



A Level
Dance
Student
Handbook

Expectation of a dancer at Morecambe Community High School

1. All students are expected to attend every lesson, unless there is a good reason, lateness is not accepted either.
2. When homework is set, free time should be used to help complete it - with use of internet and books available in the school library. It must be handed in (typed, unless stated otherwise) on time and neatly presented with a yellow cover sheet.
3. In practical lessons you are expected to look professional and wear suitable clothing
4. Bring the correct equipment to every lesson.
5. You must be prepared to perform in all lessons and be willing to be involved in extracurricular dance.

Bring to lessons...

Practical:

- Warm clothing for warm-up
- Black Leotard / fitted black top
- Fitted trousers, leggings
- Bare feet or Dance shoes
- Hair tied back
- No jewellery
- Water
- Pen
- Note book / File / IPAD

Theory:

- Handbook
- Stationary - pen, pencil, ruler, highlighter
- Note book / IPAD

A2 ASSESSMENT AT A GLANCE

A-level Dance

Component 1

Performance and Choreography

- Solo performance in the style of a practitioner within an area of study
- Quartet performance (in any style relevant to the defined genres)
- Group choreography



How its Assessed

- Practical exam
- 80 marks
- 50% of A Level



A-level Dance

Component 2

Critical engagement

- Knowledge, Understanding and Critical Appreciation of a Compulsory set work and its location within a corresponding area of study
- Knowledge, understanding and critical appreciation of one optional set work and its location within a corresponding area of study

How is it assessed

- Written exam. 2 hours 30 mins
- 100 marks
- 50% of A Level



Questions

Two sections:

Section A: short answer questions (25marks) and one essay question (25 marks) on compulsory set works

Section B: two essay questions on the second set works (25 marks for each essay)

HOW AM I BEING ASSESSED

Performance Skills

➤ **As an individual**

Communication of the choreographic intention of own solo choreography

Application of specific knowledge of stylistic features of a practitioner to our own performance

➤ **As a member of a quartet**

Working closely with fellow performers to demonstrate physical and technical skills within a quartet

Choreography Skills

➤ **As an individual**

Creating and developing ideas for the soloist in response to specific tasks or creating and

developing ideas for a group of dancers in response to specific tasks

Contextual knowledge and understanding of

➤ **Two specific areas of study from professional repertoire**

➤ Compulsary area of study (A2)

