Vocal choreography

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| Year 8 | The Arts — Dance |
| Students work in groups to choreograph and perform a vocal sequence for a song. They write program notes to support their dance work. | |
| **Time allocation** | 7–10 hours. |
| Context for assessment  The phrase *vocal choreography* was coined in the mid-1950s by Cholly Atkins who created sequences for the major Motown singing groups to enhance their performances and sell their songs. It was choreography that asked the performers to move together, accentuating their vocal performances with their bodies and creating interest onstage with gestures and steps. This style is still used today in the synchronised sequences of many vocal groups. | |

******This assessment gathers evidence of learning for the following **Essential Learnings**:

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| The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 9 | |
| Ways of working **Students are able to:**   * make decisions about arts elements, languages and cultural protocols in relation to specific style, function, audience and purpose of arts works * create and shape arts works by manipulating arts elements to express meaning in different contexts * modify and refine genre-specific arts works, using interpretive and  technical skills * present arts works to particular audiences for a specific purpose, style and function, using genre-specific arts techniques, skills, processes and cultural protocols * identify risks and devise and apply safe practices * respond by deconstructing arts works in relation to social, cultural, historical, spiritual, political, technological and economic contexts, using arts elements and language. | Knowledge and understanding ***Dance***  **Dance involves using the human body to express ideas, considering specific audiences and specific purposes, by manipulating dance elements in genre-specific dance sequences.**   * Genre-specific movements are used to create actions for dance sequences. * Traditional and non-traditional performance areas are used to manipulate movement  in space. * Irregular and mixed metres are used to manipulate timing. * Combinations of movement qualities are used to manipulate energy. * Structuring devices, including embellishment, abstraction and variation forms, are used to organise movement. |
| Assessable elements  * Knowledge and understanding * Creating * Presenting * Responding | |
| Source: Queensland Studies Authority 2007, The Arts Essential Learnings by the end of Year 9, QSA, Brisbane. | |

Listed here are suggested **learning experiences** for students before attempting this assessment.

* Research vocal choreography in popular dance, exploring key figures from the 1950s to the present day (including Cholly Atkins, Motown artists such as The Temptations, The Supremes, and boy and girl bands of other decades).
* Identify commercial uses of dance in the music industry, how it contributes to audience appeal and helps to market songs.
* Explore dance’s ability to provide information about the social context of specific time periods (e.g. the 1960s and later decades).
* Identify characteristics of vocal choreography — style, function, purpose.
* Experiment with dance elements to create short popular dance sequences — action; space (direction, shape, focus); time (tempo); energy (movement qualities) and form (repetition, canon, contrast).
* Develop and refine interpretive and technical skills in dance performance.
* Develop skills in analysis and evaluation, considering the style, function and purpose of popular dance.

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| Icon_Resource | Teacher resources |

**Texts**

Atkins, C 2001, *Class Act: The Jazz Life of Choreographer Cholly Atkins*, Columbia University Press.

**Websites**

*Music copyright for schools*, 3rd edn, 2006, accessed 3 Mar 2008, <www.apra.com.au/music-users/apra\_publications.asp>.

“Symposium celebrates 40 years of popular music”, *Information Bulletin*, January 1999, Vol 58, No.1,The Library of Congress, accessed 25 January 2008, <www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9901/motown.html>.

Wikipedia entry on boy bands: <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boy_band>>.

Wikipedia entry on girl bands: <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Girl_band>>.

**DVDs and videos**

*Tape Services*, Department of Education and Children's Services, South Australia 1999, accessed 25 January 2008, <[www.tapeservices.sa.edu.au](http://www.tapeservices.sa.edu.au)>. Search the catalogue for:

* *Sounds of the sixties: 2. Getting in on the act*. (Classic archive performances from The Rolling Stones, Dave Clark Five, Roy Orbison, The Supremes, The Hollies, Herman’s Hermits, The Seekers, Sonny and Cher, Dave Dee, Dozy, Mick and Tich, Jonathan King and The Byrds.)
* *Songs that changed the world: 3. Stayin' alive*. (Episode three of a nine-part series that looks at some of the most influential contemporary songs of the second half of the twentieth century. Dance crazes abound throughout the history of popular music.)
* *Walk on by: The story of Popular Sons*. (2002. Complete series.)

