Course Companion

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Dance · HL

Every topic handout in one volume

exercises.lol

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Composition and choreography

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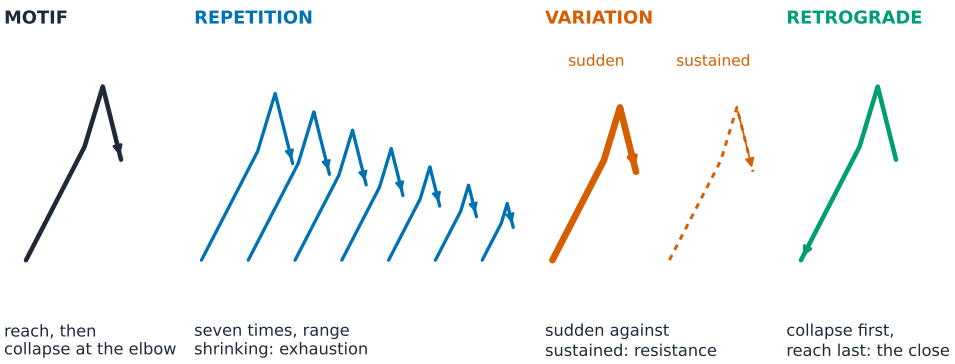
IB Diploma Programme Dance HL (first assessment 2016; 2014 guide). This topic equips the COMPOSITION side of the externally assessed composition and analysis task (35% HL): three dance works totalling 8-15 minutes composed by the student, plus an analytical statement on the processes of composition and analysis of one of the dances. Composition is taught as craft: motif, development, form and contrast serving intention, content and form. This handout teaches the compositional toolkit, the development methods and the reflective statement. All worked examples are original.

Must-know for composition and choreography:

Family	Content
works	three composed works totalling 8-15 minutes, submitted on video
motif	a movement cell: the smallest unit that carries the intention
development	repetition, variation, transposition, retrograde, accumulation
contrast	works must differ from each other: contrast across two of the three
statement	analytical statement on the processes of composition and analysis of one dance

The motif and its development

A **motif** is a movement cell: the smallest phrase that carries the dance's intention, small enough to transform and recognisable enough to anchor the work. Composition grows by **development** of the motif: repetition (the cell returns, meaning accumulating), **variation** (timing, dynamics or facings changed), transposition (the cell moves to a new body part or level), **retrograde** (the cell performed backwards), and accumulation (cells stacked into longer phrases). The discipline: every development is a choice that serves the intention; decoration that develops nothing is cut.



The motif and three of its developments, from the worked example "Reach".

> **Worked example.** "Reach", a trio: the motif is a reach that collapses at the elbow. Repetition seven times with shrinking range reads as exhaustion; variation in dynamics (sudden against sustained) reads as resistance; retrograde (collapse first, reach last) closes the work by reversing its story.

Form and contrast

Form is how the work organizes time: the **compositional structure** (statement, departure, return; ABA; theme and mutations) must be audible to the eye: the viewer should feel the return. Within a work and across the submitted works, **contrast** runs at two scales: inside one dance (levels, tempo, density, dynamics) and ACROSS the submitted works: at least two of the three must contrast in subject matter or compositional approach, or the submission reads as one work three times.

> **Worked example, continued.** The second submitted work "Doorframe" contrasts "Reach" completely: unison walking material, no floorwork, motif built from a stopped gesture rather than a flowing reach; the third "Counting House" contrasts again by structure (accumulation only, no retrograde).

Worked programme. The three works' minutes serve their forms: "Reach" 4:30 (seven shrinking repetitions need time to exhaust), "Doorframe" 5:00 (unison walking earns its length slowly), "Counting House" 2:30 (accumulation is dense and ends itself) – 12:00 inside the 8–15 window, each duration argued from its form, not padded to the limit.

The analytical statement

The statement analyses the processes of composition and analysis of ONE of the dances: not a diary but an account of decisions: which compositional problems arose (the collapse reading as injury rather than exhaustion), which solutions were tried and chosen, and what the making taught for future development. Key terms and concepts of composition are applied, sources attributed.

