

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS  
AT THE WORTHAM



STUDY GUIDE  
THE  
NUTCRACKER

PRESENTED BY HOUSTON  
**Methodist**  
LEADING MEDICINE

**EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**  
EXPOSE. EDUCATE. INTEGRATE.

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# WHAT IS A STUDENT MATINEE?

*Student Matinees* are full-length performances by Houston Ballet with live orchestra held during school hours. Your students experience these professional performances with interactive intermissions at significantly discounted ticket prices. This study guide has information and activities for before and after the performance that are intended to extend the learning experience.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Houston Ballet's performance of *The Nutcracker* will take place at the Wortham Theatre.

### BUS PICKUP AND DROP-OFF WILL BE AT:

Wortham Theater Center  
601 Prairie Street Houston, TX 77002.

### INTERMISSION

There will be one interactive intermission during the performance. Your students will be able to use the restroom at this time, but you will not have time to eat. There are **NO refreshments** allowed in the theater. Concession stands will be **closed** before, during and after the performance.

# LEARNING OUTCOMES

STUDENTS WHO ATTEND THE *STUDENT MATINEE* PERFORMANCE AND UTILIZE THIS STUDY GUIDE'S EXTENSION ACTIVITIES WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Describe how ballets tell stories without using words;
- Use words and/or pictures to summarize the story of *The Nutcracker*;
- Identify different countries and animals that influence Act II of *The Nutcracker*;
- Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior.

# TEKS ADDRESSED

The following TEKS are addressed during Student Matinees and/or as a part of the extension activities included in this study guide.

*(Please note: The TEKS addressed will vary depending upon the Student Matinee attended.)*

## ENGLISH & LANGUAGE ARTS

### LISTENING/SPEAKING

#### KINDER

ELA.K.21A: Listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments.

ELA.K.21B: Follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action.

ELA.K.23A: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussion, including taking turns, and speaking one at a time.

#### GRADE 1

ELA.1.27A: Listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments.

ELA.1.27B: Follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action.

ELA.1.29A: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussion, including listening to others, speaking when recognized, and making appropriate contributions.

#### GRADE 2

ELA.2.28A: Listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments.

ELA.2.28B: Follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action.

ELA.2.30A: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussion, including listening to others, speaking when recognized, and making appropriate contributions.

#### GRADE 3

ELA.3.29A: Listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments.

ELA.3.29B: Follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action.

#### GRADE 4

ELA.4.27A: Listen attentively to speakers, ask relevant questions, and make pertinent comments.

ELA.4.27B: Follow, restate, and give oral instructions that involve a series of related sequences of action.

#### GRADE 5

ELA.5.27B: Follow, restate, and give oral instructions that include multiple action steps.

## COMPREHENSION SKILLS

### KINDER

ELA.K.8B: Describe characters in a story and the reasons for their actions.

**ELA.K.Fig19E: Retell or act out important events in stories.**

ELA.K.Fig19F: Make connections to own experiences, to ideas in other texts, and to the larger community and discuss textual evidence

### GRADE 1

ELA.1.9A: Describe the plot (problem and solution) and retell a story's beginning, middle, and end with attention to the sequence of events

ELA.1.9B: Describe characters in a story and the reasons for their actions and feelings.

**ELA.1.Fig19D: Make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding.**

**ELA.1.Fig19E: Retell or act out important events in stories in logical order.**

ELA.1.Fig19F: Make connections to own experiences, to ideas in other texts, and to the larger community and discuss textual evidence.

### GRADE 2

ELA.2.6A: Identify moral lessons as themes in well-known fables, legends, myths, or stories.

ELA.2.9B: Describe main characters in works of fiction, including their traits, motivations, and feelings.

**ELA.2.Fig19D: Make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding.**

**ELA.2.Fig19E: Retell important events in stories in logical order.**

ELA.2.Fig19F: Make connections to own experiences, to ideas in other texts, and to the larger community and discuss textual evidence.

### GRADE 3

ELA.3.5A: Paraphrase the themes and supporting details of fables, legends, myths, or stories.

ELA.3.7A: Explain the elements of plot and character as presented through dialogue in scripts that are read, viewed, written, or performed.

