
RATINGS GUIDE TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS

CHOREOGRAPHY

Instructor Rating



PROFESSIONAL SKATERS ASSOCIATION

Est. 1938

EXAM TOPICS AREAS

- 1) Video Presentation
- 2) Ethics/ SafeSport/ Education
- 3) Figure Skating Knowledge
- 4) Choreographic Principles
- 5) Choreographic Process
- 6) Rules of Sport
- 7) Music/Dance/Arts
- 8) Improvisational Presentation

OVERVIEW OF EXAM LEVELS

Exam Level	Skating Level of Athlete	Expected Knowledge Level
Registered	Pre-preliminary through Pre-juvenile or ISI Freestyle 4 and 5	A thorough basic knowledge is required
Certified	Juvenile and Intermediate or ISI Freestyle 6	Advanced knowledge that is consistent and functional
Senior	Novice and Junior	Superior working knowledge
Master	Senior and Elite (International)	Exceptional knowledge

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CHOREOGRAPHY INSTRUCTOR RATING REQUIREMENTS

1.) PSA REGISTERED CHOREOGRAPHY INSTRUCTOR (RC):

- A. Must have attended a PSA approved educational program within one year of applying to take an exam. Affidavit must be on file with the PSA office.
- B. Must have completed the Basic Accreditation rating or Foundations of Coaching Course (FCC).
- C. Must have a minimum of 50 hours over a one-year period of professional on-ice instructing or coaching experience choreographing programs at the U.S. Figure Skating pre-preliminary or preliminary or pre-juvenile levels or above for athletes in singles, ice dance, pairs, synchronized skating, theatre on ice, or showcase; or ISI Freestyle 4 or 5, or other ISU member organization equivalent or higher. (No-test is too low.)
- D. Must have studied ballet, modern dance, or jazz class for at least one year. Must produce references from a dance school where the candidate studied dance attesting to the candidate's ability and knowledge, including documenting the time period. In the rare case where a dance studio is no longer in operation or the instructors are not able to be located, the candidate may submit a resume listing the name, place and instructors where they studied dance. Please also list the genres of dance that were studied. The resume will be accepted upon the committee's approval;
OR must have majored in dance for one year at an accredited college or university;
OR must be rated at the registered level or higher in free skating, or ice dance, or free dance, or pair skating, or moves in the field, or synchronized skating, or group instruction.
- E. Must bring a video with a sampling of the applicant's figure skating choreographic works to the exam for review by the panel of examiners. *The video must be of an athlete at the U.S. Figure Skating pre-preliminary through pre-juvenile singles, ice dance, or pairs or synchronized skating, theatre on ice, or showcase; OR ISI Freestyle 4 or 5, OR other ISU member organization equivalent or higher.* Additional samples of the applicant's work may be brought as well. See **** Video Requirements for all Levels.**
- F. Must submit a signed letter from the club/rink/facility verifying professional skating credentials.
- G. Must have passed the Registered Sport Science & Medicine exam.
- H. Must pass the Registered Choreography Instructor oral exam.

2.) PSA CERTIFIED CHOREOGRAPHY INSTRUCTOR (CC):

- A. Must have attended a PSA approved educational program within one year of applying to take an exam. Affidavit must be on file with the PSA office.
- B. Must have completed the Registered Choreography Instructor rating.
- C. Must have a minimum of 100 hours over a two-year period of professional coaching experience choreographing with at least one of the years at the certified level or higher. For U.S. Figure Skating juvenile or intermediate or above for athletes in singles, ice dance or pairs, synchronized skating, theatre on ice, or showcase; for ISI Freestyle 6, Pair 6 or Free Dance 6; or for other ISU member organization equivalent test level.
- D. Must have studied ballet, modern dance, or jazz class for at least two years. Must produce references from a dance school where the candidate studied dance attesting to the candidate's ability and knowledge, including documenting the time period. In the rare case where a dance studio is no longer in operation or the instructors are not able to be located, the candidate may submit a resume listing the name, place and instructors where they studied dance. Please also list the genres of dance that were studied. The resume will be accepted upon the committee's approval;
OR must have majored in dance for two years at an accredited college or university;
OR must be rated at the certified level or higher in free skating, or ice dance, or free dance, or pair skating, or synchronized skating or group instruction.
- E. Must bring a video with a sampling of the applicant's figure skating choreographic works at the juvenile or intermediate level to the exam for review by the panel of examiners. Additional samples of the applicant's work maybe brought as well. See **** Video Requirements for all Levels.**
- F. Must submit a signed letter from the club/rink/facility verifying professional skating credentials.

- G. Must have passed the Certified Sport Science & Medicine exam.
- H. Must pass the Certified Choreography Instructor oral exam.

3.) PSA SENIOR CHOREOGRAPHY INSTRUCTOR (SC):

- A. Must have attended a PSA approved educational program within one year of applying to take an exam.
- B. Must have passed the Certified Choreography Instructor exam.
- C. Must have a minimum of 150 hours over a three-year period of professional coaching on-ice experience choreographing programs for U.S. Figure Skating novice or junior level or higher athletes in singles, pairs, dance, synchronized skating (including collegiate), theatre on ice, or showcase; or for other ISU member organization equivalent, with at least one of the years at the junior level or higher, or choreographing for professional ice show principals.
- D. Must have studied ballet, modern dance, or jazz class for at least three years. Must produce references from a dance school where the candidate studied dance attesting to the candidate's ability and knowledge, including documenting the time period. In the rare case where a dance studio is no longer in operation or the instructors are not able to be located, the candidate may submit a resume listing the name, place and instructors where they studied dance. Please also list the genres of dance that were studied. The resume will be accepted upon the committee's approval;
OR must have majored in dance for three years at an accredited college or university;
OR must be rated at the certified level in free skating, or ice dance, or free dance, or pair skating, or synchronized skating, or group instruction.
- E. Must bring a video with a sampling of the applicant's figure skating choreographic works at the novice or junior level to the exam for review by the panel of examiners. Additional samples of the applicant's work maybe brought as well. See ****Video Requirements for all Levels.**
- F. Must submit a signed letter from the club/rink/facility verifying professional skating credentials.
- G. Must have passed the Senior Sport Science & Medicine exam.
- H. Must pass the Senior Choreography Instructor oral exam.

4.) PSA MASTER CHOREOGRAPHY INSTRUCTOR (MC):

- A. Must have attended a PSA approved educational program within one year of applying to take an exam.
- B. Must have completed the Senior Choreography Instructor rating.
- C. Must have a minimum of 250 hours over a five-year period of professional on-ice coaching experience choreographing programs for U.S. Figure Skating senior level athletes in singles, pairs, dance, synchronized skating, theatre on ice, or showcase; or for other ISU member organization equivalent, with at least one of the years at the senior level, or choreographing for professional ice show principals.
- D. Must have studied ballet, modern dance, or jazz class for at least four years. Must produce references from a dance school where the candidate studied dance attesting to the candidate's ability and knowledge, including documenting the time period. In the rare case where a dance studio is no longer in operation or the instructors are not able to be located, the candidate may submit a resume listing the name, place and instructors where they studied dance. Please also list the genres of dance that were studied. The resume will be accepted upon the committee's approval;
OR produce a bachelor's degree in dance from an accredited college or university;
OR must be rated at the master level in free skating, or ice dance, or free dance, or pair skating, or synchronized skating, or group instructor.
- E. ****** Must bring a video with a sampling of the applicant's figure skating choreographic works at the senior or elite (international) level to the exam for review by the panel of examiners. Additional samples maybe brought as well. See ****Video Requirements for all Levels.**
- F. Must submit a signed letter from the club/rink/facility verifying professional skating credentials.
- G. Must have passed the Master Sport Science & Medicine written exam.
- H. Must pass the Master Choreography Instructor oral exam

EXAM CATEGORIES AND ORDER:

In each exam category, there are listed the areas of general evaluation of the candidate. The area of evaluation can overlap to a certain degree, but this is to ensure that the examiners have ample opportunity to assess the candidate in each category.