> **Worked example, concluded.** The "Reach" statement: the problem (the collapse read as accident), the trials (slower collapse, weighted collapse, silent collapse), the chosen fix (the weighted collapse with the breath audible), and the lesson (a motif's meaning is set by its development, not its shape).

Checklist

- The motif small, recognisable, intention-carrying (motif).
- Development methods chosen to serve intention, decoration cut (development).
- The return legible; contrast within and across works (contrast).
- The statement analysing decisions and problems, terms applied (statement).
- The worked "Reach", "Doorframe", "Counting House" set understood (worked). Boundary notes: the examiner must see the making: compositional decisions visible, sources attributed, the performance interpreted. All worked examples are original.

World dance studies

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Dance · HL

IB Diploma Programme Dance HL (first assessment 2016; 2014 guide). This topic equips the externally assessed DANCE INVESTIGATION (25% HL): a formal written report of no more than 2 500 words analysing the similarities and differences between two dance styles drawn from different dance cultures and/or traditions, one familiar and one unfamiliar to the student. This handout teaches the comparative method, the elements to compare and the report. All worked examples are original.

Must-know for world dance studies:

Family	Content
styles	two styles from different cultures or traditions: one familiar, one unfamiliar
elements	actions, space, dynamics, relationships: what to compare
contexts	historical and current: how each style lives now
report	formal written report, at most 2 500 words, sources attributed
analysis	similarities AND differences, explained not listed

Choosing the two styles

The **dance investigation** compares two styles from different **dance cultures** or **traditions**, one familiar to the student and one unfamiliar: the pairing must have contrast value (styles so alike that the comparison is decorative) and shared instruments (so the comparison is fair: both have communicative movement to analyse). The unfamiliar style is studied through research AND physical engagement: the course's physical and theoretical understanding.

> **Worked example.** A student trained in studio contemporary (familiar) investigates hula kahiko (unfamiliar): both use the torso as the primary communicator, but the training, function and transmission differ.

The comparison: elements and contexts

The comparison runs on the **dance elements**: actions (what the body does), space (level, direction, pathway), dynamics (weight, time, flow), relationships (to partners, group, audience). Each similarity or difference is then explained through **context**: the historical context of each style and its current context (who performs it, where, for whom, how it is taught).

> **Worked example, continued.** Element: both styles centre the torso (similarity); context: contemporary isolates the torso as trained mechanics for an audience that watches, while hula kahiko's torso carries text (the hands speaking the chant), performed within a living ceremonial practice (difference explained by function and transmission).

A second element compared: dynamics. Contemporary trains weight changes as craft (the drop into the floor as trained release); hula kahiko keeps weight low and steady, the grounded base that lets the text be carried (power used for meaning, not display). The report reads both through function: one aesthetic, one ceremonial, so the same element answers two purposes.



Name the element in both styles, then let context explain the difference.

The report

The report is formal written work of at most 2 500 words: a comparison with a spine (the two styles named, the elements chosen, the contexts researched), sources attributed throughout. The discipline: every claim about a style is evidenced (described movement, cited source); the similarities and differences are analysed (explained by context), not listed; and the conclusion weighs what the comparison taught, including the student's physical engagement with the unfamiliar style.

> **Worked example, concluded.** The report's conclusion: studying hula kahiko physically changed the student's own contemporary practice (the torso as carrier of meaning, not only of technique): the investigation's finding is a connection, not just a catalogue.

Checklist

- Two styles, different cultures, one familiar and one unfamiliar (styles).
- Claims made through the elements, described and evidenced (elements).
- Historical and current contexts researched, differences explained by them (contexts).
- The comparison analysed, sources attributed, engagement included (report).
- The worked contemporary-and-hula investigation understood (worked). Boundary notes: the examiner must see the making: compositional decisions visible, sources attributed, the performance interpreted. All worked examples are original.

Performance

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Dance · HL

IB Diploma Programme Dance HL (first assessment 2016; 2014 guide). This topic equips the internally assessed PERFORMANCE (40% HL): two or three dances (solo, duet or group, at least one a solo or duet) in any style, performed by the student at an open showing to show proficiency and expressive ability appropriate to the dance, totalling 6-9 minutes with at least half devoted to solo and/or duet work, submitted on video. This handout teaches the performance kit, the interpretation discipline and the showing. All worked examples are original.

