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Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing: The Use of Prompts to Guide the Choreographic Process

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
Greeley, Colorado
The Graduate School

BUILDING THE MORE CONFIDENT STUDENT CHOREOGRAPHER
THROUGH WRITING: THE USE OF PROMPTS TO GUIDE THE
CHOREOGRAPHIC PROCESS

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

Yvette Bennett

College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance
Dance Education

December 2017

This Thesis by: Yvette Bennett

Entitled: *Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing: The use of prompts to guide the choreographic process*

has been approved as meeting the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the College of Performing and Visual Arts, School of Theatre Arts and Dance, Program of Dance Education

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ABSTRACT

Bennett, Yvette. *Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing: The Use of Prompts to Guide the Choreographic Process*. Unpublished Master of Dance Education thesis, University of Northern Colorado, 2017.

The purpose of this research was to implement specific writing prompts into a high-school curriculum that aids in the choreographic process in an effort to bring about confident student choreographers. This research evaluated the choreographic process using a series of writing prompts to support participants with the goal of producing successful student choreographed dance works throughout a semester long high school dance course. The researcher posed the following three essential questions: How does the writing prompt aid in the choreographic process? What did the participants learn about the choreographic process by using writing prompts? Do the participants feel a sense of accomplishment with their end product? This research project was intended to benefit not only student choreographers, but also dance educators and dance specialists. This research project demonstrated that through the use of writing prompts, student choreographers gradually became more confident to choreograph.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Goal of Thesis

For many dance students the training part of the dance curriculum, such as the everyday task of taking on a ballet class, learning the technical elements of jazz, immersing oneself in the ever-evolving genre of hip hop, or the everyday company rehearsal can be the most grueling part for the dancer, but when the choreography lessons begin, the course becomes more of a challenge. As dance educators, one must understand the fear their students may have and give them the guidance and components needed for a successful process and product. One of the many responsibilities of a dance educator are to guide their students in the variety of ways one can begin the choreographic process. One way is to use life experiences as a guiding point, but for inexperienced choreographers, applying life experiences alone may not be that simple.

Twyla Tharp, choreographer and author, and co-author, Mark Reiter of, *The Creative Habit, Learn it and Use It For Life* note in their book, “I start every dance with a box. I write the project name on the box, and as the piece progresses I fill it up with every item that went into the making of the dance” (Tharp and Reiter 80). This is Tharp’s and Reiter’s way of creating choreography and going through the choreographic process. They build upon each by grabbing objects that may help her develop her choreographic idea. Similarly, some choreographers develop choreographic intentions and/ or ideas by

not objects but looking at worldly events and situations. In this sense, the choreography is used to make a statement and serve a purpose. For the inexperienced dancer and choreographer, the thought process for creating movement comes with a price, that of low self-esteem and lack of confidence in creating movement. That's where a dance educator must step in to develop ways for young, inexperienced student choreographers, to explore the process of choreography, and in turn feel better about their final product.

The researcher addressed issues such as whether writing prompts aided students, what the participants learned by using writing prompts, and whether or not the students felt a sense of accomplishment. This study will show that the use of writing prompts will build more confident student choreographers.

Purpose of Study

As the dancer moves across the stage, the audience sits in awe of the beauty in the technique, the movement, and the story behind the movement. The story, the idea, the motif, the purpose, and the movement all represent reasons for choreographing. These elements are what drive the choreographer to create beauty and art; art that moves across a stage with intricate design and reason. But needing to be creative in so many areas can be a daunting task that can take years to master. Amy Howton writes:

Every dancer should explore choreography as a means of finding his or her individual "voice" as well as acquiring technique in order to have the tools with which to express that voice. Unfortunately, many students with limited dance experience are afraid to venture into exploration for fear they will "do it wrong". Others fear negative criticism. It is stressful to perform a personal statement in front of an audience, not knowing what the responses of that audience might be. Students, particularly young ones, who have never attempted to choreograph their movements, may be unsure how to proceed. (Howton 10)

This illustrates why there is a great importance for dance educators to be able to provide their students with every tool possible that will make the choreographic process an enjoyable experience.

Choreography can be tedious and mind breaking to a choreographer just as writing is to a writer, but there are ways in which one can master a process to realize what makes your creativity flow. The first step in choreographing is knowing where to look to begin. “Making a dance is very much like writing a composition: First find something to say, then say it as well as you can” (Ellfeldt 78). Although there are a variety of ways to choreograph, this research looks at using writing prompts to guide the student in the choreographic process, thus influencing students to become more comfortable and confident in their creativity. The goal being to promote more confident student choreographers.

The purpose of this research was to implement specific writing prompts that aid in the choreographic process into a high-school curriculum in an effort to bring about confident student choreographers. This research enabled students to expand ideas through writing that developed into choreography. As dance educators, it is necessary to provide knowledge that will help build our students confidence in what they develop. Every dancer has the ability to create beautiful art, but some need that push and/or guidance to start.

Significance

Using writing prompts as a way to aid in the choreographic process, and help build student self-confidence, is a trend teachers must begin to implement in the secondary dance curriculum. Confidence is a vital component of any human, student,

dancer, and choreographer. Confidence is what makes one feel better about one's self. Without confidence, one would not attempt to try new things, or go beyond their capabilities. For a student choreographer, the need to feel positive about what they are creating helps the choreographic process. Lauren Brooke Schlecte writes:

Confidence is a valuable component in the dance-making process and the field of dance. The role of confidence is constantly oscillating, appearing and disappearing, in the dance-making process. It does not occur as a dichotomy-merely present or absent in a given situation. The multi-dimensional experience of confidence travels through many aspects of a particular dance, making itself a characteristic of each particular work. (Schlecte 1)

It was important to provide inexperienced student choreographers with many ways to build movement. Giving students the proper elements needed to create what they would view as phenomenal works of art builds self-confidence. This study attempted to increase students' self-confidence in the choreographic process, and ability to build choreography. Although this process required daily work, the work was meant to be enjoyable and fun. It should not have felt like work to the student, but rather an enjoyable experience that they were able to take with them and feel good about them. This curriculum was meant to help students in their writing process as well, as it was an important component for secondary students to successfully complete the state mandated standardized test. This study was developed to answer three essential questions:

- Q1 How do writing prompts aid students in the choreographic process of building a motif or theme?
- Q2 What did the participants learn about the choreographic process by using writing prompts?
- Q3 Do the participants feel a sense of accomplishment with their end product?

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Choreography?

People all over the world attend ballets, Broadway musicals, studio recitals, and dance competitions with the purpose of either watching a loved one dance or for the love of the art of dance. Many times, as the audience sits and watches the dancer move about the stage there is a lack of knowledge as to the art and design of choreography. There is a lack of knowledge in creating choreography and the choreographic process. In her dissertation *Choreography As Curriculum And Knowing In Education*, Christina Halliday explains that the term “choreography” literally means “dance writing.” Halliday draws on this definition of choreography as “body discourse” to perform a figuration or post-structural writing and research practice in education (Halliday iv). Choreography could be considered a wide variety of actions presented to the audience. It can be someone’s standing on stage staring out at the audience, it can be a performer’s running back and forth on stage, it can be a paper’s rustling in the wind, or ocean waves’ crashing up against rocks. Dancers can take daily occurrences to make movement phrases, and it becomes choreography. Whatever the choreography may be, most audience members will never know what it took or what motivated the choreographer to create such work.

