came up with units based on outside research. By spending up to three weeks per unit, I could explain, in detail, each concept until students understood the main ideas. The units coincided with my benchmarks and included alignment, precision, total body integration, resistance and control, articulation of the legs and feet, plié, the three styles of learning, imagery, feedback, motivation, and dance vocabulary. Students were much more responsive when ballet was broken down into components such as these. They had time to work on each concept separately, as well as time to practice integrating and weaving these concepts together. Beyond ballet class, the students could also see how these units were interrelated with other styles of dance. This served as an important motivator and reward.

Several methods I tried during my study were not successful. I had fallen into a habit of saying the step out loud while my students were performing the exercises. I believed that saying

the steps along with them would help them remember the combination, however I was mistaken. On surveys and questionnaires, multiple students remarked that all this did was confuse them. They felt it was too hard to concentrate on my voice, the music, remembering the step and performing. They felt it was an overload of information. As a result, I stopped doing this. I also found that I talked too much during class. Being concise with my information not only made my explanations more clear, but also left more time in class for practicing movement. It was important to note that the duration of the study was too brief to expect tremendous results. While I am pleased and impressed with the amount of improvement in my students, I know that given additional time, more progress would have been made. A teacher cannot expect all progress to happen immediately. It takes time for a technique as difficult as ballet to resonate with young dancers.

Conclusion

Every teacher wonders how he or she can be most effective in a student's life. They want to know what teaching strategies help their students progress most successfully and how to make new information connect with their pupils. In the field of dance instruction, knowing the proper tools and methods to improve your practice is particularly vital. Through my seven-month study of teaching ballet classes at Pickerington Dance Academy, I was able to find alternative teaching methods, structure a functional and influential class for my students, and discover new ways in which I can be the most efficient teacher possible. By teaching ballet through important concepts rather than through a specific discipline, I was able to yield remarkable development in my students. I also discovered the importance of my relationship with my students, and that appropriate and honest feedback was a key tool for improvement. I learned to avoid certain habits, such as long-winded explanations and talking during exercises, in order to prevent hindering students' ability to learn. By taking a postpositivist approach to researching dance instructing methods, I was uninhibited by having to prove a hypothesis and free to make a wide range of conclusions that add a wealth of knowledge into the field of dance pedagogy.

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	<u>MIDDLE TO LATE CHILDHOOD</u>	
<u>Physical Development</u>	<u>Cognitive Development</u>	<u>Socioemotional Development</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brain Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased myelination improves speed in processing information on cognitive tasks and communication in the cerebral cortex ○ Changes in various structures and regions of the brain occur, such as the prefrontal cortex, which has a leadership and organizational role. This leads to advances in attention, reasoning, and cognitive control. • Motor Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Motor development becomes smoother and more coordinated ○ As children get older they gain greater control over their bodies, and need to be active because they are not yet physically mature ○ Ages 10-12 begin to show manipulative skills in fine motor skills similar to that of adults. They can master complex, intricate and rapid movements (good for arts and instruments). ○ At age 10, children can judge and intercept pathways of small balls thrown from distance; girls can vertically jump 10 inches, boys 11 inches • Exercise & Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 9 year old girls who were more physically fit showed better cognitive performance on cognitive control tasks that involved inhibiting task-irrelevant info to obtain correct solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Concrete Operational Thought</u>: Piaget says this stage lasts from ages 7-11; Children can perform concrete operations and reason logically as long as they can apply their reasoning to specific or concrete examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Seriation</u>: The ability to order stimuli along a quantitative dimension such as length ○ <u>Transitivity</u>: The ability to logically combine relations to understand certain conclusions ○ Some criticize Piaget's theory because not all children develop the same way in every part of the world <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Neo-Piagetians</u> argue that Piaget got some things right, but that his theory needs revision and greater emphasis needs to be placed on how children use attention, memory, and strategies to process information • Application to Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Piaget says that children learn best when they are active and seek solutions for themselves, learn by making discoveries, reflecting on them and discussing them rather than blindly imitating teacher ○ Teachers should facilitate rather than direct learning. Design situations where kids learn by doing, observe and find out what students think, & have them explain answers ○ Consider the child's knowledge and level of thinking. Their ideas differ from adult's ideas; acknowledge this. ○ Use ongoing assessment • Memory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Long-term memory</u>, a relatively permanent & unlimited type of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Self <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At 8-11 years of age, children increasingly describe themselves with psychological characteristics and traits in contrast to more concrete self-descriptions of younger children ○ Children are more likely to recognize social aspects of the self (social groups) ○ Increasing reference to social comparison in self-evaluation ○ There is an increase in <u>perspective taking</u>, or the ability to assume other people's perspectives & understand their thoughts and feelings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Around ages 10-11, children can start to become skeptical of some sources of info about psychological traits and others self-evaluations (smart, honest, nice) ○ <u>Self-esteem</u> (global evaluations of the self, self-worth and image) & <u>self-concept</u> (domain-specific evaluation of self; academic, athletic, appearance, ect) become increasingly important ○ Increased capacity for <u>self-regulation</u>, or the ability to manage one's behaviors, emotions, and thoughts that lead to increased competence & achievement • Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved emotional understanding ○ Children can now understand complex emotions like pride, shame; emotions become more self-generated and