- 1) Video Presentation
 - Creative Process and Movement Quality
 - Problem Solving Skills
 - Exam Preparation
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
- 2) Ethics/SafeSport/Education
 - Professionalism
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
 - Problem Solving Skills
 - Enthusiasm and Confidence
 - Exam Preparation
- 3) Figure Skating Knowledge
 - Methodology and Organizational Skills
 - Exam Preparation
 - Enthusiasm and Confidence
- 4) Choreographic Principles
 - Methodology and Organizational Skills
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
 - Complete/Clear/Concise Responses
 - Exam Preparation
- 5) Choreographic Process
 - Methodology and Organizational Skills
 - Creative Process and Movement Quality
 - Problem Solving Skills
 - Professionalism
 - Rules of Sport
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
- 6) Rules of Sport
 - Methodology and Organizational Skills
 - Complete/Clear/Concise Responses
 - Exam Preparation
 - Professionalism
- 7) Music/Dance/Arts
 - Critical Thinking and Reasoning
 - Complete/Clear/Concise Responses
 - Exam Preparation
- 8) Improvisational Presentation
 - Creative Process and Movement Quality
 - Enthusiasm and Confidence

GENERAL EVALUATION DEFINITIONS

METHODOLOGY AND ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS:

The candidate should be able to discuss his/her set of practices with a clear explanation of “WHAT” is done, “WHY” it is done, and “HOW” something is taught a particular way. A clear vision and understanding of the systemic development of skills should be communicated. The candidate should show the ability to use his (and his athlete’s) time, energy, and resources in an effective manner to achieve the goal. Examples are found in the questions in the following knowledge areas:

- Choreographic Principles
- Choreographic Process
- Rules of Sport
- Figure Skating Knowledge

CREATIVE PROCESS AND MOVEMENT QUALITY

The candidate should demonstrate the ability to create programs with vision, originality, and expressiveness, with imaginative and innovative examples of his/her work. Movement quality refers to the candidate’s awareness and ability to execute strong lines, good extension, posture, and carriage when demonstrating body movements. Examples found in questions in the following knowledge areas:

- Video Presentation
- Improvisational Presentation
- Choreographic Process
- Figure Skating Knowledge

PROFESSIONALISM:

The candidate should demonstrate the highest level of honor, integrity, responsibility, accountability and respect toward the coaching profession. The candidate should be familiar with PSA educational opportunities and the distinctions between them. Candidates at all levels should be very familiar with the U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Handbook. Examples found in questions in the following knowledge areas:

- Ethics/SafeSport/ Education
- Choreographic Process
- Rules of Sport

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

The candidate should show the ability to work through details of a problem to reach a solution by defining the problem, generating, evaluating, and selecting alternatives and implementing solutions. Examples can be found in questions in the following knowledge areas:

- Choreographic Process
- Ethics/SafeSport/Education
- Video Presentation

CRITICAL THINKING AND REASONING

The candidate should be able to demonstrate critical thinking and reasoning skills. Critical thinking is the process of independently analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information as a guide to behavior and beliefs. Examples found in questions in the following knowledge areas:

- Rules of Sport
- Music/Dance/Art

- Choreographic Principles
- Ethics/SafeSport/Education
- Video Presentation

COMPLETE/CLEAR/CONCISE RESPONSES

Candidate should be able to demonstrate complete, clear and concise answers. Bulleted answers. Evaluated throughout the entire exam

EXAM PREPARATION

The candidate should appear to have utilized a systematic process to organize thoughts, and plan and practice articulating responses for the exam. Primarily evaluated in the following knowledge areas:

- Video Presentation
- Rules of Sport
- Music/Dance/Art
- Choreographic Principles
- Ethics/SafeSport/Education

ENTHUSIASM AND CONFIDENCE

The candidate should appear to be self-assured in the content and delivery of his/her responses. Candidate should demonstrate a whole-hearted sense of eagerness and passion for his/her work. Primarily evaluated in the following knowledge areas:

- Improvisational Presentation
- Figure Skating Knowledge
- Ethics/SafeSport/Education

NOTES:

VIDEO PRESENTATION

The Video Presentation is your chance for the ratings examiners to view your work as a choreographer first-hand. While their opinion will be formed largely by the visual aspects of the presentation, your narrative of the athlete/team/group and descriptions you offer can enhance their perception of your choreography skills. The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the video portion of the exam; however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Creative Process and Movement Quality
- Problem Solving Skills
- Exam Preparation
- Critical Thinking and Reasoning

****VIDEO GUIDELINES (ALL LEVELS)**

- A. The candidate will bring a device to play the video for the panel. The candidate should not rely on the internet to access the video as Wi-Fi is not guaranteed to be available. If the video cannot be viewed at the time of the exam, the exam will not continue and the exam will be considered “incomplete.” The exam fee will be forfeited.
- B. Video must be a total of a maximum seven minutes in length (Master 10 minutes maximum in length).
- C. Video must be of excellent quality. Excellent quality is defined as the following:
 - Utilizing a good camera (8 megapixel phone camera or better)
 - In a location with sufficient lighting
 - Video should be taken on empty ice if at all possible
 - Video taken from a good angle so that the pattern can be viewed clearly
 - » Place the camera at or above shoulder height
 - » Do not use GoPro or similar devices for video
 - » Keep the camera stationary; don't follow the athlete around the ice
 - Edit the video to get all the sections in, but show the program in its entirety
 - » If you use transitions between the sections of the video, just use fade to black, fade to white, cross blur/cross fade, wipe, or no transitions. Keep it simple.
- D. Candidate must attest in writing that the choreographic work is their own. (A form will be provided.)
 - *This will assure that the candidate is submitting their own choreographic work. Falsification of this portion of the exam is grounds for disciplinary action.*
- E. One segment on the video must be presented of an athlete performing the choreographic work at the minimum level required for the test. Candidate will state if the program is an ISU Judging System (IJS), U.S Figure Skating test, or Ice Skating Institute (ISI) program, or other.
- F. One segment on the video must be presented of choreography from an ice show, gala, exhibition, theatre on ice, or showcase piece.
- G. One segment on the video must be presented of the candidate teaching at least four counts of eight of choreography to the athlete(s).

VIDEO PRESENTATION TIPS

- Realize that the video portion of the exam is critical to the ability of the examiners to determine the quality of your work. Without it, the exam is incomplete.
- Be organized when you narrate the video. While choreography ideas, concepts, and inspirations can be random or serendipitous, choreographic design rarely is.
- Keep your answers as short and to the point as possible during the video. Since the video portion is conceived with a time allotment, a lengthy, drawn out answer decreases time for other questions that can give the examiners insight to your choreography. In addition, the music will be playing, and you will want

the examiners to hear the music dynamics and how they relate to your choreography.

- Prepare in advance which selections you want to use prior to the exam. Make sure the video actually works and looks the way you expect it to look.
- Practice answering questions with a coworker prior to your exam so you are used to speaking over the athlete and the music.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER (ALL LEVELS)

1. Information on what type of program the video is (test program, IJS, ISI, or ISU)
2. Background and level of the athlete; how far into the process the video was taken
3. Musical selection information
4. Whether the selection was made to challenge the athlete or keep the comfort level
5. Choreographic vision or goal for the program
6. Section in the program(s) that best illustrates “Program Components.”
7. Inspiration for the selection
8. Research that was done on the selection
9. How the choreography enhances the strengths and/ or conceals the weaknesses of the athlete.
10. What you would have done differently if you had the chance
11. Your role in the music editing and costume design

VIDEO NARRATION KEY EXPECTATIONS (ALL LEVELS)

Be able to articulate the name of the musical piece, the musical theme, the composer and what about this piece of music made it the choice for this particular athlete.

Be ready to discuss what it was about the piece that helped you find purpose in the movements chosen. If challenge was the goal, discuss the why you chose the music to stretch the athlete out of her comfort zone. If not, be able to explain why staying with a familiar style of music was the option chosen.

Talk about the goal and vision for the program by talking about the different processes used to create the choreography, such as, references to stories, ideas, or moods. State what the goal of the program was for the athlete, how the music choice and movements chosen allowed the athlete to reach a certain goal (not placement, but growth and development) for the season.

If you were a part of the costume design, let the examiners know how the color and design of the costume was inspired by the musical piece. Reference any research done on the historical significance of the costume design, the choice of color with regard to the physical characteristics of the athlete, and choice of fabric to reflect the texture in the music.

Articulate what “failures” in the process allowed you to learn more about the athlete, the music choice, the placement of elements, the pattern of the step or spiral sequence, etc. Talk about how you have taken the challenge of having a portion of the piece not work out very well, and how you turned that “failure” into a lesson for yourself and for the athlete. The process of trial and error is the very essence of choreography.

A critical skill in choreography of all disciplines is the ability for choreographers to highlight the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of their athletes to build a program to the athlete’s advantage. Give specific examples from the video.

VIDEO KEY WORDS (ALL LEVELS)

- Choreographic Vision/ Goal
- Musical Theme
- Pattern
- Program Components

>> A sample Statement of Creative Authorship form can be found on page 29.

NOTES:

ETHICS/SAFESPORT/EDUCATION

The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the Ethics/SafeSport/Education portion of the exam, however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Professionalism
- Critical Thinking and Reasoning
- Problem Solving Skills
- Enthusiasm and Confidence
- Exam Preparation

How many career options can provide the excitement, challenges, and satisfaction of coaching figure skating? Figure skating coaches at all levels experience the pleasure of watching young and old people develop the sport skills of skating. However, coaches also have equally important legal and ethical obligations to our governing organizations, our athletes and their families, but most of all...to ourselves. Many of these obligations or responsibilities are natural extensions of the mission and goals of the PSA, U.S. Figure Skating, ISI, and other governing organizations. Others are defined legally or are expectations of society for a “teacher” in an extracurricular activity.

