

Unit 47: Jazz Dance

Unit code:	Y/502/5151
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

In this unit learners will develop dance skills working in a jazz style with the emphasis on practical work and performance.

● Unit introduction

Jazz dance is the title given to dance used in shows, cabaret, dance routines and popular music videos. Like jazz music, jazz dance was born in bars and nightclubs with its main purpose being to entertain. It has since evolved, encompassing artistically charged work, popular dance and more traditional showbiz styles. The most familiar of these styles is the one that we associate with West End/Broadway shows and covers a whole range of themes and story lines. More recently, jazz dance has been used in music videos and television commercials. It is also the main style of dance used within the entertainment industry, for example on cruise ships and in clubs and theme parks.

Due to the varied nature of jazz dance it is difficult to categorise. It can be defined through the feeling of the moves that are experienced by both dancer and audience. It is interesting to note that the word jazz derives from 'jass', a slang word for sex in early 20th century New Orleans. This goes some way in explaining the sassy appeal of jazz dance! Its sharp, slick dynamic moves and up-tempo beats make for an energetic and vibrant unit as well as providing a good foundation for dance technique and performance skills.

Learners will experience for themselves just how much hard work it takes to make dynamic dance routines look precise and effortless. This unit will allow learners to develop a good understanding of the style and key features of jazz dance. The unit links appropriately with choreographic units as well as dance performance. For anyone wishing to pursue a career in the commercial sector, jazz dance is an invaluable skill. It will encourage learners to dance with both heart and soul!

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Be able to demonstrate the relationship between jazz dance and music
- 2 Be able to demonstrate key features of jazz dance styles
- 3 Be able to perform combinations within the jazz style.

Unit content

1 Be able to demonstrate the relationship between jazz dance and music

Relationship to music: use of rhythm; dynamic quality; different time signatures; syncopation, accent; pulse; off beat

Different styles: at least two from: primitive, gospel, traditional jazz, swing, soul, pop, street jazz, musicals, blues and rock, lyrical

2 Be able to demonstrate key features of jazz dance styles

Legs: use of parallel; turn-out; leg kicks; stamps; flicks; extended and contracted

Feet, arm, and hand positions: five positions of feet; arms coordination; parallel and opposition; long and contracted jazz arms; jazz hands; turned in; turned out; co-ordination; clicks; claps; punch and flex

Isolations: head; shoulders; ribs; hips; hands; arms; feet

Movements: body rolls; ripples; high release; contraction; jazz walks; flicks; kicks; various turns; layout; spin; hops; lifts; swing; floor work; elevation; bounce; jive

Timing: combining different body parts in movement; rhythm; musicality; syncopation

Shape: sustaining formation; suspension; angle; curve; contract; arch

Rehearsal process: self-discipline; appropriate presentation; commitment; concentration; time management; application of direction/corrections

3 Be able to perform combinations within the jazz style

Movement memory training: practice; discipline; repetition and recall

Accurate performance combinations: body management and core stability; alignment of limbs; spatial awareness; shape; rhythmic accuracy

Performance skills: appropriate use of contrasting dynamics; projection; focus; style and interpretation of mood, theme or intention

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 demonstrate rhythm, time structures and a sense of musicality in performance [EP]	M1 demonstrate rhythm, time structures and musicality in performance competently	D1 demonstrate the rhythm and time structures of the jazz dance and music with inherent musicality
P2 display an awareness of appropriate jazz dance stylistic qualities in performance in relation to dynamics, placement and position [EP]	M2 display an appropriate sense of jazz dance stylistic qualities in performance in relation to dynamics, placement and position	D2 display an appropriate sense of jazz dance stylistic qualities in performance in relation to dynamics, placement and position with confidence
P3 reproduce the key features of a specified jazz dance style with some level of skill [EP]	M3 reproduce the key features of a specified jazz dance style with aptitude	D3 reproduce the key features of a specified jazz dance style demonstrating high levels of skill and accomplishment
P4 utilise rehearsal process, working with a sense of self-discipline [SM, TW, EP]	M4 utilise rehearsal process effectively, working with self-discipline	D4 work with dedication during the rehearsal process, demonstrating self-discipline throughout
P5 execute a jazz dance performance with evidence of expression, interpretation and sense of style. [EP]	M4 execute a jazz dance accurately with appropriate use of expression, interpretation and sense of style.	D4 execute a jazz dance accurately with highly effective use of expression, interpretation and sense of style.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Practical classes and workshops are an ideal way of allowing learners to explore the stylistic features and qualities of jazz dance. Learners will need to develop technical strength and understanding as well as being given the chance to perform. This may be achieved through warm-up and the development of technique exercises that focus on key areas and the use of physicality. Taught material in the form of sequences and combinations will allow learners to apply these technical skills as well as developing movement memory.

