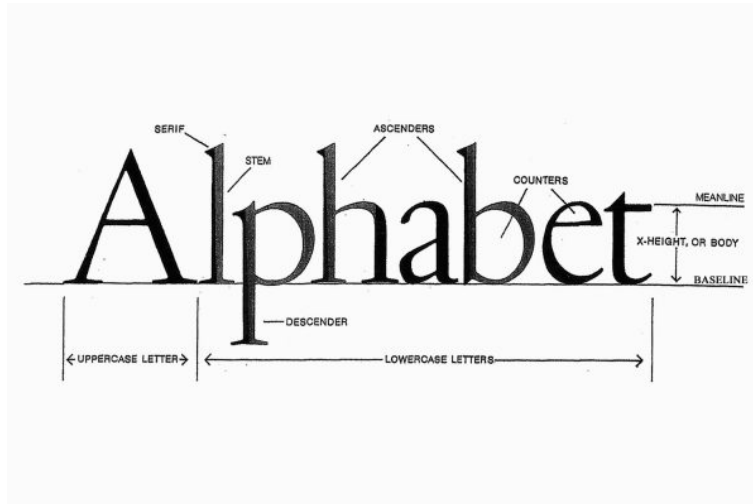


# Making a Glossary of Dance Teaching Terms

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— *Type anatomy, 'Designing with Type, A Basic Course in Typography', by James Craig*

A glossary is a collection of defined terminology assigned to a specific field of knowledge. Within a dance class many words are being used and in most cases they are recurrent from class to class signing the teacher's working principles. As explained before the perspective of the teacher and the terminology used in the classes are essential material for documenting dance teaching, thus exercising creating a glossary of one's own terms can be a great experience.

Creating a glossary implies reflection upon the terms and their definitions. For collecting principles of work, recurrent names of exercises and personal understanding of common concepts related to dance are essential.

## Suggestion on Creating a Glossary

**1. Create a list of terms you use in classes and are important to you.** At this stage you are making relations and digging mentally in your practice. There is not yet a structure, neither an order, just associations of words. Here is an example of my terms just as I think them I write:

*Circle, spiral, lines, twist, weight, extension, bending, space, inner space, skin, pelvis, articulations, water, neck, shoulder, rotating, uterus, ankles, knees, boundary, air, shift of weight, touch, walk, gaze, survival, animal, travel in space, change levels, continuous, infinite, external, endless, reduce, amplitude.*

**2. Study the list and start creating relations between the terms.** At this stage it maybe helpful to place up general concepts you use like time, space, body, energy, images, principle, exercise, etc... in order to create a higher/meta structure. Slowly hierarchies will start to appear, helping you later define your terms. For example, I have terms like *bending*, *travel in space*, and *shift of weight*. Those are all actions, so I will add *actions* to my higher level concepts.

My first list (all *italic* words below are for me higher concepts):

*Exercises*

Circles

Lines

Spirals

Walk

*Body*

Articulations

Skin

Pelvis

Uterus

Neck

Shoulder

Boundary

*Space*

Inner space

*Actions*

Touch

Bending

Shifting of weight

Twisting

Gaze

Changing levels

Rotating

*Imaginary*

Water

Air

Animal

*Intentions*

Endless

Survival

Continuous

Infinite

Amplitude

Doing this exercise, you will start moving words around, adding higher concepts, and slowly seeing how terms interrelate. For example I see that *shifting weight* is not used in all of my exercises but just in *lines*, so it may be useful to help me when trying to define the exercise. Slowly, I make hierarchies relating the terms. After a while I realize that there are terms that are not just related to a single exercise but are fundamental to my practice, so I decide to name those *fundamentals* and collect these terms:

*Fundamentals*

*Touch*

*Inner space*

Making this I realize that I had more terms, so I add them where I think they fit in my structure.

**3. Decide what you wish to *start defining*.** Once you have the collection of terms and more or less their grouping, you can decide what you wish to *start defining*. I start by the exercises. In this case I see that all my structure does serve the purpose of defining the exercises, since *body, space, actions, imaginary and intentions* are all included within each exercise. So I decide to create a table.

Exercise — body

Circles — all articulations, uterus, soft body parts and skin

Space — inner space

Actions — rotating

Imaginary — water

Intention — continuous

**4. Then try *exercising with definitions*.**

— Circle is a continuous rotation of all articulations, uterus, and soft body parts through the softness of the skin with the inner space of the body. For this the image of water running through the body is important to help the exercise.

— All articulations, uterus, soft body parts and the skin rotate continuously like water connecting with the inner space of the body.

And so on... For certain, you try to fit to the embodiment of the exercise and in doing so other terms may appear. By the end you will have a nice collection of terms and definitions that can help you document your teaching process and why not writing upon your own class. I hope it is helpful!