According to Soili Hämäläinen, author of “Evaluation in Choreographic Pedagogy”, every dance has motivation, an idea or motif from which the set of

movements and choreography develop. It can be expressed verbally, or it can start out from an emotion or movement. The style of the dance often originates from a motif or idea (36). Hämäläinen writes that:

The choreographic process is a question of finding and forming movements and arranging them into a whole. It involves both a conscious and an intuitive process in which the body is simultaneously both the subject of the dance, the producer of the experiential dimension of dance and the object of observation. Because of the fusion of subject and object, dancers do not experience their dancing in the same way as the audience receives the work. (36)

This shows that there are a variety of ways in which dancers and choreographers approach the choreographic process. As one looks at what choreography and the choreographic approach are one knows that the confidence level of every dancer or choreographer will not be the same. As an educator, one must find ways to engage and guide students to build and create choreography with the use of different approaches. Of the many approaches that one can use, experimentation with movement could be described as one of the better ways to develop choreography. In *The Intimate Act of Choreography*, Lynn Ann Blom and L. Tarin Chaplin explain that “you do not learn to choreograph by reading about it, hearing about it, or watching major companies in concert. One learns by choreographing, by experimenting, and by creating little bits and pieces and fragments of dances and dance phrases...” (37) The authors explain that choreography is about playing, creating, and getting one’s thoughts and ideas out. These ideas need to be developed into movement phrases and placed on moving bodies.

The Different Types of Choreographic Processes

Choreography as a whole can be a daunting task for both the experienced and inexperienced dancer. For an experienced dancer, the choreographic process and

development of material is often easier than for the novice dancer, but challenges and difficulties may still be present. The choreographic process can entail many different things from jotting down notes, listening to the choice of music well over fifty plus times, or using a life experience to develop an idea. Since choreographic processes can be approached in a variety of ways, there is no one wrong or right way to choreograph, keeping in mind that to choreograph is to build, create, and tell a story.

Twyla Tharp, a renowned choreographer, details her creative process and the art of choreography in her book *The Creative Habit, Learn It and Use It for Life*. Blom and Chaplin provide different examples of how to develop choreography or movement phrases. Some of these, “situations” involve isolating choreographic elements, combining theory and practice, and improvising. When isolating choreographic elements one looks at separation of the element of analyzing. This would include looking at what is involved in the different elements of movement such as time, space, and energy. A single element cannot be developed without the other. When looking at combining theory and practice, Blom and Chaplin write, “choreography is often taught using the ‘knowledge by description’ method” (40). This method involves the teacher’s giving instructions followed by giving the assignment. The last approach mentioned by Blom and Chaplin is *Improvisation*. According to Blom and Chaplin:

Improvisation is a way of tapping the stream of the subconscious without intellectual censorship, allowing spontaneous and simultaneous exploring, creating, and performing. Improvisation emerges as an inner-directed movement response to an image, an idea, or a sensory stimulus. (45)

Improvisation is not the only tool that has to be used to choreograph, but it is “a good way to experience and learn choreographic concepts (46).

Writing Prompts to Aid in the Choreographic Process

Writing is an important part of daily school life. Students spend the majority of their education experience writing essays, stories, poems, research papers, and so forth, so most likely one can assume students are comfortable with words and with putting them on paper. Because writing is so common for students, it would be an effective way to approach choreography. Writing and choreography go hand in hand, as they are both used as a way to express, require a sense of creativity, and use a process in coming together for a final product. In “Ditto;” The Creative Process in Dance and Writing”, Marissa Nesbit and Julianna Hane research the similarities in writing and dance and how they coincide with each other, in turn helping the student to successfully choreograph. In their research they write that:

With the understanding that we envisioned choreography and writing as parallel processes that depend on elaboration for development of interesting material, we set out to craft lessons that would situate students as creative agents for both processes. While students have been writing throughout their school careers, this would be the first experience with dance for many of them. (2007)

This displays the connection between both writing and dance. Writing, having been a part of everyday curriculum for students, is not necessarily an everyday part of a dance curriculum. Adding writing to the dance curriculum can aid in the choreographic process and be an added guide for students to use.

In the article “Parallel Process in Writing and Choreography”, Amy Larimer writes about the word “phrase” and how it has similar meaning in both writing and dance.

Larimer states:

Both writing and composition require not only the ability to imagine a foundation but also a commitment to grapple with material. By honing the skills within two different disciplines, students begin to recognize the connections between writing and choreography and build skills that can help them in both disciplines. (2015)

This explains how students can use their skills acquired to write and adapt them to choreography. Larimer writes, “dance and writing are often seen as very different, the connection between the two is hinted at when we recognize that the word “phrase” refers to the building blocks for both forms” (48). Dance educators need to notice the importance of taking writing into dance as a way to guide young choreographers to be successful and create with confidence. Larimer demonstrates how writing and choreography correlate with each other through improvisation, organization, feedback, editing, and refining. In the end Larimer’s results show that “both writing and dance composition require not only the ability to imagine a foundation but also a commitment to grapple with material” (49).

Current Choreographic Curricula and Their Effects on Student Self Esteem

Dance educators must devise choreographic curricula to benefit the young choreographer. These curricula must meet the criteria that will develop creative, successful, and confident choreographers. Educators can begin this course of action by looking at the choreographic process and what areas of writing will be most useful. Traci Klein, author of “Teaching the Creative Process Through Choreographic Research”, considers the importance of understanding the creative process. Klein states that:

Communicating meaning with movement is half the battle when choreographing a new dance work. Staying true to the concept of the piece, if it is conceptually based, while attempting to be relevant and unique can be difficult for new choreographers. Tools such as journaling, viewing live and recorded works by

other choreographers, presenting works in progress for evaluation and feedback, and self-review are all important aspects to the process. (81)

This demonstrates the various ways to apply a choreographic curriculum to aid in student success. Klein goes on to mention how through her teachings she has found ways to shape the student's views of dance.

These views are not only about dance alone, but also about how a student views her work and herself after she creates and presents it. All choreographers struggle to create at some point in their career. Not one is always successful and fully satisfied with the work one has created. As a dance educator, it is easy to admit that oftentimes the artist is his/ her own worst critic. Sinead Kimbrell wrote "Creating Reflective Choreographers: The Eyes See/ Mind Sees Process", where she focuses on what her teachings are and how to help young choreographers be deliberate with the choices they make during choreography. Kimbrell recognizes the importance to understanding the process and feeling confident about the choices made during the process. Kimbrell goes on to state that:

As educators, Janet, Kathryn, and I recognized that teaching artists for dance composition, and their students, needed a clear method of reflection that was accessible to multiple ages. The process needed to allow clear feedback on both performance skills choreographic choices. (88)

This demonstrates how the positive feedback would in turn make for confident choreographic choices and confident choreographers. Another researcher, Pamela Musil, author of the article "From Classroom Experiences to Works of Art: Involving Dance Students in the Choreographic Process", uses her findings to show the educational outcomes of teaching strategies that push students and build positive environments in return.

