



Clothes Coaching Outline Women's Fancy Shawl Dance

DANCER:_____

CONTEST# _____

LODGE #_____

COACH:_____

THE PURPOSE OF THE NOAC AIA COACHING SESSION:

Plains Powwow Culture is a 'popular' culture, evolving continuously in many areas; certainly, in the areas of the music, the dance and the dance clothes. Dance competitions continue to be increasingly popular not just at the summer tribal gatherings, but at big annual dance competitions happening throughout the year. Hundreds of dancers compete for thousands of dollars in prize money. Powwow-style dancing is a passion for many people and the most competitive among them actively keep their eyes on the latest fashions and their ears open to the latest songs. Smart dancers are always looking for ways to improve their dance moves and their dance clothes. Even the best-dressed dancers know their dance clothes can always be 'bumped up a notch'. While dance clothes are not 'judged' at these dance competitions, they do matter. Savvy dancers know they have to look their very best if they want to catch the judges' eye and make a positive impression. And when you look good, you feel good and then you're sure to dance your best.

In our many years of experience and involvement in dancing and powwows, we know that 'powwowing' is a family activity; rare are the dancers who go it alone. The construction of a set of dance clothes is far too complicated an endeavor to be accomplished by any one person. A set of dance clothes is a compilation of items made, received as gifts, purchased, and borrowed for the event. *It Takes a Family to Dress a Dancer*. From Tiny Tots to Golden Age, all dancers have help with their clothes. And guidance from experienced dancers is some of the best help you can get.

At the NOAC AIA Dance Clothes Coaching Session a dancer has the opportunity to discuss his dance clothes with a senior powwow dance enthusiast, tapping into years of experience in the areas of dance, dance clothes, craft and powwow culture. This outline is to be used as a guiding framework, with the understanding

that 'change happens' and everyone needs to keep his eyes open to the latest trends - competitors and coaches alike.

It is the goal of all Arrowmen who have been selected as NOAC Dance Clothes Coaches to share their knowledge and experience with younger dancers (and their support teams) in the hope of inspiring yet another enthusiastic, better-dressed dancer.

A note about DANCE CLOTHES

The most important thing about a set of modern **Women's Fancy Shawl** dance clothes is the overall look. Dance clothes are meant to be danced in, not to be judged in a still position. The components of your dance clothes should move well when you dance and work to enhance your dancing style. For this reason, materials, size, shape, and placement of the individual dance clothes components listed above must be in order. When specific materials are called for - such as beadwork - an adequate substitution of cloth, fabric applique, sequins, painted material can be used. However, proper colors, designs, and proportions must be in place for the article to get maximum points and for your dance clothes to have maximum visual impact.

This outline is not just a "scoring sheet"; it is a resource for you to constantly improve your dance clothes to be the best they can be. When you look at the individual scores of the various headings as well as the overall score, think of what you can do to improve each item, even if just by just a couple of points. Our goal is to help you to elevate your dance clothes to a higher level. By continually improving your dance clothes, your presentation on the dance floor will improve as well.

A note to DANCERS:

This outline is designed to summarize what a Women's Fancy Shawl dancer would wear at a contemporary powwow. It represents the norm as defined by modern dancers in the Northern Plains and across the country.

Be aware that although a printed or recorded work may have been relevant at the time of its making, Women's Fancy Shawl is an ever-changing dance style and these works can sometimes become outdated within a short period of time. If possible, attend powwows and notice the subtle trends being added to Women's Fancy Shawl dance clothes of today. If you live in an area where it is difficult to attend powwows, you can use resources such as:

www.youtube.com, www.gatheringofnations.com, www.powwows.com,
or www.pinterest.com

to view photos and video footage of powwow dancers. Please be respectful of other's dance clothes. Model your dance clothes after contemporary dancers, but

do not copy a specific set of clothes verbatim.

While Women's Fancy Shawl dance clothes of the past have their place in history, some of the components may not appropriate for contemporary dance styles. Stay current and up-to-date on your dance clothes' style.