	<p>memory, increases. Improvements in memory reflect this and they start to retain information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At ages 10-11, children can gain expertise and extensive knowledge in a subject ○ Learning strategies are important when developing long term memory and essential for children to process information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Critical Thinking</u>: Thinking reflectively and productively, evaluating evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Mindfulness</u>: Being alert, mentally present, and cognitively present in everyday tasks ○ <u>Creative Thinking</u>: The ability to think in novel and unusual ways to come up with unique solutions to problems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some students will show more creative thinking in different domains than others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extrinsic & Intrinsic Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Extrinsic</u>: external incentives like rewards & punishments ○ <u>Intrinsic</u>: internal factors like self-determination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery Motivation & Mindset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children show two distinct responses to difficult or challenging circumstances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Mastery motivation</u>: Child is a task oriented individual, instead of focusing on abilities they concentrate on learning strategies and process of achievement rather than outcome ▪ <u>Helpless orientation</u>: Child seems trapped by experience of difficulty & attribute to lack of ability ○ Children should develop a <u>mindset</u>, or a cognitive view that individuals develop for themselves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Fixed Mindset</u>: They 	<p>integrated with a sense of personal responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased understanding that more than one emotion can be experienced in a particular situation ○ Increased tendency to be aware of events leading to emotional reaction ○ Ability to suppress or conceal negative emotional reactions ○ Can use self-initiated strategies for redirecting feelings; more reflective about emotional lives & use strategies to control them ○ Now have the capacity for genuine empathy ○ Can now learn how to cope with stress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As children grow older they can more accurately appraise stressful situations & determine how much control they have over it ▪ Older children can generate more coping alternatives and are better at shifting thoughts to something less stressful ▪ By age 10 most are able to use cognitive strategies to cope with stress
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	<p>believe that their qualities cannot change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Growth Mindset: They believe their qualities can change and improve through their effort, like mastery motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Efficacy: The belief that one can master a situation and produce favorable outcomes, important for children to develop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This influences a child's choice of activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low SE causes avoidance of challenging activities/tasks, while high SE helps child expend effort & persist longer at learning a task <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal Setting, Planning, & Self-Regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SE and achievement improve when individuals set goals that are specific, proximal, and challenging ○ Children can set long and short term goals ○ They should set challenging goals to help commit to self improvement ○ Adults should encourage how to plan and reach goals ○ Children need to stick to a plan that adults should monitor progress & evaluate 	
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<u>ADOLESCENCE</u>		
<u>Physical Development</u>	<u>Cognitive Development</u>	<u>Socioemotional Development</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Transitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Cognitive Changes</i>: Adolescents have increased abstract, idealistic, and logical thinking; they think in more egocentric ways; they sense they are onstage, unique, invulnerable ○ <i>Socioemotional Changes</i>: Adolescents are on a quest for independence and spend less time with parents and more time with peers; achievement is more serious business & academic challenges increase ○ <i>Puberty and Hormonal Changes</i>: Body image becomes an issue and they become preoccupied with the way they look • The Brain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The corpus collosum, which connects the left & right brain hemispheres, thickens to improve ability to process information ○ The prefrontal cortex develops allowing more development in reasoning, decision making and self control, but is not fully developed until early adulthood ○ The amygdala, which is the seat of emotions like anger, is almost fully developed ○ Adolescents do not have full capacity to control all emotions or urges yet • Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children become less active as they move through adolescence ○ Exercise has positive links to healthy weight and health status ○ Physical exercise may be buffer against stress and improve mental health and life satisfaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows for improved self image, higher self-esteem, higher gpa, less depression, and better relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piaget’s fourth and final stage of cognitive development begins – <u>Formal Operational Stage</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adolescents can think more abstractly. They can create hypothetical situations and logically reason them; begin to think about thought itself ○ Thoughts of idealism and possibilities, speculation about <u>ideal characteristics</u> (qualities they desire in themselves & others) ○ Adolescents can think more logically about abstract concepts; they can devise plans to solve problems and systematically test solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Hypothetical-deductive reasoning</u>: The ability to develop hypothesis to solve problems ○ This is biased <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many may not reach this stage in other cultures & this theory doesn’t take into account much influence of culture & education • <u>Adolescent Egocentrism</u>: A heightened self-consciousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Imaginary Audience</u>: The belief that others are as interested in them as they themselves are & attention getting behavior ○ <u>Personal Fable</u>: A sense of uniqueness or invincibility; bad things that happen to other people won’t happen to them; adolescents will engage in risky behaviors; they believe that no one can understand how they really feel • Information Processing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is considerable variation in cognitive functioning; adolescents are producers of their own development ○ <u>Executive functioning</u>: higher order cognitive activities like reasoning, making decisions, monitoring thinking critically, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attachment of identity and development of sense of self ○ <u>Crisis</u>: The period of identity development where adolescents explore alternate identities ○ <u>Commitment</u>: A personal investment in identity ○ <u>4 statuses of identity</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Identity Diffusion</u>: Adolescents have not yet experienced any crisis or commitment, little interest ▪ <u>Identity Foreclosure</u>: Adolescents have made a commitment but not experienced crisis; they have been handed down responsibility before the chance to explore their own interests ▪ <u>Identity Moratorium</u>: Adolescents are in crisis, but have no commitments yet ▪ <u>Identity Achievement</u>: Adolescents have undergone crisis and made a commitment • Emotional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is a time of emotional turmoil. There are highs and lows of emotion increase and decrease. ○ Adolescents do not know how to express their emotions well; being able to control emotions is an important aspect of adolescent development ○ Pubertal changes are linked with negative emotions, but are in conjunction with other influences; moods become less extreme as they move into adulthood

