

Q&A

with Samuel Zaplin, student and Leisa Cooper, teacher
North Lakes State College
Dance, Internal assessment 2: Choreography

Samuel Zaplin, student

Q: What did you enjoy most about Dance?

A: *I loved the support in all Arts subjects from many of the teachers. I was able to go to school feeling like I was able to do what I wanted to do with my future.*

Q: How did you prepare for this assessment task?

A: *I chose a topic that was personal to me and was also something I felt had meaning to society. I often choose a song first and create my intent from that; this piece was no different. I chose a song I knew that told the story of a relationship and I incorporated the impact of technology on the couple.*

Q: How did your teacher prepare you for this assessment?

A: *I quite enjoyed being shown various dance works by different choreographers so that I was able to get inspired by movement and start to gather my ideas and understand how choreography could be manipulated to successfully tell the story.*

Q: What made you choose the topic or method of presentation?

A: *I chose a topic that I felt was deep and meaningful and would be able to have an impact on the greater society.*

Q: What is most important to you when you are preparing a response to an assessment task?

A: *Planning. This part of the phase is crucial, as it's the point in time where all the ideas are first put together and can ensure no roadblocks are hit when choreographing.*

Q: What are your thoughts about this assessment and the approach you took when responding to the task?

A: *Choreography is one of my favourite things to do, other than performance. I love to be given the opportunity to tell a story that means so much to me and can provoke an emotional response from audiences. I was particularly proud of how well the dance came together, as well as the positive response from my class.*

Q: How will you use what you have learnt in this subject?

A: *Dance is my passion. It's my entire life. It's helped me through thick and thin and no matter what happens in my life, I know that dance will be right there by my side to help get me through it.*

Leisa Cooper, teacher

Q: What was the purpose of this assessment and what key decisions were made in the design of the task?

A: The purpose of this assessment is to determine a student's ability to undertake a choreographic process and create an end product using a range of cognitive, physical and creative skills as well as theoretical and conceptual understandings.

It was important to design this task with a clear understanding of the clientele of the school. While the conditions of the task are set by the syllabus, subject matter was one area where we were able to adapt the task to suit our clientele. We selected a variety of topics that were relevant to this cohort of students and allowed them to select one to explore in more detail.

Q: How did your teaching and the student learning experiences prepare the students to complete this assessment?

A: Learning experiences for this class included the study of a variety of choreographic works and the choreographic processes used by different choreographers. Current and historical events/issues were used as stimulus for in-class choreographic learning experiences. Analysis of dance works included exploring the social, political and cultural contexts in which they were created. Various choreographic workshops allowed students to explore how to develop movement utilising the dance concepts and skills to create meaning.

Q: How does this assessment reflect the unique characteristics of your school and your students?

A: The community in which our college sits is a very tight-knit community with minimal outside influence. This means that students don't have a broad range of life experience to draw from when creating dance works. In order for students to develop a dance work that communicated a clear viewpoint to the audience, the assessment piece had to provide students with a topic that was easily accessible through research rather than life experience. The topics we set for the students had ample information readily available, so students were able to develop their viewpoint through in-depth research and analysis.

Q: Can you explain the exemplary aspects of Sam's response?

A: Sam's choreographic statement shows application of literacy skills through sequences and connected ideas that enhance the communication of meaning about the dance concepts. Evaluation within the choreographic statement incorporates a well-reasoned justification using examples that reveal the interrelationship between purpose, context and meaning.

The choreographic work shows the ability to apply dance concepts and communicate meaning effectively. Purpose and context are made explicit through both the manipulation of movement and the use of production elements. There are subtle and complex layers of meaning that communicate a viewpoint with impact and sensitivity.