There are many lists of coaching responsibilities to be found, and a list of resources is included at the end of this guide. Every figure skating coach should print, read, and have available a copy of each of these documents, and become familiar with the expectations for professional figure skating coaching. Some focus mainly on the legal issues and others focus more on ethical issues. The legal and ethical issues are not mutually exclusive, as many of the legal responsibilities are based upon societal ethics, doing what is morally right. Preventing discrimination and harassment of athletes is a legal duty of coaches, since these activities are illegal, but this duty is also an ethical expectation of society. Athletes in a coach’s care are expected to be safe, both physically and emotionally.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Legal responsibilities are usually formulated to maintain the safety and well-being of the athletes. Mandatory child abuse reporting is a legal responsibility of coaches in many states and is a good example of a coach’s duty that is mandated by a governmental body. Check your state laws to learn what the expectation is for a professional coach with regard to reporting child abuse.

A very important source of additional expectations for a coach is found in the accepted national standards for coaching published by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) and based on the USOC National Standards for Coaching. As these standards become more widely accepted, they will likely become the “standard of care” for figure skating coaches in the eyes of the legal system. It will be necessary for figure skating coaches to show that they have the training and expertise in each of the various areas detailed in this set of standards.

LEGAL DUTIES

The following list of legal duties of a coach is representative of the many codes of conduct and behaviors recommended for coaches:

- 1) Use of current knowledge of proper skills and methods of instruction
- 2) Creating and maintaining a safe physical and positive emotional environment
- 3) Proper and beneficial short- and long-term planning
- 4) Providing warnings to parents and athletes of the risks inherent in sport participation
- 5) Developing a sensitivity to the health and well-being of athletes under a coach’s direction
- 6) Planning for the provision of appropriate emergency care

ETHICAL DUTIES

The *ethical* duties of a coach are not as easily defined. We can begin with the acknowledgement of core responsibilities of the coaching profession as the cornerstone of ethics. There is a framework that we can use for making ethical decisions:

- 1) Define for yourself what the ethical issue is
- 2) Gather the facts surrounding the issue

- 3) Make your best effort to understand all sides of the issue
- 4) Consult with trusted colleagues
- 5) Make a list of actions you can take
- 6) Identify the practical options from the list of actions
- 7) Consider, determine and weigh the consequences of each proposed option by answering three questions:
 - Who will be affected by my decision or my action?
 - Will I be able to acknowledge this decision to my colleagues, my club, rink, PSA, etc.
 - Can I live with my action or decision?

Respect, responsibility, and integrity encompass the standards of ethical behavior that coaches must exhibit in their role as the primary facilitator of developing athletes. When ethical standards are applied consistently, they enable coaches to emphasize and nurture the long-term best interests of athletes and allow coaches to facilitate the development of the highest potential of the athletes.

SAFESPORT

The U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Handbook Coaches Code of Conduct document is in Section II - Athlete Protection Policies and Guidelines. The Coaches Code of Ethics, Standards and Conduct is the guide for coaching practices and it provides a standardized guideline of ethics, standards and conduct to ensure the quality, integrity and moral environment of U.S. Figure Skating, its member clubs and programs. *Refer to the U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Handbook for comprehensive information.*

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Coaching figure skating as a profession is an exciting and dynamic one. There is no major sport in the world that trains its athletes the same as it did 20 years ago—and figure skating should not be an exception. We have a challenge and an obligation to provide our athletes with the highest-quality information and training techniques.

Continuing education is a vital and necessary part of developing skills as a coach. As we learn more within the sport, we are able to coach at higher levels, interpret training methods more comprehensively, and have a greater understanding of technique. Most licensed professions have continuing education requirements to stay updated on new methods or developments within their profession. In occupational therapy, for example, 25 continuing education course hours are required every two-year period to maintain licensure. Requirements vary between professions but the need for professional development is universally accepted. When you look at your own coaching career, investing in education is a natural part of improving.

Refer to the PSA website at www.skatepsa.com for more information.

Refer to the U.S. Figure Skating SafeSport Handbook at www.usfigureskating.org (All Levels)

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

REGISTERED:

- 1) What is the PSA Code of Ethics?
- 2) What is “two-deep leadership”?
- 3) What does sexual harassment consist of? Explain “hostile environment” sexual harassment.
- 4) What course of action should a coach take if an athlete requests lessons, but the former coach says that the athlete owes him/her money?
- 5) List five PSA educational programs and explain each.

CERTIFIED:

- 1) From time to time the athletes with whom we work may choose to cease taking lessons from us and seek other choreographic arrangements for any one of many reasons. If this happens, what would the professional response be?
- 2) What are the PSA Tenets of Professionalism and please list a few of them.

- 3) Name three different resources you can use for recent changes made in the sport of figure skating.
- 4) Where would a coach go to find out how to file a PSA Grievance?

SENIOR:

- 1) What are some disciplinary actions that can result from a grievance?
- 2) Is it acceptable to advertise your background and credentials?
- 3) What are the benefits of belonging to PSA?
- 4) What is the SafeSport program?

MASTER:

- 1) You are asked to re-choreograph an existing program for an athlete by her head coach. You do so, but you do not change everything in the program. How do you take credit for your work on this program and exhibit professional integrity?
- 2) What is “intellectual property” and does a choreographer have any rights to protect it?
- 3) What are some benefits of belonging to the PSA?

ETHICS/SAFESPORT/EDUCATION KEY WORDS

- SafeSport Handbook
- Legal Duties
- Ethical Duties
- PSA Code of Ethics
- Coach Compliance
- Tenets of Professionalism
- Ethical Solicitation, Marketing and Promotion
- Grievance Procedure
- Professional Standards

NOTES:

FIGURE SKATING KNOWLEDGE

The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the Skating Knowledge portion of the exam, however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Methodology and Organizational Skills
- Exam Preparation
- Enthusiasm and Confidence

As a choreographer, it is essential to know the language and rules of figure skating to be able to communicate effectively with the athletes and the primary coaches you collaborate with. When choreographing a program, think of all the required elements first. The music must show off each element and there must be sufficient time for each element to be completed well. If you do not have a skating background, it is imperative that you learn skating terminology, which edges each jump take off and land on, the basic positions and variations of every spin. You must also have a good understanding of all turns, steps, and moves in the field. Take the time to develop a basic recognition of all skating moves and the difficulty in executing each.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

REGISTERED:

- 1) Demonstrate/ explain inside and outside edges.
- 2) Explain the athlete's balance on the blade.
- 3) Demonstrate/ draw turns and steps such as: three-turn, bracket, Mohawk, Choctaw.
- 4) What are the basic spin positions? What are the basic jumps?

CERTIFIED:

- 1) How do you improve the athlete's skating quality?
- 2) Name the different types of steps and turns.
- 3) What are some off-ice exercises you might use to improve the quality of a spiral?
- 4) What edge does a Lutz take off from?

SENIOR:

- 1) What can you substitute for excessive back crossovers?
- 2) What is the difference between a Butterfly and an Arabian?
- 3) What edge does a backward camel spin on?

MASTER:

- 1) What is a flying spin? What is a spin in one position?
- 2) What is the consequence of an under-rotation or downgrade call?
- 3) How do you change the choreography in order to land a triple jump?

FIGURE SKATING KNOWLEDGE KEY WORDS

- Stroking
- Flip vs Lutz
- Loop vs Salchow
- Edges
- Turns
- Steps
- Weight (Balance) on the Blade
- Spirals
- Landing Position
- Basic Spin Positions
- Edge Jumps
- Toe Jumps
- Flying Spins
- Spin in One Position
- Under rotation
- Combination Jumps
- Multi-revolution Jumps
- Downgrade

NOTES:

CHOREOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLES

The questions on Choreographic Principles are specifically designed and directed to determine how you identify and demonstrate choreographic principles in your choreography. The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the Choreographic Principles, however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Methodology and Organizational Skills
- Critical Thinking and Reasoning
- Complete/Clear/Concise responses
- Exam Preparation

The arrangement of choreography can be described as comprised of four key elements:

- Time
- Space
- Energy
- Form

You may be asked to discuss how you demonstrate the choreographic principle of time in your choreography and how you teach your athletes to understand how time relates to what they are doing. There are several ways that time affects and influences the choreography.

