Report of a Live or Recorded Performance

Significant dance works viewed as live or recorded performances are enjoyable learning experiences. Recorded performances provide you with a wonderful opportunity to see international dance artists and companies perform ballet, modern, contemporary, and other genres of dance works and re-creations of historical works. You can also see interviews of famous dancers and choreographers who discuss their creations or re-creations of roles and choreography. The report of the live or recorded performance allows you to learn what to observe in dance works in order to build your visual memory of those works. By watching dance, you develop a memory bank that becomes the basis for analyzing dances and then a systematic way of comparing performances of the same work. Recorded performances give you the benefit of viewing it several times in order to study it and gain a more in-depth understanding of the work. Use the following instructions for preparing the report.

# Cover Sheet

On the cover sheet, include this information centered on the page:

* Title of the dance
* Your name
* Date
* Professor’s name

# Format

* The report should be typed and double spaced.
* Content, grammar, and spelling will be considered in the evaluation.
* Dances are works of art; therefore, the titles of sections of dances should be enclosed in quotation marks (e.g., “Pas de Deux” from *Don Quixote*). The names of ballets or dances are in italics, such as *Swan Lake* or *Appalachian Spring*.

# Content

* Write the report in narrative form, using first-person point of view.
* When writing about the dance, use kinetic words to describe the dance and include specific examples of movements as well as individual or group designs from the dance.
* For the performance assignment to be evaluated, follow the outline in order.

## I. Dance

1. Choreographer: A biographical summary (one or two paragraphs) that includes dates of birth and death, choreographer’s nationality, and other significant works by the choreographer
2. Performance of the work  
   Company and place  
   Performance space or theater and date of premiere performance  
   Important dancers in the premiere performance
3. Composer: Brief paragraph identifying the person and his or her body of musical work
4. Importance of this work in relation to the choreographer’s other contributions
5. Role or importance of this piece in the history of dance (identify the date of the first performance of the work)

## II. Choreography

1. Choreographic concept: What is the dance about?
2. Fully describe the mood, idea, theme, or story of the dance as you understand it from the performance. (Please do not use your program notes or a website.) What was your perception of the performance? Engage your aesthetic scanning skills of seeing, hearing, and your kinesthetic senses as the dancers perform the work.
3. Compare your ideas with those of a standard source, such as the choreographer’s or a dance company’s website . If the choreography is a re-creation or restaging of a classic work, then consult one or more books or websites that describe it. Be sure to include the sources you consulted. (See list at the end of this form.)
4. Choreographer’s tools  
   Describe how the choreographer used the following elements in the dance:
5. Space and spatial relationships and designs of dancers
6. Energy and dynamics
7. Weight and flow of movements
8. Temporal qualities of the dance: Was it fast or slow or did the tempo change?
9. Choreographic elements: Motif, theme, phrase; sequential, unison, opposition, dance formations, and other relationships in the work
10. Clarity of the dance: Did the choreographer present a clear movement statement that was reinforced through contrasting movement or repetition? Can you write a short description of what you perceive was the choreographer’s concept or intent of the work?
11. Compositional structure
12. Musical form
13. ABA: Dance theme A followed by a contrasting theme of B, ending with a restatement of theme A, which may be a variation of the original A
14. Rondo: ABACADA
15. Canon: One theme with several voices in succession and overlapping harmony
16. Theme and variations: The presentation of a movement theme; the theme is repeated with variations in different elements
17. Narrative: Based on a story or plot
18. Open (free): Having an individualized structure imposed by the movement or dance ideas rather than arbitrarily imposed by an outside source
19. Classical ballet structures
20. Pas de deux: A series of four or more dances for a couple (male and female dancers)

* The first dance is a supported adagio performed by the male and female dancers.
* The second and third dances are pas seuls (solos). The man performs first, then the woman performs her solo. These solos are a display of the dancers’ dancing abilities. The woman often performs multiple consecutive pirouettes and the male dancer executes turns, big jumps, and turns in the air.

1. Variation: A solo dance performed by either a female or male dancer. Quite often the variation is a dance from a larger work, such as a solo or a pas de deux.
2. Ensemble or corps work, soloists, demi-character work, premier danseur, or ballerina
3. Form of the dance: Reflecting on the dance, explain how the following elements contributed to the dance:
4. Unity: How did the dance hold together considering its overall concept?
5. Contrast: The use of opposite qualities or elements in the work.
6. Variety: The use of the same or similar qualities or elements in different forms.
7. Repetition: The manner in which the choreographic elements are restated.
8. Transition: The way in which one movement, phrase, or section of the dance connected to the next.
9. Climax: The point to which the dance builds followed by a resolution; usually occurs close to the end of the dance.
10. Musical accompaniment for the dance
11. Describe the music or sound accompaniment of the dance.
12. Describe the quality and dynamics of the music.
13. Did the choreography mirror the music or sound, or did the movements contrast or counterpoint the accompaniment?
14. Was the music supportive of the choreography?

## III. Dancers’ performance

Describe the effectiveness of the dancers in their relation to the choreography:

1. Quality of the dancers’ technique
2. Dancers’ use of projection and conviction in performance
3. Dancers’ ability to change roles from one dance to another or within the dance

## IV. Production elements

Analyze the effectiveness of the theatrical elements in their relation to the dance:

1. Costumes
2. Lighting design
3. Music or sound accompaniment
4. Sets and props
5. Indicate designers

After you have written your report, use some of the following resources to read more about the dance or search for a description of the dance using the Internet.

Balanchine, George, and Francis Mason. *101 Stories of the Great Ballets: The Scene-by-Scene Stories of the Most Popular Ballets, Old and New.* New York:Doubleday Dolphin, 1975.

Koegler, Horst. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Ballet.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1982.

McDonagh, Don. *Don McDonagh's* *Complete Guide to Modern Dance.* New York: Popular Library, 1977.

Reynolds, Nancy, and Susan Reimer-Torn. *Dance Classics: A Viewer's Guide to the Best-Loved Ballets and Modern Dances.* Chicago: A Cappella Books, 1991.

Robertson, Allen, and Donald Hutera. *The Dance Handbook.* Essex: Longman Group UK, 1988.