**Other commercially available resources**

* The Temptations (various, such as, *Get Ready: Definitive Performances 1965–1972—The Temptations*,2006, DVD, Motown).
* The Supremes (various recordings).
* *Dreamgirls* 2006, DVD, Dreamworks & Paramount Pictures.
* Commerical DVD and video source, Marcom Projects Pty Ltd: <www.marcom.com.au>.

## redesign headings_developPreparing

This assessment will provide you with valuable information about your students’ understanding of vocal choreography. It will also allow students to rehearse and polish their performance skills and write appropriate program notes to support the intention or meaning of their work.

You will need to:

* provide research opportunities, class notes and video footage to develop students’ knowledge and understanding of vocal choreography
* select suitable music for vocal choreography (from the 1950s to the present day), choosing songs that have clear lyrics, are appropriate to school and age, and allow for easy interpretation in a movement context (e.g. *Stop in the name of love*, The Supremes; *Think*, *Respect*, Aretha Franklin; *Stop*, Spice Girls; *Every time you cry*, Human Nature; *Bye bye bye*, NSync)
* be aware of copyright guidelines for use of music (see Appendix B: Copyright issues)
* provide an open, uncluttered space and access to music players.

## Implementation

Consider these points when implementing the assessment.

* Students may need additional time to rehearse in the facilities they will use for the performance.
* Students should be encouraged to sing the lyrics to get the feel of the style. Non-movement components — props and costume — could also be included to enhance the performance but are not assessable.
* Ensure that the choice of songs and material is inclusive of a range of beliefs and perspectives where possible.

Sample implementation plan

This table shows one way of doing this assessment. It is a guide only — you may choose to use all, part, or none of the table. You may customise the table to suit your students and their school environment.

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| **Suggested time** | **Student activity** | **Teacher role** |
| **Section 1. Create a vocal choreography** | | |
| 4–6 hours | Students work in groups of 3 or 4 to create vocal choreography for a set piece of music.  Students adapt and modify movements using the following dance elements to shape and communicate meaning:   * action * space (direction, shape, focus) * time (tempo) * energy (movement qualities) * form (repetition, canon, contrast). | Select music, provide lyrics.  Discuss and reinforce dance elements.  Use Appendix A: Glossary — Dance terms.  Monitor group collaboration and involvement, checking to see that each group member is responsible for choreographing and developing ideas for a clear section of the sequence, e.g. a verse and/or chorus of selected song.  Provide feedback on choreography. Use the Choreography feedback guidelines in the *Student booklet.* |
| **Section 2. Write program notes for a vocal choreography** | | |
| 1–2 hours | Students write a 200–250 word outline in the form of program notes about their choreography, analysing and evaluating how their piece reflects the style, function and purpose of this popular dance style. | Guide and assist students as required.  Collect program notes before performances. |
| **Section 3. Perform a vocal choreography** | | |
| 1 hour | Students rehearse and polish their choreography for performance. | During rehearsal, provide feedback on performance skills. Use the Performance feedback guidelines in the *Student booklet.* |
| 1 hour | Students perform choreography for other class members. | Select groups for performance.  Video performances for informal feedback. |

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| Icon_Resource | Resources for the assessment |

Appendix A Glossary — Dance terms

Appendix B Copyright issues

Lyrics sheets

Song recordings (e.g. CD, MP3)

Music players

Electronic recording equipment

During the learning process, you and your students should have developed a shared understanding of the curriculum expectations identified as part of the planning process.

After students have completed the assessment, identify, gather and interpret the information provided in student responses. Use only the evidence in student responses to make your judgment about the quality of the student’s learning. Refer to the following documents to assist you in making standards-referenced judgments:

* *Guide to making judgments*
* *Indicative A response*
* *Sample responses* (where available).

**Making judgments about this assessment**

You will need to continually monitor the progress of students to ensure that they are all contributing and have tried to include the dance elements required. They will be assessed only on their section of choreography and performance of the dance movements, rather than the vocal component.   
The choreography, performance and the program notes will be assessed individually.

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| Icon_ForFurtherHelp | For further information, refer to *Using a Guide to making judgments*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website. |

Evaluate the information gathered from the assessment to guide teaching and learning strategies.