WOMEN'S FANCY SHAWL DANCE MAXIMUM SCORE: 80 Points

SCALE:

0 = Missing or Inappropriate Item

1-3 = Acceptable

4-6 = Good

7-9 = Excellent

10 = Superior

STANDARD ITEMS

SCORE

Item 1: SHAWL:

(10) _____

The Fancy Dance Shawl is the major component of this dance style. Typically the shawl is made from a brightly colored, lightweight moveable fabric and decorated in fabric applique of appropriate design.

Superior: Appropriate length, not only over the shoulders from fingertip to fingertip, but also the length from neck to bottom hem (mid-thigh). Decorated with fabric applique. Trimmed on three sides with 3/8" to 1/2" satin ribbon fringe of appropriate length (usually ankle length or an inch off the ground).

Acceptable: No decoration, chainette fringe, flat fringe, or fringe too short.

Inappropriate: Shawl too short, inappropriate design, no fringe, made from inappropriate fabric such as wool, velvet or other fabric which limits the movement of the shawl.

Item 2: HEAD: Feather Plumes, Barrett, Hair Ties.

(10) _____

Superior: Imitation eagle feather plume(s). Typically a beaded hair barrette secures the feather at the center back of the head. Beaded, quilled, parfleche, and/or shell hair ties, all coordinated in color and style. A head band (optional). Braided hair. Short hair.

Acceptable: Items in place, mismatched or not necessarily coordinated. Fluffs instead of plumes. Undecorated hair ties. Braided hair. Short hair.

Inappropriate: Missing items.

Item 3: BODY: Dress or Skirt and Blouse

(10) _____

*Appropriate shorts or tights **MUST** be worn underneath.*

Superior: Dress or skirt and blouse fit nicely, are the proper length, and made from colorful, fabric. Proper use of kick-pleats, ruffle or flair on dress or skirt. Fabric applique and/or ribbon decorations on dress or skirt.

Acceptable: Undecorated dress or skirt.

Inappropriate: Midriff skin showing. See-through bodice or skirt. Hem too short on either dress or skirt. Dress or skirt too narrow as to not allow leg movement. Improper fit or improper use of fabric. No shorts or tights.

Item 4: BODY: Cape, or Vest with Cape, Belt. (10) _____

Superior: Beaded or fabric applique cape (front and back), or front-fitted vest with beaded or fabric applique cape attached to the back of the vest at shoulder seams. Beaded or coordinated belt (leather, tack or concho belt acceptable).

Acceptable: Undecorated cape, cloth neck scarf and slide worn like a neckerchief instead of cape. Medallion necklace instead of cape. Belt.

Inappropriate: Cape too short in front or back. No cape, neckerchief or medallion. Scout or inappropriate neckerchief used instead of cloth neck scarf. No belt.

Item 5: LEGS AND FEET: Leggings and Moccasins, or Northern Style Boots. (10)

Superior: Fully or partially beaded leggings and moccasins. Northern style boots with beaded decoration (aka "high top" moccasins, or "Crow" boots). Full fabric applique leggings.

Acceptable: Partial fabric applique leggings. Undecorated leggings, and moccasins. Undecorated Northern style boots. Commercial hide boots.

Inappropriate: No leggings, moccasins, or boots. The use of tennis shoes or other inappropriate footwear in place of moccasins.

Item 6: ACCESSORIES: Choker, Jewelry (10) _____

Superior: Beaded choker with a beaded medallion (or decorative drop), beaded barrettes, earrings, rings, and/or bracelets coordinated in style and color to compliment the dance clothes.

Appropriate: Accessories are present but not coordinated in color or design. Inappropriate: No accessories.

Item 7: OVERALL: (20)

Scale: 1-5 Good start, room for improvement; 6-10 Solid basic dance clothes, lacking some items; 11-15 Excellent; 16-20 Superior

Does the set look complete? Do the dance clothes have the right "look"? Are the clothes consistent with current styles?

FINAL SCORE (80) _____

Ribbon Scale: White 1-22 Red 23-43 Blue 44-63 Gold 64-80