Musil uses several strategies to build on the concept of student confidence. One of those strategies involves nine components: exploration and improvisation, movement motifs and phrases, individual student phrases, group composition, informal showings of student works, crafting via experimentation, final refinement and cleaning, and performance. In the end, this model develops confident students within a positive teaching environment. Musil has been able to show that through this model:

Students gain confidence in their abilities as dancers through guaranteed success. Because they manipulate and/or design the movement phrases themselves, they are more likely to experience the movement intrinsically. Hence, they perform it well, and in turn, their feelings about dance are positively affected. (38)

showing that there is clear sense of self-confidence and ownership of their work. Students in this type of curriculum are influenced in the most positive way possible.

Conclusion

Through this study the researcher hoped to gain significant insight into the correlation between writing prompts in the choreographic process and student self-confidence. With the many different avenues to discover in the choreographic process, writing prompts can be a way to lead those just starting off in the creative process.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The following chapter explains the methods used to conduct the research on student confidence and the choreographic process: entrance and exit surveys, student journals, and researcher observations. The researcher conducted this study in an ever-changing manner that took shape as the study progressed. The methods used addressed such issues as how writing prompts aided students, what participants learned, and whether they felt a sense of accomplishment.

Prior to conducting this study, the researcher needed approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). To obtain this approval, she submitted a formal narrative application that included a brief description of the purpose of the study, the different methods that were to be used for data analysis, sample student and parent consent forms, entrance and exit surveys, and all other methods used to conduct the research. The Institutional Review Board requested several revisions to the application prior to approval. Upon correcting the various revisions, the researcher received IRB approval, approval by school administration and the district allowing her to submit the research application packet to Assessment, Research and Evaluation Department. Exactly one week later the researcher received an approval letter by email to begin the study.

(Appendix A)

Research Study

This qualitative research study implemented specific writing prompts into a high-school curriculum to aid in the choreographic process in an effort to bring about confident student choreographers. The research evaluated the choreographic process using a series of writing prompts such as: *I Am Poem*, *Just Because Poem*, *Where I'm From Poem*, and other quotes and poems of their choice. The writing prompts were used to support participants with the goal of producing successful student-choreographed dance works throughout a semester long course. This research project was intended not only to benefit student choreographers but also to provide dance educators and dance specialists with a model that supports the creative process. This research project guided student choreographers in developing a map of choreographic ideas that would lead to a story or theme. This study also provided dance educators and dance specialist a way to implement a choreographic curriculum that could enhance their present classroom instruction.

Research Participants

The researcher conducted this study at the high school in which she serves as the dance instructor. This high school is located near the Mexican border in deep south Texas, where the student population is roughly 2,300 with 99.6% being Hispanic. The researcher conducted this study using 9th–12th grade students who were enrolled in the high school dance program. Established in 2005, the dance program started out with only 75 students. It currently has around 175 students who have options of auditioning for the performance group or taking a regular Dance I-IV class. The students also have the

choice of taking a Ballroom Dance I-IV class and being a part of the Ballroom competition team.

Nine students participated in this study. Those under the age of eighteen were required to have student and parental consent forms. The participants met forty-five minutes a day, five days a week, for five consecutive weeks. Days were interrupted by student activities such as state mandated tests. Of the nine participants, one or two did not attend consistently. The researcher chose a class with Level II and Level III students that consisted of both inexperienced as well as experienced students in the area of choreographing. Of the many students enrolled in the class, the researcher observed only the nine with parental consent and chose to participate in the study. To start this study, the researcher gathered their writing prompts every week. Once the participants answered the entrance survey, they began with their first writing prompt, *I Am* poem. The researcher then explained how they were to use the writing prompt as a choreography guide. They were to fill in the poem and choose two sentences of each section of the poem to condense to a smaller poem. Once this was done the participants were to begin developing movement phrases to their poems. The participants worked for several days and used their journals as a note-taking tool as well as a reflection tool at the end of the class. At the end of the week, each participant presented his or her choreography. This went on for each of the writing prompts they were given.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

There were three instruments used for data collection in this study: a choreography entrance questionnaire, student journals, and a choreography exit questionnaire. (Appendix C)

Each participant filled out the Choreography Entrance Survey the first day of the research project. The survey consisted of ten choreographic questions. They varied between three questions on choreography experience, two choreography knowledge questions, four confidence level questions, and one question on dance experience. The researcher using their knowledge of dance and choreography developed the various survey questions.

As a way to document and reflect the daily choreographic process, every participant used daily journals. Documentation included the writing prompt used, any notes of their choreography, and their reflection of the process and how it made them feel.

Each of the 9 participants filled out a choreography exit survey. The survey consisted of ten choreographic questions similar to the entrance survey at the beginning of the research project. The exit survey determined if there was an increase in confidence level from the start of the research project to the end.

Research Procedures

The study consisted of a qualitative research. As mentioned above, the instruments used to collect data were entrance and exit surveys and student journals. The instruments were used to determine student confidence level from start to finish. The study assisted in the following areas of the choreographic process: writing prompts as an aide in the choreographic process; participants can gain choreographic ideas through the use of writing prompts; and participants should be feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of the choreographic process.

Each of the participants obtained parental consent forms, can be found in Appendix B, as well as student assent forms before participating. The participants given consent by their parents turned in all forms and began the study. All participants received a weekly writing prompt from which they developed choreography. Each day the students reflected on their process in their student journals. At the end of each week the participants shared their choreography with the rest of the class through performance. At the end of the five weeks, the participants concluded the study by answering choreography questions in the exit survey.

Data Analysis

For this study, the analyzed data collected used both qualitative and quantitative methods using entrance and exit survey that can be found in Appendix C. The participants answered questions from an entrance survey at the start of the research as well as an exit survey at the end of the study. Both surveys asked questions pertaining to choreography knowledge and confidence levels. The first five questions in the entrance survey analyzed the collected data using quantitative methods while the last five questions used qualitative methods. In the Exit Choreography Survey, four of the ten questions analyzed the data using quantitative methods and the rest used qualitative methods. The students also kept daily journals to track their progress as well as reflection. The researcher evaluated these journals using qualitative methods.

Quantitative Analysis

In the entrance surveys, the students answered ten questions. Of the ten questions, five were multiple choice, in which the researcher ranked the answers 1 thru 4 with 1 being the least and 4 being the highest. Additionally, students answered exit surveys

where there were only four multiple choice answer questions. The researcher then took each participant's answers and created a spreadsheet to arrive at an average of each question to gauge where most participants stood with choreography as far as experience and comfort/confidence level. The researcher used the same process to calculate the exit survey questions.

Table 1: Choreography Entrance Survey Results

Student	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
A	1	2	3	2	4
B	2	2	3	2	3
C	1	2	2	2	3
D	1	2	3	2	3
E	2	2	2	1	3
F	4	3	2	2	3
G	1	2	4	2	3
H	1	2	2	2	3
J	1	3	2	2	3

Table 2: Choreography Exit Survey

Student	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q6
A	5	2	2	5
B	3	2	2	3
C	3	2	2	4
D	4	2	2	5
E	4	2	2	4
F	4	2	2	4
G	3	2	2	4
H	4	2	2	5
J	4	2	2	4

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis is based on the participants' responses to the short answer questions on both the Entrance and Exit Choreography Surveys and the Student Journals.

The survey questions determined any prior dance and choreography experience the participants had, as well as their comfort and confidence level.

