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STUDENT GUIDE

Much Ado About Modern Dance

Modern dance is, in a word, modern. Unlike other forms of dance, such as ballet or ballroom dance, which have existed for centuries, modern dance is relatively young. It was developed in the 20th century and is considered, like recent art and music, to have developed in response to the unique conditions of modern life.

At first modern dance was a rebellion. The pioneers of the modern dance movement were tired of the firm rules that controlled ballets and other stage shows. They began to develop a new dance style that encouraged the audience to consider new realities about themselves and their world.

Although this new dance form was based on an absence rather than an abundance of rules, a few distinct styles and influences can be identified that have nurtured and defined modern dance as we know it today.

THE EARLY DAYS One early innovator was Isadora Duncan. Duncan shocked audiences by appearing onstage in a simple Greek tunic and doing a series of natural movements that made up what she called “free dance.” Although Duncan performed to the music of serious composers, she was known for improvising her dances onstage. In fact, Duncan improvised so much that she was often the only dancer who could perform her routines.

Duncan’s work was followed by that of Loie Fuller, who used dance to illustrate the natural world onstage. Fuller created dance moves like the flame,

ELISA MONTE DANCE - Zydeco

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 9
2008



the flower, and the butterfly. She also experimented with stage lighting and costumes.

Meanwhile, dancer Ruth St. Denis and her husband/creative partner Ted Shawn founded the Denishawn company, which is known for taking its dance inspiration from ethnic sources.

Asian religions were sources of inspiration, and Native American tribal dance was another. Like Fuller, Denishawn dancers created a picture onstage. Denishawn is credited with increasing the popularity of modern dance in the United States and spreading it to Germany, where dance innovators stubbornly kept the movement alive by restarting schools that had been closed by the Nazis.

MORE REBELLION At the end of the 1920’s the modern dance world changed again. Dancers began to reject elaborate settings, costumes, and music. They believed that the purpose of dance was to help the audience look inward. Although dancers explored classic themes like Greek mythology and the Old Testament in their work, they believed music was only a frame for dance and ignored elaborate

sound accompaniment. Some eventually rejected music and performed in silence or to “everyday sounds” like bursts of laughter. Martha Graham developed dances based on simple life functions like breathing. Graham’s influence was so far reaching that a company based on her dance philosophy and bearing her name is still in existence today.

AND EVEN MORE REBELLION

The 1960’s and 70’s are known as a time of social and political unrest in the US. Things were no different in the modern dance world. In fact, they were changing again. A new wave of dancers who questioned formalities more than ever entered the scene. Amongst these are Paul Taylor, who stood along onstage making small changes to his posture when the voice of a telephone operator sounded at 10 second intervals, and Twyla Tharp, who removed distracting music and moved performances from the stage to public spaces like a museum staircase or a city park. Another notable event of this era was pop artist Steve Paxton’s attempt to remove the barrier between life and art by performing a duet with a chicken.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER By the late 20th century, distinctions among modern dance, ballet, and show dancing were not as rigid as they once had been. Ballet technique and choreography have remained more formal than those of modern dance, but their themes and stage effects are often similar. Important modern dancers have been invited to perform with and to create

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— continued from cover —
 dances for ballet companies. In 1990, Mikhail Baryshnikov joined dancer-choreographer Mark Morris to form a new eclectic dance company. In addition, Paul Taylor performed with the New York City Ballet in a work created for him by George Balanchine, Taylor himself created dances for Rudolf Nureyev, and Tharp's dancers joined the Joffrey Ballet to perform her *Deuce Coupe* and *As Time Goes By*. No doubt modern dance will continue to grow and change in the future. Keep watching, and see what the 21st century brings.

Beauty Made Possible Through Dance: Profiling Elisa Monte Dance Company

Name: Elisa Monte Dance Company

Who's involved: Company director and choreographer Elisa Monte and crew of very well-trained and disciplined dancers

Birthplace and Influences: The company, which was founded in 1981, took the skills director Elisa Monte had developed as a member of various other dance companies. It now represents the basic elements of those styles and incorporates the new. Now the Elisa Monte Dance Company boasts a unique athletic and sensual dance style marked by fabulous technical precision.

Famous Friends: Elisa Monte is a former member of both the Martha Graham Dance Company and Pilobolus, and she makes it part of her mission to collaborate with artists in other disciplines on innovative new performances.

Where Found: Basically, worldwide. This multi-ethnic company has performed in over 40 nations including Singapore, Italy, Russia, France, Germany, and throughout the United States. Elisa Monte Dance has also appeared in several major dance festivals and has been featured on television networks throughout the USA, Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean.

