

Key Words and Definitions

These criteria are used to help focus observers on some of the characteristics and behaviors that can be recognized in students participating in dance activities. The definitions are not all-inclusive or mutually exclusive. The talent profile of each individual is unique. The observer will recognize many of the behaviors simultaneously and can weigh the criteria according to his or her own perspective.

The focus of each session changes to allow students to demonstrate their full range of talents, to solve real problems and to learn and demonstrate new skills that help them express their artistic natures.

SKILLS

Physical Control

- knows by feeling
- can make adjustments
- can balance on one leg
- has strength in legs, arms, torso
- can maintain corrections

Coordination and Agility

- can combine movements
- executes complex locomotor patterns
- can isolate body parts from each other
- moves freely through space
- moves quickly

Spatial Awareness

- is aware of other people
- adjusts to other dancers and the space
- evens up the circle or line
- is accurate in time and space

Observation and Recall

- remembers information
- can perform without following
- can see and replicate movements accurately
- can build sequences

Rhythm

- puts the beat in the body
- repeats rhythmic patterns accurately
- anticipates, waits for proper moment to begin
- can find the underlying pulse or beat

MOTIVATION

Ability to Focus

- directs attention
- makes full commitment to the movement
- is interested and involved in class

Perseverance

- doesn't give up easily
- practices
- improves over time
- takes time to think
- tries hard to get it right

CREATIVITY

Expressiveness

- shows pleasure in movement
- performs with energy and intensity
- is fully involved
- communicates feelings

Movement qualities

- displays a range of dynamics
- has facility moving in levels, directions, styles
- communicates subtlety
- moves fully
- connects body parts

Improvisation

- responds spontaneously
- uses focus to create reality
- shows the details
- gives surprising or unusual answers

* From the *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, Volume 27, Number 1, pp. 62–94 (2003) with Owen and Baum.