- Rambert Dance Company
 - Rooster (Christopher Bruce)
 - Richard Alston
 - Siobhan Davies
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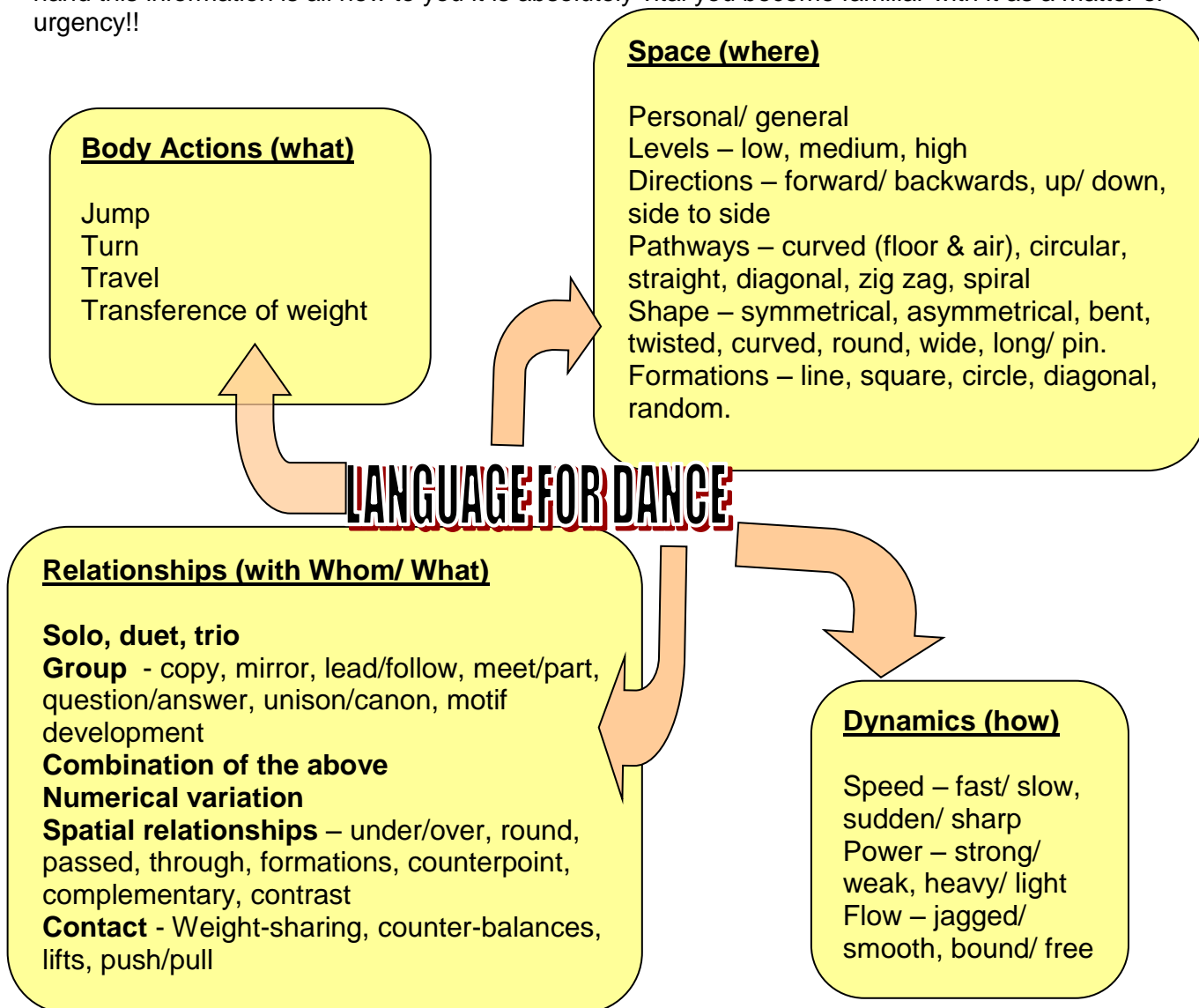
➤ Works from an optional area of study (American Jazz)

- Singing in The Rain (Gene Kelly)
- West Side Story (Jerome Robbins)
- Sweet Charity (Fosse)

WHAT SHOULD I ALREADY KNOW?

1. BASIC LANGUAGE FOR DANCE

You really need to have a firm grasp of the basic language for dance, which you can refer to below. Please use this as a refresher if you're feeling a little rusty after doing GCSE dance. If on the other hand this information is all new to you it is absolutely vital you become familiar with it as a matter of urgency!!



2. STAGE DIRECTIONS

USR	USC	USL
CR	CS	CL
DSR	DSC	DSL

AUDIENCE

USR – Upstage Right
USC – Upstage Centre
USL – Upstage Left
CR – Centre Right
CS – Centre Stage
CL – Centre Left
DSR – Downstage Right
DSC – Downstage Centre
DSL – Downstage Left

Sixth Form Research and Reading List

For professional works please see the resource packs on **SHOWBIE**

You can access sections of the Professional works using www.youtube.co.uk

Websites:

Rambert Dance Company: www.rambert.org.uk

Workshops and resources (shop) based on present and past repertoire

Richard Alston Dance Company: www.theplace.org.uk

Workshops and resources

Birmingham Royal Ballet: www.brb.org.uk

Education dept: Ballet workshops & resources

Dance Books Ltd: www.dancebooks.co.uk

Wide range of books, DVDs, CDs, magazines on all areas of Dance

Dance Magazine: www.dancemagazine.com

Offers access to major ballet companies

Dance UK: www.danceuk.org

General information, detailed resources on healthy dancer

The Dancing Times: www.dancing-times.co.uk

Monthly magazine with very useful articles, photos and reviews

English National Ballet: www.ballet.org.uk

Education dept: Ballet workshops & resources

Merce Cunningham Dance Company: www.merce.org/home.html

Siobhan Davies Dance Company : <http://www.siobhandavies.com/>

Jerome Robbins: <http://jeromerobbins.org/>

Glossary of Useful Dance Terms

- Adagio – a controlled sequence of movement done very slowly and smoothly.
- Arabesque – a position in which you balance on one leg and extend the other leg behind. Both legs should be turned out.
- Argumentation – making a movement larger in space and time.
- Attitude – a turned out position in which you balance on one leg and lift the other leg forward or back with the knee bent at about 90 degree to the thigh.
- Battement – lift one leg up forcefully in air, then control the leg down while the torso remains straight.
- Beat – underlying pulse
- Canon - a choreographic device or structure in which movements introduced by one dancer are repeated exactly by subsequent dancers in turn, e.g., Mexican wave
- Call and response - a structural device most often associated with African dance and musical forms, one soloist or group performs, and the second soloist or group performs in response to the first.
- Chasse – step one foot side, step the other foot next to it, then step the first foot side again. One foot leads and the other chasses it. This can be executed in any direction.
- Choreographic Devices – a specific way of manipulating movement to develop
- Choreographic Structures – the way in which movement is organised and shaped to create a dance
- Coupe – bend the working leg with a pointed foot, and lift the leg until the foot meets the front of the supporting ankle.
- Demi-plie – literally a “half-bend”. The knees are bent keeping the heels on the floor. Remember to keep your knees in line with your toes.
- Demi-pointe – rise up on ball of the foot.
- Developpe – bend the working leg with a pointed foot and lift the leg until the foot meets the side of the supporting leg. Then extend the working leg straight front. This can be done in any direction.
- Direction/ Spatial orientation – the motif changes to face a different direction(s), e.g. a motif facing the down stage left corner faces upstage right corner
- Dynamics – by changing the dynamics (weight, time, flow) the motif embodies a different quality
- Embellishment – adding detail to movement e.g. arm/ hand action
- Formation/ Spatial patterns of dancers – the motif can be changed to be danced in a different special patterns e.g. a diagonal line as opposed to a circle, the numbers of dancers can increase or decrease
- Fragmentation/ extraction – braking movement in to separate parts, which are then used in a different place or order.

- Grand jete – execute a front-split jump in the air. Push off back foot and land on front foot then bring the other foot down.
- Insertion - putting new movement into a movement e.g. hop, leap, turn
- Instrumentation – using another part of the body to complete the same movement
- Inversion – turning a movement upside down
- Isolation – with particular reference to Jazz, an isolation is the independent movement of any single muscle group or joint.
- Level – the whole motif or part of the pattern changes level, e.g. mid to low, mid to high (elevation)
- Motif – movement or gesture that can be elaborated upon or developed in a variety of ways.
- Parallel – a position in which the thighs, knees and toes of both legs are facing straight ahead.
- Passé – standing on one leg, bend your other knee up and touch the inside knee of your standing leg with pointed toes in a passing through movement.
- Plie – a bending of the knees.
- Syncopation - stepping on/ emphasising an unstressed beat. For example, ballroom Cha cha is a syncopated dance in this sense, because the basic step "breaks on two."
- Releve – lifted or raised up on the half-toe.
- Reorder/ restructure - the actions of the motif are altered to create a new order, this may need transitional vocabulary
- Repetition – repeating a movement exactly the same or repeated on the opposite side of the body
- Retrograde – the motif is performed backwards through the space
- Reversal – the performance of the movements of a motif or sequence in reverse order (but not in a backwards direction)
- Rhythm – vary the rhythm but not the tempo, the pattern or breath of beats could be changes - steady/ irregular
- Sickled foot – a term used to describe the foot when it is twisted in a curve towards the big toe.
- Size: condense/ expand
- Staging/ placement – the motif is performed in a different place on stage
- Tendu – stretched.
- Unison – dancers moving at the same time

- Accumulation – a choreographic device or structure where new movements are added to existing movements in a successive manner, e.g. A, AB, ABC, ABCD
- Binary Structure – two movements used in a sequential two-part form
- Chance – a random structure
- Elements of dance – the key components of movement (e.g., space, time, energy, relationships and body awareness)
- Narrative structure – a choreographic structure that tells a story
- Pathways – patterns created on the floor or in the air as the body moves
- Quality – ways of using energy, e.g. smooth, sudden, erratic
- Rondo – recurring and contrasting sections e.g. ABACAD
- Shadowing – copy movements behind a leader
- Symmetry – balanced or even in space and time
- Tempo – the speed of movement, or the beat in the music
- Ternary Structure – in three parts e.g. ABA
- Theme/ Variation – an original phrase with a variation of speed/ space

