

# 2009 HSC Dance

## Sample Answers — Written Examination

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- (a) as part of the development of the examination paper to ensure the questions will effectively assess students’ knowledge and skills, and
- (b) in order to provide some advice to the Supervisor of Marking about the nature and scope of the responses expected of students.

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### Section I — Core Appreciation

#### Question 1

*Answers could include:*

- Definition and description of a motif, may make reference to repetition, development, use of and/or manipulation of motifs
- Identifies/establishes specific movement(s) as a motif(s)
- Motif examples may include; fluttering hands, sinking, many literal gestures such as waving, covering the mouth, pulling the leotard, open wing and broken wing shapes, slow motion walks and so on
- Motif, phrase, motif into phrase – a discussion of internal structure as this relates to organising the dance
- An understanding of organising the dance may make reference to sequencing, transition, repetition, variation & contrast, formal structure and/or unity
- Organisation in relation to the use of music, lighting, costume, formations of dancers and/or movement
- Use of motif in the communication and development of themes
- Explanation of structure in relation to the intent of the Work.

## Section I (continued)

### Question 2

#### *Answers could include:*

- May reference the following spatial elements: shape, level, pathway/floorpattern, direction, dimension, plane, designs in space, performance space, active space, personal and general space.
- Engagement being emotive, sympathetic, recognising the hardships – space, dynamic quality, movement, accompaniment, lighting, etc
- May reference motif as this links to special elements.
- References to variation and contrast (shape/love etc) to engage the audience
- Links may be made between spatial elements and how these engage audiences. These may include but are not limited to the following examples:

#### Direction

- Repetitious use of left to right reinforces the narrative of the work, ploughing, sowing, natural elements such as blowing breezes, the land (such as evident in aerial views of farmed land). Circular floor patterns – tumble weed, symbolic of cycles in nature. This is easily identified as the narrative; audiences might empathise with the characters on the stage.

#### Shape

- Use of motif (ploughing, contracted torso, circular shapes through arms, legs and turns, sowing, broken backs, upward arm lifts and so on) to clearly convey narrative and reinforce the development of the narrative throughout the Work. This is engaging because these shapes are readily identifiable by audiences.

#### Designs in space

- Use of groups – clumping conveys sense of togetherness throughout hardships
- Duos, grouping of dancers within the stage space to convey relationships between men and women, women and women, men and men, shapes created with two bodies in space. This is engaging because of the traditional use of roles such as the male taking the supportive, lifting, masculine role and the female taking the nurturing, comforting, feminine role, possibly because it doesn't challenge stereotypical roles and is easily accepted

Students will approach this question from a wide range of perspectives; answers are appropriate where students have justified their response using the spatial elements as their way in.

Students may challenge the question, i.e. lack of audience engagement however they must still use spatial elements to justify their response.

## Section II — Major Study Appreciation

### Question 1

#### *Answers could include:*

Students may include an explanation about:

- Something new or different introduced
- A new method, idea, product
- The introduction of new things or methods

#### Martha Graham

- Contract and release principles
- Use of breath
- Use of torso from which movement emanates as the source of movement
- Development of specific movement vocabulary
- Overtly emotional and concerned with era issues
- Predominate use of female dancers/themes in her work initially including strong characters, gender issues
- Collaboration with Hawkins (late 1930s) led to future development of thematic ideas
- Initially fiercely anti-ballet however re-examined movement vocabulary after 1930s to include/expand her vocabulary to increase her range of movement
- Initially bare stages to use of sets, and simple to elaborate costumes, often herself in a stand out colour from the core of dancers
- The use of current issues as themes as significant enough to make a dance about such as; nationalism, political causes, protesting against wars – Franco’s regime in Spain
- Initially stripped bare, percussive, unadorned, dark, dramatic and not concerned with the decorative to unhinder the fundamentals of movement
- Often provided a social commentary. She turned down her invitation to dance in the International Dance Festival part of the Berlin Olympic Games (1936) – very American, anti-German
- Believed modern experience is a subject of choreography

#### Merce Cunningham

- Detached – move away from emotion to motion – direct rebellion from Graham
- Use of other art forms to parallel rather than influence his work, such as John Cage
- New choreographic techniques such as Chance techniques
- Element of surprise, such as combining aspects of performance on opening night rather than highly rehearsed
- His treatment of the relationship between dance, music and visual décor, each arrived at independently yet performed simultaneously
- Decentralised, de-emphasised performance space
- Dancer’s positions not important and often ambiguous on the stage, i.e. these might change over a given performance period
- Non-linear, abstract, non-coherent – displaced the conventional linear plot driven narratives
- John Cage collaboration – also innovative
- Not preconceived like in nature – structure is organic (haphazard, chaotic) yet leaves nothing unconsidered – not improvised
- Use of multimedia, i.e. video monitors on stage, projections onto to cycloramas
- Life forms/Dance forms

