

NEW YORK CITY CENTER
EDUCATION

FLAMENCO FESTIVAL



**BEHIND THE
CURTAIN:
FLAMENCO
FESTIVAL**



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THE HISTORY OF FLAMENCO

The roots of flamenco can be traced back for centuries. Born from the expression of a persecuted people, most notably, the Gypsies of southern Spain, its unique blend of influences and musical complexity can be attributed to the consequences of the decree made in Spain in 1492 by King Ferdinand V and Queen Isabella that everyone living under their domain convert to Catholicism. This proclamation was issued under the threat of varying degrees of punishment, the most severe being the death penalty, by fire. Gypsies, Muslims, Jews and anyone living in Spain at the time was ordered to convert. It is believed that because of this decree these different ethnic groups came together to help each other, and within this melding of cultures flamenco was born.

Flamenco, in general, consists of three artistic elements: the singing (cante), the dance (baile) and the guitar (guitarra). In addition, there are often members of a flamenco group playing “palmas” or hand-clapping. The relationship between the artists is similar to that of jazz—there is a basic structure that one must follow, but at its heart, it is

an improvised form. The singing is the center of the flamenco group. The dancer physically interprets the words and emotion of the singer through his or her movements, which include percussive footwork and intricate hand, arm and body movements. The guitarist provides the accompaniment to the singer and dancer, accentuating his or her vocal lines and/or melodies. Most scholars will agree that the birthplace of flamenco is Jerez de la Frontera, a small city in southern Spain. However, because of the nomadic nature of the Gypsies, flamenco quickly gained roots in several Andalusian towns, including Sevilla and Granada. Flamenco went through many phases in the 18th and 19th centuries, including the performance of the form by non-Gypsies. Ironically, this is what gave the form its legitimacy, as it was seen in theaters and cafes. It can also be said that it became commercial, with the obvious negative implications, as well as quite successful. And although the Gypsies did not achieve respect and honor for their contribution to the art form until many years later, they have always been considered the best interpreters of the flamenco arts.

**New York City's
first flamenco
performance
occurred in the
1840s!**

Towards the end of the 19th century flamenco entered the commercial arena. This led to the evolution of professional artists and culminated in the period of the “cafes cantantes” (song and dance cafes) where flamenco could be heard and seen in public. This evolution also led to changes in the nature of the songs as fads developed for particular types of cante. Many of the more primitive forms languished, and some were totally lost, while other more upbeat forms achieved tremendous popularity.

Today, Flamenco is nothing short of an international phenomenon. The city where the first cries of Flamenco were heard, Jerez, now hosts an annual Flamenco Festival that attracts thousands of visitors from across the world. Flamenco fans, or “aficionados,” can be found in most any country. Flamenco is an art form that inspires, educates and entertains people the world over.

GLOSSARY

Baile: Flamenco dancing

Braceo: Arm work - movement of the arms during the flamenco dance

Cajón: A box-shaped percussion instrument

Cante: Flamenco singing

Compás: Rhythmic cycle of beats, measures and rhythms

Farruca: A form of flamenco music that is traditionally danced to only by men

Floreo: Handwork, the movement a dancer makes with their hands while dancing. In Spanish means “to flower”

Jaleo: A chorus in which dancers and the singer clap. It can also be words or expressions of encouragement

Juerga: A lively and communal flamenco celebration, often involving a “jam session” or “free-style” movements

The origin of the word “flamenco” is a mystery! One theory, proposed by Andalusian historian Blas Infante, suggests that the word comes from the Hispano-Arabic phrase *fellah mengu*, meaning “expelled peasant”.

Llamada: A call, or dance break to signal the change of a section

Marcaje: Marking step, it is particularly used when the singer is singing

Palmas: A style of handclapping used in flamenco music, an essential form of percussion to help punctuate and accentuate the song and dance

Palmas Claras: Louder, higher-pitched claps, created when the fingers of the strong hand land into the open palm of the weak hand.

Palmas Sordas: Softer, low pitched or muted clapping done with cupped hands, often by the singer

Percusión Corporeal: Body percussion

Pitos: Finger snapping

Redoble: Rhythmic patterns with double beats; redobles are usually used in the dance to provide dynamic accents.

Taconeo: Footwork associated chiefly with the heel, involving rhythmic patterns.

