

# Dance Dialogue



## *Awards!*

We are well on our way into preparations for the upcoming IDA Awards. The material has been taught, registration forms have been passed out, and extra practices have started. Things seem to be coming along well. If you misplaced your sign-ups or extra practice schedules please pick up a new copy at the studio. **All registrations are due Saturday, February 14 by 2pm.** Once I know everyone who will be participating in the event, I will be able to make a schedule. **Awards will be the afternoon of March 7th.** As I don't know how many people will sign up, I really don't know how long the afternoon will be. In the past, we have run easily from 1- at least 6; I would plan to keep the day very open.

It is now appropriate to start video taping us in practice. Some hints about video taping. Having a recording is to help the dancers remember their material when they are practicing outside of class, if they forget something. It is important that they not *rely* on the videotapes to make it through their exercise and dance every time. I would recommend when the students are practicing that they don't actually dance with the video tape. Instead, if they forget, watch the video, and then try to do it again by them self. Otherwise, this very helpful tool can actually turn into a crutch, making it hard for them to do the dances without prompting at the Awards.



## LESSONS

The experiences gained from Awards is absolutely invaluable. Yes, if the dancers put in the kind of effort we encourage of them, they will greatly improve their dance technique and stage presence. There is the obvious skill of acting confident, and presenting yourself well, even when under pressure. But, there is so much more to be gained. Setting a goal, working hard, and following through until the end is another important part of Awards. This discipline is something that will help these students through countless events in life. Another important lesson is that it is not always possible to be the best at everything. Undoubtedly, there will be students who "score" higher after their Awards performance. Just as there will be someone who



does better on a test, makes the sports team we were hoping for, or even gets the job that we put tons of time and effort into getting. Learning how to cope when we don't get everything we want in life is another important skill. Finally, being honest with ourself - knowing if we really tried our best - and being proud of the job we did, even if the outcome wasn't what we wanted, is something that everyone needs to learn. There will be students who put lots of time and effort into the preparation, but for one reason or another are not as successful as they hoped. Remember, the judge only sees them dance for a few minutes. We teachers know how hard they work - and that is much more important.

### *Extra Practices*

To help the dancers have a successful Awards experience, we offer a bunch of extra practices for the youngest students. These are by no means mandatory for participation, but they do help a great deal, and I certainly do encourage them! This is especially for those dancers who have a hard time practicing at home, or are struggling trying to remember the material. If you can't make it in to all the extra practices, it is fine to come in to other classes of your level to replace them - please just let us know when you plan to come.

Students in Ballet IB/ II: there are only 2 extra practices for the Ballet II class. If you are only taking regular class once a week, the Awards may be especially challenging. Please come in to other Ballet II classes for additional practice. You can use the same pricing structure as described on the Extra Practice Schedule (\$48 for 5 classes). Please send me an email so I know when to expect you!



### Practice Makes Perfect

I once had a students say to me “practice doesn’t make perfect, perfect practice makes perfect.” One of the truths about ballet is there is no such thing as perfect. We dancers hate watching ourselves, and even the most accomplished professional dancer will pick themselves apart. The good thing is that Awards have age-appropriate goals for the students, and realize that these are kids performing, not professional dancers. But the reality is that if everyone gets a perfect score, it doesn’t mean very much. Don’t expect your child to get top marks, and make sure their expectations are appropriate. Of course, there is a lot we can do to improve ourselves, and hopefully better our outcome. Here are my hints for you to remind your child of as they prepare for their big day!



Keep the above quote in mind as you practice. The quality of practice is much more important than quantity. If your child dances around the house for hours, but without pointing their toes or clean arm positions, that is probably how they will perform for the judge. There is a

saying that says your performance will be 80% as good as your best rehearsal. I recommend practicing each exercise and dance 3 times 3-4 times a week. Make sure they are keeping in mind all of the corrections we talk about in class as they work (toes, arms, posture, turn out, head, straight legs... the list goes on and on!).

Make sure your student knows their music. I always tell the kids to remember that the music is their partner, and we always dance with our partner! A few parents have emailed me for music, and are sharing it amongst classmates. Please try to get the music! Listen to it often, sing the steps of the dance - both while dancing and while just listening. Really, the dance and the music are inseparable.

Have fun! And look like you are having fun. The students need to remember their smiles. The judge will enjoy watching dancers who look like they love what they are doing over those that look bored, terrified, or angry. How we dance is a habit - that includes our smile. Encourage them to practice showing off their beautiful faces.

### Calendar

- February 14, 2015**  
IDA Awards sign-ups are due
- February 16, 2015**  
President’s Day! No class!
- April 13-18, 2015**  
Parent Meetings and Costume Sizing
- March 7**  
IDA Awards!
- March 23-28**  
Spring Break! Take time to relax!
- May 25**  
Memorial Day - No class!
- May 30**  
All-cast Rehearsal at ABA
- June 6**  
All-cast Rehearsal at ABA
- June 12**  
Spacing at Elsinore Theatre
- June 13**  
Spring Performance!

### CONTACT

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please feel free to contact us at any of the following:

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### Awards Dress Code and Store Hours

Students in Pre-Ballet I-Ballet I are required to wear black tank leotards (1 inch straps). Students Ballet II and up will need black camisole leotards (spaghetti straps). Everyone needs pink tights and pink ballet shoes. On your registration form there is a spot to mark down what dress code requirements you need. Once I have this information, I will do a big store order. There are some things in stock now, but you might be better to wait a couple weeks before coming in. The store is open Tuesday from 4:45-5:45, Saturday from 10:15-11:45, or by appointment outside of class times.

For the Awards, students will need to wear their hair up in a neat, secure ballet bun. Light make-up is fine. As always, no jewelry or undergarments!

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Store Hours:

Tuesday 4:45-5:45pm

Saturday 10:15-11:45am

By appointment