	<p>and monitoring one's own cognitive process; more effective learning and improved ability to determine how attention should be allocated to make decisions and think critically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Decision Making:</i> Adolescence is a time of increased decision making. As they get older they are more likely to see risks and anticipate consequences; they develop the ability to regulate emotions during decision making, to remember prior decisions & consequences improve with age; they need more opportunities to practice and discuss realistic decision making ▪ <i>Dual Process Model:</i> Decision making is influenced by two cognitive systems (analytical & experiential) that compete; <u>experiential</u> (monitoring and managing actual experience) benefits decision making not analytical, some say benefit from both ▪ <i>Critical Thinking:</i> Now able to think reflectively and productively & evaluate evidence; adolescents develop increased speed, automaticity, & capacity for information processing, more breadth of content info in variety of domains, more ability to construct new combos of knowledge, more range & more spontaneous use of strategies for obtaining & applying knowledge <p>○ Memory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Short Term Memory:</u> More storage space, changes in speed & efficiency of information processing ▪ <u>Working Memory:</u> The "mental workbench" where information is manipulated & assembled to help make decisions, solve problems and comprehend; in a 	
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	developmental period until age 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>Long Term Memory:</u> Increases substantially in late childhood and continues through adolescence	
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Video Analysis

Junior Competition Line Ballet Class

Exercise:	Video A	Video B
<i>Tendu in First Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are not holding themselves with core muscles – gives a limp look - Students are not holding arms in the correct position - Students are working with bent knees and un-pointed, unarticulated feet - No use of head movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are using core muscles to hold themselves taller & straighter - Better use of head movement (obvious attempt) - Students are able to perform a more complicated step - Students exhibit better balance (use of core muscles)
<i>Tendu in Fifth Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are unable to perform basic, fluid transitions between directions - No visible use of turnout muscles which makes 5th position unclear - Same comments as above concerning not holding bodies, arms and lack of use of head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are able to perform more direct pathways and positions because of better placement - Slightly off the music counts - Arms much more fluid, and students show a conscious effort in using them correctly - Students were given a more difficult balance to perform – a little bit shaky
<i>Dégagés in First Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students perform the step with their legs too high – should only be about 2 inches off the ground - Noticeable extra hip movement, result of not using abdominal and core muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students now perform the step with legs too low – overcorrection - Students have a slight bend in the knee, but much straighter than video A
<i>Dégagés in Fifth Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are not exhibiting clean positions (5th position) – they tend to swing through the position rather than complete the movement - Students are not using turnout muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students exhibit good use of core muscles during faster dégagés as well as little excess upper body movement - Students perform passé with good placement of the hips - Improved placement of the hips in a low arabesque
<i>Rond de Jambe à Terre:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students perform rond de jambe with bent knees, unclear first positions, and without going through the full movement - No use of turnout muscles - No use of resistance and control – no dynamic quality to the exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students perform movement much more fully, tracing all important parts of the exercise - Better use of resistance and control – more dynamic - Noticeable use of épaulement - Students show much better alignment in hips, ribs and shoulders which is especially seen

		in higher and more proper placement of legs in extension