Students must reference specific examples, as well as an explanation about how they challenged the conventions of dance

## Section II (continued)

### Question 2

*Answers could include:*

1920–1960 – Aspects of the era

Doris Humphrey

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Aspects</i>	<i>Works</i>
1920  Post WWI – sense of Nationalism in addition to cultural context a sense of creating a new way of addressing new American form that could be identified with	Influence of Kandinsky such as the use of the colour white, as he studied the psychological effects of colour.  Artist/dance context of the 1920s, developed vocabulary of movement with the principal of fall and recovery in response to the superficial Denishawn dances.	<i>Colour Harmony</i> (1928) – this work reflects expressionist arts, dancers in primary colours, blue, yellow and red.
Roaring 20's	Modern dance as a confrontational stance against Ballet as an elitist and European art form	<i>Water Study</i> (1928) – they moved to the pulse of their own steady breathing, irregular, environment yet still controlled. She built a repertoire of works focused on a new way of meaning that sought a deeper understanding of the possibilities of the human body.
	Links to new technologies emerging after the war, mass consumerism, worker image. Conformity after the war, both in grieving process and new jobs for men and women.	<i>The Life of the Bee</i> (1929) – bees build hives in geometric exactness.
1930  Great Depression  Crash of Wall Street	Reflects the changing roles of women. The only prominent dance company of the 1930s that included both men and woman therefore addressing these roles on stage.	<i>Dances for Women</i> (1931) – three sections, the fruitful: abstraction of birth, the decadent: depicted women as objects and the militant: rebellious women.

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Aspects</i>	<i>Works</i>
	FDR (Franklin D Roosevelt) – conjured new economic package of the time that regulated economy	<p><i>Theatre Piece, New Dance, With My Red Fires</i> (1935–6) <i>New Dance</i> – FDR regulating economy, group work dealing with stress points in human behaviour.</p> <p><i>Theatre Piece</i> – a look at competitive atmosphere, satirised business, the marriage game and the athletics.</p> <p><i>With My Red Fires</i> – explored human relationships between people towards the end of the Depression.</p>
1940  WWII  US Isolationist policy was abandoned	US goes to War  Changing roles of women – women replace men in the workplace  GI's return from war – Baby Boom period	<p><i>Story of Mankind</i> (1946–7)</p> <p><i>Day on Earth</i> (1947) – the exaltation and pain of intimate personal relationships and the solace of work.</p>
1958  Year of her death	Boom and consumerism, suburbia, national anxiety, anti-communist sentiments – Hollywood went on witch hunts, concerns that communism had infiltrated the US government  Segregation breaking down  Activity in dance – regional dance companies  Dance documented on television	<p><i>The Art of Making Dances</i> published – process of life's works</p>

## 1960–2000 – Aspects of the era

## Twyla Tharp

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Aspects</i>	<i>Works</i>
1960	Peace and Love Vietnam War JFK (John F Kennedy) Martin Luther King The Beatles, The Rolling Stones The Twist Fashion – mini-skirts, hot pants, bright colours Began her dance company Influence of Pop Art – characterized by themes & techniques drawn from popular mass culture e.g. Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Tom Wesselmann	<i>Tank Dive</i> (1963) – her first dance work. Collaboration with Judson Dance Theatre
1970	Watergate – Nixon scandal Mohammad Ali Margaret Thatcher Tension between USA and USSR – The Cold War Challenged the boundaries of the modern era in dance	<i>Push Comes to Shove</i> (1976) – modern & classical movement vocabulary accompanied by <i>Hayden's Symphony</i> danced by Baryshnikov – a blend of the sly, unpredictable, wry, self-mocking, witty and virtuosic  <i>Duece Coupe</i> (1973) – Beach Boys, David Payne and Jazz influenced  <i>Hair</i> (1979) – Broadway

