

Question 1 (a)

The dynamics and quality of movements for contemporary and jazz are very different. Contemporary dance often has softer movements that flow from one move to another whereas the dynamics in jazz are very sharp and clean where movements can be separate from the other. The dynamics in contemporary can change rapidly going from a very soft movement straight into a faster sharp one where as in jazz the movements are usually maintained throughout the dance, with high energy not changing a lot. The way the dancers use their centre of gravity in each style is different as in contemporary when movements show fall and recovery with use of breath it is like the dancer is on the verge of losing it but then quickly regain it however in jazz having a low centre of gravity is more common with many movements performed with lower gravity or soft knees. Contemporary dance is very fluid often using shapes to express what the dance is about. Jazz dance is usually much jerkier and is performed with high levels of energy. The movements in contemporary dance can be indirect which means each movement goes into another and are not defined. In jazz movements are direct which means each movement has to hit a certain position and each movement is defined from the other. Both styles would usually be choreographed to show contrasting dynamics to create a highlight in the dance piece this can be created by stillness before a change in dynamics or shape and force of movements.

Question 1 (b)

Both strength and flexibility are required in both styles of dance. Flexibility in the legs, hips and back allow a greater range in movement and improve the quality of movements such as kicks and back bends, which come into both style of dance. Strength is important for all aspects in contemporary and jazz. In contemporary, strength is required in legs, arms and your back for the many changes in levels. In jazz, strength is essential in your legs for high elevated jumps. Strength also allows positions to be held for longer which allows flexibility to be highlighted.

Question 2

Before starting a dance class, carrying out a well executed warm up is essential for the safety of the dancers body. If a dancer begins a class without preparing their body, they will not be able to carry out movements to their full range and ability at ease as their muscles and joints won't be warm. This causes the dancer to put strain on their body as they push themselves to achieve the correct positions and dynamics, causing injury and discomfort by, for example, pulling a muscle. Carrying out a warm up is required for raising your heartbeat before starting an vigorous movements or exercise.

The shoes the performer wears is very important. If the performance floor is slippery than the shoes will need some form of grip so the performer does not slip. Performers can also dance bare foot however when this is the case the flooring all around and on the stage needs to be checked for potential hazards so the performer doesn't injure their feet, potentially by stepping on a sharp object.

If the dancers attire is extremely loose fitted and baggy, there is potential for it to get caught on something or even someone which is a threat for their safety when dancing because it could lead to them injuring themselves. Similarly, jewellery has potential to get attached to something. This is very dangerous because it can result in serious injuries to fingers and ears. For that reason, the dance attire should consist of no jewellery.

Hair should be tied up as well. If some performers are performing a floor routine with hair down and others are dancing on their feet, there could be an incidence where a dancer slips on hair and injures themselves. Therefore hair should be tied up.

Question 3

There are many ways in which historical events have influenced the development of jazz dance. You can look at the history of jazz by using a 'metaphorical tree', which is an idea in the book Jazz Dance. This idea of the tree shows that the history of jazz dance has roots, a trunk and branches just like a tree does. The roots of this style are very clearly from Africa, particularly from West African enslavement, which forced a huge number of Africans to the United States on slave ships. When these people moved, their music and dance travelled with them for example the use of low centre of gravity which can be seen in the styles today.

The trunk represents the vernacular dance style, which developed in the "jazz age" which was in the early 1900s. This was when African dance developed into African - American dance. Popular dances of this time were styles such as the

Charleston and Lindy Hop. These dances were danced socially, performed in jazz clubs, dance halls and theatres of the 1920s and 30s. In the 1940s vernacular jazz began to merge with ballet and modern dance.

New Orleans was a place where jazz dance developed because of the many cultural clashes that took place in the history of the city. Jazz dance was seen to have evolved and developed alongside jazz music in the early 1900s. In the 1930s through to the 1960s jazz dance transformed from the vernacular style it was at the beginning to a more theatre-based performance. In New Orleans jazz dance developed with community life such as brass band funerals and music in the bars and streets of New Orleans. The growth of jazz dance was mostly due to the city's musical style, which allowed the dance style to develop as the music changed and evolved.

There are many branches to the style just as there are many branches to a tree. One of these branches is theatrical jazz, which blends elements of ballet, jazz, and other genres together. This is commonly seen in musical theatre, commercial dance and on the concert stage. Another branch on the tree represents tap dance. Tap dance shares the same rhythmic tendencies as jazz but they just express it more through their feet. Hip-Hop is another branch that shares some of the same aspects such as improvisation, competition and individual style, hip-hop does not share rhythmic closeness with jazz though. An ideal representation of the style would have a tree with intertwining branches as many different styles feature in the development of jazz dance.

Swansong by Christopher Bruce and the theme is human rights.

Question 4 (a)

The mood and atmosphere throughout the piece shows intimidation, interrogation and isolation. The prisoner is intimidated by the guards when they use question and answer to try get information out of him which creates a tense atmosphere.

As we see the prisoner bullied and isolated by the guards it creates an unsettling and nerve-wracking atmosphere for the audience as the guards have power and control and push him to the floor throughout the piece.

Question 4 (b)

Two of the dancers wear dull, brown uniforms shirts and trousers to show that they are guards and are more powerful and superior than the other character who is dressed in normal clothing, tshirt and jeans which shows he is the prisoner and doesn't have any authority or power in the situation. This shows the tension between the prisoner and the guards.

Question 5

The movement created was a fusion of dance styles including contemporary, jazz and tap. The intricate footwork used suggests heated arguments taking place between the prisoner and guards, the guards movement increases in force and speed which adds to the intensity. The travelling section with leaps and turn towards upstage left shows the prisoner longing for freedom and to escape the bullying from the guards. During the contact section the guards keep contact with the prisoner at all times manipulating his movements such as they push and pull to and from the floor and pull him off the chair. This shows that the guards are more powerful and in control.

Question 6

The spatial elements used in Swansong were pathways, levels, formations and direction.

Levels are used throughout to emphasise the power of the guards and the weak victim, the guards stand tall and strong with good posture looking down at the prisoner effectively making them appear very powerful and it is clear to see the victim will be overpowered. Throughout the prisoners movements vary, at points his movement is small contained and close to the floor suggesting the guards are making him feel trapped.

The formations is always 2 against 1 and is often the two guards either side of the prisoner, this can be seen with the guards standing in front of the prisoner and also in a straight line. This positioning traps the prisoner showing the guards are restricting where he can go which further emphasises the power and control they have over him. Having the two guards in front of the prisoner shows his inferiority and their dominance as they are in control. Pathways used include the guards entering and exits stage right which helps to show that it is a cell and there is only one way in and out. This adds to the choreographers intentions as it adds to the feeling of being trapped and isolated and also helps the audience to visualise the prison cell and to empathise with the theme of human rights. Another significant use of pathways is the prisoners diagonal pathway as he travels to the corridor of light upstage left. This is used to convey his hope and desire for freedom.