“TIME” AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLE

Tempo	The slow and fast beat of music or movement (Adagio to Allegro, etc.)
Accents	An emphasis placed on a particular note or movement
Duration	The length of time of a work, piece, phrase, movement, or gesture (sustained vs sudden)
Meter	The grouping of strong and weak beats; time signature; top number = number of beats in a measure; bottom number = what note gets the beat. <i>Example: 4/4 Meter = 4 beats in a measure will count – 1 2 3 4. Quarter note would get the beat.</i>
Rhythm	Structure of the measurement of time in music, usually identified by a downbeat. The downbeat is usually the first note in each measure.

You should be able to discuss how you teach the athlete how to use each of the concepts of “space” in your choreography. The discussion should include the relationship of the athlete to the space through which they are moving. This refers both to the ice area, to the space around the athlete, and the shapes they make in the space on the ice. The space factor reflects how the skater moves in space on a continuum from “direct” to “indirect”. Direct actions take the shortest path to their destination, whereas, indirect actions detour and meander en route. Space-related action words: unswerving, undeviating versus roundabout, circuitous.

“SPACE” AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLE

Levels (not IJS level of difficulty)	Refers to one aspect of the division of space (Rudolph Laban); three main levels: high, middle, and low level
Shapes, Formation, and Patterns	The visual aspect of movement; can be the body itself or the pattern(s) skated or the formation; or the performance space
Direction	The direction of the movement or pattern
Size	The largeness or smallness of the movement or pattern
Focus	The emphasis or effort that the choreography brings attention to

“ENERGY” AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLE

- Softness with strength
- Balance followed by off balance
- Fluidity of the chosen movements
- Intensity and sharpness of the chosen movements
- Other

The flow of movement used in choreography can be described on a continuum from “free” to “bound.” A bound movement is one of careful precision; it is highly controlled and can be stopped at any moment. Think of threading a needle. A free movement proceeds unopposed and unrestrained. Think of a child spinning with abandon. Fluctuations in flow produce oscillating, vibratory motion. Flow-related action words: constrained, guarded versus uninhibited, unconstrained.

EXAMPLES OF ENERGY “BOUND v FREE”

Effort	Weight	Space	Time	As if...
Punch	Strong	Direct	Sudden	“striking like a boxer”
Press	Strong	Direct	Sustained	“moving like a piano”
Dab	Light	Direct	Sudden	“catching a butterfly”
Glide	Light	Direct	Sustained	“skimming along ice”
Slash	Strong	Indirect	Sudden	“slicing tall grass with a sickle”
Wring	Strong	Indirect	Sustained	“squeezing water from a towel”
Flick	Light	Indirect	Sudden	“shooing away a mosquito”
Float	Light	Indirect	Sustained	“wafting among the clouds”

The form of choreography determines the way it is organized. This is similar to the way musical forms such as the suite, symphony, or concerto shape their overall contour or identity. “Form” in this case, is observed when choreography is derived from the musical structure, but it also can be derived from the movement patterns and shapes.

MUSICAL “FORM” AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLE

A-B	A-B form is a simple choreographic form that consists of a beginning section A, followed by a second section, known as B. While sections A and B fit together in terms of the common feeling of a composition, each contains elements that contrast in tone or quality.			
A-B-A	Derived from a musical form and has two sections: A and B, followed by an ending A section. Theme A is stated and manipulated. Theme B then presents a contrasting theme that complements the first, and concludes with a return to Theme A, sometimes with a twist. This conclusion is recognizable, but somehow changed in order to bring the piece to its resolution. There is a cyclic feel, a sense of continuity, order and inevitability.			
Suite (A-B-C)	Has a moderate beginning, a slow second section, and a fast and lively third section (similar to fugue)			
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rondo • Canon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tableau • Narrative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme and variations • Ground Bass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collage

There are two different movement forms of “Locomotor & Non-Locomotor (Axial) that relate for figure skating.”

MOVEMENT “FORM” AS A CHOREOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLE

Locomotor Movement:	Movement that travels through space Examples on the floor: walking, running, hopping, jumping, leaping Examples on the ice: stroking, gliding, edge work, crossovers, most skating skills and elements such as jump passes and step sequences, etc.
Non-Locomotor Movement: (Axial)	Movement that moves around the axis of the body (the spine); occurs in a stationary position Examples on the floor: arabesque, passé, stretching, pushing, pulling, bouncing, swinging, shaking and twisting Examples on the ice: all spins, pivots, poses with arm and body movements, fan kicks, illusions, loops, etc.
Combination of both	Examples on the ice: spirals, twizzles, hydroblading, etc.

It is important to use both types of movement form to show contrast and to match the musical structure.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

ALL LEVELS:

1. Discuss and demonstrate the following types of movements: percussive, sustained, vibratory, and suspension.
2. Demonstrate the following:

Oppositions	Any two parts of the body moving in opposite directions
Parallelisms	Two parts of the body moving simultaneously in the same direction
Successions	Any movement passing through the entire body, or any part, which moves each muscle, bone and joint as it comes to it, producing a wave-like movement
Cumulative Rhythm	A pattern that progresses by adding units in sequence.
Symmetry and Asymmetry	An even proportion; an uneven proportion
Movement Theme	A formulation of movement representing a central concern or unifying intent such as in a Spanish dance

REGISTERED:

1. What are some examples of how “time” is used in choreography?
2. Define the concept of “time” by the use of “tempo” in choreography.

CERTIFIED:

1. Define and give some examples of how you use the concept of “space” by using “direction” in your choreography.
2. Please demonstrate an example of how you use the concept of “energy” in your choreography.

SENIOR:

1. How you are able to teach athletes to understand and perform the concept of “space” by using “shapes, formations and patterns” in your choreography?
2. Give some examples of how you use the concept of “locomotor vs. non-locomotor-(axial)” (even if you do not use these particular words) in your program choreography.

MASTER:

1. Please discuss how you use the organization of the music structure to organize your choreography.
2. How are you able to teach athletes to use the concept of “energy” effectively in the program for strength and stamina?

CHOREOGRAPHIC PRINCIPLES KEY WORDS

Time	Accents	Speed	Duration	Meter	Rhythm	Stillness
Space	Levels	Shapes	Formations	Patterns	Size	Focus
Energy	Force	Tension	Weight	Movement flow	Attack	Qualities
Form	A-B A-B-A A-B-C	Rondo	Theme & Variations	Narrative Call & Response	Collage Tableau	Canon Ground Bass
Qualities of Movement	Locomotor Axial	Percussive	Vibratory	Suspension	Swinging	Collapsing

NOTES:

CHOREOGRAPHIC PROCESS

The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the Choreographic Process portion of the exam, however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Methodology and Organizational Skills
- Creative Process and Movement Quality
- Problem Solving Skills
- Professionalism
- Rules of Sport
- Critical Thinking and Reasoning

The choreographic process is the most revealing part of the exam. If a choreographer can explain “what” they do, “how” they do it, and “why” they do it the way they do, that speaks volumes to the examiners about their knowledge and application. Choreography has evolved to be of great importance to all athletes. No longer is it acceptable to simply skate a program with the required elements performed to a great piece of music. Choreography is an art form full of both knowledge and expression. The theme, the costuming, the music, and the elements must all blend to form a cohesive balance throughout the entire program. This means that choreographers must have greater skill, knowledge, and training than in the past.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

The Choreographic Process section of the exam includes a range of questions in areas such as:

- 1) Creativity, invention and self-direction:
- 2) Individual Choreography
- 3) Evaluation of work
- 4) Collaboration
- 5) Methods of teaching and development of skills
- 6) Group choreography

ALL LEVELS: Mandatory Questions

- 1) What would you describe as your “Choreographer’s Statement” or “Choreographer’s Philosophy?”
- 2) Describe your choreographic process

REGISTERED:

- 1) Using a panel member, please demonstrate how you would teach him/her to perform a movement that is: percussive; sustained; vibratory; suspending; swinging; collapsing.
- 2) Give an example of how you help an athlete develop the ability to use facial expression in their performances.
- 3) What are the differences in themes or music might you choose for choreographing a group of beginning 6-year olds vs. 10-year olds vs. 14-year olds?

CERTIFIED:

- 1) One possible question might be, "How do you take creative risks?" You should develop the subject by describing an example of:
 - a. When you have had to decide whether to do so
 - b. Why you moved forward or why you took a different direction
 - c. How you chose to proceed
 - d. What your thoughts were with the outcome
 - e. What you would have done differently and why

- 2) Discuss the importance of musicality as it relates to figure skating programs, and elaborate on how you teach this to your athletes.
- 3) How do you accommodate for stronger vs. weaker athletes in a group number?

SENIOR:

- 1) Once you have choreographed a program, what must you consider?
- 2) Emotion is essential to the artistic side of figure skating. Please demonstrate the following emotions as you might choreograph for your athlete:
 - a. Excitement
 - b. Sadness
 - c. Joy/Happiness
 - d. Fear/Alarm
 - e. Love
 - f. Bravado
- 3) What is mirror skating and what is shadow skating?