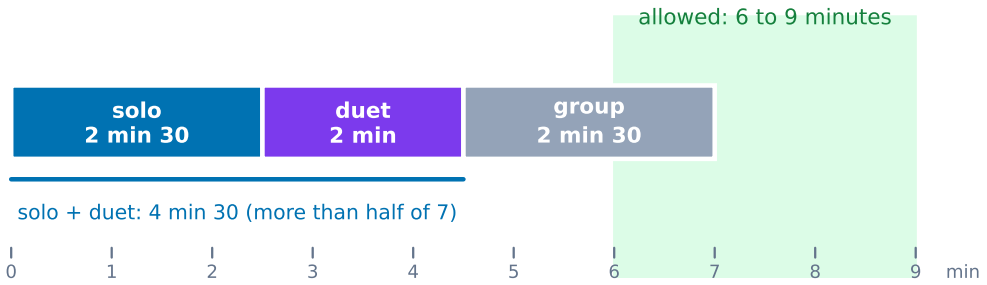
Must-know for performance:

Family	Content
programme	two or three dances, at least one solo or duet, 6-9 minutes total
half-rule	at least half the time in solo and/or duet work
skills	movement skills: clarity in space, time, dynamics and movement qualities
expression	communicative expression: to other performers and to the audience
interpretation	the intention of each dance interpreted sensitively

The programme and the half rule

The performance **programme** is built under rules that discipline the choice: two or three dances in any style or styles, at least one a **solo** or **duet**, totalling 6-9 minutes, with at least half the time devoted to solo and/or duet work. The programme shows RANGE (styles or moods contrasted) rather than three versions of the same dancer.

> **Worked example.** A programme of three: the solo "Reach (one)" (2 minutes 30), the duet "Doorframe for two" (2 minutes), and the group "Counting House" (2 minutes 30): 7 minutes total, 4 minutes 30 solo-and-duet, the half rule satisfied with room to spare.



The worked programme: 7 minutes in the 6-9 minute window, with solo and duet over half

Skills: clarity in space, time and dynamics

Proficiency is CLARITY: in space (line and pathway finished, not approximate), in time (the phrase's rhythm held, including its silences), in **dynamics** (weight, time and flow changing as the work demands), and in **movement qualities** (the how of the movement: sustained against percussive, collapsing against suspended). The discipline: technique serves the dance's intention, never displays itself: a triple turn that blurs the phrase is a fault, not a flourish.

> **Worked example, continued.** In "Reach (one)" the shrinking repetitions must shrink in RANGE but keep their clarity: the audience must see that the reach is smaller, not sloppier.

Expression and the open showing

The discipline of **communicative expression** runs two ways: to the other performers (the duet's timing is a conversation, not a countdown) and to the audience (the **open showing** is a real performance with real viewers, not a videotaped rehearsal). Reading each dance's intention sensitively is **interpretation**: the same phrase danced as aggression and as grief are different interpretations, and the choice must be legible.

> **Worked example, concluded.** At the showing, "Doorframe for two" is interpreted as negotiation: the stopped gesture lands off the beat, the walkers never look at each other until the final unison: the intention legible from the back row.

Worked evaluation sentence. "The stillness worked: three audience members leaned in at the second freeze, and one answered the direct question aloud – but the ending went unlanded, asked after, unproven." Evidence first, judgement second, limits named – the performance criterion pays for sentences like that, not for "we think it went well".

Checklist

- Two or three dances, one at least solo or duet, 6-9 minutes (programme).
- Half the time in solo/duet work (half-rule).
- Clarity in space, time, dynamics; technique serving the dance (skills).
- Expression to partners and audience; intentions legible (expression).
- The worked programme and its showing (worked). Boundary notes: the examiner must see the making: decisions visible, sources attributed, the performance interpreted. All worked examples are original.

