

RATIONALE: DANCE

This rationale complements and extends the rationale for The Arts learning area.

Dance is expressive movement with purpose and form. Through Dance, students represent, question and celebrate human experience, using the body as the instrument and movement as the medium for personal, social, emotional, spiritual and physical communication. Like all art forms, dance has the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich all students, exciting the imagination and encouraging students to reach their creative and expressive potential.

Dance enables students to develop a movement vocabulary with which to explore and refine imaginative ways of moving both individually and collaboratively. They choreograph, rehearse, perform and respond as they engage with dance practice and practitioners in their own and others' cultures and communities.

Students use the elements of dance to explore choreography and performance and to practise choreographic, technical and expressive skills. Students respond to their own and others' dances using physical and verbal communication.

Active participation as dancers, choreographers and audiences promotes wellbeing and social inclusion. Learning in and through Dance enhances students' knowledge and understanding of diverse cultures and contexts and develops their personal, social and cultural identity.

Learning Area The Arts: Years 3 and 4 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 4, students describe and discuss similarities and differences between artworks they make and those to which they respond. They discuss how they and others organise the elements and processes in artworks.

Students collaborate to plan and make artworks that communicate ideas.

Dance: Years 3 and 4 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 4, students describe and discuss similarities and differences between dances they make, perform and view. They discuss how they and others organise the elements of dance in dances depending on the purpose.

Students structure movements into dance sequences and use the elements of dance and choreographic devices to represent a story or mood. They collaborate to make dances and perform with control, accuracy, projection and focus.

AIMS

In addition to the overarching aims of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, Dance knowledge, understanding and skills ensure that, individually and collaboratively, students develop:

- body awareness and technical and expressive skills to communicate through movement confidently, creatively and intelligently
- choreographic and performance skills and appreciation of their own and others' dances
- aesthetic, artistic and cultural understanding of dance in past and contemporary contexts as choreographers, performers and audiences
- respect for and knowledge of the diverse purposes, traditions, histories and cultures of dance by making and responding as active participants and informed audiences.

Organisation and Content Structure

In the Australian Curriculum, the Arts is a learning area that draws together related but distinct art forms. While these art forms have close relationships and are often used in interrelated ways, each involves different approaches to arts practices and critical and creative thinking that reflect distinct bodies of knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum examines past, current and emerging arts practices in each art form across a range of cultures and places.

The Australian Curriculum: The Arts Foundation to Year 10 enables exploration of the dynamic relationships between Arts subjects. This can involve students making and responding to artworks in traditional, contemporary and emerging forms, using materials, techniques and technologies from one Arts subject to support learning in another. In this twenty-first century Arts curriculum, students explore innovative and hybrid art forms which extend and challenge art making and combine practices of two or more art forms.

Within all Arts subjects, design facilitates the creative and practical realisation of ideas. Design thinking is a fundamental strategy in the experimentation, refinement and resolution of an artwork and takes into account logical, critical and aesthetic considerations. Many different words describe design within the Arts such as choreographing, narrating, devising, constructing, composing and sculpting. Design connects the different art forms so that they inform each other, providing possibilities for students to create innovative and hybrid forms of art.

Strands - Content descriptions in each Arts subject reflect the interrelated strands of *Making* and *Responding*.

- *Making* includes learning about and using knowledge, skills, techniques, processes, materials and technologies to explore arts practices and make artworks that communicate ideas and intentions.
- *Responding* includes exploring, responding to, analysing and interpreting artworks.

Relationship between the strands: *Making* and *Responding* are intrinsically connected. Together they provide students with knowledge, understanding and skills as artists, performers and audience and develop students' skills in critical and creative thinking. As students make artworks they actively respond to their developing artwork and the artworks of others; as students respond to artworks they draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired through their experiences in making artworks.

Viewpoints - In both making and responding to artworks, students consider a range of viewpoints or perspectives through which artworks can be explored and interpreted. These include the contexts in which the artworks are made by artists and experienced by audiences. The world can be interpreted through different contexts, including social, cultural and historical contexts. Based on this curriculum, key questions are provided as a framework for developing students' knowledge, understanding and inquiry skills.

In **Dance**, students use the body to communicate and express meaning through purposeful movement. Dance practice integrates choreography, performance, and appreciation of and responses to dance and dance making.