Hobbies: Yoga and Pilates. Elisa Monte is extensively trained in both disciplines, and her dancers practice these forms of exercise to keep their bodies in shape and prepared for the strenuous dance movements for which they are known.

IF YOU CAN DREAM IT, THEY CAN DANCE IT

If you think about it, dance is a very old art form. Before people gathered in theaters, in front of the t.v., or around the computer screen to see dance performances, ancient people danced around their campfires while recalling history or acting out hoped for events. Similarly, Native Americans and other tribal groups include dance in their religious ceremonies. Today, dance is not only still around and, it is more varied and unique than ever. A comparison of various dance forms and styles exists below. Examine these, then use the concept map provided below to complete a VENN diagram comparing what you believe you will see at the Elisa Monte Dance Company performance and what you might see at other dance performances or in the dance of dance you, your friends, and your family do.



Type of Dance	Modern	Ballet	Tap	Ballroom	Hip-hop
Where to see it	Onstage during Elisa Monte Dance Company's performance	Every Christmas when <i>The Nutcracker</i> can be seen onstage and on television	On old movies and television shows (like <i>Singing in the Rain</i> or <i>The Little Rascals</i>)	Just watch ABC's hit <i>Dancing With the Stars</i>	Download some music videos
Where is it performed?	Onstage or in a performance space	Dancers require a smooth, highly polished stage	A firm, hard floor is needed	In the ballroom, of course!	In the club, in the street, on the stage...the possibilities are endless
The Clothes	Costume are often simple and fitted to emphasize the dancers' bodies	Tutus and tights	Fred Astaire, one of the best tappers ever, always wore a suit. Many other have since followed suit. (Pun intended)	Suits and formal gowns	Anything cool and baggy
The Shoes	None – modern dancers do it barefoot!	Pointed "toe-shoes" that lace on the ankles	Flat soled lace-ups with taps attached	Dressy flats for men and heels for women	Tennis shoes are preferred, but sometimes a diva keeps her heels on
The Music	Any sort of sound works (hence the Zydeco infusion)	Classical	Jazzy beat or Broadway-type musical number	Instrumental tunes are common	It's gotta be hip hop or pop

Past, Present, and Future Fusion: A Jeffrey Broussard and the Creole Cowboys Profile

AKA: Musicians Jeffrey Broussard (accordion and vocals), D'Jalma Garnier III (fiddle and guitar), and their musical support.

BIRTHPLACE AND INFLUENCES: Both men are Cajun Country natives who grew up listening to the greats of Cajun and Creole music.

FAMOUS FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS: Jeffery is a former member of the band Zydeco Force. His father, Delton Broussard, was the leader of Delton Broussard and the Lawtell Playboys. D'Jalma's grandfather was a famous fiddle and coronet player, and he has spent ten years as a member of the band File and even more time playing various types of music in Austin, Texas.

WHERE FOUND: Performing at a festival, taking part in a benefit concert, or on the internet. Check out these guys on YouTube, or access their MySpace page.

HOBBIES: Giving music lessons to family, friends, or members of the public. Jeffrey Broussard is especially passionate about making sure that the musical styles and traditions that he was raised with do not die out.



The Evolution of the Zydeco Revolution

In Elisa Monte Dance Company's Zydeco presentation, two special modern art forms meet each other on the stage. Modern dance has a unique history that reflects cultural and social change. Just as modern dance has had a long and varied evolution, Zydeco music has grown slowly from an interesting set of circumstances. Study the chart on Zydeco below, and notice how the music changes over time and

what its influences are. Use the article "The Beginnings of Modern Dance" to help you complete the chart below. Compare and contrast the evolution of the two, and discuss anything interesting that you find.