<i>Decade</i>	<i>Aspects</i>	<i>Works</i>
1980	<p>Wall Street Crash</p> <p>War demonstrations against nuclear weapons</p> <p>Fluro colours, punks, skin heads</p> <p>Michael Jackson</p>	<p><i>The Upper Room</i> (1986) (Philip Glass) – Fiercely controlled, demonic energy influenced by minimalism – where the work is stripped down to its most fundamental features, less is more, music which features repetition &amp; iteration eg. Philip Glass, geometric-cubic forms</p> <p>66 (1982) – Growing up on the hwy Route 66. Influenced by the music of Billy Joel &amp; Bob Dylan</p> <p><i>The Catherine Wheel</i> (1981) – links to David Byrne from Talking Heads. The work is about love, hate, fight and destroying one another. Distinct sections in the work each with its own title.</p> <p><i>Singing in the Rain</i> (1985) – Broadway</p>
1990	<p>Gulf War</p> <p>Y2K bug (roll over to year 2000)</p>	<p><i>How Near Heaven</i> (1995) – worked with Benjamin Britten (his music can be described as disjointed, eerie, dissonate) The movement is characterised by pointe work, geometries</p> <p>Published her book <i>Push Comes to Shove</i> (1992) – autobiography</p>
2000	<p>Technology</p> <p>Terrorism – September 11, Bali bombings</p> <p>Middle Eastern conflict</p> <p>Reality television</p>	<p><i>Movin' Out</i> (2002) – Broadway with Billy Joel – a love story, depicting the highs and lows of a relationship through dance</p> <p><i>The Times Are A Changin'</i> (2006) – with Bob Dylan on Broadway</p> <p>Published <i>Creative Habit: Learn it and Use it for Life</i> (2003)</p>



Tharp's movement style can be described as:

- Eclectic – combines styles of dance
- Combined ballet technique with natural movements eg. running, skipping, walking
- Movement is humorous and edgy
- Quirky and rebellious
- Sexual overtones
- Comic
- Pop choreography

NB Tharp's influence came predominately from the music and related art forms within the era, and less from the actual events within the era.

## Section II (continued)

### Question 3

#### *Answers could include:*

- Background – black American, from a poor disadvantaged family, at a time when he was experiencing racial prejudice. Ailey showcases this injustice and depicts themes such as his religious influence through the movement, the music/accompaniment, costume and props.
- Subject matter/themes – slavery, freedom/release, hope, joyful, celebration as evidenced through the shapes, the music, the groupings, costumes, lighting, use of dynamics
- Development of his movement style – influences on his movement vocabulary by Lester Horton, Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey and provide movement examples to support this, such as hinges, contraction, high release
- Movements – motif examples from the Work that are recognised as signature Ailey/*Revelations* shapes
- Music/Aural elements – gospel, spiritual, religious, passionate, reflective of church memories and his own Baptism and the importance of this event in his life that ultimately shapes the person
- Form – episodic, three distinct sections. Within these sections Ailey retells/recalls the story of his childhood and being a part of black American society and the experiences of black Americans from the beginning of slavery to the present time
- Groupings of dancers – ensemble, duo and solo, including group shapes and lifts
- Symbolism – use of props, for example the fabric used to represent water, use of costume (colour) white is pure, freedom and link to Christianity – baptism, cleansing the soul.
- All black cast is significant as it gave black artists an outlet and professional position
- The reputation of this Work makes it the most significant
- Links may be made to his other Works and his dance company

# 2009 HSC Dance

## Sample Answers — Viva Voce

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### Section III — Core Performance

#### Part B: Viva Voce

##### Question 1

##### *Answers could include:*

Definition of terms may include a response similar to the definitions below:

- Alignment is the relationship of the skeleton to the line of gravity and the base of support (Syllabus, p78)
- Turn(s) – are movements that rotate around a central axis, e.g. spiral, pivot, ½, ¼, pirouette or an isolated body part
- Elevation – is obtaining height and uplifting the body (not necessarily off the ground), e.g. leaps, rise, releve, or a jump
- Balance – can be either into, holding or out of, dynamic or static, e.g. a turn could be executing 'dynamic' balance. Non-locomotor movement requiring a control of muscles.
- Definition and application of safe dance practice relevant to the question
- Linking of concepts within the question
- Selection of appropriate physical examples
- Discussion of how these physical examples demonstrate an answer relevant to the question
- May link class work to dance technique

N.B Candidates do not have to cover all dot points in the topic to get full marks.

## Section IV — Major Study Performance

### Part B: Viva Voce

#### Question 2

*Answers could include:*

- Definition of dance technique and terms (body skills, sequencing, variety of structure, safe dance practice and kinesthetic awareness)
- Discussion of their dance technique including limitations and capabilities and efficiency of movement
- Dance technique linked to the topics within the question
- Control of dynamics – the ability to control the level of energy or force applied to the execution of a movement or movement sequence (Syllabus p79) to communicate meaning to an audience
- Projection – a confident presentation of one’s body and energy to vividly communicate movement and meaning to an audience (Syllabus p80). This may include demonstration of thematic consideration; communication of feelings, ideas, emotions, a story; engaging the audience through eyeline and eye contact (or lack of)
- Quality of line – clarity of body/parts to communicate meaning and enhance the aesthetic appeal of the movement
- Selection of appropriate physical examples
- Discussion of how these physical examples demonstrate the relationship between their dance technique and the topic indicated in the question.