Knowledge and skills of Dance

In Dance, students develop kinaesthetic knowledge through the development of dance knowledge and skills and their engagement with the materials of dance. Early sensory experience using the body as the instrument of expression and movement as the medium is fundamental to the development of this kinaesthetic knowledge in dance and contributes to students' overall aesthetic understanding.

Dances may have a particular 'look', 'sound' and 'feel' that students respond to positively, negatively or with indifference according to the engagement of their senses, emotions and cognition. They consider their perceptions of different dances and their notions of what is appealing or not appealing in the bodies, movement, sounds, aural and visual settings of dances they participate in or view.

Through Dance, students learn to reflect critically on their own aesthetic preferences by considering social, historical and cultural influences, and the effects of local and global cultures upon their tastes and decision making. From early family experiences, students' aesthetic preferences are nurtured by an increasing range of cultural influences. The wider social, historical and cultural contexts for dance present students with differing aesthetic preferences, tastes and viewpoints determined by people and their cultures.

The Arts across Foundation to Year 10: Years 3–6

Through the primary years, students draw on their growing experience of family, school and the wider community to develop their understanding of the world and their relationships with others. In Years 3 to 6, learning in the Arts occurs both through integrated curriculum and The Arts subject-specific approaches. Some of the instinct to play evident in the early years becomes formalised into both experimentation and artistic practice. Students in these years increasingly recognise the connections between the Arts and other learning areas.

While arts in the local community continues to be the initial focus for learning in the Arts, students are also aware of and interested in arts from more distant locations and the curriculum provides opportunities to build on this curiosity. Students learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples tell history through combinations of art forms. They learn that particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories have been recorded and will explore the meanings of stories and styles in which they are told. Students have opportunities to participate in a variety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art forms that are publicly available for broader participation in their community. Students may also extend their cultural expression with appropriate community consultation and endorsement.

Students also study artworks which represent Australia's connections with other places, the effects of these interconnections and the factors that affect people's knowledge and opinions of other places.

During these years of schooling, students' thought processes become more logical and consistent, and they gradually become more independent as learners. Students talk about changes in their own thinking, performance or making, giving reasons for their actions and explaining and demonstrating their organisation of ideas. They begin to recognise, appreciate and value the different ways in which others think, act and respond to artworks and consider how practices in the Arts may be enacted and sustained.

Content descriptions in each Arts subject focus on similar concepts and skills that, across the bands, present a developmental sequence of knowledge, understanding and skills. The focus of each content description in Foundation to Year 6 expands into more specific content descriptions for Years 7 to 10 as presented in the table below. For transition purposes from primary to secondary in Years 7–8 and consistency state-wide, generalist primary teachers at Year 7 could focus on the four initial similar concepts and skills eg, the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 6th Content Descriptions, with the deeper and expanded concepts being the focus in year 8, eg, the 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 7th Content Descriptions. E.g. The focus in Year 7 could then be on: 8.1, 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6, and in Year 8: 8.2, 8.4, 8.5 and 8.7.

Content description	Foundation–Yr 6	Content description	Yrs 7–10
1 st	Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas	1 st	Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas
		2 nd	Manipulating and applying the elements/concepts with intent
2 nd	Developing understanding of practices	3 rd	Developing and refining understanding of skills and techniques
		4 th	Structuring and organising ideas into form
3 rd	Sharing artworks through performance, presentation or display	5 th	Sharing artworks through performance, presentation or display
4 th	Responding to and interpreting artworks	6 th	Analysing and reflecting upon intentions
		7 th	Responding to and interpreting artworks

Years 3–4: Level Description: Dance

In Years 3 and 4, learning in Dance builds on the experience of the previous band. It involves students making and responding to dance independently and collaboratively with their classmates and teachers. Students extend their awareness of the body as they incorporate actions using different body parts, body zones and bases. They explore and experiment with directions, time, dynamics and relationships using groupings, objects and props. They extend their fundamental movement skills adding and combining more complex movements. Students use technical skills including accuracy and awareness of body alignment and expressive skills including projection and focus. As they experience dance, students draw on dances from a range of cultures, times and locations. They explore the dance and influences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and those of the Asia region. Students learn about dance in their community. They also learn about dance from more distant locations that may be represented in their community. Students learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dances use expressive skills to communicate ideas and tell stories. As they make and respond to dance, students explore meaning and interpretation, elements and forms including shapes and sequences of dances, and social and cultural contexts of dance. They make personal evaluations of dances. Students learn about warm-up and cool down for safe dance practice and careful selection of dress and footwear. Their understanding of the role of the artist and the audience builds upon their experience from the previous band. As an audience, students focus their attention on the performance and respond to the performance. They consider why and how audiences respond to performance.