MASTER:

- 1) Regarding the planning and developing of a program, describe your collaboration with others.
- 2) What do you do with the extreme differences in pair or dance teams?
- 3) What pitfalls should choreographers be aware of when setting a program?

CHOREOGRAPHIC PROCESS KEY WORDS

- Choreographer’s statement
- Creative Process
- Investigation and Discovery
- Self-reflection
- Evaluation and Critique
- Artistry

NOTES:

RULES OF SPORT

The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the Rules of Sport portion of the exam, however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Methodology and Organizational Skills
- Complete/Clear/Concise Responses
- Exam Preparation
- Professionalism

You should demonstrate a reasonable understanding and application of the rules for programs at the level which you have applied. You may not be able to answer the rules questions 100% correctly, but demonstrate a command of the rules and the ability to access resources to find rules that you are unsure of, and that you employ a practice of regularly reviewing your work according to the current rules.

1. Know the applicable rules within the system you teach.
2. Have a method of theoretical and practical application of the rules
3. Demonstrate the development and inclusion of the Program Components in IJS levels to develop the performance quality of the athlete
4. Show that you build a foundation for maximum point accumulation in IJS levels.

Today choreographers at all levels should be familiar with the rules applicable to the level of that athlete's program. Choreographers must be able to access resources to assist them, ensuring that the programs they set comply with all rules and regulations. No one will argue that the rules can be complicated and confusing due to the fact that they can change from season to season. This takes great effort, but it may also factor into how to make yourself extremely valuable to the primary coaches you collaborate with. Come to the exam prepared to diagram a program from the levels listed. It is acceptable to diagram the program from the video presentation.

REGISTERED EXAM

Come to the exam prepared to diagram a U.S. Figure Skating pre-preliminary, preliminary or pre-juvenile test or free skating program using the IJS codes, if you know them (not mandatory) or ISI Freestyle 4 & 5 program. Explain your reasons for element placement, direction of movement, and pattern on the ice.

CERTIFIED EXAM

Come to the exam prepared to diagram a U.S. Figure Skating juvenile or intermediate test or free skating program using the IJS codes, or ISI Freestyle 6 program. Explain your reasons for element placement, direction of movement, and pattern on the ice.

SENIOR EXAM

Come to the exam prepared to diagram a U.S. Figure Skating novice or junior test or free skating program using the IJS codes.

MASTER EXAM

Come to the exam prepared to diagram a U.S. Figure Skating well-balanced senior test or free skating program using the IJS codes. Explain jump and spin placement, changes in pattern on the ice.

In scoring a competitive performance, the marks are divided into two basic categories: the *Technical Element Score* for the feats of athleticism performed by the athlete/s and the *Program Component Score (PCS)* reflecting five different artistic aspects of the program.

In each segment of an event, the judges award five separate program component marks to each program on a scale of 0.25 to 10 with increments of 0.25 to express the overall presentation and artistic mastery of the program. In the ladies, men's, pairs, and synchronized skating, the five components are scored in the short program and the free skate. In ice dancing, these five components are scored in the short dance and the free dance. Together, the

scores of the five components will be used in a formula to make up the Program Component Score (PCS).

The PCS is calculated and factored by specified percentages. All five program component marks are factored equally, then added together. It is this factored sum of the program component marks that constitutes the PCS. This is a complicated formula and is beyond the scope of this material. Please refer to the following for more information on factoring:

Tables for Factors of Components can be found on the U.S. Figure Skating web site: usfigureskating.org

The idea behind factoring is to make the Program Components Score equal in weight to the Technical Element Score (TES). The TES is a combination of the Grades of Execution (GOEs) for each element plus the numerical degree of difficulty assigned for each element in the Scale of Values (SOV). Since the perfect non-factored Program Components Score is always 50, this number is factored to roughly equal what each discipline is capable of scoring in the TES.

Totaling the Competition Score:

Technical Element Score (TES) + Program Components Score (PCS) = Total Segment Score (TSS)

At the end of the competition, the athlete is given a protocol detailing the evaluation result of each aspect of the program. This protocol gives all details of the technical elements as well as each of the program components.

There are five Program Components scored in the short program/short dance and the free skate/free dance:

1. Skating Skills
2. Transitions
3. Performance
4. Composition
5. Interpretation of the Music (Timing for Ice Dance)

Judges evaluate each program component based on its listed criteria. Errors, falls, and disruptions must be reflected in the marks. The *guiding principle* is that all criteria hold equal weight (i.e. no one criteria is more important than the others).

“*Buzz words*” are used for components quick reference. They were created to assist athletes, coaches, and officials in understanding the points of criteria for each component. The authors of the components chose a word that embodied the overall concept of each component. Although these words do not replace listed criteria, a clear and simplified understanding can be gained from each buzz word.

COMPONENT 1 – SKATING SKILLS | BUZZ WORD: BALANCE

Precise core strength, control and overall coordination required for balance.

Poor balance will result in unsteadiness, two-foot skating or a fall.

DEFINITION: *The overall cleanness and sureness, edge control and flow over the ice surface demonstrated by a command of the skating vocabulary (edges, steps, turns, etc.), the clarity of technique, and the use of the effortless power to accelerate and vary speed.*

Skating Skills are the foundation of movement. It is here that the concepts of space, time, and energy are learned and related to movement. The skill level of an athlete will define the range of movements possible in a program. Weakness in this component is difficult to cover up. If basic skating is poor, everything else is of lesser significance. It is important that the athlete has adequate time and experience while developing a program to have the confidence to skate the program with an “ease of performance” and the ability to maximize flow and edges.

COMPONENT 2 – TRANSITIONS | BUZZ WORD: CONNECTION

All movements that link the elements and program into a whole.

This is the “connective tissue” of the body of work.

DEFINITION: *The varied and purposeful use of intricate footwork, positions, movements and holds that link all elements into a finished athletic and artistic program.*

- *Movement should be apparent throughout the program, not just after difficult elements*
- *Continuous sequential movement with a minimal use of crossovers should be the goal*

Transitions are the thread that binds together the program as a whole. Every movement pattern in and out of each element represents a section of the program. Programs should incorporate all types of transitions while conforming to the basic criteria. A “short cut” or long preparation into an element is a missed opportunity to create a seamless composition. Transitions are the connective matter of the program. These transitions should be varied for judge and audience interest. All transitions should demonstrate the highest quality of movement while working to keep the continuity of the movement into and out of the elements.

COMPONENT 3 – PERFORMANCE | BUZZ WORD: DELIVERY

The degree to which the athlete(s) delivers a successful performance demonstrating command of the overall program. This is the “life” of the composition.

DEFINITION: *The involvement of the athlete/pair/couple physically, emotionally and intellectually as they deliver the intent of the music and composition.*

- *Performance should demonstrate the quality of movement and the precision of delivery.*
- *All motion requires energy. The proper amount of energy used produces quality movement.*

Energy can be sustained and lyrical, or it can be aggressive demonstrating “command and attack”. It can also dissipate with a lack of stamina. Uncontrolled energy causes tension for the athlete and audience, compromising the aesthetics and delivery of the program.

Performance requires a quality of delivery and precision throughout the overall program. Successful performance transcends the ice through spirited energy and commitment. A performance should produce a chemistry between the athlete and the judges and audience. The performance component appears to win more Olympic gold medals than any other component.

COMPONENT 4 – COMPOSITION | BUZZ WORD: DESIGN

A purposeful arrangement of elements and movements to create an aesthetic performance.

DEFINITION: *An intentionally developed and/or original arrangement of all types of movements according to the principles of musical phrase, space, pattern, and structure.*

- *A choreographer is trained to “hear movement” in music. It is that listening skill, along with creative instinct that helps a choreographer translate music into movement.*
- *A program is the creation of aesthetic movements encompassing required elements to create a complete composition. The creation of the whole becomes more important than each movement.*

Composition should maximize the potential and ability of the athlete. All movement should be created with a clear purpose and idea. If the judges and audience are left questioning the purpose or idea of a program, it becomes a distraction in the evaluation of the program. The canvas of the ice allows for engaging design throughout its surface. The aesthetic use of movement through time and space creates an enjoyable and entertaining program. Creative and unanticipated design and movement keeps the interest of the judges and audience. The creation becomes a whole encompassing each movement. Elements need to be successfully integrated to create an overall unity of the program and to receive the maximum score possible for the athlete.