A few of the questions asked:

- Do you have previous dance training? If so, how many years?
- What genres?
- What has been your starting point, your motivation, your ideas, thought process when attempting choreography?
- What do you hope to learn about the choreographic process after taking this course?
- Did you find it more difficult/ easier to choreograph with the use of a writing prompt? Please explain.
- Was keeping a journal helpful during the choreographic process? If yes, please explain
- Did you feel this course gave you a sense of self-confidence and a willingness to choreograph again? If yes, explain.
- After participating in this research project, what did you learn about yourself and the choreographic process?

The students used journals to keep track of their daily progress and for them to reflect on their day-to-day experience while participating in this study.

After reviewing all collected data, it was obvious that students' confidence level increased over the five-week period. The participants' daily journals reflected that the use of the writing prompts throughout the study helped their progress and self-assurance in the choreographic process

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research is to implement writing prompts into a high school curriculum in order to bring about confident student choreographers throughout the choreographic process. This study was developed to answer three essential questions:

- Q1 How do writing prompts aid students in the choreographic process of building a motif or theme?
- Q2 What did the participants learn about the choreographic process by using writing prompts?
- Q3 Do the participants feel a sense of accomplishment with their end product?

The researcher posed these questions to determine if there is a connection between the use of writing prompts and student confidence within the choreographic process. This chapter will analyze and determine whether the use of writing prompts is an effective tool in the choreographic process, as well as a confidence builder for student choreographers. Results drew from the student surveys and student journals.

Participant Surveys: Quantitative Analysis

The researcher used the Choreography Entrance Survey to determine the participants' choreography experience and comfort/confidence level at the beginning of the study. The charts below show the various responses as far as the choreography experience.

The first chart illustrates the participants' experience with choreography prior to beginning this study. Most participants had no experience while a few had at least 1–2 years of choreography experience. The second chart displays the participants' confidence. The survey asked each participant the question: How comfortable are you with the choreographic process? The participants' options were Not Comfortable at All, Somewhat Comfortable, Very Comfortable, and Extremely Comfortable. As the chart shows, the majority of the participants' confidence level was somewhat confident to choreograph.

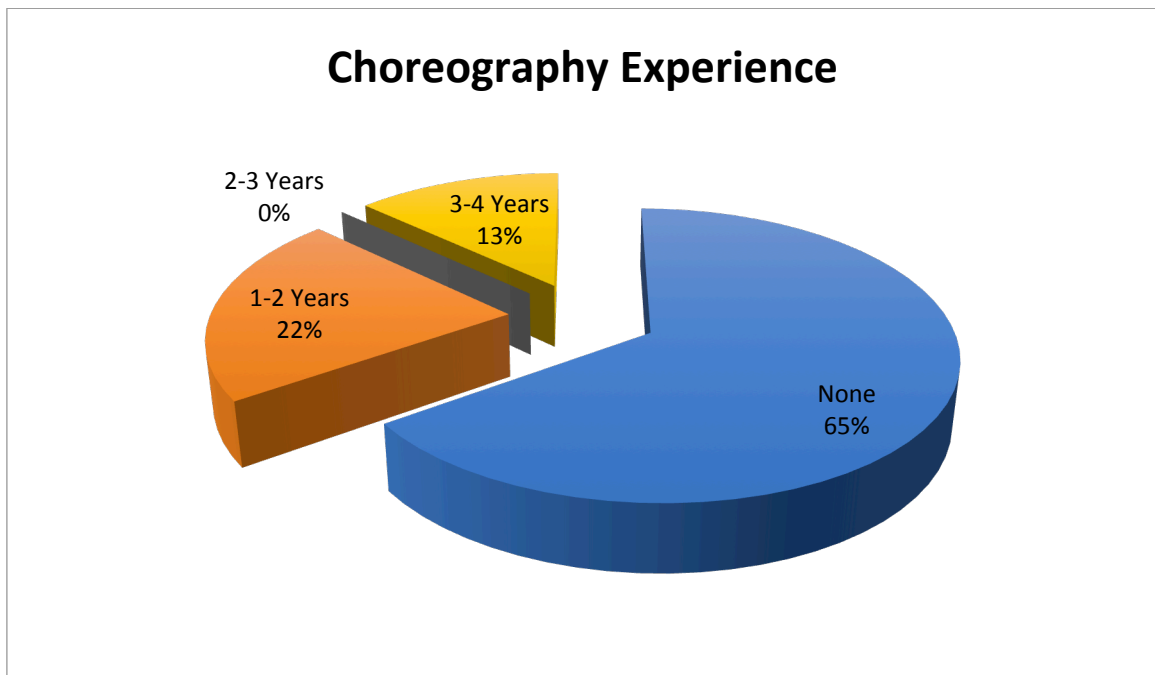


Figure 1. Choreography Entrance Survey Question 1

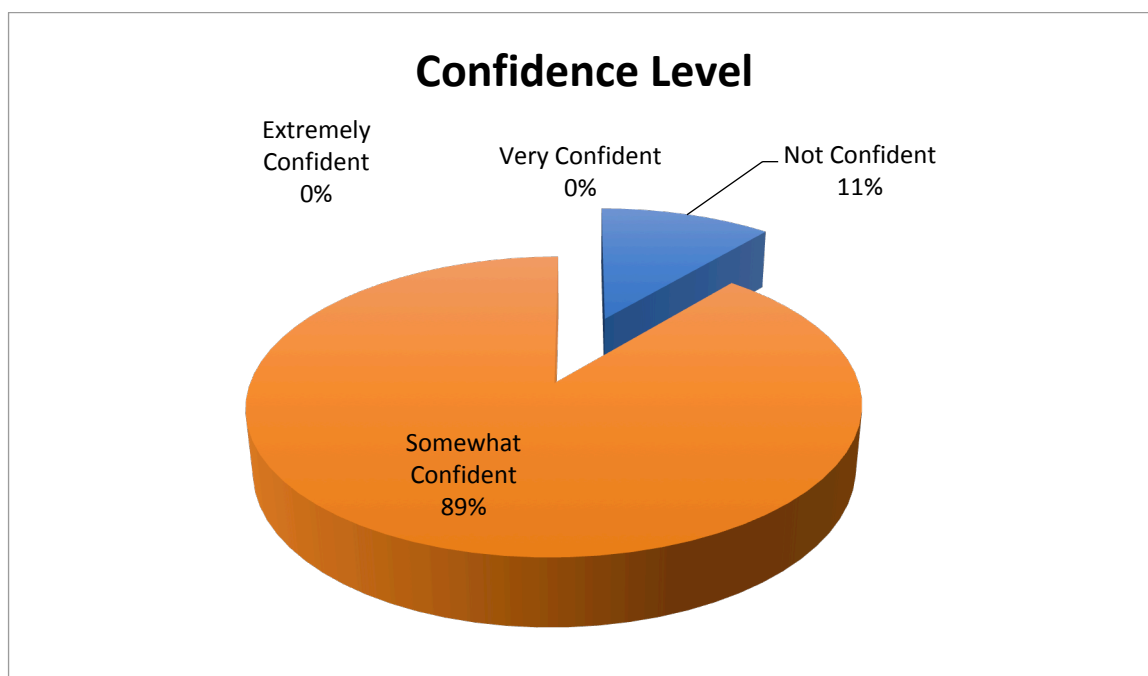


Figure 2: Choreography Entrance Survey Question 2

The Choreography Exit Surveys determined where the participants stood at the end of the study with choreography experience and comfort/confidence level. The charts below show the various responses as far as the choreography experience on a scale of 1–5 with one being the lowest and five being the highest. The same rating scale applied to the comfort/confidence level chart.

