HL depth: sustained inquiry

IB DP Dance HL depth tasks full package

HL depth: sustained inquiry

- plan a third composition that contrasts with your other works;
- compare two short excerpts from different dance cultures in depth;
- explain movement differences through context, training and purpose;

HL depth: sustained inquiry (2)

- trace the **influence** of composition, world dance studies and performance on one of your dances;
- evaluate why each influence mattered.

The third work and cross-work contrast

- HL students compose **three** works instead of two.
- The third is where HL depth first shows.
- Compositional **contrast** must be clear across at least two of the three works, so plan the third **against** the others.
- If your first two works are flowing and floor-based, make the third upright, sparse or built on unison.

Two excerpts in depth

- **Training**: ballet trains turnout and pointe work to make the dancer look weightless and vertical, ideals of the 19th-century Russian imperial theatre. Chinese folk and classical training trains the curved body, the fingers and the eyes.
- **Meaning of the bird**: in Dai culture the peacock is a symbol of beauty and good fortune, and peacock dances belong to festivals and village life; the solo celebrates a living creature. The swan in Fokine's dance is a Romantic image of dying beauty.
- **Similarity**: both dancers make the **arms and hands** carry the bird, while the feet stay small and quiet. Both show that a dancer does not imitate a bird literally; she selects a few qualities and makes them exact.

Connections across the components

- **composition**: the craft you learned in making dances;
- **world dance studies**: what you learned from other dance cultures;
- **performance**: what you learned as a performer.

Sources for this lesson

- International Baccalaureate, *Dance guide* (2014).
- Yang Liping, *Spirit of the Peacock* (1986).
- J. Homans, *Apollo's Angels: A History of Ballet* (2010), on *The Dying Swan*.
- E. Wilcox, *Revolutionary Bodies: Chinese Dance and the Socialist Legacy* (2018).

Common errors

- Making a third work that looks like the first two, so no **contrast** is shown.
- Comparing excerpts in general terms instead of move by move.
- Choosing long excerpts and describing them only on the surface; short excerpts allow depth.

Common errors (2)

- Listing the three components' influences without evaluating their **significance**.
- Explaining differences only by "culture" without naming training, purpose or history.

Key terms

- **Cross-work contrast**: a clear difference in approach between submitted dances.
- **Excerpt**: a short section of a dance, analysed in detail.
- **Comparative discussion**: an in-depth analysis of similarities and differences between two excerpts.

Key terms (2)

- **Influence / significance**: what a source contributed / why it mattered to the finished work.
- **Three bends** (*san dao wan*): the curved body shape of Dai and other Chinese dances.

Check yourself

- 1.
- A student's two works are both slow solos on the floor.
- Suggest a contrasting third work. 2.
- Why does HL **comparative discussion** use short excerpts? 3.