Years 3–4: Examples of knowledge and skills in Dance

Students choreograph, perform and appreciate dances from a range of contexts, demonstrating an increasing range of movement skills and style-specific techniques. Through *Making* and *Responding*, students develop skills in and understanding of their dance making by becoming increasingly proficient in using choreographic, performance and appreciating practices.

Examples of knowledge and skills in Dance

The following information serves to articulate the main parts of the broader conceptual areas of Knowledge and Skills. These are not an exclusive, exhaustive list, but an indication of the breadth of study within dance. In this band students develop their knowledge of how ideas and intentions are communicated in and through dance. They build on and refine their knowledge, understanding and skills through dance practices focusing on:

Body	Body parts /actions	—for example, gestures
	Body zones	—for example, body areas of front and back; cross-lateral – left arm and right leg
	Body bases	—for example, seat as base
Elements of dance		
Space	Level	—for example, moving at a level, moving between levels
	Directions	—for example, diagonal, circular
	Shapes	—for example, symmetry versus asymmetry, organic versus geometric shape, angular versus curved shape
	Dimension	— size of movement, for example, large, small, narrow, wide
	Pathways	—for example, in air, on floor
		— positive and negative space
Time	Tempo	— for example, sustained, increasing and decreasing speeds
	Rhythm	— for example, regular, irregular
	Stillness	— for example, pausing; freezing; holding a shape for a moment, then continuing with a dance sequence
Dynamics		— controlling and combining different movement qualities, for example, a smooth, sustained movement followed by a percussive, jagged movement; limp, floppy movements followed by stiff, sharp movements
	Force	— for example, lightness/strength
Relationships	Groupings	— solo; connected; group formations, for example, conga line dances, making group shapes
	Spatial relationships	— for example, over, under, near, far
	Interaction	— for example, lead/follow, meet/part with a partner/group
		— relationships between different body parts
		— use of objects/props to communicate dance ideas
Fundamental movement skills		
		- locomotor movements – adding and combining more complex movements, for example, running, galloping, sliding, crawling
		- non-locomotor movements – for example, rising, pulling, swinging, spinning, twisting, collapsing, curling
Technical skills		
		- body control, accuracy
		- body awareness
		- alignment, strength
		- balance and coordination
Expressive skills		- for example, projection and focus
Safe dance practices		- warming up their bodies before executing more complex and contrasting movement patterns in dance sequences and cooling/calming down afterwards
		- removing socks if the floor surface is slippery (and clean)
Choreographic devices		
		- contrast
		- repetition

Years 3-4: Considering Viewpoints in Dance

In both *Making* and *Responding*, students learn that meanings can be generated from different viewpoints and that these shift according to different world encounters. As students make, investigate or critique dances as choreographers, dancers and audiences, they may ask and answer questions to consider the choreographers' and dancers' meanings and the audiences' interpretations. Meanings and interpretations are informed by an understanding of how the elements of dance, materials, skills and processes are used in differing social, cultural and historical contexts. These questions provide the basis for making informed critical judgments about their own dance and the dance they see as audiences. The complexity and sophistication of such questions will develop across Foundation to Year 10. In the later years, students will consider the interests and concerns of choreographers, dancers and audiences regarding philosophies and ideologies, critical theories, institutions and psychology.

Examples of viewpoints and questions within the Dance Content

Elaborations Years 3–4:

Considering viewpoints:

- *Forms and elements*: For example – How did the/does your dance begin? Was/is there a middle part? How did/does the dance end? What shapes did you see/make? (individual and group)
- *Meanings and interpretations*: For example – Is there a story in the dance? How are you using grouping or pathways to communicate ideas or intentions in your dance?
- *Societies and cultures*: For example – Do you recognise new movements in the dance? Why do you think people from different cultures dance? Where are these dances performed?

Years 3–4: Content Descriptions: Dance

4.1 Improvise and structure movement ideas for dance sequences using the elements of dance and choreographic devices

4.2 Practise technical skills safely in fundamental movements

4.3 Perform dances using expressive skills to communicate ideas, including telling cultural or community stories

4.4 Identify how the elements of dance and production elements express ideas in dance they make, perform and experience as audience, including exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance.

NB: It is advised that the 'Learning in Dance' two page introduction (Subject, structure) is used along with this 'explorer' paper. Download it from the Australian Curriculum website.

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