

Kaylee Fandre

Practicum

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I did my practicum with Talya Dozois at Platinum Dance Center in Edina, MN. The students responded well to my lesson. I tried to go out of the box of what I had seen Talya working on them with to challenge them a bit. This seemed to get them excited even if they were unable to completely achieve the skills I had them working on. One combination in particular was a double allusion in a battement sequence. This is something that my teacher growing up challenged us with and it is fun helping new students on their journey with furthering themselves. We did the combination a few times to let it get into their bodies and you could tell that they were already understanding the mechanics of it. This is something that I enjoy doing because it is often something you cannot do on the first try but completely attainable at this level. Momentum and weight distribution are what they have to think about most because they usually have the talent and technique behind it.

Some questions that came up for me were: How long do you spend on something in one week? Do you keep going with something until they get it or is it okay to move on without them grasping it completely yet? What kind of mix of this should you have? Along with these questions, it also spiked a topic that we had talked about with my co workers at a staff meeting. How can we get something that we are working on to stick? How do we stop the students from going through the motions? A few solutions that we thought of are to constantly be reminding them of the things we are working on, get them to be actively thinking by asking questions during class, and having a short meditation time to prepare yourself for class in the beginning of

each class. The presence that you have in class can be completely altered by how you approach it.

I achieved my learning goals as I was able to get a workout in for them working the correct muscle groups. During the develop combination in center floor, I gave the correction of where to hold the leg and how to maintain rotation and I could see them self correcting after me telling them once or twice. This showed me that they were listening, applying, and understanding the topic as well. We also did a stretch that I like to say gives “immediate gratification” and it was exciting to see them excited if they got down farther in their splits. This partner resistance stretch allows for maximum flexibility right away and they are not used to being able to have results instantly so this is something that excited them.

Nothing truly unexpected came from the lesson. This might be because this class was in my comfort zone for teaching so I was more prepared to teach a jazz technique class than I would have been to teach any other class. I was surprised by the loss of technique the first time we did a foreign combination to them just because it was something different. Even though they were the same steps just in a different order, sometimes it would take them until the second time of doing the combination to completely delve into dancing it. This is something that I found beneficial doing the combination multiple times. I do not always do this but you could tell it was important to do when I was a teacher that they do not normally have.

If I were to teach this lesson again, I would leave a few more minutes to do some leaps across the floor. It seems like they spend most of their time on turns because when we did start to do leaps, I could tell there was a lot of room for growth. Because I did not leave a ton of time for this, we were not able to delve into them as much as I would have liked. I also would have loved to do a small combo with them but 45 minutes is just not enough time to do so.

My teaching improved by remembering that it is okay to spend some time on one thing every once in a while. I like to get through a lot of material and have a fast paced class. Sometimes I need to remember that sweating at the end of class is not the only way to have a good class. Breaking down topics can be just as helpful. I also am really trying to incorporate telling the students why they are doing each exercise and referring to warm up exercises across the floor to help integrate meaning. I think the dancers are more willing to work hard when they know it is for a specific outcome.