



Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure[®]

TEST INFORMATION BOOKLET

46 Dance

MA-SG-FLD046-04

Massachusetts Department of Education

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Dance (Field 46)

Test Overview Chart

Sample Test Items

Answer Key and Sample Responses

Test Objectives

***Test Overview Chart:
Dance (46)***

Subareas	Approximate Number of Multiple-Choice Items	Number of Open-Response Items
I. Dance Skills and Concepts	18–20	2
II. Choreography	17–19	
III. Dance Production and History	17–19	

The Dance test is designed to assess the candidate's knowledge of the subject matter required for the Massachusetts Dance Teacher certificate. This subject matter knowledge is delineated in the Massachusetts Department of Education *Regulations for the Certification of Educational Personnel in Massachusetts* (April 1995), 603 C.M.R. 7.12, "Competencies for Specific Certificates," Section (24) (a) 2. "Competency I: Subject Matter Knowledge."

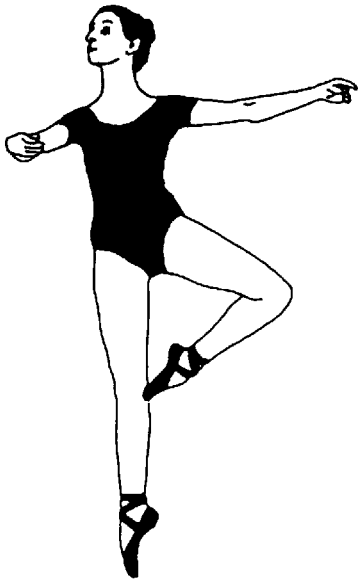
The Dance test assesses the candidate's proficiency and depth of understanding of the subject at the level required for a baccalaureate major, according to Massachusetts standards. Candidates are typically nearing completion of or have completed their undergraduate work when they take the test.

The multiple-choice items on the test cover the subareas as indicated in the chart above. The open-response items may relate to topics covered in any of the subareas and will typically require breadth of understanding of the Dance field and the ability to relate concepts from different aspects of the field. Responses to the open-response items are expected to be appropriate and accurate in the application of subject knowledge, to provide high-quality and relevant supporting evidence, and to demonstrate a soundness of argument and understanding of the Dance field.

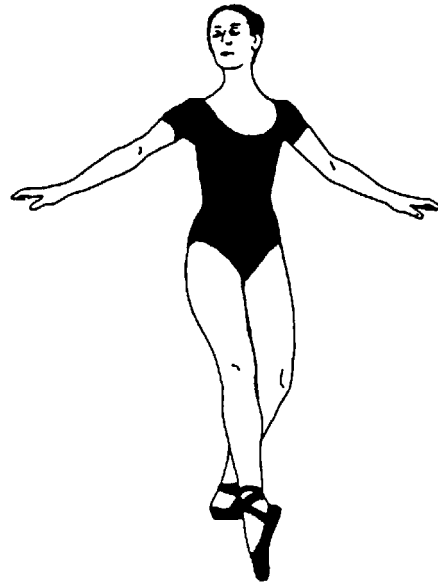
Sample Test Items:
Dance (46)

1. Which of the following illustrations shows proper placement of the feet in a *cou-de-pied devant* position?

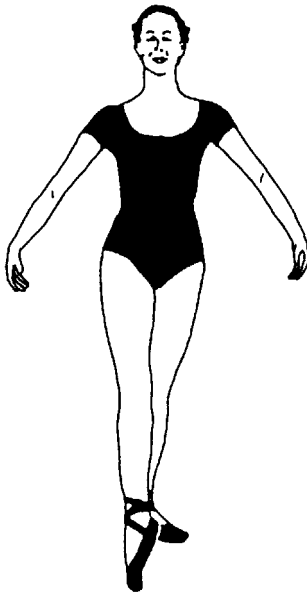
A.