COMPONENT 5 – INTERPRETATION OF MUSIC/TIMING (FOR ICE DANCING) | BUZZ WORD: FEELING

An emotional reaction to an expressive and detailed performance

DEFINITION: *The personal, creative and genuine translation by the athlete of the rhythm, character, and content of music to movement on ice.*

- *As the tempo binds all notes in time, athlete(s) need to demonstrate the ability to use the tempos and rhythms of the music in a variety of ways.*
- *Subtle use of finesse to reflect musical nuances creates a mastery of interpretation*
- *The soul of the athlete is intrinsically matched to the structure of the music. The performance is a seamless composition.*
- *Understanding the concepts and terms are most important for understanding interpretation*

Interpretation assesses the athlete's ability to bring life and feeling to the music as the athlete communicates the emotional aspects of the music. Having a complete understanding of musical concepts and structure is critical for successful interpretation. Details and nuances of the music are acknowledged. Apparent form and sensed meaning are transferred to the audience through musical and effortless expressive movement. The mood and style of the selection should become prominent in the performance. Good interpretation produces historical and memorable programs.

PROGRAM COMPONENT SUMMARY:

There are several criteria to be considered before assessing a component score. Often judges come to this score by different paths, in that each performance being evaluated is different. Judges assess and weigh the overall criteria for each component before awarding a mark. It is not uncommon to have one or more component mark(s) significantly different (i.e. Skating Skills 5.5, Interpretation 3.75).

Movement and how it occurs is critical to every component. Posing without movement takes away the basic athletic quality of glide and flow of the sport.

Repetitive movement or movement that frequently disconnects with the music becomes boring to the judges and audience. The music should drive continuous movement.

Putting the time into developing the criteria for the Program Components Score is one of the best investments of time for an athlete. Each component and criteria will provide the athlete with artistic skills and understanding that will enrich all aspects of his/her skating.

CHOREOGRAPHER'S TOOLBOX FOR IJS

It is highly recommended that all choreographers print or download a copy of each of these each season to use when choreographing IJS programs.

Program Components Overview – Junior and Senior

Program Components Overview – Juvenile, Intermediate and Novice

Current Season Documents

- Short Program (or Short Dance) Elements
- Free Skate Program Elements
- Levels of Difficulty-- Singles/ Pairs (from ISU Communications)
- Scale of Values (from ISU Communications)
- Updated Guidelines for Marking GOE
- Updated Guidelines in Establishing GOE for Errors

Skater/Coach

- Age and Test Requirements
- Planned Program Content Sheet

ISU Communications for Current Season

- ISU Communications for Scale of Values, Levels of Difficulty, Guidelines for Marking GOE and Additional Remarks

- ISU Technical Panel Handbooks

Note: These documents are prepared for ISU technical panels for all international events, and U.S. Figure Skating technical panels follows them for its events.

- Current Season ISU Q&A for Singles/ Pairs/ Dance/ Synchro Skating

Current Season – Calling Clarifications for Novice and Below

Singles/Pairs – Current Season Procedures for Applying Bonus Points and Falls

Spins Difficult Variations Chart Tool – Singles

Post-event Error Protocol

Referee Manual – Regional Competitions and Non-Qualifying Competitions

RULES OF SPORT SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

ALL LEVELS:

1. What is the role that the five program components play in IJS choreography?
2. What is a keyword or a word you use to define each of the program components?
3. What is the criteria of each of the program components?
4. How do you develop the understanding and performance of each component score in your athlete?
5. What are some strategies that you use to ensure that each of the program components are recognized in your athlete's program?
6. What are some methods that you use to strengthen the program components score in your athlete's program?
7. As a choreographer, should you be concerned with costuming? If so, what should you consider in this regard?

REGISTERED:

1. Name the five positions on the technical panel and describe their responsibilities.
2. The timing of a free skate program begins and ends when?
3. What are the three basic spin positions? Follow up question: What is a non-basic position (NBP)?

CERTIFIED:

1. What are some "non-listed" elements that can be used for transitions?
2. Describe and demonstrate the three different difficult variations that can be attained in a camel spin. What is the determining factor?
3. Name some "body movements" that can be used for transitions.

SENIOR:

1. What are some common problems that occur in attempting to attain higher levels in step sequences?
2. As a choreographer, how can you increase the GOE (Grade of Execution) on elements?
3. What are the four different types of "transitions tools?"

MASTER:

1. What are some common problems that occur in attempting to attain higher levels in spins?
2. As a choreographer, how can you increase the Grade of Execution on the entry into a jump element? A spin element?
3. What does "finesse" refer to?

RULES OF SPORT KEY WORDS

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| • Program Components Criteria and Overview | Definition | • Camel Spin Difficult Variations |
| • Diagram a Program | • Composition Definition | • Non-Basic Position (NBP) |
| • Technical Panel | • Performance Definition | • Body Movements Feature (StSq) |
| • Technical Notifications | • Costume Rules | • Simple Variation vs. Difficult Variation |
| • Transitions Definition | • Types of Transition Tools | • Levels of Difficulty |
| • Skating Skills Definition | • Grade of Execution (GOE) | • Scale of Values (SOV) & non-listed elements |
| • Interpretation of Music/Timing | • Upright Spin Difficult Variations | |
| | • Sit Spin Difficult Variations | |

NOTES:

MUSIC/DANCE/ART

Questions in the Music/Dance/Art section of the exam focus on music theory and history, dance elements and history, and the influence of visual art on your choreography. Be ready to discuss how you utilize your knowledge in these areas to accomplish your choreographic goals. Share how you relate these aspects to the choreography and why you incorporate them into choreography the way you do.

The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the Music/Dance/Art portion of the exam, however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Critical Thinking and Reasoning
- Complete/Clear/Concise Responses
- Exam Preparation

MUSIC (THEORY & HISTORY)

Selecting music is highly personal and is the foundation upon which the choreography is built. It is important not only for the content of the program, but also the potential performance value of that program. The music should be there to challenge, excite, stimulate, and inspire. The selection should complement the athlete's style, and be unique enough to allow for creativity. The musical selection can be used as a tool to develop the athlete. A cautious athlete can be challenged to skate faster. An athlete that lacks flow can learn to be more graceful, and the inhibited athlete can discover how to add a new flavor or flair to the program. When listening to music for your athlete, you will have three major things to think about: your athlete, the program, and the message or mood to be conveyed to the observers. The questions in the music section will include the selection process, music theory, and history.

DANCE (ELEMENTS & HISTORY)

Dance training generally proves quite valuable in developing oneself as a choreographer, as well as the athlete. Dance influence is critical in choreography on ice. Both jazz and ballet are helpful in developing body awareness, pose, flexibility, balance, presentation, core strength, and increased muscular control. Exam questions will be asked on dance terminology and history.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Visual and performing arts of all types can be a source of inspiration and creativity. It can be very beneficial to take the time to explore art in all its forms and structures to gain insight into the vision of the artists. When considering the impact that the visual arts have had on your choreography, you should be able to: (1) recall a specific example; (2) describe an example of the impact on the program; (3) articulate if you would repeat the process based on the effect.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

ALL LEVELS:

- 1) Name several prominent pieces of classical music and the composers of each.
- 2) How does turnout in dance relate to figure skating?
- 3) Name and demonstrate some different dance styles.

REGISTERED:

- 1) Define "articulation" with regard to music.
- 2) What are the five most prominent eras of classical to modern music? Give a range of time and an example of a composer for each era.
- 3) Discuss blues and how you help your athlete understand its musical history.
- 4) Define and demonstrate four ballet terms.
- 5) Discuss the history of ballet.
- 6) Give some examples of ballets, time periods, music, and their stories.

CERTIFIED:

- 1) Discuss jazz and how you help your athlete understand its musical history.
- 2) Define and demonstrate six ballet terms.
- 3) Discuss the history and development of modern dance.
- 4) Give some examples of musical theatre that you are familiar with.
- 5) Define musical terms such as: rhythm, tempo, dynamics, melody, harmony, and melodic line.
- 6) What is meant by musical dynamics?

SENIOR:

- 1) Discuss rock and roll and how you help your athletes understand its history.
- 2) Explain musical modulation.
- 3) Define and demonstrate eight ballet terms.
- 4) Name and demonstrate some well-known social dances.
- 5) Name some musical theatre productions and tell us what you know about them.
- 6) How do you develop musicality in an athlete?

MASTER:

- 1) Discuss opera figure skating choreography and how you help your athlete understand its historical roots.
- 2) Define and demonstrate ten ballet terms.
- 3) Name well-known choreographers (American and international).
- 4) Discuss pitch, scales and modes, consonance and dissonance, musical texture in the form of melody, rhythm, counterpoint, harmony, form, durational proportions, composition (form and structure), and orchestration as they relate to choreography for figure skating.