<i>Grand Battement:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students show a lot of excess hip movement - Students are not using proper musculature to lift legs (students are using their gluteus maximus and quad muscles) - Students did not display proper use of arms and head movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students perform the exercise with much straighter knees, but they could still improve here - Students properly and effectively use head and arms - Students use new knowledge of correct placement to lift legs correctly - There is less excess movement of hips and upper body, but still some is shown - Students are now brushing through the floor, which is important in this exercise
<i>Adagio:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students have no core control, which makes it difficult to perform this combination - Students have trouble following and using the music - Students do not yet have the strength to perform an adagio which does not make it dynamic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students now use all of the music which helps add a more dynamic quality - Students have now acquired more strength and control to help them perform - Much better use of épaulement - Adagio is a very difficult part of class and can always use more work
<i>Pirouettes:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students do not perform a clear preparation (tombe pas de bourre into a fourth position) - Students are not using any spotting technique or use of arms to help them turn - Students do not land or finish the turns - Passé in the pirouette is too low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students perform a much clearer preparation, however, 4th position is still slightly turned in – must fix this - Passé is at a proper height - Students use a better spotting technique (could still be sharper) and better arms - All of these elements have allowed my students to increase the amount of pirouettes they can perform
<i>Petite Allégro:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a correct use of plié and heels were firmly planted on the floor after each jump - Students did not demonstrate correct arms and did not land changement in 5th position - Students need to jump with straighter legs and more pointed feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students used arms correctly and landed in much clearer positions - Legs could still be straighter and feet more pointed in the air - Students exhibit better stamina in the amount of times they can repeat the combination

	in the air	
<i>Grand Allégro (Saut de Chat):</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are not preparing at all (tombe pas de bourre, glissade) - Students did not use arms and head correctly - Students did not use their plié in landing the jump, which makes the landing loud - Students had bent knees in the air and did not point their feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students used their arms, upper body, and head more appropriately - Students are landing jumps more quietly, but they are still louder than necessary - Students still exhibit bent knees and not pointed feet

Senior Competition Line Ballet Class

Exercise:	Video A	Video B
<i>Tendu in First Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are holding their arms incorrectly - The students are performing the step in a very robotic way with no épaulement - Students are not engaging their turnout muscles or their core muscles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are using nicely articulated and stretched feet - Students are exhibiting use of core muscles helping them stand staller with better posture - Students are able to remember a more difficult step
<i>Tendu in Fifth Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are not reaching clear positions or using clear transitions between steps - Students are not using a direct pathway to reach positions which wastes energy and makes the exercise look sloppy - Students are not using épaulement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students now perform more clear positions (5th) and use direct pathways to reach these positions - Students show a connection between their arms and legs (total body integration) as well as use of épaulement - Students are still displacing hips slightly in passé
<i>Dégage in First Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because students are not using any core muscles, there is a lot of excess movement - Legs are too high in dégage - Students are not holding their arms or upper bodies at all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are holding their upper body and hips more steadily - Students are held well before the combination begins - Students are performing dégage with legs too low which is an overcorrection - Legs in dégage are well stretched - Students show a slight tilt in arabesque balance – not proper rib alignment
<i>Dégagé in Fifth Position:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are exhibiting a lot of excess upper body movement and hip movement - In balancing, students tend to lean back and not keep a center of gravity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students exhibit much more control which means there is less excess body movement, better 5th positions and cleaner pathways - Students are using their core