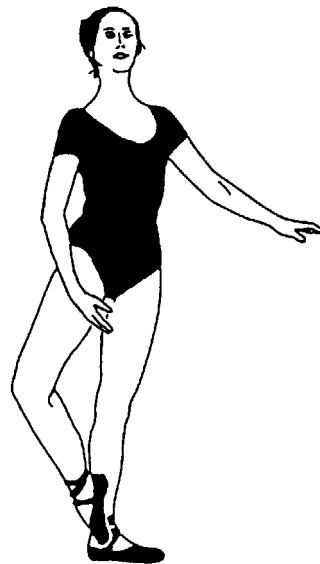
B.



C.



D.



2. A jazz dancer is performing a warm-up exercise in which he moves only his head, then only his shoulders, then only his ribcage, and so on until he has warmed up each area of his body in this way. This type of warm-up exercise is known as:
- A. isolation.
 - B. contraction.
 - C. progression.
 - D. flexion.
3. In dance, which of the following is a common cause of a strained knee joint?
- A. repeated flexing and releasing of the muscles surrounding the knee
 - B. improperly fitting clothing and shoes
 - C. poor alignment between the thigh and ankle
 - D. prolonged weight distribution over a single supporting leg
4. Three dancers are performing the same steps simultaneously. One dancer is positioned center stage right, one dancer is positioned center stage, and the other dancer is positioned center stage left. This use of balance is most likely to serve which of the following functions?
- A. focusing on individual interpretations of the movements
 - B. producing an impression of stability
 - C. establishing one dancer as dominant
 - D. creating strong visual tension
5. In dance, which of the following compositional forms consists of a basic theme that returns between sections of contrasting material?
- A. rondo
 - B. canon
 - C. collage
 - D. AB

6. A dance teacher wishes to help her students recognize that dance can be a process in itself and does not always have to result in a final performance product. Which of the following activities would be most appropriate to achieve this goal?
- A. having the students work in small groups to break down a given sequence of steps into its separate parts and master each step
 - B. having the students work as a group as they improvise to a simple piece of music or rhythm
 - C. having the students work in pairs to develop a dance sequence to teach to the other pairs
 - D. having the students work individually to practice a given sequence of steps over an extended period of time
7. Choreographer Katherine Dunham has made a major contribution to the preservation and understanding of traditional forms of dance by:
- A. establishing a dance company whose primary purpose was the recreation of folk and ethnic dances from around the world.
 - B. incorporating traditional African, Caribbean, and African-American dance forms into contemporary modern dance.
 - C. bringing dance troupes from Africa and the Caribbean to perform folk and ethnic dances for audiences throughout the United States.
 - D. documenting traditional folk and ethnic dances from around the world and analyzing thematic similarities among them.

8. A lighting designer is preparing a lighting plot for a realistic dance. One scene includes a romantic interlude between two characters on a moonlit terrace. To establish a realistic setting, which of the following effects would be most appropriate for the designer to include?
- A. a blackout
 - B. amber frosted light
 - C. cool-colored lights
 - D. warm-colored lights
9. Which of the following types of dance is typically performed to music in $\frac{3}{4}$ time?
- A. adagio
 - B. polka
 - C. waltz
 - D. Charleston
10. The use of dance in the study of somatics combines movement with which of the following other disciplines?
- A. language arts
 - B. physics
 - C. mathematics
 - D. psychology

11. **Use the information below to complete the exercise that follows.**

The work of some choreographers is characterized by departures from the conventions of form, style, and/or content used by earlier choreographers. Such innovative works may seem unusual, unorthodox, or individualistic at the time they are created but often become milestones in the development of dance.

Using your knowledge of dance, write an essay in which you discuss how the work of a particular choreographer represents a milestone in the development of dance. In your essay:

- identify a well-known choreographer whose work represents a departure from existing conventions of form, style, and/or content;
- describe a particular work by this choreographer that exemplifies such departures of form, style, and/or content; and
- analyze how this choreographer influenced the development of dance.