It may be useful to show learners a range of professional jazz dance pieces or sections of jazz dance from musical theatre. This will connect practical acquisition of skills to the 'real' world and stress the importance of fitness and physical range for this style of dance. Learners will initially need to build general skills in jazz dance before looking at the stylistic features of specific styles of jazz dance and their relationship with the music. It is essential to allow learners time to understand the basics before moving on, as this will give them the best chance of success. Rehearsal time is also an important element where learners can gain understanding of the significance of refining and perfecting combinations.

Learners will need to demonstrate all of the criteria in at least two different jazz dance styles. Evidence could be delivered through the performance of a 'set study' choreographed by the tutor to test musicality, rhythm and timing. It may also be delivered in a lengthy group dance, small group work or solo piece in a specific jazz dance style. Learners are required to understand the key features of a particular style of jazz dance. This could be delivered through a piece of repertoire taken from a section of musical theatre or pop video. Learners should be able to identify and understand the detail of different jazz dance styles. Measurement of accuracy of movement memory and interpretation could be delivered in the form of a set study, lengthy phrases or combinations. These will need to be at least two minutes in length in order to test movement memory sufficiently.

Delivery of a scenario that covers all grading criteria could run as follows. If the style of jazz dance selected is street jazz for example, the process could begin with group discussion and perhaps watching an example of the style on DVD. Further information such as musical elements, key and stylistic features could be demonstrated practically by the tutor and supported with written documentation, PowerPoint presentation or handouts. Learners could then participate in classes/workshops in the given style in order to build competence and familiarity. They could be taught a combination, take part in rehearsals and then perform the completed combination.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
<p>Introduction: what is jazz dance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">tutor-led group discussion about jazz, its origins and its various stylestutor-led session based on rhythms and time structures found in jazz dance.
<p>Assignment 1: Traditional Jazz – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5</p> <p>Introduction to key features of traditional jazz:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">centre exercises, floor work, travelling and combinationweekly traditional jazz dance technique classes consisting of centre exercises, floor work, travelling sequences and a combination culminating in assessment of technique class and combination.
<p>Assignment 2: Street Jazz – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5</p> <p>Introduction to key features of street jazz.</p> <p>Weekly street jazz dance technique classes culminating in assessment of technique class and combination.</p>
<p>Assignment 3: Swing – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5</p> <p>Introduction to the key features of swing.</p> <p>Workshop introducing key steps and partner work including lifts.</p> <p>Learners are taught a swing combination which progresses on a weekly basis. Simultaneously learners are developing their skills working with a partner, using trust and transference of weight during lifts. Learners are encouraged to develop their own partner work in addition to that taught by the tutor. This would culminate in a practical assessment of the combination.</p>
<p>Assignment 4: West End Musicals – P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5</p> <p>Introduction to the key features of West End musicals.</p> <p>Learners watch excerpts from samples of West End musicals on DVD. One musical is selected and a discussion takes place about the dance and interpretation.</p> <p>Learners are taught a jazz routine based on one dance selected from a West End musical which is then rehearsed up to performance standard. The dance is then filmed for assessment purposes.</p>

Assessment

Evidence for this unit will be through practical work and therefore assessment will be in the form of tutor observations of class work and performed pieces. This can be in the form of video recordings of practical class work as well as observation sheets, witness statements and peer observations. The tutor may also wish to discuss key principles, stylistic features and in particular musical structures, rhythm and timing with learners. This information can then enhance their delivery of these elements.

Learners will demonstrate their sense of musicality in connection with the combinations they perform. This is most easily evidenced via video recordings, where application of rhythm, syncopation, etc can be analysed by the tutor. Learners are not required to provide written material for any criteria, but additional research and tutor guidance can help to underpin learners' practical knowledge. The more technical aspects of jazz dance are best evidenced via video in order that tutors can scrutinise ability and expertise. The same also applies to stylistic features and performance of combinations, where video can capture these elements. For further detail regarding performance skills, observation sheets can provide additional information. With regard to the rehearsal process, this evidence is best collected through observation sheets, witness statements and peer observations. These methods are suitable ways of recording process rather than an end result, showing consistency and commitment of learners to the rehearsal period.

Assessment of a scenario that covers all grading criteria could run as follows. If the style of jazz dance selected is street jazz for example, learners could be filmed participating in classes which could cover grading criteria 1, 2 and 3. Observation sheets could supplement information such as learners' consistency and development. Whilst in the rehearsal period, learners could be filmed as a form of evidence. This may not be as effective as written documentation however, although it could provide additional information. Observation sheets can provide insight into learners' attitude and commitment to the rehearsal process that sometimes cannot be captured on video (grading criteria 4). The filming of a final performance would provide evidence for grading criterion 5. This may need to be supplemented with additional evidence such as observation sheets, depending on how successful the filming translates elements such as facial expression.

To gain P1, learners would be able to dance to the rhythm correctly, whether syncopated or on the beat of the music. For a merit grade, additional skills would include interpretation of the music as well as rhythmical accuracy. D1 would be awarded if learners' movements and musicality were intrinsically linked. This could include attention to details in the music such as accents, crescendos and dynamics.