MUSIC/DANCE/ART KEY WORDS

- Pitch
- Scales and Modes
- Consonance and Dissonance
- Texture
- Composition: Form & Structure
- Rhythm, Tempo Meter
- Durational proportions
- Orchestration
- Melody
- Harmony
- Counterpoint
- History of Ballet, Jazz, Modern Dance, Opera
- Types of Dance
- Dynamics
- Modulation
- Classical Composers
- Articulation
- Musical Terminology
- Dance Terminology
- Musical Eras
- Musical Terms
- Relating to Music
- American Composers
- American Choreographers
- Syncopation
- Social Dance Rhythms
- Ballet Terms
- International Choreographers

NOTES:

IMPROVISATIONAL PRESENTATION

The examiners will consider the range of knowledge areas when grading the Improvisational presentation portion of the exam, however they will primarily be assessing the following:

- Creative Process and Movement Quality
- Enthusiasm and Confidence

Improvisation is a chance discovery of movement. Reflect on how you might use improvisation as a choreographic tool. In skating, sometimes we are forced as choreographers to do “off the cuff” or “on the spot” choreography without preplanning. Sometimes we have never heard the music before. We would like you to listen to a few pieces of music, and after the second playing do some improvisation for us. We are only concerned with movement, not the placement of jumps and spins.

IMPROVISATIONAL PRESENTATION TIPS

- If you are familiar with the title or origin of the piece of music, the composer, and/ or the artist, do not hesitate to share your knowledge.
- Your movements do not have to resemble a program, the objective is to just move to the music and give the examiners a chance to evaluate your movement patterns and quality.
- Have fun! This is usually the most enjoyable part of the exam for the examiners because it is an opportunity to see the exam culminate in a spontaneous performance.

IMPROVISATIONAL PRESENTATION KEY WORDS

- Musical Expression
- Emotional Communication
- Movement Quality
- Musical Character
- Discovery of Movement
- Improvise

NOTES:

VOCABULARY

This is a partial list of vocabulary and should be used as a guide for further learning.

ABSTRACT: To take the essence or essential meaning of an idea rather than a literal imitation.

ACCENT: An increase in stress, emphasis, or intensity within movement count.

ALIGNMENT: Placement of body parts.

ALLEGRO: A fast lively tempo.

ARABESQUE: One leg supports the body, other leg is extended behind body.

ASSEMBLE: (ah-sahn-BLAY) Taking off from one foot and landing on two (both) feet.

ASYMMETRICAL: Not balanced in the conventional sense of exact correspondence or balanced proportion.

ATTITUDE: (ah-tee-TEWD) A position on one leg, the free leg is lifted in a forward, sideward, or backward direction with the knee bent at an angle and higher than the foot.

AXIAL: A movement around a stationary axis, non-locomotor or staying in one place.

BALANCE: (ba-lahn-SAY) A step starting in first of fifth position; leap lightly to one side landing in demi-plié.

BALL CHANGE: A quick transfer of weight from one foot to another.

BATTEMENT: (bat-MAHN) A controlled movement of the leg in which a straight leg is lifted from the hip and returned to the floor.

BEAT: The basic unit of a rhythmic measure.

BODY WAVE: A sequential movement of the body starting with the knees and moving through the hips, abdominal, chest, and head.

CAMEL WALK: Pedaled movement. Roll up to the ball of one foot, transfer weight to the other foot, the knee is bent.

CHASSÉ: (sha-SAY) A gliding movement (step, close, step).

CHANGEMENT: (shahnzh-MAHN) A scissor-like action of the legs where the feet change position.

CHOREOGRAPH: To make up or create a routine with combinations of movements.

CHOREOGRAPHER: Person who creates combinations or movements or entire routines.

CHOREOGRAPHY: The composition of a piece.

COLLAPSE: A sinking movement involving the release of tension as a whole.

CONTAGION: A ripple action; movement is passed from one performer to another.

CONTRACTION: A muscular tension that produces a shortening of body parts.

COUPÉ: (koo-PAY) A small intermediary step done as a preparation or impetus for some other step.

DANCE HANDS: Hands soft--pretend to hold an egg with the thumb and middle finger.

DEGAGÉ : (day-ga-ZHAY) Passing through the tendu position, the foot slightly disengages from the floor.

DEMI: Means small movement.

DEVELOPPÉ: (dayv-law-PAY) A movement in which the working leg is drawn up then extended. It can be done in any direction.

DIAGONAL: Three or more performers lined at an angle.

DIG: Step without weight transfer.

DIMENSION: The relative size of movement or of the space.

DOUBLE STAG: A leap with both legs in a bent position.

DOWNSTAGE: A direction to indicate movement toward the audience.

DYNAMICS: Shading in the amounts of energy, intensity of power; subtle variations in the treatment of movement contrasts.

ELEVÉ: (ay-LEV) A gradual rising onto the balls of the feet, a controlled rise.

EXTENSION: An elongation or lengthening of the body or any of its parts.

FAN KICK: Straight leg kick which crosses in front of the supporting leg and circles around to other direction. A lift kick circling 360 degrees.

FLEA HOP: Sliding hop directly to the side.

FLEX KICK: A kick which the foot passes the supporting knee first and then fully develops until the leg is straightened.

FLEXED FEET: Ankles in a flexed position so that the toes are pulled back toward the body.

FLEXION: A bending movement; a contraction of muscles around a joint that brings two body parts closer together.

PATTERN: An imaginary line of path in space taken by the performer as they move from place to place.

FOCUS: The concentration on a fixed or moving point in space; indication of a fixed or moving point or object in space by the direction of movement or gaze.

FOUETTÉ: (fweh-TAY) Lift one leg and hop while turning, the leg stays in the air until after the hop.

GRAND BATTEMENT: Grand (meaning large) Battement (meaning beating). A lifting movement of the free leg from a forward, sideward, or backward position. Also called a high kick.

GRAND: Means large movement.

GRAND JETÉ: (zhuh-TAY) A leap usually obtaining height and distance.

GRAPEVINE: A weaving movement; step- side-back-side-front; depending on where you want to start.

HALF TOE: Position of the foot with the heel off the ground with the weight on the ball of the foot.

HEAD SNAP: Head turns sharply to one side or the other.

HEAD TILT: Head moves to side with the face in a forward direction as if you were trying to put the ear towards the shoulder.

HEEL DIG: Place heel forward with the ankle flexed; this movement takes no weight.

HITCH KICK: Starting from a passé, jump back on the passé leg and kick the other leg.

HOOK: A parallel passé where the foot is lifted to the supporting knee.

HOP: Jump off floor on one foot and landing on the same foot.

HYPEREXTENSION: Extreme arch of the back, knees or arms.

IMPROVISATION: To perform without preparation.

INTENSITY: The relative degree of force or strength; the depth of feeling or concentration.

ISOLATION: Separation of body parts. Making one body part work independently of another body part.

JAZZ HANDS: Hands open with the fingers wide spread.

JAZZ LEAP: Single stag leap.

JAZZ WALK: A walk done in demi-plié position; the feet pointed forward with the abdominals lifted.

JETÉ: (zhuh-TAY) Leap; a jump from one leg to another.

KINESTHETIC SENSE: An internalized awareness of body placement and movement, and awareness of the relative force and range of movement.

KNEE HINGE: Knee bends with toe on floor and closes to supporting leg, then opens to other side.

LOCOMOTOR: A movement through space involving a change of location.

LUNGE: A movement where one leg is in a plié position and the other leg is extended.

LYRICAL: A style of dancing with a smooth flowing quality.

MODERN DANCE: A highly individualized form of artistic expression which began as a rejection of traditional ballet concepts; there is not a single approach to technique.

MUSCLE: A band of contractile (having the power of lengthening) tissue in the body, that affects bodily movement.

OBLIQUE: A facing position towards a corner or diagonal.

OPPOSITION: A position or movement in contrast to another position or movement of an opposite part of the body used to maintain balance.

PARALLEL POSITION: Feet and knees facing forward.

PASSÉ: (pa-SAY) The foot meets the knee of the supporting leg from one position to another.

PAS DE BOUREÉ: (pah duh boo-RAY) A sideways movement or transition step where a person steps behind, to the side, and then steps to the front.



PSA Choreography Rating Exam

Statement of Creative Authorship

The Professional Skaters Association is committed to fostering a community of members that adheres to the standard that our practices shall be governed by the principles of honesty and integrity. All candidates for the Choreography Rating Exam are required to attest in writing that the video(s) or other material, in any form, submitted to the panel for review and rating is the candidate's original choreographic work.

I attest that the video(s) and similar material submitted for review by the rating examiner panel was created by me and is my original choreographic work.

Printed Name

Signature of Candidate

Date

Exam Level

Location/Event of Exam

**Note: False statements or statements made to mislead shall result in disciplinary action as stipulated under the PSA Bylaws.*

Witness Signature (Exam Monitor)

Date

Printed Name



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PEDDLE: Changing weight from one foot to the other; the heel comes up first and the toe remains on the ground.