**ELA.3.8A: Sequence and summarize the plot's main events and explain their influence on future events.**

**ELA.3.8B: Describe the interaction of characters including their relationships and the changes they undergo.**

**ELA.3.Fig19D: Make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding.**

**ELA.3.Fig19E: Summarize information in text, maintaining meaning and logical order.**

**ELA.3.Fig19F: Make connections (e.g., thematic links, author analysis) between literary and informational texts with similar ideas and provide textual evidence.**

### GRADE 4

ELA.4.3A: Summarize and explain the lesson or message of a work of fiction as its theme.

**ELA.4.6A: Sequence and summarize the plot's main events and explain their influence on future events.**

ELA.4.5A: Describe the structural elements particular to dramatic literature.

**ELA.4.6B: Describe the interaction of characters including their relationships and the changes they undergo.**

**ELA.4.Fig19D: Make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding.**

**ELA.4.Fig19E: Summarize information in text, maintaining meaning and logical order.**

**ELA.4.Fig19F: Make connections (e.g., thematic links, author analysis) between literary and informational texts with similar ideas and provide textual evidence.**

## **GRADE 5**

ELA.5.3A: Compare and contrast the themes or moral lessons of several works of fiction from various cultures.

**ELA.5.6A: Describe incidents that advance the story or novel, explaining how each incident gives rise to or foreshadows future events.**

ELA.5.5A: Analyze the similarities and differences between an original text and its dramatic adaptation.

**ELA.5.6B: Explain the roles and functions of characters in various plots, including their relationships and conflicts.**

ELA.5.13B: Interpret factual or quantitative information presented in maps, charts, illustrations, graphs, timelines, tables, and diagrams.

**ELA.5.Fig19D: Make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding.**

**ELA.5.Fig19E: Summarize and paraphrase texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order within a text and across texts.**

**ELA.5.Fig19F: Make connections (e.g., thematic links, author analysis) between literary and informational texts with similar ideas and provide textual evidence.**

## **WRITTEN COMPREHENSION**

### **GRADE 1**

ELA.1.19B: Write short letters that put ideas in a chronological or logical sequence and use appropriate conventions (e.g., date, salutation, closing).

### **GRADE 2**

ELA.2.19B: Write short letters that put ideas in a chronological or logical sequence and use appropriate conventions (e.g., date, salutation, closing).

ELA.2.20A: Write persuasive statements about issues that are important to the student for the appropriate audience in the school, home, or local community.

### **GRADE 3**

**ELA.3.20A.i: Create brief compositions that establish a central idea in a topic sentence.**

**ELA.3.20A.ii: Create brief compositions that include supporting sentences with simple facts, details, and explanations.**

**ELA.3.20A.iii: Create brief compositions that contain a concluding statement.**

ELA.3.20B: Write letters whose language is tailored to the audience and purpose (e.g., a thank you note to a friend) and that use appropriate conventions (e.g., date, salutation, closing).

ELA.3.21A: Write persuasive essays for appropriate audiences that establish a position and use supporting details.

### **GRADE 4**

**ELA.4.17: Write about important personal experiences.**

**ELA.4.18A.i: Create brief compositions that establish a central idea in a topic sentence.**

**ELA.4.18A.ii: Create brief compositions that include supporting sentences with simple facts, details, and explanations.**

**ELA.4.18A.iii: Create brief compositions that contain a concluding statement.**

ELA.4.18B: Write letters whose language is tailored to the audience and purpose (e.g., a thank you note to a friend) and that use appropriate conventions (e.g., date, salutation, closing).

ELA.4.19A: Write persuasive essays for appropriate audiences that establish a position and use supporting details.

## **GRADE 5**

**ELA.5.17A:** Write a personal narrative that conveys thoughts and feelings about an experience.

**ELA.5.18A.i:** Create multi-paragraph essays to convey information about the topic that present effective introductions and concluding paragraphs.

**ELA.5.18A.iii:** Create multi-paragraph essays to convey information about the topic that include specific facts, details, and examples in an appropriately organized structure.

**ELA.5.18A.iv:** Create multi-paragraph essays to convey information about the topic that use a variety of sentence structures and transitions to link paragraphs.

**ELA.5.18B:** Write formal and informal letters that convey ideas, include important information, demonstrate a sense of closure, and use appropriate conventions (e.g., date, salutation, closing).

**ELA.5.19A:** Write persuasive essays for appropriate audiences that establish a position and include sound reasoning, detailed and relevant evidence, and consideration of alternatives.