HL depth: sustained inquiry

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Dance · HL

IB Diploma Programme Dance HL (first assessment 2016; 2014 guide). This topic equips the HL-only DEPTH of the course: the third composed work with compositional contrast across two of the three submitted dances, the longer dance investigation, the in-depth comparative discussion of two short dance excerpts from two cultures, and the analysis and evaluation of the influence and significance of connections from all three course components in the making of one composition. This handout teaches the depth tasks. All worked examples are original.

Must-know for hl depth: sustained inquiry:

Family	Content
third work	the third composed work: contrast across two of the three
excerpts	two short excerpts from two cultures, discussed in depth
connections	how composition, studies and performance fed one composition
evaluation	influence AND significance: what it did and why it matters
sustained	depth over one term: one inquiry carried to the end

The third work and cross-work contrast

The third work is where HL depth shows first: compositional **contrast** must be demonstrable across two of the three submitted works, so the third is planned AGAINST the others (if the first two are flowing and floor-based, the third is vertical, sparse or unison-based). The contrast is named in the analytical statement: the examiner must see that the maker can change approach, not only repeat a strength.

> **Worked example.** "Counting House", the third work: built only from accumulation (cells stacked, nothing retrograded), vertical and unison against "Reach"'s floor-flow and "Doorframe"'s stopped gestures: the contrast axis (device and level) named in the statement.

Two excerpts in depth

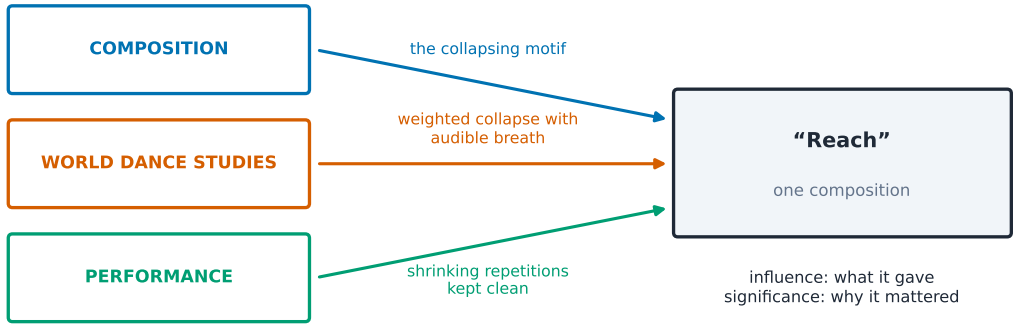
The **comparative discussion** of two short **excerpts** from two dance cultures goes deeper than the investigation's overview: one moment from each, described in the elements move by move, their differences explained by context and training, and their similarities weighed for what they reveal about dance itself. The discussion is in depth: thirty seconds of film can carry a page of honest analysis.

> **Worked example, continued.** Twenty seconds of the hula kahiko's entrance against twenty seconds of contemporary's opening phrase: the bent-kernel stance read as readiness with meaning (the ground as ancestor) against the contemporary's neutral stance as blankness before choice; similarity: both open by establishing the torso's authority before any travel.

Connections across the components

The HL essay task asks the maker to analyse and evaluate the **connections** from all three components (composition, world dance studies, performance) in the making of ONE composition: the **influence** (what each component contributed: the motif discipline from composition, the torso-as-text finding from the investigation, the clarity standard from performance) and its **significance** (why it mattered: the work would not exist in this form without it).

> **Worked example, concluded.** "Reach" traced: the collapsing motif from composition class; the weighted collapse with audible breath from the investigation's finding that meaning rides transmission; the shrinking repetitions kept clean from performance's smaller-not-sloppier standard: each connection evaluated for what it changed, not merely listed.



Trace what each component gave the work, and why it mattered.

Checklist

- The third work planned against the others; the contrast axis named (third work).
- Two excerpts described move by move, explained by context (excerpts).
- All three components traced into one composition (connections).
- Influence AND significance evaluated, not listed (evaluation).

- The worked “Reach” connection trace understood (worked). Boundary notes: the examiner must see the making: compositional decisions visible, sources attributed, the performance interpreted. All worked examples are original.