

Critique Process for Peer or Professional Choreographic Work

Step 1: Describe

What do you see? Can you describe any details: shapes, pathways, time, effort, or the energy behind how a movement is performed (i.e., “stillness with energy”)?

Is this a student work or professional piece? Is the work completed or in progress? If completed, are there costumes, sets, or lighting designs you can describe?

Step 2: Analyze

Look at how the dance is put together in sections or parts. How is the work organized? Did the choreographer(s) utilize any choreographic devices (cannon, format, retrograde, chance, or improvisation)? Are there any movement motifs or themes that are repeated? Is there a difference between the quality of the choreography and the performance quality?

Step 3: Interpret

What do you think the choreographer is trying to say or communicate to the audience? Can you decipher or determine if there is an apparent theme, feeling, or mood? If there is a theme, how are the movements abstracted rather than being mimetic? Or does the piece look to be merely a structural design in space (i.e., parallel study, cubism, or architectural)?

Step 4: Evaluate

What do you think or how do you feel about the dance piece you just viewed? Is it important or does it have value as a work of art? Is it a piece that would stay in a choreographer’s repertoire for a long time (i.e., Alvin Ailey’s *Revelations* has been part of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater since 1960 or *Giselle* a classic piece for ballet companies since 1841)?