# **DANCE**

## **KINDER-GRADE 2**

**DANCE.K–2.3.1:** Understand the differences in dances through historical periods.

**DANCE.K–2.2b.4:** Understand and remember proper performer, audience, and classroom behavior.

**DANCE.K–2.3.4:** Apply dance concepts to the other content areas.

**DANCE.K–2.4.1:** Remember, understand, and perform movement sequences or dances communicating and expressing feelings and/or ideas.

**DANCE.K–2.4.2:** Evaluate and explain the dance content, meanings, or social/cultural context within the dance observed and/or performed.

**DANCE.K–2.4.4:** Observe and understand the differences of artistic movement choices and its effects on audience.

## **GRADE 3-GRADE 5**

**DANCE.3–5.2b.4:** Understand and apply proper performer, audience, and classroom behavior.

**DANCE.3–5.3.1:** Analyze and evaluate the differences in dances through historical periods as communicated through dance movement.

**DANCE.3–5.3.4:** Understand and apply dance concepts in various media to the other content areas.

**DANCE.3–5.4.1:** Analyze, evaluate, and perform movement sequences or dances communicating and expressing feelings and/or ideas.

**DANCE.3–5.4.2:** Evaluate and apply dance content, meanings, or social/cultural context within the dance observed and/or performed.

**DANCE.3–5.4.4:** Analyze, evaluate, and apply the differences of artistic choices and its effects on audience and/or performer.

## **MS DANCE I**

**MS DANCE. 1.1A:** Demonstrate basic kinesthetic and spatial awareness individually and in groups.

**MS DANCE. 1.1D:** Identify dance movement elements through space, energy, and time.

**MS DANCE. 1.3D:** Understand dances in various media and other content areas.

**MS DANCE. 1.4A:** Define the quality and effectiveness of dance performances while incorporating appropriate etiquette in the classroom and performances.

**MS DANCE. 1.4B:** Identify relationships between dance and other content areas.

**MS DANCE. 1.4C:** Define the content and choreographic structures used by various American choreographers.

**MS DANCE. 1.4D:** Define artistic decisions of personal dance works.

## **MS DANCE II**

MS DANCE. 2.1A: Demonstrate basic kinesthetic and spatial awareness individually and in groups.  
MS DANCE. 2.1D: Explore and demonstrate dance movement elements through space, energy, and time.  
MS DANCE. 2.3D: Evaluate dance in various media and other content areas.  
MS DANCE. 2.4A: Demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of dance performances while incorporating appropriate etiquette in the classroom and performances.  
MS DANCE. 2.4B: Interpret relationships between dance other content areas.  
MS DANCE. 2.4C: Demonstrate the content and choreographic structures used by various American choreographers.  
MS DANCE. 2.4D: Interpret and evaluate artistic decisions of personal dance works.

## **MS DANCE III**

MS DANCE. 3.1A: Demonstrate basic kinesthetic and spatial awareness individually and in groups.  
MS DANCE. 3.1D: Develop dance movement elements through space, energy, and time.  
MS DANCE. 3.4A: Design and apply criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of dance performances while incorporating appropriate etiquette in the classroom and performances.  
MS DANCE. 3.4B: Create relationships between dance and other content areas.  
MS DANCE. 3.4C: Compare and contrast the content and choreographic structures used by various American choreographers.  
MS DANCE. 3.4D: Interpret, evaluate, and justify artistic decisions of personal dance works.

## **HS DANCE I**

DANCE.I.1A: Demonstrate basic kinesthetic and spatial awareness individually and in groups.  
DANCE.I.1C: Recognize knowledge of dance genres, styles, and vocabulary.  
DANCE.I.1D: Identify images found in the environment through movement.  
DANCE.I.2Ab: Explore, improvise, and demonstrate original movement during the creative process.  
DANCE.I.4A: Incorporate appropriate movement vocabulary when identifying qualities and discussing meaning of performance or production in dance.  
DANCE.I.4B: Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior and etiquette in the classroom and at performances.  
DANCE.I.4C: Identify relationships between dance and other content areas.