PENDULAR: The type of movement which is held then released to flow back and forth in a swinging action using gravity.

PERCUSSIVE: A movement quality which is quick and more aggressive in nature.

PETITE: Small movement

PIROUETTE: (peer-WET) A turn executed on one leg and does not travel.

PIVOT TURN: A turn in place on the ball on the foot.

PLIÉ: (plee-AY) To bend the knees; **DEMI:** meaning small, the movement is stopped before the heels release from the floor.

POINTED TOES: Ankle must be extended and toes follow the line.

PORT DE BRAS: (pawr duh brah) The carriage, placement, and movement of the arms.

RECOVER: To resume original position.

RELEASE: The letting go of tension or energy.

RELEVÉ: (ruhl-VAY) Like an elevé but executed with a spring-like action.

ROND DE JAMBE: (rawn duh zhajn) When the leg produces a circle pattern.

RHYTHM: The flow of movement in recurrent groupings resulting in a feeling of relationship.

SAUTÉ: (soh-TAY) A jump taking off from two feet at the same time.

SISSONE: (see-SAWN) Taking off from both feet and landing on one foot.

SOUTENU: (soot-NEW) A turn involving two steps.

SPIN TURN: A turn stepping on one foot and bringing both feet together as you turn.

SPOTTING: A movement of the head in turns where the eyes are focused on a particular spot in the direction of the turn, and the head is quickly snapped back at the last possible moment to re-focus upon the same spot.

SKIP: Consists of a step and a hop done on the same foot.

SLIDE: Consists of a step and a drawing or dragging of the other foot.

STAGGER: Every other girl moves forward or back.

STAG LEAP: A jazz leap jumping from both feet and placing one leg in a bent leg position and the other leg is straight.

STRADDLE: A position of the legs when both legs are extended out to the side.

STRETCH: The lengthening or enlarging of a muscle.

STYLE: A distinctive or characteristic manner of expressing an idea; a personal mode or form.

SUSPENDED: A quality of movement that creates the impression of defying gravity; floating, effortless movement.

SUSTAINED: Movement where energy is released equally in a smooth pattern.

SWINGING: Tension is held, then released to flow with gravity back and forth.

SYMMETRICAL: A balanced, even design; an even correspondence of design, space, rhythm, or position of the body.

SYNCOPIATION: A temporary displacement of the normal stressed beats of a measure.

TAG: Additional measure or beats of music.

TEMPO: The rate of speed at which the music is played or that the movement occurs.

TORSO: Part of the body from the top of the shoulders to the bottom of the hips.

TENDU: (tahn-DEW) Foot brushes; the foot brushes along the floor to a pointed foot, the knees do not bend.

THREE STEP TURN: A complete turn in a straight line, using three steps.

TURN OUT POSITION: An outward rotation of the legs, the action taking place at the hip joints.

TEMPO: The rate of speed at which a movement occurs or in which the music is played.

TOE DIG: Place the ball of the foot beside the supporting foot, this movement does not take weight.

TRIPLET: A three step pattern with the accent usually on the first step.

TURNOUT: A position of the legs with the feet and knees turned outward from the hips.



UPSTAGE: A direction indicating movement away from the audience.



VIBRATORY: A group of expressive moves performed in quick succession.

EXTENDED READINGS AND RESOURCES

The following suggested reading represents publications related specifically to choreography. None of the publications necessarily represent the official position of the PSA as to any content presented. This list is provided solely as a reference tool for the convenience of persons interested in choreography.

It is most important to have read and understand all current rules and notifications and materials from U.S. Figure Skating and the International Skating Union. Stay current with updates and information linked to you from the Professional Athletes Association.

Official U.S. Figure Skating Rulebook, U.S. Figure Skating, Colorado Springs, CO. www.usfsa.org, current year

ISU Rules, Regulations, and Communications, Lausanne, Switzerland, www.isu.org

Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet, New Edition, Gail Grant, Dover Publications, 2008

The Harper Collins Dictionary of Music, Second edition, Christine Ammer, Harper Trade, 1995 *Choreography & Style for Ice Athletes* by Ricky Harris, St. Martin's Press, 1991

Classical Music for Dummies by David Pogue and Scott Speck, IDG Books Worldwide, 1997

BOOKS

Choreography and Style for Ice Skaters, Ricky Harris, St. Martin's Press, New York, NY 1980. ISBN: 0-312-13388-X

The Complete Book of Figure Skating, Carole Shulman, Human Kinetics, 2001. Chapters 10 & 11 *Artistry on Ice*, Nancy Kerrigan with Mary Spencer, Human Kinetics, 2003.

The Handbook of Figure Skating, Professional Skaters Association, Rochester, MN www.skatepsa.com, 1995.

A complete guide to the sport of figure skating. Single Figure Skating for Beginners and Champions, Dr. Josef Dedic, Olympia, Prague, 1982.

Masters of Movement--Portraits of America's Great Choreographers by Rose Eichenbaum, Smithsonian Books, Washington, 2004.

The Creative Habit--Learn It and Use It For Life by Twyla Tharp, Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2006. *The Vision of Modern Dance In the Words of Its Creators*, Second Edition, edited by Jean Morrison Brown, Naomi Mindlin and Charles H. Woodford, Princeton Book Co., 1998.

NO FIXED POINTS: Dance in the Twentieth Century by Nancy Reynolds & Malcolm McCormick, Yale University Press, 2003 ISBN: 0-300-09366-7

WORLD OF DANCE: Ballet, Chelsea House Publishing, 2004 ISBN: 0-7910-7640-7, also at www.chelseahouse.com there are booklets on African, Asian, European, Middle Eastern, & Modern *The Black Tradition in American Dance* by Richard A. Long, Prion, 1995 ISBN: 0-8317-0763-1

Dance Was Her Religion: The Sacred Choreography of Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Martha Graham, Hohm Press, 2004 ISBN: 189077-238-0

Physics and the Art of Dance: Understanding Movement by Kenneth Laws, Oxford University Press, 2002 ISBN: 0-19-514916-5

Dance: A Very Social History by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York City), John D. O'Neill, Editor, 1986 ISBN: 0-8478-0819-X

Dancing: The Pleasure, Power, and Art of Movement by Gerald Jones, Abrams, Inc., 1992 ISBN: 0-81093212-1 (This book is based upon the 8 part public television series produced by 13/WNET.)

The Joy of Music by Leonard Bernstein, Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1954

A Concise History of Western Music by Paul Griffiths, Cambridge University Press, 2006

A Concise History of Avant-Garde Music from Debussy to Boulez by Paul Griffiths, Oxford Univ Press, 1978

Understanding Jazz: Ways to Listen by Tom Piazza, Random House, 2005. ISBN: 1-4000-6369-8

Everything Music Theory Book by Marc Schonbrun, Adams Media, 2007 ISBN: 13-978-1-5937-652-9

Harmony & Theory by Keith Wyatt & Carl Schroeder, Halleonard Corp., 1998 ISBN: 0-7935-7991-0

History of Art by H. W. Janson, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Fourth Edition, 1991

Modern Dance by Gay Cheney & Janet Strader, 1971

Singles Figure Skating for Beginners and Champions by Dedic, Josef, Ellfeldt, Lois 1980 A Primer for Choreographers 1 Ghiselin, Brewster The Creative Process: A Symposium 1952, 1985

Understanding the Fundamentals of Music Vol 1 & 2 by Robert Greenberg, 2007 ISBN: 15903285-2

The Book of Dance by John Martin, 2000 ISBN-13: 978-0814801642

Dance Through the Ages by Walter Sorrell, 1967 ISBN-13: 978-0448019123 *The Language of Dance* by Mary Wigman, 1966 ISBN-13: 978-0819560377

MAGAZINES AND PERIODICALS (FOR ALL DISCIPLINES)

Dance Magazine, Kew Gardens NY

PS Magazine, Professional Skaters Association, Rochester, MN. Bi-monthly

SKATING Magazine, U.S. Figure Skating Colorado Springs, CO

Recreational Ice Skating, Ice Skating Institute, 355 West Dundee Road, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-3500

U.S. FIGURE SKATING & PSA CER COURSES

CER IJS 101 (in 2018-19 Season will be CER ROS 300) - *Introduction to the International Judging System*

CER IJS 201 (in 2018-19 Season will be CER ROS 303) - *IJS Overview for Singles*

CER IJS 206 (in 2018-19 Season will be CER ROS 302) - *Understanding IJS Program Components*

CER IJS 400 (in 2018-19 Season will be CER ROS 400) - *Advanced Application of the Program Components*

PSA E-LEARNING COURSES

PSA EL 100 - *The Vocabulary of Figure Skating*

PSA EL 101 - *The Principles of Stroking*

PSA EL 102 - *The Principles of School Figures - Basic Eights*