Dance elements:

- Body awareness - body shapes, body base, body part, locomotor, non-locomotor
- Energy - float, swing, sudden, smooth, sharp, percussive, vibratory, explosive
- Relationships – orientation
- Space - level, size, range, place, focus, direction, pathway
- Time - rhythm, tempo, beat

Others:

- Beat – underlying pulse
- Body base – standing, sitting, kneeling, lying
- Body parts – arms, legs, head, fingers, ankles, elbows, knees, shoulders, toes, wrists, etc...
- Body shape – curved, straight, open, closed, symmetrical, asymmetrical
- Accent – emphasis
- Culture - understandings, patterns of behaviour, values and symbol systems that are acquired, preserved, and transmitted by a group of people and that can be embodied in art works

- Dance work – a product of dance making activity (i.e. haka, ballet, hip hop, etc...)
- Duration – long, short
- Focus – fixed, moving, single, multi
- General space – space in the overall dance area
- Genre - a specific category of dance that has a tradition or history and is identifiable by specific characteristics, social functions, and cultural contexts (e.g., romantic ballet, hip hop, kapa haka)
- Notation – the system of reading movement on paper
- Improvisation - spontaneous movement in response to a stimulus
- Interpretation – analysis or appreciation of meaning in a dance work by a viewer: or the particular meaning communicated by the performer of an existing art work
- Locomotor movement – movement in which the body travels across space, e.g. running, creeping, rolling)
- Melodrama – overly dramatic, larger than life
- Movement phrase - a series of movements linked together to make a distinctive pattern
- Movement sequence - a series of movements, longer than a phrase but shorter than a section of a dance
- Non-locomotor movement - movement in which the body remains anchored to one spot by a body part (e.g., bending, twisting)
- Personal space - the "space bubble" around the body, extending as far as the body and body parts can reach
- Range - near, far, big, small

Choreography

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Performance

Composing a dance

Process			
1. Select Stimulus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already selected through the question you have chosen. 	<p><u>Aural setting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music in a range of styles • Found sound/ natural sound • Spoken poetry or prose • Silence <p><u>Physical setting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set design, lighting, props • Realistic, abstract, site-specific, back drop/ cyclorama(use of curtain or wall to create illusion) • Colour, material, texture, shape, size, etc... <p><u>Costume:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic, abstract, characterised • Colour, texture, size, weight, flow, line, etc... 	<p><u>Action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexion • Extension • Rotation • Jump • Turn • Travel • Gesture • Weight transference • Stillness <p><u>Dynamics:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy • Continuity • Speed • Rhythm • Accent • Phrasing <p><u>Space:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body shape • Pathways • Levels • Directions • Size • Orientation
2. Respond, select, explore and investigate the stimulus	<p><i>Research stage:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the stimulus make you think of? • Discuss and create a word bank • Read/ use the internet to find out more 		
3. Improvise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get moving • Experiment with a variety of movement ideas that are suggested by the stimulus. 		
4. Select movement material, create motifs and phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use action, space, dynamics and relationships to find original movement ideas that reflect the theme/ idea. • Decide on the style/ type of dance • Is it funny, serious, dramatic, abstract? 		
5. Vary, develop and refine motifs and phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phrase/ Motif – repeat, fragment, subtract, reverse • Action – change body parts used, add more actions • Space – change size, level, pathway, direction, focus • Dynamics – change speed, energy, continuity, rhythm. 		

6. Use compositional devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use contrast, complimentary, repetition, juxtaposition (adjacent, closeness), unison, canon, climax, unity, visual and rhythmic design, chance, addition. 		<u>Relationships:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body part to body part • Movement to movement
7. Structure the dance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Binary (ABAB), Tertiary (ABA), Rondo (ABACAD) • Theme and variation (A A1 A2) • Narrative (ABCDE) 		
8. Rehearse and perform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice in sections and the whole dance • Work on focus, projection, musicality, dynamics, phrasing, spatial awareness, communication of choreographic intention. 		
9. Evaluate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate throughout the process of creating the dance. Consider what is successful and what could be improved. 		

