

Activity: Angles**Theme: Dance Skills****Elements of dance: body, dynamics, relationships**

When filming dance sequences, various camera angles convey not only description and detail but also emotional impact to the audience: the more extreme the angle, the more weight of impact. Consider the following camera angles: (1) the bird's eye view or looking from directly overhead was first used by Busby Berkeley, a 1930s and 1940s choreographer. His dancers' legs and arms made intricate patterns seen from above, looking much like a kaleidoscope; (2) the high angle - where the camera is elevated to give a general overview; (3) eye level where the camera is angled as though it were a human viewing the scene; (4) low angle which increases the height of the dancer and increases the sense of speed; (5) oblique, where the camera is tilted, suggesting imbalance, transition, instability.

1. As a class, view the clip, *Pop Videos*, where Sammy makes a video of Kat as she casually dances to Miles' song. Sammy uses a hand-held camera which produces a home movie style image that looks candid and "funky". Discuss the kinds of camera angles that are possible with a small hand-held camera. List the range of camera angles on the board and share with the class. Include: still image, close-up, telephoto, wide-angle, bird's-eye view, below the eye level, dollying, panning, among others.
2. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of hand-held camera use. The use of a hand-held camera can represent loss of equilibrium/steadiness, appear more candid, but also such use can affect the sound quality, light quality, and make the clip appear more rough and ready and less professional.
3. Divide the class into pairs. Have one student film with available cameras while the other student performs. The available devices could be either a phone camera, digital stills camera on the movie setting, or a movie camera. The other student will improvise movement to music. The camera person should continually record the other person and explore different camera angles. Reverse the roles and compare the films.
4. Have students complete **Student Activity Sheet E9.2: Dance and the Camera: Reflection.**

5. As a class, review the videos and discuss which camera angles are the most effective and the least effective.

Download

- Student Activity Sheet E9.2: Dance and the Camera: Reflection

Useful resources

- [Ausdance Factsheet 11, Producing a dance performance](#)
- [YouTube, Busby Berkeley clip](#)
- [SWIRK, Camera angles and techniques](#)
- [ACTF, Education, The Learning Centre – Teaching activities for film and camera techniques](#)
- [ACTF, Education, The Learning Centre - Creating meaning with the camera](#)



NAME:

Student Activity Sheet: E9.2
Activity: Angles

Episode 9: Heartbeat
Clip: Pop Songs

Dance and the Camera: Reflection

Fill out the following once you finish your filming.

What worked in your filming?	What didn't work in your filming?	What was interesting?

Next time you film a dance, what will you be sure to include?