Tangos: A lively dynamic dance and song form within the flamenco style

Toque: Flamenco guitar

Vueltas: Flamenco turns



FLOREO



BRACEO



PALMAS CLARAS



PITOS



PALMAS SORDAS

FLAMENCO CROSSWORD

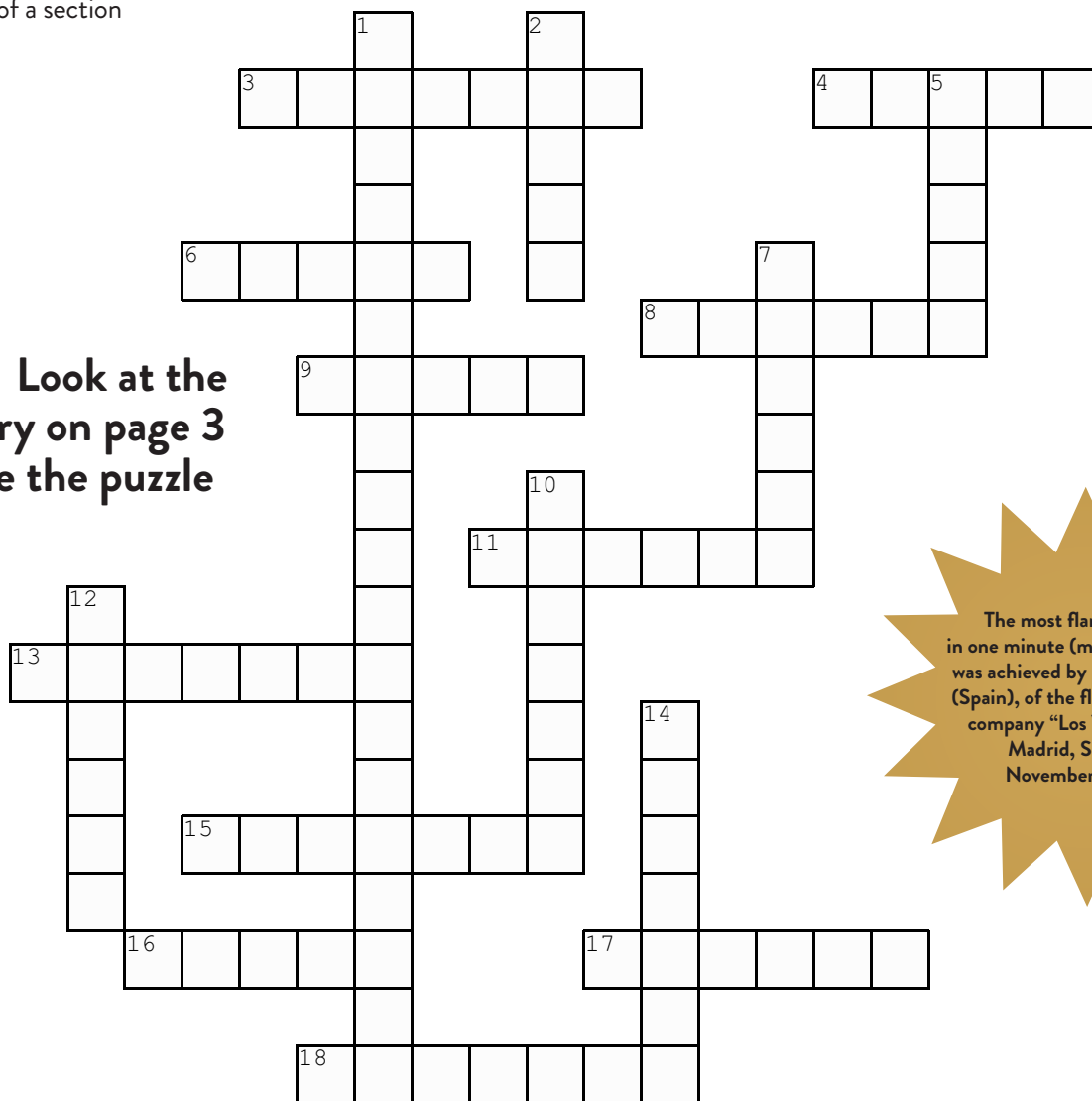
ACROSS

3. Flamenco turns
4. A box-shaped percussion instrument
6. Flamenco guitar
8. Handwork, in Spanish means "to flower"
9. Finger snapping
11. A lively dynamic dance and song form within the flamenco style
13. Footwork associated chiefly with the heel
15. Rhythmic patterns with double beats
16. Flamenco singing
17. A lively and communal flamenco celebration
18. A call, or dance break to signal the change of a section