Sectional Structures:

1. Binary Structure – two movements used in sequential two-part form.
2. Ternary Structure – in three parts e.g. ABA.
3. Theme and Variation – an original phrase with a variation of speed/ space.
4. Rondo – recurring and contrasting sections e.g. ABACAD.
5. Episodic – many episodes spread out over a period of time and different location

Performing a dance

Quote by Gill Clarke (Independent dance artist and Head of Performance, Laban)

'When a performer draws my eye, there is a transparency to their dancing. I feel that I see them as a person through and in the movement, rather than seeing the movement material they are dancing. I have the sense that I am seeing their thinking, imagining and decision-making processes.'

Performing in dance requires a range of skills, both technical and expressive.

Technical skills

- Posture
- Alignment
- Co-ordination
- Strength
- Flow of energy
- Flexibility
- Control mobility
- Stamina
- Balance
- Movement

Performance/ Expressive skills

- Projection
- Focus
- Sense of style
- Musicality
- Communication of choreographic intention

Movement components

Action:

- Flexion extension
- Rotation
- Travel jump
- Turn
- Gesture
- Weight transference
- Isolation
- Stillness

Space:

- Body shape
- Pathways
- Levels
- Directions
- Size
- Orientation

Dynamics:

- Speed
- Energy
- Continuity
- Rhythm
- Accent
- Phrasing

Relationships:

- Body part to body part
- Movement to movement
- Person to person
- Interaction between dancers
- Sensitivity to other dancers
- Complementary and contrasting relationships

Dance

Appreciation

Rambert Dance Company

The company itself

Rambert Dance Company is the largest and most active contemporary dance company within the UK.

Rambert Dance Company is Britain's flagship contemporary dance company. Under the artistic direction of Mark Baldwin it tours throughout the UK and overseas, producing an unrivalled quantity of new work on the large-scale. Established in 1926 by Polish dance teacher Marie Rambert, Rambert continues to build on its rich heritage to deliver performances full of ideas and passion.

The Company believes in the power of live music to enrich the senses, and works with its Associate Orchestra, London Musici, to present a variety of musical styles.

Rambert's 22 dancers are considered to be some of the finest and most versatile in the world, meeting the challenge of performing a range of styles with precision and flair. Committed to creating dance for future generations, the Company seeks out and nurtures new and exciting choreographers.

The Company provides a vibrant and accessible dance experience and is committed to engaging people of all ages through learning and participation.

Initially founded as a touring ballet company, it was relaunched during the mid-1960s as a contemporary dance company.

Rambert famously said her School was not to be, "a sausage factory". It has always been a place that fostered personal creativity, integrity, intuition, perhaps even quirkiness and certainly work of the highest quality.

The emphasis on individuality and innovation naturally finds expression in choreography. Perhaps related to the fact that it has tended to be a place of innovation the School has, on a number of occasions, reinvented itself. On each occasion it has developed a distinct character while remaining within the Rambert tradition.

Deliberately remaining small the School is one of the world's great centres of professional dance education and training. Graduates, now within the dance profession, can be found all over the world. They work as dancers, directors, choreographers and teachers.

Rambert Dance Company (1966-2002)

The 1960s saw the start of a process to introduce modern dance to Britain. Ballet Rambert played a key part in this development and 1966 heralded a period of change in the company. Marie Rambert was encouraged by Norman Morrice, associate director, to make changes to the company, relating to the company size, the preservation and creation of works, the inclusion of Graham technique in the dancers' training, the involvement of guest choreographers and teachers, and the development of the touring schedule.

When Morrice left in 1974, John Chesworth continued Morrice's policies with the promotion of new work from company members and the expansion of the repertoire through guest choreographers. He was also instrumental in developing Rambert's educational activities.

Christopher Bruce became associate director in 1975 and then associate choreographer in 1979. From 1975 to 1985 there were links between Ballet Rambert and London Contemporary Dance Theatre through the use of choreographers eg Robert North and Richard Alston. In the 1980s the repertoire of Ballet Rambert focused on the work of three British choreographers: North, Bruce and Alston. North directed the company from 1981 to 1986 and was keen to develop the physicality, musicality and dramatic quality of the dancers.