The first chart shows the choreography experience of the participants at the close of the study. Most participants had no experience when the study began. After taking part in this research, most participants fell well above average with the choreographic experience. The second chart displays the comfort/ confidence level of the participants after the research was complete. The majority of the participants were well above average on the comfort/ confidence level.

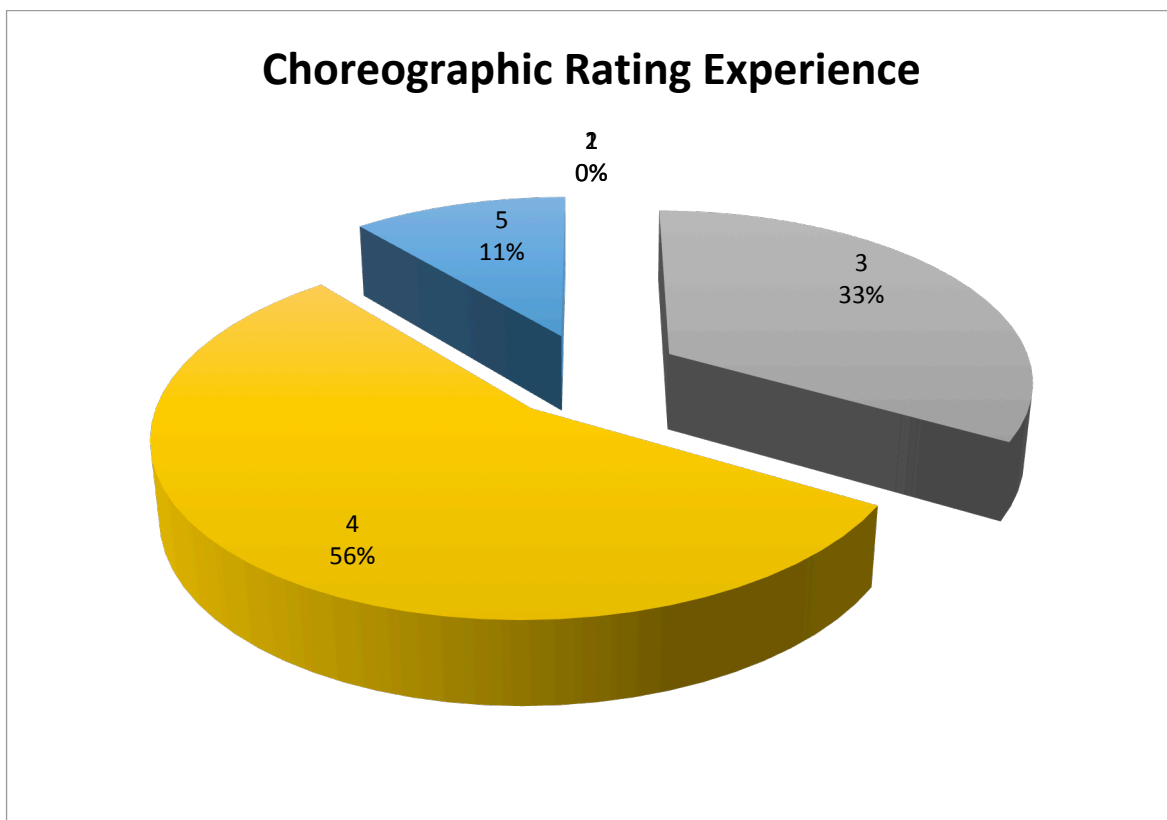


Figure 3. Choreography Exit Survey Question 1

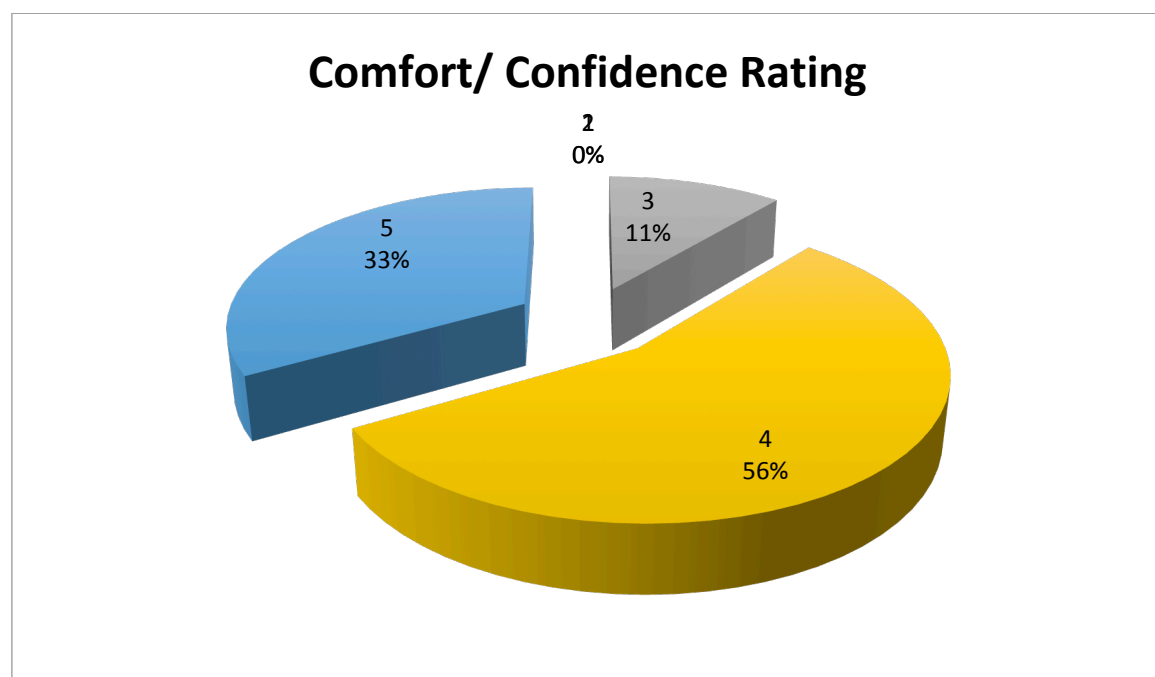


Figure 4. Choreography Exit Survey Question 2

Student Journals: Qualitative Analysis

Other data collected in this study included student journals that were kept on a daily basis. Participants used these journals to keep track of their progress, keep choreographic notes, and reflect on their journey throughout the study. At the end of the study the researcher analyzed the data collected in these journals. Each of the participants used the daily journal to enter the pertinent writing prompt. They also took notes on what their process was and reflected on their daily progress. The students kept these journals for all five weeks of the course of the study. In analyzing this data, the researcher looked for patterns of the participants' having difficulty with the choreographic process to its becoming easier with the use of writing prompts as well as their confidence level being built up.

