**Important Reminders for Grade 10 & 11 Critique Writers:**

* Write your critique as if the reader has NOT seen the performance or artwork you are critiquing   
  and does not get to see the chart you filled in while watching/ viewing.
* Use high quality, formal writing, in the first person ( you can use “I”, “me” etc…)
  + That means – **~~don’t~~** do not use contractions, or slang.
  + Avoid using firstly, secondly, thirdly and so on, at the beginning of every paragraph.   
    There are all kinds of transition words – find some! (check here: <https://www.msu.edu/~jdowell/135/transw.html>)
  + Proofread for grammar, spelling, and especially, **clarity of thought**. Look at each sentence/paragraph:   
    Does it make sense? Does it say what you are trying to say?
  + Refer to different portions of performances by using descriptive language, do not refer to things by citing the times ( ie. Do NOT say “From 2:10-2:17 in the dance….”)
  + Use art-specific language whenever possible, and use it properly! Examples: **Synchronized** not in sync, **movements** not moves , **upstage** not at the back, etc….
  + Try to keep things constructive, and phrase things politely, as if the artistss were going to read it.
* Include an introduction **AND** conclusion.
  + The **introduction** should introduce the piece you are critiquing and draw the reader in.   
    For Performances: It **MUST** include basic information such as the style of performance ( contemporary dance, hip hop, jazz / miming, musical theatre, monologue etc…) , number of performers ( ensemble, duo, trio etc…), choreographer/director ( if known), and music ( if applicable), as well as the context (movie, dance recital, audition, practice session at a studio, workshop, festival, street performance, etc…)
  + For Visual Works: It **MUST** include basic information such as the artist(s) name(s), location/context, medium(s) used ( acrylic, graphite, clay, multimedia etc…), size / scale of the works, you may also want to include the style (if known, ex. Cubism, Group of Seven, Impressionist ), and the motivation for the work, the location in which it was created, and another other technical information.
  + You may want to use the introduction to state your overall opinion and give a very brief overview of what you will discuss in your critique/analysis.
  + Use multiple paragraphs in the body of your critique (one for each new thought).
  + Back up **ALL** your opinions and statements with **well described examples** of what you can **SEE** in the performance or art work. Providing well explained examples is key to getting the highest marks.
  + The **conclusion** should recap what you have said in the body of your critique. It should start with specifics and move to more general statements to wrap up.

A critique is basically an opinion essay – you are entitled to your opinion but you MUST back it up.

**Not sure what you can talk about? Here are just a few things you could talk about:**

* **Narrative/ Message:** Is there a story or meaning behind the piece? What is it? How is it told/shown? How does the composition, or artistic techniques used in the work help to convey the story or message? Discuss the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of these approaches.
* **Dancers –** Technique, expression, effort, extension, flexibility, gracefulness, sharpness, timing, coordination etc…
* **Actors-** Stage presence, expressions, projection, accent, body language, use of the stage, etc…
* **Choreography –** is the dance interesting / dynamic to watch? Has the choreographer used techniques of dance composition well ( patterns, pathways, transitions, formations, levels, use of space, interaction of dancers etc… )
* **Props/Costumes/Lighting –** what types of props, costumes, lighting or special effects are used? Do they help tell a story / send a message? What do they add to the performance? Are they distracting? Interesting? Used effectively?
* **Visual Art -**  Think about the elements and principals of art / design ( Line, colour, shape/form, value, texture, perspective, repetition, balance, movement, etc… ) How are they used? Are they effective? Visually interesting? Do they help tell the story or evoke a feeling?

**Example of a quality introduction:**

It is often said that dances which tell a story are those that make the most impact on the audience. On season two of So You Think You Can Dance (USA ), choreographers Tabitha and Napoleon D’Umo choreographed a piece that certainly lived up to that statement. In this piece, danced to the song “No Air” by Jordan Sparks & Chris Brown, dancers Katee and Joshua communicated the story of a soldier who receives word he is being sent to war and the distress it causes his girlfriend. The combination of quality dancing, excellent choreography, and emotional performances all came together to create a highly moving, and emotional piece of art that I thoroughly enjoyed.

**Example of a quality conclusion:**

Despite the small issues in synchronization during the jump series near the end of the dance, Katee and Joshua’s emotional portrayals of their characters, and their overall technical proficiency made this dance highly successful, and very memorable. I felt connected to both characters and really felt their pain and frustration throughout the dance. If they continue to create dances such as this I suspect that both the dancers and choreographers involved will have long and prosperous careers bringing stories to life for audiences everywhere.