Zydeco Revolution	Time Period	Modern Dance Evolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The forerunners of Zydeco music are being performed in call and response music (sometimes called <i>jure</i>) and the developing Cajun music. 	Before the 20 th century	Modern dance is not yet a recognized art form.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First-ever recording of Creole music, <i>Allons a' Lafayette</i> is made in 1928 and released to a regional audience. It becomes a hit, but has little in common with the other music that is popular at the time, and the fiddle, triangle, and accordion used in this music sound strange to those who are not accustomed to Creole sounds. Cajun and Creole music enjoy a brief mainstream popularity before returning to their original locales: homes, churches, and family gatherings. While this music remains popular in parts of southern Louisiana and Texas, its fame elsewhere is not yet set. 	1920's – 1950's	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clifton Chenier and Boozoo Chavis begin recording. Even though no one has heard the term "Zydeco" yet, listeners know that this style is different. Some say that Chenier develops the first "frottoir," or metal washboard/vest, and has it made in Texas. This instrument helps to provide Zydeco with its unique sound. 	1950's	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rockin' Sydney calls attention to Zydeco with his hit tune "My Toot Toot." Waves of new Zydeco performers continue to emerge and break the mold. Groups like Zydeco Force, Nathan and the Zydeco Cha-Chas, and the Terrance Simien Band appeared on the scene and bridged the gap between old and new by playing traditional music with their own flair. Buckwheat Zydeco, a locally famous artist, signed a major record deal. More Zydeco performers begin touring nationally and take Cajun music out of their realm. 	1960's – 1980's	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beau Jocque changes the face of Zydeco once again by adding pounding beats and bass lines that show the influence of rap and hip-hop. 	1990's	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Zydeco musicians continue to appear, and more female and Caucasian performers join their ranks. Zyde-Cajun sound becomes more popular and shows the ongoing fusion of ethnic and popular music. Interest in Zydeco and Cajun music grows outside of its usual region with the creation of new Grammy award for Cajun and Zydeco music. Terrance Simien and the Zydeco Experience win the first Grammy given in this category for their album <i>Live! Worldwide</i>. 	2000 and Beyond	



TRIVIA QUICKIE:

Isadora Duncan died a rather tragic, yet famous death. She was fond of riding in open convertibles and wore long neck scarves that trailed behind her in the wind. One day, Duncan's scarf caught in a wheel while the convertible she was traveling in roared down a French highway. Duncan died of a broken neck, and her unfortunate story has been famous ever since.

ZYDECO – IQ After working through all the other sections in this student guide, you should be able to complete all of the completion items presented below. Supply an answer for each statement. All correct answers can be found in the word search puzzle, which will test your knowledge of Zydeco and modern dance.

M B S Q U P O J Q A N F V A O
 X A V H O C K L T C A G T S B
 D M R H O B U W T C E L Y C J
 F S P T N E E W P O B D U Q T
 T I C T H N S Q T R P M O O F
 H T G E T A E R J D A Y Q M V
 T V J I D I G D I I N R M M J
 G K E F T G Y R Z O S M I G Y
 H T G R A M M Y A N T I G U F
 H B T U B J Q V K H L T F K W
 N O Y V D O P H Q J A I P Y L
 W G W P Z O H R Y G O M R R Z
 Y S H Y W X Y P N L H S T S F
 E T T E Y A F A L K S S Y E S
 B H C N H U H D D H O X D T I

- Elisa Monte was once a principal dancer in the company named after modern dance innovator _____.
- Today's Zydeco music incorporates the influence of rap, R&B, ska, and _____ - _____.
- In addition to performing vocals, Jeffrey Broussard is an instrumentalist who plays the _____.
- Modern dance was developed in the _____ century.
- The first ever recording of Creole music was the album *Allons a' _____*.
- The name for a washboard/vest, which some say Clifton Chenier developed, is a _____.
- Terrance Simien and the Zydeco Experience were the first to win a _____ award for Zydeco music.
- In order to emphasize the nature of their movements and bodies, modern dancers wear simple, fitted costumes and no _____.
- The word "zydeco" is derived from the name for a _____.
- Elisa Monte and her dancers have performed in over _____ countries.

FACTOIDS:

A Double-Clutching Zydeco

Since Zydeco is not only a relatively new, but an ever-changing form of music, it is hard to define or explain. Therefore, with no simple definition in existence, the best way to talk about this type of music may be to gather a few facts. Unique tidbits about Zydeco music and the people who play it can be culled from many sources, including the internet, documentary film, or a conversation with someone who knows their stuff. Presented below are a series of facts from Zydeco sources that give a picture of what Zydeco is all about. In addition to information, vocabulary words have been incorporated into the facts. This lesson does double duty. Use a dictionary to define each vocabulary word in the box provided. Then use the empty box to create a picture or non-linguistic representation that represents each Zydeco fast fact. In the end, you will improve your vocabulary and your Zydeco knowledge.

DERIVED The name “Zydeco” is *derived* from “les haricots,” the French word for snap beans.

REFLECTED Originally, Zydeco *reflected* the music that was popular at the time. That was the waltz, the two-step, and the blues.

INCORPORATES Zydeco’s sound still changes because it *incorporates* elements of popular music. Today it might sound a bit more like hip-hop, R & B, or ska.

GENRE In 2007, a new category of Grammy award was created to represent the popularity and growth of Cajun and Zydeco music. For the first time, an award was given for the best album in this *genre*.