In reviewing the student journals, it became evident that the participants were making progress with every choreographic assignment. It was also clear to see that the comfort and confidence level of the participants increased over the duration of the study. Included below are a few of the student journal entries that clearly indicate this result:

Day 1

Student A

I hadn't had any experience in choreographing before and I don't think I, ready to do it.

Student C

During my dance class, my freshman year I remember one of our assignments was to choreograph a small dance. I found it a little challenging...By doing this I hope to accomplish by the end of this study to have the ability to be comfortable when it comes to choreographing."

Day 1 Continued*Student D*

My experience with choreographing is none. I hope to achieve the cleanness of dancing, being confident, with showing a dance as well as learning new steps.

Student E

When it comes to the choreographic process I'm not very comfortable with it. I sometimes feel insecure about my choreography and I'm usually afraid that my choreography is going to be judgedI have very little experience with choreographing.

Student H

I feel like I'm a confident dancer but not a confident enough choreographer. I wish I could be able to choreograph for a group of dancers. My only fear is judgment.

Day 3*Student A*

Choreographing is hard! I've never thought I was going to have trouble with inventing some moves and putting them together.

Student C

I'm finding it a bit hard. I knew it wasn't going to be easy.

Student D

My experience with putting this piece together has been a bit difficult. I'm trying to make the steps fit together and look natural...I just have to keep trying and I know it is possible.

Student E

With the choreography, so far, I have been struggling a little bit but it is coming along. As for my confidence of my choreography it's not so good.

Student H

Working with the I Am poem has been kind of difficult. I don't have any music to it so it makes it so hard.

Day 9*Student A*

I enjoyed this!

Student C

Most of us were nervous but we got it done

Day 9 Continued*Student D*

Today was a good so many creative ideas were shown and I'm excited to see how I end up in choreography.

Student E

Today I was still nervous. I feel as the days go by I will get even more nervous.

Student H

It was a nice experience to watch my peers and to actually go up there. I am excited to see what the other assignments consist of.

Day 15*Student A*

I have my first chunk! I'm still working on the second one.

Student C

No, I don't like this one I can't do it.

Student D

I performed and I think it was pretty good. I think I am not creative as other girls but its unique what I come up with.

Student E

I finished my choreography and it wasn't as hard as I thought it would be.

Student H

I have advanced with my choreography. I am half way through....

Day 20*Student A*

The choreography process to me has become easier compared to when I started. The writing prompts have helped me!

Student C

I'm finding this a little helpful like I'm starting to make my dances a lot faster than before when I would take forever.

Student D

My choreographic process was different.... I thought this little writing prompt helped me more than the big chunk.

Day 20 Continued

Student E

I found that this is helping me with my choreographic process become easier for me. I wouldn't mind doing this again.

Student H

These projects have gotten easier and easier. I feel like my peers and I have gotten used to it and can choreograph faster and better.

Last Day

Student A

My experience on this research really helped me. It was complicated at first, but then I kinda got used to it and how it's easier for me to just come up with random choreography. I am glad to say that this research really helped me!

Student C

This study really helped me in the future for sure.

Student D

I loved this experience it definitely opened my eyes on a new way to choreograph.

Student E

From the beginning of the research I didn't think it would be easier for me to choreograph because of my confidence level. Since then I've gotten confidence to choreograph and it has become so much easier for me to do also.

Student H

As the assignments have gone by I have seen how my peers and I have gained confidence and it has been easier for us to choreograph and actually present. I feel like I have grown more as a dancer. I will eventually use the same techniques I learned here in my final project. This final assignment was really nice.

The overall analysis of the data for this study demonstrated how the use of writing prompts aides in the choreographic process. It is evident that there is a pattern of an increase in comfort and confidence level with the choreographic process over time of the study. The researcher, who also conducted the study, could see the change in the

students' progress as they developed their choreographies along with the writing prompts.

In the journal entries, one can see there is a sense of excitement and accomplishment by the end of the course study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to investigate whether the use of writing prompts in a high-school curriculum helps bring about confident student choreographers. This research study had a total of nine participants, all in a Level II or III dance class. As far as the choreographic process, several of the participants had some experience choreographing while others had little to no experience. This study used both quantitative and qualitative research. Data collected for this study came from choreography entrance and exit surveys and participant journals. The following essential research questions were: Does the writing prompt aid in the choreographic process? What did the participants learn about the choreographic process by using writing prompts? and Do the participants feel a sense of accomplishment with their end product?

Research Findings

The finding from this study indicates that writing prompts do have an impact on the choreographic process. Throughout the course of this research the participants showed an increased willingness to choreograph. The participants' comfort level seemed to change over time from anxiety to excitement. As the study progressed and the different writing prompts challenged the students, the choreography became more interesting. When the study involved music, the students seemed to have a bit more of an

appreciation for their work. The idea of including music seemed to make them feel as if their choreography was complete and had more meaning.

Limitations for the Study

For this study, the researcher who observed the course was also the teacher of record for the course, which could have led to potential bias. Other factors that could have given limited results were the small sample size, lack of validity and reliability of research tools used for the study, and limited access to a variety of classes in the district. Better results could have been achieved with a bigger group, more than one participant group, and the researcher's not being the teacher of record.

Recommendations for Further Research

Although the findings in this research study showed that there were significant changes in comfort and confidence level of the student participants, there should be more research done on this topic. It would be of great interest to see the impact on a larger group of participants with little to no choreography experience. The researcher recommends that considerations for the age, maturity levels, and possibility of learning disabilities of the participants figure into future research of a similar topic.

In conclusion, the researcher believes that a curriculum similar to the one used in this study would further aid young student choreographers in their choreographic process. The use of writing prompts is a valuable way for student choreographers to develop complex ideas that explore creative structure and choreographic elements in preparation for future choreography experiences.

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APPENDIX A
LETTERS OF APPROVAL

January 23, 2017

Yvette Bennett
[REDACTED]

Re: Application for Research Study

Ms. Bennet

Please be advised that your application for a Research Study has been reviewed and has been approved. The research ID number assigned to your request is 2017-01-23.

You have indicated that the research will be concluded in May 2017 and that this study will only be conducted at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] application states that all research will be concluded before the last 20 days of the school year, please do follow our request to conclude your research by May 8th. Please ensure that all consent forms have been signed and are on file if they should be requested. The Principal will have to grant the initial consent for research to be conducted on their campus. Once that consent is given the students will have to consent to participate in the study.

We are respectfully requesting that you forward your research results and/or a copy of the publication, if any, to our office upon completion of the project.

Good luck with your endeavor and thank you for your interest in the [REDACTED] and its students.

Should you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at 554-2806.

Sincerely,

I. Research Background (to be completed by researcher)

Title of the Study Building a More Confident Student Choreographer through Writing: The use of writing prompts to guide the Choreographic Process

Name of Researcher Yvette Bennett Organization University of Northern Colorado

Street address 501 20 st. City Greeley State CO Zip 80639

E-mail y[REDACTED]@unco.edu Phone [REDACTED]

II. Description of Research Proposal

Researcher is to provide the principal with a copy of the Executive Summary (Form A - Last Section) and the Time Requirement Form (Form G), along with a sample of the Teacher/Staff and Parent/Legal Guardian Consent Forms (Forms H & J).