Alston became resident choreographer in 1980 and artistic director in 1986, consolidating the

Cunningham influence. The name of the company changed to Rambert Dance Company in 1987. Bruce returned to the company in 1994 as artistic director until 2002 and continued its development with the inclusion of a range of techniques, new works, guest choreographers and a repertoire of neoclassical and modern works.

Named Practitioners

- Glen Tetley (1926–2007)
- Robert North (born 1945)
- Richard Alston (born 1948)
- Siobhan Davies

<http://www.rambert.org.uk>

American jazz dance 1940–1975

In the early 1900s the jazz dancing performed by African-American artists showed links to the dances of minstrelsy and ragtime using new syncopated rhythms. From the 1930s through to the 1960s the style became a more theatre-based form of dance, requiring trained dancers. Choreography involving jazz dance was created by practitioners from the ballet and modern dance world. These included Jack Cole, George Balanchine, Agnes de Mille, Michael Kidd, Katherine Dunham, Jerome Robbins, Bob Fosse, Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly. Jack Cole was an important figure in the development of jazz dance technique and its theatrical form. He inspired many practitioners, including Matt Mattox, Jerome Robbins and Bob Fosse. Katherine Dunham founded the anthropological dance movement and introduced African and Caribbean rituals into American choreography. Matt Mattox performed on Broadway and in many Hollywood musicals. His teaching of jazz was significant in the training of future generations of dancers.

Gene Kelly's physique and personality, combined with his training in acrobatics and athletics, contributed to the popularity of his dancing style with the public. He was very interested in the use of the camera for dance sequences. His collaboration with Stanley Donen produced exciting choreography and developments in the filming and locations used for dance. Jerome Robbins' style of social dance combined with classical ballet allowed him to create choreography conveying characterisation, rhythmic complexity and dynamic variation. He followed Agnes de Mille's lead in making dance of equal importance to drama and music in the development of the storyline. Different choreographers developed their own stylisation of jazz dance eg Bob Fosse. His early influences contributed to the creation of his distinctive style featuring angled lines, inverted limbs and a hunched over posture

Singin' in the Rain (Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly, 1952)