ETHNIC Since Zydeco music was developed and is traditionally played by non-white people from African cultures, it is considered *ethnic* music.

DESCENDANT Since Cajun music was popularized before Zydeco, and many Zydeco musicians learned from Cajun musicians and copied some of their practices, Zydeco is sometimes called a *descendant* of Cajun music.

ORAL Early Cajun and Zydeco music was not written down. Musicians learned by listening to other people play. Therefore, this music is part of the *oral* tradition.

INTEGRAL Zydeco music is seen as an *integral* part of life in southern Louisiana.

NOMADIC Now that Zydeco bands are in demand throughout the country, many Zydeco musicians live a *nomadic* lifestyle.

IMPROVISE Sometimes, Zydeco musicians *improvise* rather than play something they have rehearsed and memorized.



The Basic rule of behavior: Theater behavior falls somewhere in between that expected for a church and a movie. If you wouldn't do it in one of the above don't do it here.

THEATER ETIQUETTE

DO turn your cell phone off.

DON'T eat or drink in the theater unless refreshments are sold there.

DO sit in your assigned seat.

DO arrive on time.

DON'T disturb those around you (even if you are bored).

DON'T sing along at an opera or musical.

DON'T shout rude things at the performers. Treat them as you would want to be treated if you were onstage.

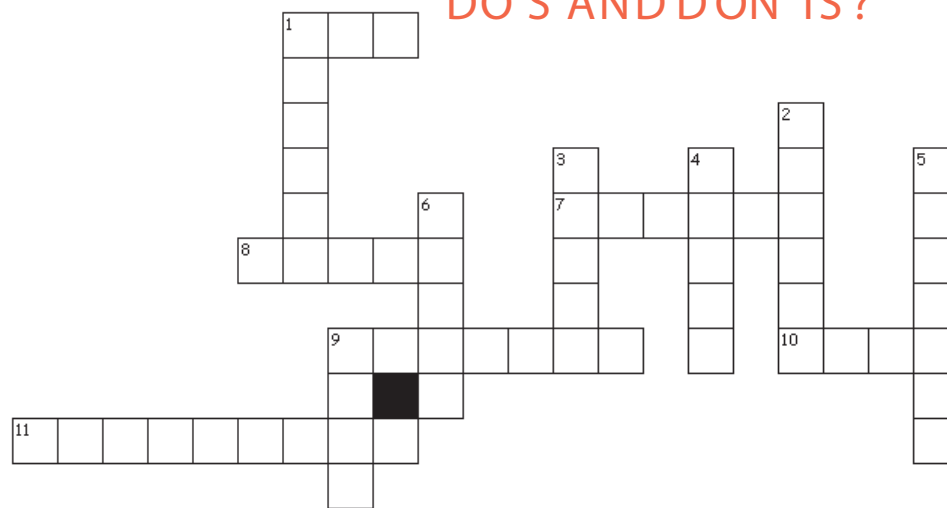
DON'T forget to enjoy yourself and learn new things.

DO remain in your seat until intermission.

DO clap at the end of an act, a scene, after a wonderful moment called a “*show-stopper*”, or at the end of a production. If you are unsure, clap when others do.



Good Theater Behavior: DO YOU KNOW THE DO'S AND DON'TS?



- ACROSS**
- Clap at the end of a _____.
 - Good theater behavior falls between that expected for a _____ and for a movie theater.
 - Always remember to _____ new things.
 - Clap after an especially amazing part in the play called a “show-_____.”
 - The only time you should leave your _____ is during intermission.
 - Your _____ should always be turned off.
- DOWN**
- _____ on time.
 - If you are unsure of when to clap, clap when _____ do.
 - Clap at the end of a _____.
 - Never eat or _____ unless refreshments are sold in the theater.
 - Pay attention during the production. Even if you are not interested, sit _____ to avoid disturbing others.
 - Always remember to _____ yourself.
 - Do not _____ along at an opera or musical.

SPECIAL THANKS TO



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ANSWERS TO “Good Theater Behavior”

Across	Down
1. act	1. arrive
7. church	2. others
8. learn	3. scene
9. stopper	4. drink
10. seat	5. quietly
11. cellphone	6. enjoy
	9. sing

E LISA MONTE
DANCE —ZYDECO !

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

thursday
october 9
10:30 pm

EVENING PERFORMANCE

saturday
october 11
7:30 pm

ANSWERS TO “ZYDECO—IQ”

- Marthagraham
- hiphop
- Accordion
- Twentieth
- Lafayette
- Frottoir
- Grammy
- S ho es
- S napbean
- Forty

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DRAMA

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