Involve students in the feedback process. Give students opportunities to ask follow-up questions and share their learning observations or experiences.

Focus feedback on the student’s personal progress. Emphasise continuous progress relative to their previous achievement and to the learning expectations — avoid comparing a student with their classmates.

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| Icon_ForFurtherHelp | For further information, refer to *Using feedback*, available in the Resources section of the Assessment Bank website. |

Glossary — Dance terms

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| **Term** | **Definition** |
| Action | Movements of the human body used in dance, using technical (physical) and expressive (interpretive) skills. |
| Direction | Refers to which way a dancer or body part is moving, e.g. backwards, sideways. |
| Shape | The form created by the body's position in space, e.g. symmetrical/asymmetrical, angular/curved. |
| Focus | 1. Where the dancer is looking. 2. Where the audience’s attention is directed. 3. The ability to concentrate attention and effort. |
| Tempo | The speed with which a movement is performed. |
| Movement qualities | The identifying characteristics that relate to how a movement is made — the release, follow-through and termination of energy. Terms used to describe qualities include sustained, percussive, collapsing, vibratory and swinging. |
| Repetition | The repeated use of an arts element to create rhythm or unity. |
| Canon | Individuals and groups perform the same movement/phrase beginning at different times, e.g. the Mexican wave. |
| Contrast | Setting elements side by side to emphasise their differences, e.g. two contrasting movements might differ in energy and space (size, direction or level) or timing (fast or slow, even or uneven). |
| Musicality | In the context of dance, this refers to fitting a dance to the music being played with the goal of relating the dance to the music’s rhythm, melody and mood. |

Adapted from:

Queensland Studies Authority2004*, Dance Senior Syllabus 2004*, available from Queensland Studies Authority website, <www.qsa.qld.edu.au>.

California State Board of Education 2007, *Visual and Performing Arts: Dance Content Standards — Glossary*, accessed 25 January 2008, <[www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/daglossary.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/daglossary.asp)>.

Kentucky Educational Television 2008, *Arts toolkit — Dance — Glossary*,accessed *25* January2008, *<*www.ket.org/artstoolkit/dance/glossary.htm>.

Copyright issues

The guidelines below cover copyright for school music performances both inside and outside the classroom. They are an excerpt from *Music copyright for schools*, 3rd edn, 2006 available at <www.apra.com.au/music-users/apra\_publications.asp>.

4.1 Introduction

Most schools in Australia are involved in the public performance of music in some way, either by organising school concerts, or simply by playing music via CDs or other types of commercial recordings, radio or television. Although there is an exception in the Copyright Act for performances within a class setting, all public performances of copyright musical works by schools or authorised by schools outside of the class context require the coverage of an APRA licence.

4.2 Performances in a class context

There is a limited exception under the Copyright Act for the performance (playing) of copyright musical works and sound recordings in the course of educational instruction. **These performances are deemed not to be public performances and therefore do not require any type of licence.** The permission of the copyright owner is not required where a literary, dramatic or musical work, sound recording or film is performed:

* in class or otherwise in the presence of an audience
* by a teacher in the course of giving educational instruction, provided the instruction is not being given for profit, or by a student in the course of receiving such instruction, and
* the audience is limited to persons who are taking part in the instruction or are otherwise directly connected with the place where the instruction is given. A person is not taken to be directly connected by reason only of being a parent or guardian of a student — therefore this section will not apply to performances where parents or other family members are present unless there is some other direct connection between them and the educational instruction or institution.

This exception also applies to the playing of sound recordings in the course of educational instruction, where the instruction is not being given for profit.

4.3 Agreements with peak educational organisations

If a school organises a public performance of music or plays recorded music outside of the classroom setting, it would require a licence from APRA. All Government schools are covered by an APRA licence as the Department of Education in each State and Territory pays the relevant licence fees each year on behalf of their public schools. Most other schools in Australia are covered through an agreement with their peak education body, but if you are not sure if your school is covered, please contact your peak education organisation to ensure that you are covered under their APRA licence.

If the teacher wanted to make copies of music for students e.g. MP3 files for them to take home for reference, this would be covered under the school’s licence too, but would need to be reported to APRA.