## **Instructional Unit Title: Speaking With Our Feet**

Dance 6th Grade

As an introduction, the teacher may use a variety of video clips of famous tap dance artists so that students can begin to identify unique/individual stylistic attributes.

The teacher may bring in primary and secondary sources (e.g., diaries, journals, biographies, etc) related to one tap dance artist so that students can begin to comprehend external and internal factors that may have affected the artist's improvisational choices.

The teacher may engage students in researching one area of a tap dance artist's life so that students can identify specific external or internal factors that may have played a role in the artist's creative choices.

The teacher may ask students to share their research so that students can begin considering/determining the effects of time period and geographic location on the artist's improvisational work and creative choices.

The teacher may demonstrate a short phrase (no more than 8 bars/1 chorus) from a tap dance artist so that students can begin to understand the importance of internalizing the steps of a dance.

The teacher may use student reflections on the group collaboration and individual dance creation/preparation experiences so that students can begin to discern how internal and external factors can influence personal artistic choices.

The teacher may model solo abstraction so that students can identify processes/methods for determining individual artistic choices when creating a personal variation.

The teacher may have students share collaboratively-produced variations so that students can begin to recognize how collaborative efforts can transform original tap dance phrases in diverse/unique ways.

The teacher may share a variety of collaborative processes so that students can consider the ways in which working with peers can facilitate the abstraction/transformation of an original tap dance sequence.

The teacher may demonstrate a dance phrase that is an abstraction (or variation) of an original phrase so that students recognize a concrete process for abstracting already developed material (e.g., turning a 4 count riff into a paradittle or 3 touches and a step or a shuffle and a flap.)



The teacher may re-engage collaborative groups, so that students begin to understand the power of bringing together individual and peer work in creating new and/or impromptu variations of original dance phrases.

The teacher may review an original dance phrase and ask student groups to share collaborative and individual solo variations so that the students can further identify and consider the diversity of created abstractions.

(Post-Performance Task)The teacher may engage the students in an analytical discussion so that students can begin to comprehend both the similarities and differences between dancing someone else's work to dancing one's own work.



**PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT:** As a dance troupe, you and your fellow dancers have been asked to perform a variation of a classic tap dance sequence for a dance festival. To complete this task, you will need to discover your personal, artistic voice through choices you make in tap dance improvisation by observing master tap artists, researching their lives and how their environments guided the creative choices made by that artist. You will then learn a classic tap phrase from your teacher. Once learning the phrase you will break into small groups and improvise your own version of that phrase. You will also create an individual solo that you will improvise on your own. You will perform all tap phrases for your class to prepare for the festival.

This unit was authored by a team of Colorado educators. The unit is intended to support teachers, schools, and districts as they make their own local decisions around the best instructional plans and practices for all students. To see the entire instructional unit sample with possible learning experiences, resources, differentiation, and assessments visit <a href="http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples.">http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunitsamples.</a>