



## SECTION 4: CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Dance Team World Education Foundation understands that the very idea of “dance team” varies from state-to-state and also internationally. **Our definition celebrates originality, authenticity, and artistic expression.**

We encourage dance programs to bring their own unique voice and creativity to the floor in every category. There is no specific “formula” or style we expect. Moreover, we welcome innovation, risk-taking, and routines that reflect the identity of your dancers.

Our judging panel is committed to providing feedback that is not only fair and thoughtful, but also genuinely helpful to your team’s growth throughout the season. Whether you’re refining a style, debuting a new concept, or building team confidence, our goal is to support your process through meaningful evaluation... and most importantly, friendly camaraderie!

The scoring rubric for each division is designed to be clear, consistent, and centered on execution, movement quality, artistry, and performance.

**The following pages have detailed descriptions of each dance category. Whether you are a school dance team or all-star/studio team, your unique artistry and choreographic creativity are always welcome here!**

SCHOOL TEAM CATEGORIES		STUDIO/ALL-STAR CATEGORIES	
Contemporary	Novelty/Open	Acrobatic	Line/Production
Hip Hop	Pom	Ballet	Lyrical
Jazz	Prop	Character	Military
Kick	Spiritline/Gameday	Contemporary	Musical Theatre
Lyrical	Student Choreo	Folkloric	Open
Military	Team Performance	Hip Hop	Pointe
		Jazz	Pom
		Kick	Ballroom



## SCHOOL TEAM CATEGORIES

### Contemporary

This division encompasses styles commonly referred to as contemporary or modern dance with emphasis on combining traditional dance styles, abstract articulation, and/or unique interpretive movement. Combinations of these styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty using advanced dance skills (e.g., turns, leaps, extensions). Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the style presented.

### Hip Hop

There is no one definition to describe hip-hop dance, which is continuously transforming and redefining itself with each new generation of dancers. Any general street or hip-hop style (or combination of styles) is acceptable in this category. Movements should complement the music, and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the street dance styles presented.

### Jazz

Our “jazz” division encompasses styles commonly referred to as jazz, Broadway, or jazz-funk, and teams have successfully competed in the jazz division with all of these styles. Combinations of these styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty using advanced dance skills (e.g., turns, leaps, extensions). Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the style of jazz dance presented.

### Kick

30 kicks of at least waist height performed by at least 50% of the team must be included in each routine. Any style of dance may be used to accomplish this and there are no required movements. Turns, leaps, jumps, lifts, or tricks are not required. The team may demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of the number and structure of kick sequences and the height and pace of kicks. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and unison. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the kick routine choreography presented.



## Lyrical

Any general lyrical dance style (or combination of styles) is acceptable including styles commonly referred to as lyrical or liturgical. Combinations of these styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of classical ballet technique, advanced dance skills (e.g., turns, leaps, extensions), and musical demand. Movements should complement “lyric-based” music selections. Teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the Lyrical routine choreography presented.

## Military

A Military routine should contain but not be limited to clean, crisp movements with visual formation changes/transition, and visually complex arm, hand and/or leg lines. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and unison. Military routines DO NOT need to adhere to parade marching standards of leading with the left foot on odd-beats, and may utilize any style of transitional movement that highlights unity and overall precision. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., intensity, excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the military style presented.

## Novelty/Open

This division encompasses any style of thematic dance movement (subject to our rules and regulations related to entry guidelines), including but not limited to those styles not otherwise offered separately such as Novelty, Show Production, or Character dances. Combinations of styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty appropriate for the chosen style(s). Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style presented.

## Pom

Any style of dance may be used to present a pom dance routine, and there are no required movements. Turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, lifts, or tricks are not required. The team should demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of intricate pom motions. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams will also be judged on the creative use of poms for visual effect. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the Pom style presented.



## Prop

Any style of dance may be used to present a prop-focused routine and there are no required movements. Turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, lifts, or tricks are not required. The team should demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of intricate motions including the prop. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams will specifically be judged on the creative use of a single prop or multiple props for visual effect. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style presented.

## Spiritline/Gameday

Must showcase the type of performance the team might do at an event as a dance team. Routines in this division must have two sections, performed in order, as follows:

1. **Spirit Raising Routine:** Include 1 or more of the following (at the team's option):
  - a. Fight Song Routine
  - b. Sideline Routine
  - c. Stand Routine
  - d. Step Routine
  - e. Drum Cadence
  
2. **Performance Routine:** A routine of any style designed to appeal to the crowd at a school event (such as a sporting event).

Dance skills such as leaps, turns, extensions, acrobatic tricks, lifts, etc., are not required. Thought should be given to a well-organized choreographic performance as a whole, as well as seamless transition(s) joining the two routines. Routine should focus on dance and not cheerleading (Any section that includes a coordinated cheer or chant not accompanied by a dance element will not be judged or earn any points for the team)

## Student Choreography

Teams are limited to only (1) entry in this category. Routine must be 100% student choreographed, and may consist of any dance genre or combination of movement styles. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style presented.



## Team Performance

This category requires a variety of pom, jazz, kick, and hip-hop styles combined into one cohesive routine. Please see the descriptions of those individual styles for more information. Teams should demonstrate proficiency in each style to maximize their score. Judges are instructed to award ZERO points in the Technique and Difficulty caption for any style they do not see in the routine at all, and judges will reduce a team's score in the Technique and Difficulty caption for any style that is not present in an amount deemed sufficient by that judge to evaluate the team's proficiency in the applicable style. For this reason, it is recommended that teams have well-defined sections devoted to each of these styles of at least 25-30 seconds in length. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and unison. Teams should display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to each style presented.