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Named Practitioners

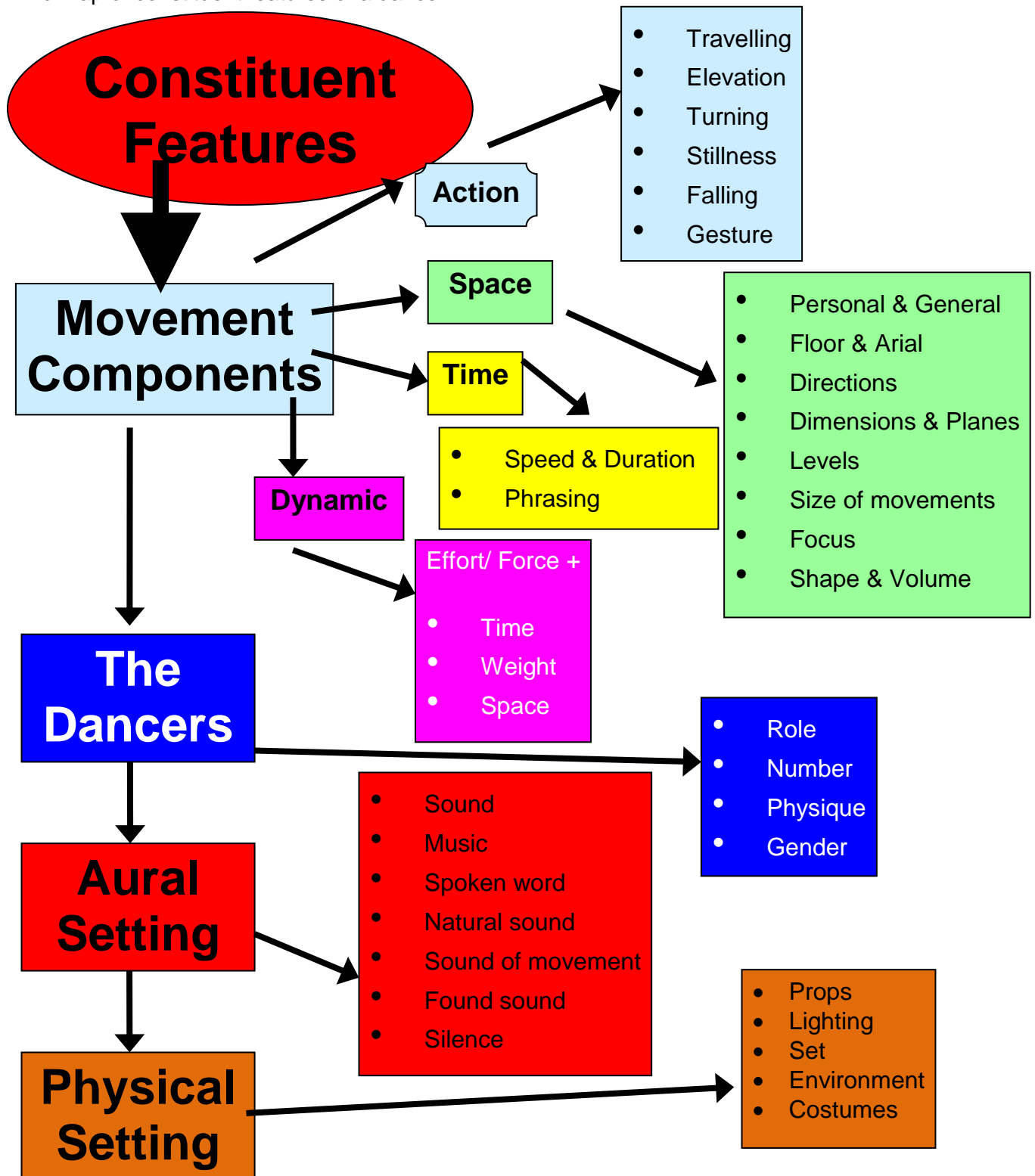
- Agnes de Mille (1905–1993)
- Jack Cole (1911–1974)
- Jerome Robbins (1918–1998)
- Bob Fosse (1927–1987)

Constituent Features of Dance

The basics:

You must be able to make clear to your dancers exactly what movements you require. This will help you to collaborate with the dancers and bring out their best in performance. Therefore, you need to be able to observe and analyse in order to find the most appropriate and successful movements.

Mind map of constituent features of a dance:



Example exam questions

Section A: Own Practice. Answer all questions in this section.

01 - Identify three ways in which a motif can be developed. [3 marks]

02 - With reference to the solo choreographic task you completed for Component 1, explain how you used motif and motif development to enhance the choreographic presentation/intention. [6 marks]

03 - Spatial awareness is an important skill required when performing a dance with others.

In the context of the duet/trio task you completed for Component 1, explain how this skill was developed and demonstrated in performance. [6 marks]

Section B: Compulsory Area of Study Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) 1966–2002 Answer all questions in this section.

04.1 - Identify two influences which contributed to the choreographic style of one named practitioner you have studied from the Rambert Dance Company 1966–2002.

You must clearly state the name of the practitioner in your answer. [2 marks]

04.2 - Identify one dance work choreographed by this practitioner from the repertoire of the Rambert Dance Company 1966–2002. Describe how each influence identified in 04.1 is reflected in the work. [6 marks]

05 - Explain how Ballet Rambert's name change in 1987 reflected the company's development during the 1980s. [7 marks]

Section C: Compulsory and Optional Area of Study Answer two questions in this section.

Answer the essay question on the compulsory area of study and one essay question chosen from one of the four optional areas of study.

Compulsory Area of Study: Rambert Dance Company (formerly Ballet Rambert) 1966–2002

06 - Marie Rambert had a vision to produce 'a truly creative company, pioneering new styles in choreography, music and design and encouraging new choreographers to emerge from within the company'.

Discuss how Marie Rambert's vision informed the development of Rambert Dance Company 1966–2002. [25 marks]

American Jazz Dance 1940–1975

07 - Discuss how American jazz dance developed during the period 1940–1975. You should provide clear examples from works you have studied to support your answer. [25 marks]