DOWN

1. Body percussion
2. Flamenco dancing
5. A chorus in which dancers and the singer clap
7. Rhythmic cycle of beats and rhythms
10. A marking step
12. A style of hand-clapping used in flamenco music
14. A form of flamenco music that is traditionally danced to only by men

HINT: Look at the Glossary on page 3 to solve the puzzle



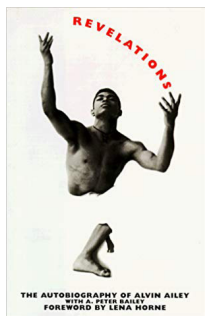
WRITE A REVIEW

City Center Education encourages you to continue the conversation and write your own review. Use the questions below to help discuss or write about the performance!

- What was your overall reaction to the performance?
- Describe the moment that popped or stuck out most in your mind. Why?
- What message do you think the dance was trying to communicate?
- Did the dance remind you of anything? If so, what?
- How did you feel watching the performance? What emotions did you observe the performers experiencing?
- What spatial characteristics or shapes of the movement did you observe? (e.g., angular, curved, staccato, legato, light, heavy, symmetrical, asymmetrical, low level, high level, etc.)
- How would you describe the music? Set? Lighting? Costumes? Props?
- Describe the pace and tempo of the dances. (e.g., slow, fast, varied)
- What did you like most about watching the performance?
- If you were the choreographer, what creative changes or additions would you make to the show?

From 1869 – 1910, flamenco artists became major attractions in venues known as *cafés cantantes*. This period is referred to as the “Golden Age of Flamenco”.

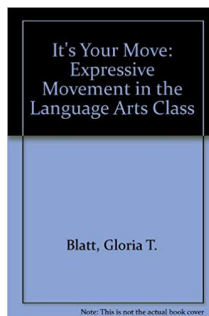
RECOMMENDED DANCE BOOKS



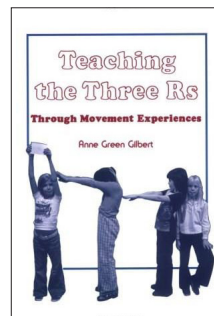
Revelations: The Autobiography of Alvin Ailey by Alvin Ailey



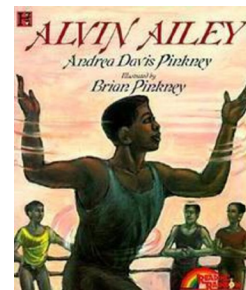
Ballet and Modern Dance by Susan Au



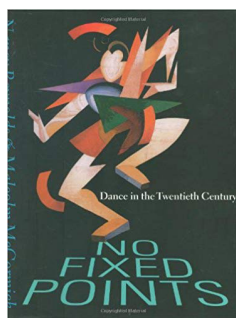
It's Your Move: Creative Movement Activities for the Language Arts Curriculum by Gloria Blatt and Jean Cunningham



Teaching the Three R's Through Movement Experiences by Anne Green Gilbert



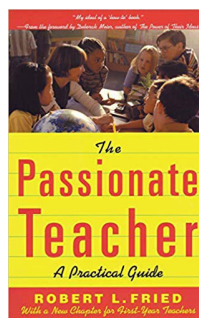
Alvin Ailey by Andrea Davis Pinkney and Brian Pinkney



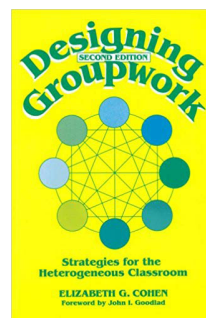
No Fixed Points: Dance in the Twentieth Century by Nancy Reynolds and Malcolm McCormick



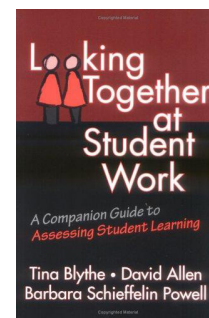
Private Domain by Paul Taylor



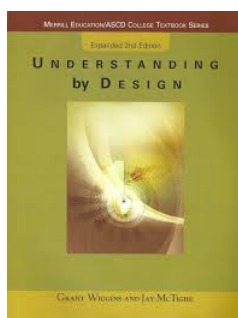
The Passionate Teacher: A Practical Guide by Robert L. Fried