III. Agreement (to be completed by principal)

I, Aimee Gane Linn, Principal of [REDACTED] understand

- the study and what it requires of the staff, students, and/or parents in my school,
- that the privacy and confidentiality of any staff or student will be protected,
- that I have the right to allow or reject this research study to take place in my school,
- that I have the right to terminate the research study at any time,
- that I have the right to review all consent forms and research documents at any time during the study.

☒ I grant permission to the researcher to conduct the above named research in my school as described in the proposal

☐ I DO NOT grant permission to the researcher to conduct the above named research in my school as described in the proposal.



Institutional Review Board

DATE: December 16, 2016

TO: Yvette Bennett

FROM: University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [971806-3] Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing: The use of prompts to guide the choreographic process

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: December 16, 2016

EXPIRATION DATE: December 16, 2017

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this project. The University of Northern Colorado (UNCO) IRB has APPROVED your submission. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on applicable federal regulations.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of December 16, 2017.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Sherry May at 970-351-1910 or Sherry.May@unco.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORMS

Note: This is a template. The information in *italics* will be completed prior to sharing with Parents / Legal Guardians by the researcher. Please do not include the italicized wording in your completed form, instead replace those words with the information specified.

The researcher will provide this form in ENGLISH and SPANISH.

NAME OF THE _____
PROJECT: _____
STUDENT _____
NAME: _____
CAMPUS: _____

1. Please describe what you will ask the student to do, and how much time you predict will be involved in participation, and the length of the study (how many times will data be collected).
2. Please describe all data you will collect from student records, such as test scores, attendance data, etc. and what you will do with this data.
3. If you are requesting access to free/reduced price meal eligibility status, please state that you are requesting such access and include a statement indicating that the failure to allow access to this information will not affect eligibility for or participation in Child Nutrition Programs.
4. The following statement will need to be included "The results of my student's participation in this project will be kept confidential unless I give prior written consent." Please state here how the identity of participation will be protected and who will have access to the project data.
5. Please describe what form or forms the data you collect will be reported or otherwise shared.
6. Please state any risks or inconveniences that participants might incur. If there are none, include a statement so indicating. If there are risks, indicate what the risks are and what precautions you will take to protect participants. Describe the benefits of participating in the study and the compensation, if any, to participants.
7. My consent is optional and voluntary. My decision whether or not to allow my child to participate will not prejudice my present or future relations with (your institution's name here) or my child's school or teacher. To the extent that my child may be identified, if I withdraw my student from the project, my student's information will be removed from the project results.

8. If my child participates in the project, I can get information about the project and copies of any surveys or tests given to my child by contacting (provide the name of the project contact and contact information here).
9. I understand that, while this project has been reviewed by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is not conducting the project activities.

Please check the appropriate box below.

- ☐ I DO NOT grant permission for my child to participate in this research project.
- ☐ I grant permission for my child to participate in this research project.

If you later decide to withdraw your consent for participation in the study, you should contact the Project Director/ Researcher. You may discontinue participation at any time. The Parent / Legal Guardian should keep a copy of this form for his/her records.

I agree to the conditions listed above with the understanding that I may withdraw my child from the project at any time, and that my child may choose not to answer any questions that he/she does not want to answer.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above and have had an opportunity to ask questions.

Signature _____
Parent / Legal Guardian

Date: _____

Signature _____
Project Director / Researcher

Date: _____

Print Form

UNIVERSITY of NORTHERN COLORADO



*College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance*

ASSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO STUDENT

Thesis Title: Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing:
The use of prompts to guide in the choreographic process

Researcher: Yvette Bennett, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

Contact Information: [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Research Advisor: Christy O'Connell-Black, University of Northern Colorado,
Christy.OConnellBlack@unco.edu

You are being asked to take part in a research study of the choreographic process with the use of writing prompts to build confidence. I am asking for you to take part because you are enrolled in the Dance 2-4 level course in the [REDACTED]. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The goal of this research is to build up your confidence in creating choreography. As a participant in this research you will be provided with a variety of writing prompts to guide you through the choreographic process. Each week of the study, you will be given a different writing prompt to use. To keep track of your work and your progress in the study, you will be given a few minutes daily to reflect in your student journal. As part of the graduate thesis project the research will assist the researcher and future readers of the final thesis in understanding the benefits of incorporating writing prompts to guide in the choreographic process and in turn build confident student choreographers.

Risks: The risks and discomforts associated with this study are those typical of any dance class. Every precaution will be taken by the researcher/instructor to create a safe working environment. Because of the nature of this study, there is some level of emotional risk and discomfort that participants may experience. The researcher/instructor will make every effort to create a safe and positive environment.

Students will be instructed to let the teacher know ahead of time if they have an injury or other reason they cannot participate in a particular activity. If students participate, they agree to take on all risks involved; the teacher, university, and dance studio are not liable.

Your answers will be confidential. Every effort will be made to protect your identity. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I make public, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. A code system will be used to identify all participant responses including the pre-test, journal and post-test information. No actual names will be used. I will use pseudonyms. The goal of the research is to simply document the success incorporating writing prompts to guide in the choreographic process and in turn build confident student choreographers. All documents pertaining to this study will be stored in a locked cabinet in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Dance Education MA co-coordinator Christy O'Connell-Black. The notes will be destroyed after the completion of the thesis.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. This study will run for approximately 16 weeks and will not require any additional time outside of class. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled nor will it have any affect towards your grade in this course. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

If you have questions: The researcher conducting this study is Yvette Bennett. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact me with the information listed above. Please retain one copy of this letter for your records.

Thank you for assisting me in my research. Sincerely,

Yvette Bennett

ASSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
STUDENT

Thesis Title: Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing: The use of prompts to guide in the choreographic process

Researcher: Yvette Bennett, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

Contact Information: [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Research Advisor: Christy O'Connell-Black, University of Northern Colorado,
Christy.OConnellBlack@unco.edu

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled nor will it have any affect towards your grade in this course. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future references. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, Office of Sponsored Programs, 25 Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910.

Statement of Assent: I have read the above information and have received answers to any questions I asked. I assent to take part in the study.

Participant's Full Name (please print) Participant's Birth Date (month/day/year)

Participant's Signature Date (month/day/year)

Researcher's Signature Date (month/day/year)

Printed Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent Date (month/day/year)

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by the IRB on (date).

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO



*College of Performing and Visual Arts
School of Theatre Arts and Dance*

CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
PARENT/GUARDIAN

Thesis Title: Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing:
The use of prompts to guide in the choreographic process

Researcher: Yvette Bennett, Graduate Student at the University of Northern
Colorado

Contact Information: [REDACTED],

Research Advisor: Christy O'Connell-Black, University of Northern Colorado,
Christy.OConnellBlack@unco.edu

Your child is being asked to take part in a research study of the choreographic process with the use of writing prompts to build confidence. I am asking your permission for your child to take part in this study because your child is enrolled in the Dance 2-4 level course in the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to allow your child to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The aim of this research is to discover how the use of writing prompts aid in the choreographic process and build a more confident student choreographer. The research will consist of using a variety of writing prompts to guide the participant through the choreographic process. Each week of the study, they will be given a different writing prompt to use. To keep track of their work and their progress in the study, the participants will be given a few minutes daily to reflect in their student journal. As part of the graduate thesis project the research will assist the researcher and future readers of the final thesis in understanding the benefits of incorporating writing prompts to guide in the choreographic process and in turn build confident student choreographers.