Answer Key and Sample Responses: Dance (46)

Question Number	Correct Response	Test Objective*
1.	D	Understand the fundamental skills and concepts of modern dance and ballet.
2.	A	Understand fundamental skills and concepts of jazz and tap dance and folk, social, character, and ethnic dance.
3.	C	Understand the nervous, muscular, and skeletal systems and principles of kinesiology and biomechanics as they relate to dance.
4.	B	Understand the concepts of time, space, shape, dynamics, and movement in dance.
5.	A	Understand choreographic principles, devices, and structures.
6.	B	Understand improvisational techniques used in dance.
7.	B	Understand the history of dance.
8.	C	Understand the fundamentals of costumes, makeup, stage areas, scenery, lighting, and sound equipment in dance and procedures for dance performances.
9.	C	Understand the relationship of dance to other art forms and other disciplines.
10.	D	Understand the relationship of dance to other art forms and other disciplines.

*Each test objective is clarified and further described by a descriptive statement, which provides examples of the types of knowledge and skills covered by the test objective. The test objectives for the Dance test begin on page 41.

The sample response below reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

Merce Cunningham is good example of a choreographer whose works are characterized by departures from the conventions of form, style, and/or content used by earlier choreographers. He departed from the existing ideas in dance and choreography. Earlier choreographers needed to have a logical structure to their works, but Cunningham did not, so he created dances without any relationship to set design, costumes, or music. In his dances, he doesn't focus on anything, so neither can the audience.

His works really did seem unusual, unorthodox, and individualistic when they first came out. In fact, they still do. The dances he choreographed are full of interesting costumes and music that don't have anything to do with the dancers or the movement of the dance. Audiences and critics seem to like his work, though, and he performs his dances in interesting places.

Merce Cunningham's works are influential because before he started choreographing, dance always kept a logical relationship to set design, costumes, and music. Cunningham didn't use conventions of form, style, and/or content. He came up with a different way of dancing and choreography.

The sample response below reflects a strong knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

The advent of Martha Graham's choreography was one of the most important milestones in dance history. In 1935, Graham premiered "Frontier," a solo that would become her signature piece during the second decade of her career. This short dance represented many firsts for Graham and would influence other dancers and choreographers for years to come.

Graham's previous works generally concerned primitive or puritanical matters and had used formalized movements and frozen facial expressions. In "Frontier," however, she went in another direction entirely, gesturing expansively, clasping her hands and flinging them apart, and allowing her emotions to show on her face. This new freedom on her part greatly enhanced her communication to the audience of her vision of the Western frontier. The set brought to mind sweeping vistas, the music evoked the excitement the pioneers who settled in the West represent, and the choreography--decisive and joyous, advancing across the stage, then scurrying back as if from a storm, then striking out again, ending with a bold pose of defiance by the fence--communicated the new freedom, fears, and strength the pioneers experienced.

The music for "Frontier," written by Louis Horst, was developed after the dance was created, and it too diverged from traditional paths. In the opening moments of the work, Graham slowly lifted her arm up and above her head. The music does not rise slowly with it, as the conventions of the time would have dictated. Rather the music was alive, quivering in excited action. This broader interpretation of the relationship between dance and music allowed a far greater variety of visual effects in Graham's works, and inspired generations of future choreographers to break free from the conventional uses of music to dictate movement.

The scenery used in "Frontier" also represented a major departure from the style of stage design at that time. Created by sculptor Isamu Noguchi, rather than by a painter or architect, as was the custom, the set consisted mainly of a segment of fence in the middle of the stage. Two ropes, anchored together behind the fence, radiated diagonally toward the back corners of the stage, until they disappeared from view. This design was meant to give the audience the impression of a fragile barrier holding off the wildness of the plains from the dancer's homestead. Prior to this innovative creation, sets for dance works had simply decorated the space, in the art nouveau style of Denishawn, leaving as much room as possible for the dancers. Noguchi's design helped to emphasize the wide-open spaces suggested by Graham's choreography, echoing her broad-stroked, high-flung movements.