## **HS DANCE II**

DANCE.II.1A: Demonstrate kinesthetic and spatial awareness individually and in groups.  
DANCE.II.1C: Demonstrate effective knowledge of dance genres, styles, and vocabulary.  
DANCE.III.1C: Compare knowledge and skills of dance genres, styles, and vocabulary.  
DANCE.IV.1C: Demonstrate and evaluate a working knowledge and skills of dance genres, styles and vocabulary.  
DANCE.II.1D: Interpret details in movement in natural and constructed environment.  
DANCE.II.2Ab: Explore, improvise, and perform original movement during the creative process.  
DANCE.I.2Ac: Express ideas and emotions through movement.  
DANCE. II.2Ac: Expand the expression of ideas and emotions through movement.  
DANCE.II.4A: Identify characteristics of a variety of dances.  
DANCE.II.4B: Analyze qualities of performance and proper etiquette in dance.  
DANCE.II.4C: Identify similarities of form and expression in dance and other content areas.

### **HS DANCE III**

- DANCE.III.1A: Analyze kinesthetic and spatial awareness individually and in groups.
- DANCE.III.1D: Differentiate designs and images in natural and constructed environment.
- DANCE.III.2Ab: Experiment, improvise, and perform original movement during the creative process.
- DANCE.III.2Ac: Compare and contrast the expression of ideas and emotions through movement.
- DANCE.III.4A: Compare characteristics and qualities of a variety of dances.
- DANCE.III.4B: Analyze dance from a variety of perspectives such as those of dance critic, performer, choreographer, and audience member.
- DANCE.III.4C: Understand the relationship of dance performance skills and other content areas.

### **HS DANCE IV**

- DANCE.IV.1A: Evaluate kinesthetic and spatial awareness individually and in groups.
- DANCE.IV.1D: Create designs and images found in natural and constructed environment.
- DANCE.IV.2Ab: Improvise, construct, and evaluate original movement studies.
- DANCE.IV.2Ac: Evaluate the expression of ideas and emotions through movement.
- DANCE.IV.4A: Evaluate personal dance compositions and the work of others.
- DANCE.IV.4B: Create and reconstruct a choreographic study using varied media and environments.
- DANCE.IV.4C: Create a portfolio based on personal artistic works, performance works, or research.

## **MUSIC**

### **KINDER**

- 3C: Move alone or with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross and fine locomotor and non-locomotor movement.
- 5B: Identify simple interdisciplinary concepts related to music.
- 6A: Identify and demonstrate appropriate audience behavior during live or recorded performances.
- 6D: Respond verbally or through movement to short musical examples.

### **GRADE 1**

- 3C: Move alone or with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross and fine locomotor and non-locomotor movement.
- 6A: Identify and demonstrate appropriate audience behavior during live or recorded performances.
- 6D: Respond verbally or through movement to short musical examples.

### **GRADE 2**

- 3C: Move alone or with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross and fine locomotor and non-locomotor movement.
- 5C: Identify simple interdisciplinary concepts related to music.
- 6A: Begin to practice appropriate audience behavior during live or recorded performances.
- 6D: Respond verbally or through movement to short musical examples.

### **GRADE 3**

- 3C: Move alone or with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross motor, fine motor, locomotor, and non-locomotor skills and integrated movement such as hands and feet moving together.
- 5C: Identify the relationships between music and interdisciplinary concepts.
- 6A: Exhibit audience etiquette during live and recorded performances.
- 6D: Respond verbally or through movement to short musical examples.

#### **GRADE 4**

3C: Move alone or with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross motor, fine motor, locomotor, and non-locomotor skills and integrated movement such as hands and feet moving together.

5D: Examine the relationships between music and interdisciplinary concepts.

6A: Exhibit audience etiquette during live and recorded performances.

6D: Respond verbally or through movement to short musical examples.

#### **GRADE 5**

3C: Move alone or with others to a varied repertoire of music using gross motor, fine motor, locomotor, and non-locomotor skills and integrated movement such as hands and feet moving together.

5D: Examine the relationships between music and interdisciplinary concepts.

6A: Exhibit audience etiquette during live and recorded performances.

6D: Respond verbally or through movement to short musical examples.

#### **MS MUSIC I**

MUSIC I.1A: Experience and explore exemplary musical examples using technology and available live performances.

MUSIC I.5E: Demonstrate appropriate cognitive and kinesthetic responses to music and musical performances.

#### **MS MUSIC II**

MUSIC II.1A: Compare and contrast exemplary musical examples using technology and available live performances.

MUSIC II.5F: Demonstrate appropriate cognitive and kinesthetic responses to music and musical performances.

#### **MS MUSIC III**

MUSIC III.1A: Evaluate exemplary musical examples using technology and available live performances.