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are not closing into clean 5th positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - muscles to hold their bodies straight - Students demonstrate clean pirouettes at the barre with well aligned passé positions
<i>Rond de Jambe à Terre:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students arms are very unclear, they do not reach any of the positions needed to complete proper arms - In rond de jame, students have bent knees, turned in legs and unarticulated feet - No demonstration of resistance and control in developé' section - Students do not know the combination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students show clear and proper arm and head movement - Students have improved on their ronde de jambe (straighter knees, use of turnout, full movement) - Students are able to perform a longer, more complicated combination, but some still had difficulty - Students' leg extensions are much higher and more properly aligned - Now that technique has improved, I expect more épaulement
<i>Grand Battement:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are kicking their legs instead of brushing them through the floor - Students demonstrate poor alignment - Students are exhibiting a lot of excess upper body movement and hip movement - Students are bending their knees (both working and standing legs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are brushing through the floor and using better alignment which helps their legs go higher - Instead of using hamstrings to help lift their legs, in order to maintain proper alignment students have begun to grip their hip flexers
<i>Adagio:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students have no core control which makes it difficult to perform this combination - Students not able to remember the combination - No use of épaulement - Students do not yet have the strength to perform an adagio which does not make it dynamic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students have now acquired more strength and control to help them perform - Students are able to remember a longer, more complicated exercise - Students use better épaulement, but could still improve - Students are still having trouble maintaining proper alignment in adagio
<i>Tendu in Center:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students have no core control, which makes it difficult to perform this combination. They are very wobbly and show no use of head and arms. - Feet are not articulated and knees are bent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students' core have grown visibly much stronger - Students demonstrate much better knowledge of how to use head and arms here
<i>Pirouettes:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students do not perform a clear preparation (tombe pas de bourre into a fourth position) and they prepare with heels up which is incorrect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students demonstrate a clear and proper preparation - Students perform properly placed passé and most are quick to reach

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students know decent spotting technique - Students' passé are too low and not sharp enough 	<p>this position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a result, all students are now able to perform double pirouettes
<i>Traveling Turns (Piqué, chaînés, soutenu):</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are stepping into turns with bent knees - Students are not crossing into 5th position in soutenu - Students are not controlling their arms or using them effectively - Students should use more plié in turn preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students show a much more effective use of plié and are stepping into turns with straight knees - Students are performing arms with much more control - Students could still make 5h position more clear in soutenu
<i>Waltz:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students look very robotic when performing waltz step and use incorrect arms and head movement - Students are doing the step correctly, but without any dynamics - It is clear this step is new to them - Students are not using any turnout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are able to waltz with much more fluidity - They could still find more dynamics in arm movement. They look unsure when using épaulement here which damages performance.
<i>Warm-up Jumps:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are unsure of what to do with their arms - Students did not land changement or echape in 5th position - Acceptable use of plié 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students have a noticeable understanding of the mechanics of jumping - Improved use of plié - Students used arms properly - Students now jump higher and with better upper body position
<i>Petite Allégro:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are visibly confused by the exercise - The foot does not connect in coupe during jete which is incorrect - Students are not jumping high enough - Students are not using any sort of arm movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are using arms which make sense - Students are performing jetes with correct foot placement - Students could still jump higher, they have shown slight improvement - Students are now able to perform more complicated petit allegro combinations
<i>Grand Allégro (Saut de Chat):</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students are not preparing at all (tombe pas de bourre, glissade) - Students did not use arms and head correctly - Students did not use their plié in landing the jump which makes the landing loud - Students had bent knees in the air and did not point their feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students used their arms, upper body and head more appropriately, but they could still reach more - Students are landing jumps more quietly, but are still louder than necessary - I now expect students to have higher jumps