Stylistically, P2 would involve some demonstration of the use of torso and low gravity in street jazz, for example. M2 learners would continuously display these qualities but perhaps not be wholly confident in their execution. D2 learners would completely immerse themselves in the style in every respect, and be self-assured in the performance.

With regard to grasping the key features of jazz dance techniques, P3 would require learners to execute the characteristics in so much as reproducing them correctly. M3 would mean that learners would need to demonstrate better competency, for example fully extended limbs in kicks or leaps. To be awarded D3 would warrant further expertise such as effective flexibility, agility and control.

Learners showing consistency in their professional approach to the rehearsal process would gain a distinction. Effective commitment to some areas of the process, for example teamwork and contribution of ideas, would constitute a merit. That is to say, if learners have some areas needing improvement for example time-keeping, they would not achieve a Distinction. P4 would suggest that learners demonstrate some skills in the execution and management of rehearsals. Effective commitment to the rehearsal process showing teamwork and contribution of ideas would constitute a merit. Learners showing consistency in their professional approach to the rehearsal process would gain a distinction

For P5, learners would be able to reproduce sections of a dance with occasional errors. Some performance skills should be evident. For M5, learners would accurately reproduce material as well as demonstrating appropriate performance skills. For D5, learners would be expected to perform a flawless dance that also demonstrates effective projection and a high degree of performance skills.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	Traditional Jazz	Having participated in weekly traditional jazz dance technique classes, learners are taught a combination which culminates in a performance.	Practical work –performance will be filmed for assessment purposes. Tutor observation – can comment on dedication during rehearsal process.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	Street Jazz	Having participated in weekly street dance classes, learners are taught a combination. They also contribute to the piece by adding some of their own movements. This culminates in a performance.	Practical work –performance will be filmed for assessment purposes. Tutor observation – can comment on dedication during rehearsal process.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	Swing	Having participated in swing workshops, learners are taught a combination. They also contribute to the piece by adding some of their own movements. This culminates in a performance.	Practical work –performance will be filmed for assessment purposes. Tutor observation – can comment on dedication during rehearsal process.
P1, M1, D1, P2, M2, D2, P3, M3, D3, P4, M4, D4, P5, M5, D5	West End Musicals	Learners are shown an excerpt from a West End musical on DVD/live performance of a musical. They are then taught a routine from this which they rehearse and then perform.	Practical work –performance will be filmed for assessment purposes. Tutor observation – can comment on dedication during rehearsal process.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Performing and Production Arts sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the BTEC Performing and Production Arts suite:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Exploring Dance Skills	The Development of Dance	Dance Performance
	Performing Dance	Choreographic Principles
	Jazz Dance	Choreographing Dance

Essential resources

A practical dance space with mirrors will be required, preferably with a suitably covered sprung floor. A sound system and range of music are essential items for this unit. A video camera and video playback facilities will also be required as it will be necessary to film examples of classes as well as performances. DVDs/videos of West End shows or professional jazz dance performances would aid learners' understanding of the style.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres are encouraged to develop links with professional dance companies, choreographers, local universities and dance colleges and dancers in the dance world. This could be in the form of talks, demonstrations, workshops, professional classes, taught repertoire, performance opportunities, theatre visits, and any education resources that are available to centres.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Goodman Kraines M and Pryer E – *Jump into Jazz: The Basics and Beyond for Jazz Dance Students, 5th Edition* (Mcgraw Hill Higher Education, 2004) ISBN 9780072844047

McWaters D – *The Fosse Style* (University Press of Florida, 2008) ISBN 9780813031538

Stearns M and Stearns J – *Jazz Dance: The Story of American Vernacular Dance, 2nd Edition* (Da Capo Press, 1994) ISBN 9780306805530

Wessel-Therhorn D – *Jazz Dance Training* (Meyer and Meyer Sports Books, 2000) ISBN 9781841260419

Websites

www.dance.about.com

About.com Dance – Dance resources

www.jazzcotech.com

Jazz Cotech Dancers (Old Skool Jazz dance)

www.jazzjiveswing.com

Jazz, Jive Swing resources

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	rehearsing set movement phrases independently
Creative thinkers	adapting movements and developing routine
Reflective learners	watching performance on video and making targets for improvement
Team workers	working in small groups to input to the process of producing movement material
Self-managers	organisation of rehearsal time, response to direction and feedback. Taking responsibility for improving own technique.
Effective participators	taking part in technique classes, rehearsals and performances.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	researching jazz dance styles
Creative thinkers	providing creative input for jazz dance choreography
Reflective learners	looking at filmed work and making achievable targets for improvement
Team workers	supporting others within a group situation; giving and taking of ideas, effective collaboration and cooperation
Self-managers	prioritising tasks within the rehearsal process. Making adjustments to work in order to improve the final outcome
Effective participators	responding effectively to group situations in terms of sharing ideas, negotiating problem areas and communicating successfully.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	discussing musical structures, key features and stylistic qualities
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	researching different jazz dance styles.