

## Flipped Assessment in the Choreographic Process

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What information does assessment bring to choreographic process? Who decides what quality work looks like? Can student controlled smartphone assessment modalities support creative skill development, efficacy and metacognition in dance? Traditional classrooms are controlled and moderated by the teacher and students seldom make decisions about their own learning. Flipped Assessment is a new twist on curriculum, instruction and evaluation, where students not only define creative projects and learning goals but also the modes of assessment employed to evaluate their work. Smart technologies serve to assist in the process of “flipping” evaluative practice and placing it in the hands, and phones, of students.

In a “flipped” assessment dancers, ages 7-17, become familiar with dance standards and define personal, creative and performance goals. Using freeware applications on smartphones and iPads, student’s work collaboratively to discuss, create and evaluate dance. By defining key learning outcomes aligned with student’s long-term goals students move past initial quick solutions to more informed thorough ones.

How can “flipped” assessment better serve students developing artistic practice? Moving beyond the traditional evaluative methods, “flipped” assessment created by students, for students, prepares students for making critical judgments and decisions on their own. In the process of “flipping” assessment students think through complex problems, identify specific goals, and design evaluation strategies that work for them. Students talk through a problem, learn to visualize relationships between existing knowledge, identify what they are interested in, what they already know, and what they need to discover. Quickly, students learn to draw inferences, spend time encoding the terms of a problem, unpack the component parts, postpone conclusions, and as a result, develop awareness about their own thinking and learning process.

As dance educators we have a unique opportunity to nurture creative thinking, self-direction and personal efficacy before, during and after instruction. Interactive web based “smart” technologies can assist in this process. When students are in charge of their own learning and assessment, their work is more focused, self-directed, and embodied and as a result students learn to take initiative and to be responsible and accountable for their work. The benefits for using handheld assessment in the dance class include:

- (a) Integrative research for class project using multiple sources of information, including database articles, web-based news stories, videos, photos, and interviews;
- (b) Handheld media incorporation in process and performance assignments provides increased opportunities for thoughtful self and peer assessment;
- (c) Process journals which scaffold learning, can be used for documenting semester long or project-based class experiences;
- (d) Students and teachers may archive and organize traditional and non-traditional sources of information for later use serving to develop critical thinking tools in the production of multi genre learning artifacts to represent key learning;
- (f) When cell phones are used to record, document and store information, students are more likely to personalize experiences and revisit progress reports, feedback and videos when found on personal devices.

### Practical things to consider

Here are a few practical things to consider when bringing handhelds into the dance studio.

#### Take time and create a safe space for reflection

Discuss acceptable language use for both peer and self-assessment. Discuss the value of authentic feedback vs empty overpraising “good work.” Strategies for feedback should encourage self-awareness and collaborative peer support. As a class define the function of prompts and value of a thoughtful, focused response.

### Establish a location for digital reflection

Determine a media policy in class. It is helpful to restrict social media or other apps when conducting peer and self reflections. Make the consequences known in advance that misuse will impact grades. Offer opportunities for students to share both written and audio feedback to the class. At the beginning of class require that students place their devices in silent mode, on the edges of the room. When recording a reflection have the students face away from other members of the class to reduce distraction.

### Quality of feedback

Sound quality and clear speech is important in the process. In cavernous dance studios excess noise control can be challenging. If no one can hear the student's comments then feedback is unused. Take the time to discuss relative volume. Maintaining volume in the space is critical – with everyone talking I encourage students to bring phones speaker close to their mouths and use their best “yoga teacher volume”. Further, encourage students to remove visual stimulus to support inner focusing of their thoughts. In written and audio reflections be specific and describe what you see and understand.

### Time and prompts

I find that many students have much to say and I encourage the students to take the time needed to complete the reflection. However, if a student finishes sooner than other members in the group, give them a second prompt where they provide additional detail or identify something they feel is important to remember. Also have students ask their partner what they would like them to focus on in their reflection. Depending on the students ages, 2-5 minutes is an effective amount of time for reflection. It helps to provide a 15 second warning before coming to a close, in order to allow all students to bring their reflection to an end.

Flipped assessment practices that help students to overcome obstacles in their learning also may also help students to find deeper connections to the process of creating the final product. Creativity and innovation that is nurtured by learning experiences foster questioning, reflection and collaboration in the learning process. Creating Curricula that will guide students to understanding the function of assessment in the learning process is vital to increasing student achievement on a personal level. Good assessment provides students with the tools to reach achievement in their understanding of the concept through the breakdown of assessment. Flipped assessment works to identify what the student knows, understands and can apply to the learning process. Students will begin to share more deeply about their own process.



I can tell essence is exploring new movements but she never fails to keep her gracefulness. I see strength and intention in her movements. She's starting to use different body parts like leading with her foot or moving only her elbow. I can tell a huge difference in how she moved in the beginning of the year to now. She's letting go and letting her body flow. She did something on the floor where she was rolling and her foot came over and it was gorgeous then she got up and started shaking her foot it was dope go ess ily 🤩🤩🤩🤩🤩🤩

2nd time:

I want to see you do something completely out of your comfort zone. Like really fast movement