Risks: The risks and discomforts associated with this study are those typical of any dance class. Every precaution will be taken by the researcher/ instructor to create a safe working environment. Because of the nature of this study there is some level of emotional risk and discomfort that participants may experience but the researcher/

instructor will be very careful in handling. Students will be instructed to let the teacher know ahead of time if they have an injury or other reason they cannot participate in a particular activity. If students participate, they agree to take on all risks involved, and the teacher, university and dance studio are not liable.

Your answers will be confidential. Every effort will be made to protect your child's identity. The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I make public, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify your child. A code system will be used to identify all participant responses including the pre-test, journal and post-test information. No actual names will be used. I will use pseudonyms. The goal of the research is to simply document the success incorporating writing prompts to guide in the choreographic process and in turn build confident student choreographers. All documents pertaining to this study will be stored in a locked cabinet in Crabbe Hall, room 308, the office of Dance Education MA co-coordinator Christy O'Connell-Black. The notes will be destroyed after the completion of the thesis.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. This study will run for approximately 16 weeks and will not require any additional time outside of class. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which your child is otherwise entitled nor will it have any affect towards your child's grade in this course. If you decide to allow your child to take part, you are free to withdraw your child at any time.

If you have questions: The researcher conducting this study is Yvette Bennett. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact me with the information listed above. Please retain one copy of this letter for your records.

Thank you for assisting me in my research. Sincerely,

Yvette Bennett

CONSENT FORM FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
PARENT/GUARDIAN

Thesis Title: Building the More Confident Student Choreographer Through Writing: The use of prompts to guide in the choreographic process

Researcher: Yvette Bennett, Graduate Student at the University of Northern Colorado

Contact Information: [REDACTED]

Research Advisor: Christy O'Connell-Black, University of Northern Colorado,
Christy.OConnellBlack@unco.edu

Participation is voluntary. Your child may decide not to participate in this study and if your child begins participation you or your child may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time. Your decision will be respected and will not result in loss of benefits to which you and your child are otherwise entitled nor will it have any affect towards your child's grade in the course. Students and parents will be reassured that their grade will not be affected in any way, whether they choose to participate or not. Having read the above and having had an opportunity to ask any questions, please sign below if you would like your child to participate in this research. A copy of this form will be given to you to retain for future references. If you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, please contact Sherry May, IRB Administrator, Office of Sponsored Programs, 25 Kepner Hall, University of Northern Colorado Greeley, CO 80639; 970-351-1910.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

 Child's Full Name (please print) Child's Birth Date (month/day/year)

 Parent/Guardian's Signature Date (month/day/year)

 Researcher's Signature Date (month/day/year)

 Printed Name of Researcher Obtaining Consent Date (month/day/year)

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by the IRB on (date).

APPENDIX C
STUDENT SURVEYS

Choreography Entrance Survey (Survey to be given out to each of the participants the first day of the research project. Forms will be provided to them)

Please choose the response that best describes your answer. Thank You!

1. How many years of choreography experience do you have?

- ☐ None
- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ 2-3 years
- ☐ 3-4 years

2. How comfortable are you with the choreographic process?

- ☐ Not Comfortable at all
- ☐ Somewhat Comfortable
- ☐ Very Comfortable
- ☐ Extremely Comfortable

3. How difficult do you find it to choreograph?

- ☐ Not Difficult at all
- ☐ Somewhat Difficult

- ☐ Very Difficult
 - ☐ Extremely Difficult
4. How confident are you with the choreographic process?
- ☐ Not confident at all
 - ☐ Somewhat Confident
 - ☐ Very Confident
 - ☐ Extremely Confident
5. How willing are you to try new ideas to choreograph?
- ☐ Not willing to try at all
 - ☐ Somewhat willing to try
 - ☐ Very willing to try
 - ☐ Extremely willing to try

Please respond to the following questions to the best of your ability. If you feel the need to clarify or add additional information, please feel free to write comments next to the responses or on the back of the sheet. Thank You!

6. What has been the your starting point, your motivation, your ideas, thought process, when attempting choreography?
7. If you have choreographed, whom have you choreographed for? Yourself? Others?
8. What genre/ style do you feel more comfortable choreographing?
9. Do you have previous dance training? If so, how many years? What genres?
10. What do you hope to learn about the choreographic process after taking this course?

Choreography Exit Survey (Survey to be given out to each of the participants on the final day of the study. Forms will be provided to each participant)

Please respond to the following questions to the best of your ability. If you feel the need to clarify or add additional information, please feel free to write comments next to the responses or on the back of the sheet. Thank You!

11. How would you rate your choreography experience on a scale of 1-5(1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest)?

1 2 3 4 5

12. Do you feel comfortable with the choreographic process?

Yes or No

13. Did the writing prompt aid in the choreographic process?

Yes or No

14. Did you find it more difficult/ easier to choreograph with the use of a writing prompt? Please explain.

15. List the steps you took in your choreographic process.

16. On a scale of 1-5 (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest) what would you rate your confidence level with the choreographic process after this course?

1 2 3 4 5

17. Was keeping a journal helpful during the choreographic process? If yes, please explain.

18. Do you feel that having previous dance training made it easier to choreograph? If yes, please explain.
19. Do you feel this course gave you a sense of self-confidence and a willingness to choreograph again? If yes, explain.
20. After participating in this research project, what did you learn about yourself and the choreographic process?

APPENDIX D

POEMS

I Am Poem

I am _____
 (Two special characteristics)
 I wonder _____
 (Something you are curious about)
 I hear _____
 (An imaginary sound)
 I see _____
 (An imaginary sight)
 I want _____
 (A desire you have)
 I am _____
 (The first line of the poem repeated)
 I pretend _____
 (Something you pretend to do)
 I feel _____
 (A feeling about something imaginary)
 I touch _____
 (An imaginary touch)
 I worry _____
 (Something that bothers you)
 I cry _____
 (Something that makes you sad)
 I am _____
 (The first line of the poem repeated)
 I understand _____
 (Something you know is true)
 I say _____
 (Something you believe in)
 I dream _____
 (Something you dream about)
 I try _____
 (Something you make an effort on)
 I hope _____
 (Something you hope for)
 I am _____

 (The first line of the poem repeated)

Just Because

Just because I am _____,
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am _____.
Just because I am _____,
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am _____.
Just because I am _____,
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am _____.
Just because I am _____,
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am not _____
I am _____.

WHERE I'M FROM

I am from _____ (specific ordinary item), from _____ (product name) and _____.

I am from the _____ (home description... adjective, adjective, sensory detail).

I am from the _____ (plant, flower, natural item), the _____ (plant, flower, natural detail)

I am from _____ (family tradition) and _____ (family trait), from _____ (name of family member) and _____ (another family name) and _____ (family name).

I am from the _____ (description of family tendency) and _____ (another one).

From _____ (something you were told as a child) and _____ (another).

I am from (representation of religion, or lack of it). Further description.

I'm from _____ (place of birth and family ancestry), _____ (two food items representing your family).

From the _____ (specific family story about a specific person and detail), the _____ (another detail, and the _____ (another detail about another family member).

I am from _____ (location of family pictures, mementos, archives and several more lines indicating their worth)