Designing Group Work: Strategies for the Heterogeneous Classroom by Elizabeth G. Cohen



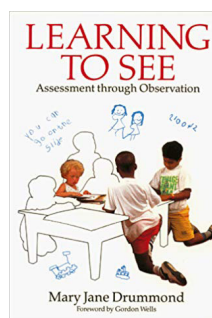
Looking Together at Student Work: A Companion Guide to Assessing Student Learning by Tina Blythe, David Allen, and Barbara Schieffelin Powell



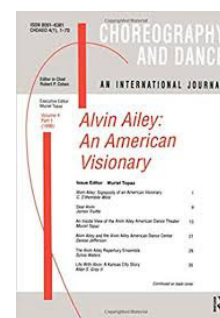
Understanding by Design, Expanded Second Edition by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe



No More Secondhand Art: Awakening the Artist Within by Peter London



Learning to See: Assessment through Observation by Mary Jane Drummond



Alvin Ailey: An American Visionary by Muriel Topaz

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

DANCE WEBSITES

- **New York City Center** | NYCityCenter.org
- **Arts Education Partnership** | aep-arts.org
- **DanceArt.com** | danceart.com
- **Dance/NYC** | dancenyc.org
- **Dance/USA** | danceusa.org
- **Dance Magazine** | dancemagazine.com
- **Dance Teacher Magazine** | dance-teacher.com
- **Flamenco World** | flamenco-world.com
- **Lincoln Center Institute** | lcinstitute.org
- **National Dance Association** | aahperd.org/nda
- **National Endowment for the Arts** | arts.endow.gov

DANCE VIDEOS

- **Active Videos** | activevideos.com
- **Dance Horizons** | dancehorizons.com
- **Facets** | facets.org
- **PBS** | pbs.org/wnet/gperf

DANCE COLLECTION

- **New York Public Library for the Performing Arts** | nypl.org/research
- **Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture** | nypl.org/research/sc/sc.html

DANCE COMPANIES (A Selection)

- **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** | alvinailey.org
- **Martha Graham Dance Company** | marthagrahamdance.org
- **Paul Taylor Dance Company** | ptdc.org
- **Corella Ballet** | corellaballet.com
- **Flamenco Festival** | flamencofestival.org
- **World Music Institute** | worldmusicinstitute.org

DANCE SCHOOLS

- **The Ailey School** | alvinailey.org
- **Ballet Hispanico** | ballethispanico.org
- **Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana** | flamenco-vivo.org
- **Mark Morris Dance Center** | markmorrisdancegroup.org
- **Peridance** | peridance.com
- **School of American Ballet** | sab.org
- **Steps** | stepsnyc.com
- **The Taylor School** | ptdc.org

GENERAL ARTS

- **National Endowment for the Arts** | arts.endow.gov
- **New York Foundation for the Arts** | nyfa.org
- **VSA arts (formerly Very Special Arts)** | vsarts.org

Crossword Puzzle Answer Key

(page 4)

ACROSS

3. Vueltas
4. Cajón
6. Toque
8. Floreo
9. Pitos
11. Tangos
13. Taconeo
15. Redoble
16. Cante
17. Juerga
18. Llamada

DOWN

1. Percusión
Corporeal
2. Baile
5. Jaleo
7. Compás
10. Marcaje
12. Palmas
14. Farruca



NEW YORK CITY CENTER EDUCATION

VISION STATEMENT

The mission of New York City Center Education is to ignite an appreciation of the performing arts, cultivate the creative mind, and create a culture of inquiry and exploration. Committed to drawing inspiration from works on the mainstage, New York City Center Education strives to provide innovative, accessible arts education to schools and communities across New York City.

ABOUT NEW YORK CITY CENTER EDUCATION

Each year City Center reaches over 11,000 students from NYC public and private schools, kindergarten to grade 12, through dance and musical theater performances and in-school workshops. In-depth residencies engage young people in building technical and expressive skills, personal voice, and collaborative spirit. Innovative workshops are crafted for families, seniors, and other special groups that express an interest in collaborating with City Center.

Through the Introduction to Performing Arts program, students have the opportunity to view live performing arts at City Center. At the Workshop level, students receive two in-school workshops in addition to attending a live performance. Residencies provide in-depth multi-week study around one of the productions presented during the season. During the 2019-2020 Season, City Center Education offers students the opportunity to study dance and musical theater productions from City Center's mainstage.