N.B Candidates do not have to cover all concepts in the topic to get full marks.

## Section V — Core Composition

### Part A: Viva Voce

#### Question 3

*Sample answer/Answers could include:*

- Shape – open/closed, positive/negative, size, symmetrical/asymmetrical, curved/angular, geometric/organic, literal/abstract, gestural/symbolic, centre/off centre, level, geometry of shape
- Shape – development and manipulation of motif
- How the shapes are manipulated – change the level, size, direction, retrograde, embellish, instrumentation, inversion, repeat, fragmentation and so on
- Links to geometry of space – dimension and plane
- Duration – length of individual movement(s), phrase(s), sequence(s), section(s), whole dance
- Duration of the accompaniment may influence the duration of the movement
- Duration of motif – may link to dynamic qualities such as sustain, suspend, percussive, collapse, swing, vibratory
- Dynamic and static, stillness
- Links to other components of time including metre, the time signature of the accompaniment, rhythm – regular/irregular/natural
- Direction – up/down, left/right, forward/backward, diagonals
- Direction of the movement, the focus, the process – in relation to climaxes, highs and lows of the dance
- Designs in space relating to the direction of pathways taken, both the floor and aerial patterns
- Direction of individual movements, sequences, phrases, sections and whole dance
- Selection of appropriate physical examples
- Discussion of how these physical examples demonstrate an answer relevant to the question
- Links to the realisation of concept/intent

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## Section VI — Major Study Composition

### Part A: Viva Voce

#### Question 4

*Answers could include:*

- Definition of the element/component used
- Linking the specific element/component by providing examples from their Work
- Demonstrating how the components of time (tempo, duration, momentum, regular/irregular, accent, metre, natural rhythms, stillness) have been manipulated for 2/3 dancers
- Links to accompaniment
- Definition of motif
- Definition of manipulation
- Demonstrating how the motif has been developed for 2/3 dancers
- Link to stimulus/improvisation/generating the movement
- Explanation of the development of the motif(s) for 2/3 dancers
- Organising the movement: motif, phrase, motif into phrase – the development of this process/sequence for 2/3 dancers and the manipulation of the motif (space, time dynamics) for 2/3 dancers.
- Discussion of manipulation of motif across the whole work for 2/3 dancers (same motif for all dancers or different for each dancer).
- Definition of structure (form)
- Discussion of a formal structure, eg, binary, rondo, narrative, collage and so on
- Organising the work: sequencing, transition, repetition, variation and contrast, formal structures, unity, appraisal and evaluation for the 2/3 dancers
- Discussion of how these examples demonstrate an answer relevant to the question for 2/3 dancers
- Discussion of deliberate choices made for 2/3 dancers relevant to the element/component indicated in the question.

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## Section VII — Major Study Dance and Technology

### Option 1: Choreographing the Virtual Body

#### Part A: Viva Voce

##### Question 5

##### *Answers could include:*

##### Opportunities

- Laws of physical possibility can be overridden
- Endless potential of the virtual dancer
- Can create individual styles and characters
- No technical or stylistic limitations
- Unlimited perspectives – above, below and so on
- Limitless rendering of figures and environments
- Can create a ‘perfect’ product – no technique limitations, no injuries on the day
- Unlimited rehearsal time
- Focus on selected viewing frame – lead dancer, body parts, movement, groups and so on
- Limitless editing
- Use of illusions, effects, lighting, sound and other production elements

N.B Candidates must make reference to the creation of their own Work in their explanation.  
Candidates do not have to cover all dot points in the topic to get full marks.

## Section VII — Major Study Dance and Technology

### Option 2: Film and Video

#### Part C: Viva Voce

##### Question 6

##### *Answers could include:*

##### Opportunities

- Can create individual styles and characters
- Limitless rendering of figures and environments
- Can create a ‘perfect’ product – editing possibilities
- Unlimited shooting time
- Unlimited rehearsal time
- Focus on selected viewing frame – lead dancer, body parts, movement, groups and so on
- Use of illusions, effects, lighting, sound and other production elements
- Use of camera to focus audience attention
- Spatial patterns and designs from varying camera perspectives
- Creating and emphasising dynamic elements
- Recreation/referencing of known works

N.B Candidates must make reference to the creation of their own Works in their explanation.  
Candidates do not have to cover all dot points in the question to get full marks.