Graham's innovative style and fearless approach to new ideas has made her a role model for many others in the dance world. She defended her ideas to such giants as Fokine and others in the ballet world, who were sharply critical of her work. Her own company members worshipped her, working slavishly with near fanatical devotion. Her pieces inspired books of photographs of her choreography, philosophical quotes of hers, and descriptive notes of her dancing. Most notably, however, her fearless innovation and rejection of more formal styles of dance inspired the creation of modern dance as we know it today. Her willingness to take risks and

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choreographer in opposition to the traditional ideas of ballet created a place in the dance world for such modern dance legends as Merce Cunningham, Jose Limon, and Twyla Tharp. Her style bypassed traditional notions of grace, beauty, and rhythm in favor of a freer and more visceral use of movement. The value of the gift she gave to the future of dance can not be underestimated.

Test Objectives:
Dance (46)

SUBAREAS:

DANCE SKILLS AND CONCEPTS
CHOREOGRAPHY
DANCE PRODUCTION AND HISTORY

DANCE SKILLS AND CONCEPTS

0001 Understand the fundamental skills and concepts of modern dance and ballet.

For example: types of axial and locomotor movement in modern dance; elements and interrelationships of space, time, and energy in modern dance; stationary warm-up techniques and their purposes; basic terminology in ballet and modern dance; the basic positions of the arms, feet, and body in ballet; directions of the body; types of barre techniques; types of center-floor combinations; and proper body alignment and weight distribution for various techniques.

0002 Understand fundamental skills and concepts of jazz and tap dance and folk, social, character, and ethnic dance.

For example: basic terminology associated with jazz and tap dance and with folk, social, character, and ethnic dance; kinds of jazz and tap dance; types of center warm-up techniques; types of combinations used in jazz and tap dance; proper body alignment and weight distribution for various techniques; types of folk, social, character, and ethnic dance and their characteristics; and dance patterns associated with folk, social, character, and ethnic dances.

0003 Understand the nervous, muscular, and skeletal systems and principles of kinesiology and biomechanics as they relate to dance.

For example: major skeletal structures of the body; muscles, tendons, and ligaments used in given dance movements and their functions; interactions among the nervous, muscular, and skeletal systems in movement; the use of principles of kinesiology and biomechanics to create illusion in dance and to improve dance technique; and the effects of a dancer's size and shape on movement potential.

CHOREOGRAPHY

0004 Understand the concepts of time, space, shape, dynamics, and movement in dance.

For example: the elements of time and space in movement; the relationships between time and movement and between space and movement; types and uses of shape in dance; the relationship between shape and space in dance; and movement concepts in dance.

0005 Understand choreographic principles, devices, and structures.

For example: factors to consider in choreography; aesthetic principles reflected in given choreographic decisions; choreographic structures; and staging for large ensembles, small ensembles, and solo work to achieve particular effects.

0006 Understand improvisational techniques used in dance.

For example: the relationship between improvisation and choreography; and the uses of improvisational techniques in movement study, solo work, and ensemble work.

DANCE PRODUCTION AND HISTORY

0007 Understand the fundamentals of costumes, makeup, stage areas, scenery, lighting, and sound equipment in dance and procedures for dance performances.

For example: the functions and effects of costumes; makeup principles and techniques; terminology related to stage areas; types and uses of scenery; types, characteristics, and functions of lighting, sound equipment, and design materials; the application of design concepts to lighting, sound, and scenery; procedures for warming up, cuing, and attending to final details before a dance performance; and responsibilities of personnel involved in performance production.

0008 Understand the history of dance.

For example: important individuals in the history of dance and their contributions; major developments in dance history; and common themes, purposes, and characteristics of dance.

0009 Understand the relationship of dance to other art forms and other disciplines.

For example: elements of dance that are common to all art forms; relationships among speech, theater, and dance; ways in which art forms can be used together to express ideas; ways in which dance relates to other disciplines; and ways in which skills developed through dance are used in various contexts.