---

## STUDIO/ALL-STAR CATEGORIES

### Acrobatic

A routine in this division should incorporate a combination of dance technique and controlled acrobatic movement such as walkovers, limbers, handstands, aerials, handsprings, contortion/flexibility skills, or similar elements. The routine should still contain dance choreography in addition to acrobatic content. Dancers will be judged on technique, control, musicality, and uniformity, as well as the integration of acrobatic elements into the choreography. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the style presented.

### Ballet

Our "ballet" division encompasses routines rooted in formal classical ballet technique and vocabulary. The routine should demonstrate grace, precision, clean lines, turnout, control, and appropriate use of traditional ballet movements. Pointe shoes are not permitted in this category. Movements should complement the music and dancers will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the ballet style presented.



## Ballroom

This division encompasses routines based on traditional ballroom repertoire and may include Standard and/or Latin ballroom technique. Dancers should demonstrate partnering skills, rhythm, fluid movement, precise footwork, and technique appropriate to the ballroom style presented. Movements should complement the music and dancers will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the ballroom style presented.

## Character

This division encompasses routines that portray a recognizable character, persona, or role throughout the performance. The character may be inspired by a play, movie, television show, Broadway production, stereotype, or other clearly identifiable source. Any style of dance appropriate to the theme may be used, and acrobatic elements may also be incorporated. Movements should complement the music and dancers will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the character and theme presented.

## Contemporary

This division encompasses styles commonly referred to as contemporary or modern dance with emphasis on combining traditional dance styles, abstract articulation, and/or unique interpretive movement. Combinations of these styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty using advanced dance skills (e.g., turns, leaps, extensions). Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style presented.

## Folkloric

This division encompasses routines that incorporate ethnic, cultural, or traditional dance styles with strong historical or cultural roots. Examples may include, but are not limited to, styles such as Chinese, Japanese, Mexican Folklorico, Spanish Flamenco, Hawaiian, polka, belly dance, or other culturally based movement vocabularies. The dancer should demonstrate authenticity and technique appropriate to the style presented. Movements should complement the music and dancers will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the style presented.



## Hip Hop

There is no one definition to describe hip-hop dance, which is continuously transforming and redefining itself with each new generation of dancers. Any general street or hip-hop style (or combination of styles) is acceptable in this category. Movements should complement the music, and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the street dance styles presented.

## Jazz

Our “jazz” division encompasses styles commonly referred to as jazz, Broadway, or jazz-funk, and teams have successfully competed in the jazz division with all of these styles. Combinations of these styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty using advanced dance skills (e.g., turns, leaps, extensions). Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the style of jazz dance presented.

## Kick

30 kicks of at least waist height performed by at least 50% of the team must be included in each routine. Any style of dance may be used to accomplish this and there are no required movements. Turns, leaps, jumps, lifts, or tricks are not required. The team may demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of the number and structure of kick sequences and the height and pace of kicks. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and unison. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the kick routine choreography presented.

## Line/Production

This division encompasses large-scale routines designed to create visual impact through group staging, choreography, and theatrical presentation. Any style of dance or combination of styles may be used. Routines in this category often include a storyline, theme, plot, or narrative element and may incorporate props, sets, or other production features for visual effect. Dancers should demonstrate difficulty appropriate to the chosen style(s) and be judged on musicality, uniformity, staging, and overall presentation. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the production presented.



## Lyrical

Any general lyrical dance style (or combination of styles) is acceptable including styles commonly referred to as lyrical or liturgical. Combinations of these styles may also be used. The team should demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of classical ballet technique, advanced dance skills (e.g., turns, leaps, extensions), and musical demand. Movements should complement “lyric-based” music selections. Teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, sadness and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the Lyrical routine choreography presented.

## Military

A Military routine should contain but not be limited to clean, crisp movements with visual formation changes/transition, and visually complex arm, hand and/or leg lines. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and unison. Military routines DO NOT need to adhere to parade marching standards of leading with the left foot on odd-beats, and may utilize any style of transitional movement that highlights unity and overall precision. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., intensity, excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the military style presented.

## Musical Theatre

This division encompasses routines inspired by Broadway musicals, movie musicals, or television productions with a theatrical performance style. Any dance style appropriate to the source material may be used, and routines may emphasize storytelling, characterization, staging, and performance quality in addition to technical execution. Movements should complement the music and dancers will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the theatrical style presented.

## Open

This division encompasses routines that combine multiple dance styles or do not fit squarely into any other single category offered. Any style of dance, or combination of styles, may be used in this category. Dancers should demonstrate difficulty appropriate for the chosen style(s), with choreography that is clear, intentional, and well-developed. Movements should complement the music and dancers will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the style presented.



## Pointe

Our “pointe” division encompasses routines rooted in classical ballet or ballet-based technique performed in pointe shoes. The routine should demonstrate strength, balance, control, clean lines, and appropriate pointe/toe technique throughout the choreography. Movements should complement the music and dancers will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Dancers should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response appropriate to the pointe style presented.

## Pom

Any style of dance may be used to present a pom dance routine, and there are no required movements. Turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, lifts, or tricks are not required. The team should demonstrate difficulty through the incorporation of intricate pom motions. Movements should complement the music and teams will be judged on both musicality and uniformity. Teams will also be judged on the creative use of poms for visual effect. Teams should also display an ability to connect with the audience and provoke an emotional response (i.e., excitement, laughter, joy, and/or sense of drama) appropriate to the Pom style presented.