MUSIC III.5F: Demonstrate appropriate cognitive and kinesthetic responses to music and musical performances.

#### **HS MUSIC I**

MUSIC I.1A: Experience and explore exemplary musical examples using technology and available live performances.

MUSIC I.5A: Compare and contrast music by genre, style, culture, and historical period.

MUSIC I.5D: Identify and explore the relationship between music and other academic disciplines.

#### **HS MUSIC II**

MUSIC II.1A: Compare and contrast exemplary musical examples using technology and available live performances.

MUSIC II.5A: Compare and contrast music by genre, style, culture, and historical period.

#### **HS MUSIC III**

MUSIC III.1A: Evaluate exemplary musical examples using technology and available live performances.

MUSIC III.5A: Classify representative examples of music by genre, style, culture, and historical period.

#### **HS MUSIC IV**

MUSIC IV.1A: Evaluate exemplary musical examples using technology and available live performances.

MUSIC IV.5A: Discriminate representative examples of music by genre, style, culture, and historical period.

# THEATRE

## KINDER

- K.1B: Explore space using expressive movement.
- K.1C: Imitate sounds.
- K.1D: Imitate and recreate objects in dramatic play.
- K.2A: Demonstrate safe use of movement and voice.
- K.2B: Assume roles through imitation and recreation.
- K.3D: Cooperate with others in dramatic play.
- K.5A: Discuss, practice, and display appropriate audience behavior.

## GRADE 1

- 1.1B: Develop spatial awareness in dramatic play using expressive and rhythmic movement.
- 1.1C: Imitate actions and sounds.
- 1.1D: Imitate and create animate and inanimate objects in dramatic play.
- 1.2A: Demonstrate safe use of movement and voice.
- 1.2B: Create roles through imitation.
- 1.3A: Discuss aspects of the environment for use in dramatic play, such as location or climate.
- 1.3D: Cooperate with others in dramatic play.
- 1.5A: Discuss practice, and display appropriate audience behavior.
- 1.5C: Discuss the use of music, creative movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

## GRADE 2

- 2.1B: Expand spatial awareness in dramatic play using expressive and rhythmic movement.
- 2.1C: Participate in dramatic play using actions, sounds, and dialogue.
- 2.1D: Role play, imitate and recreate dialogue.
- 2.2A: Demonstrate safe use of movement and voice.
- 2.2B: Role play in real life and imaginary situations through narrative pantomime, dramatic play, and story dramatization.
- 2.3D: Cooperate and interact with others in dramatic play.
- 2.5A: Discuss, practice, and display appropriate audience behavior.
- 2.5C: Integrate music, creative movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

### **GRADE 3**

- 3.1B: Create playing space using expressive and rhythmic movement.
- 3.1C: Respond to sounds, music, images, language, and literature using movement.
- 3.1D: Reflect the environment, portray character, and demonstrate actions in classroom dramatizations.
- 3.2A: Demonstrate safe use of movement and voice.
- 3.2B: Participate in a variety of roles in real life or imaginative situations through narrative pantomime, dramatic play, or story dramatization.
- 3.3A: Identify technical theatre elements, such as props, costumes, sound, and visual elements that define character, environment, action and theme.
- 3.3D: Cooperate and interact with others in dramatic play.
- 3.5A: Apply appropriate audience behavior consistently.
- 3.5C: Discuss the use of music, movement, and visual components in dramatic activities and performances.

### **GRADE 4**

- 4.1B: Develop body awareness and spatial perception using rhythmic and expressive movement.
- 4.1C: Respond to sound, music, images, language, and literature with voice and movement and participate in dramatic play using actions, sounds, and dialogue.
- 4.1D: Express emotions and ideas using interpretive movements, sounds, and dialogue.
- 4.2A: Demonstrate safe use of the voice and body.
- 4.2B: Describe characters, their relationships, and their surroundings.
- 4.3A: Describe the appropriate use of props, costumes, sound, and visual elements that define character, environment, action, and theme.
- 4.3D: Interact cooperatively with others in brief dramatizations.
- 4.5A: Apply appropriate audience behavior at formal and informal performances.
- 4.5C: Discuss how movement, music, or visual elements enhance ideas and emotions depicted in theatre.

### **GRADE 5**

- 5.1B: Develop body awareness and spatial perceptions using pantomime.
- 5.1C: Respond to sounds, music, images, languages, and literature using movement.
- 5.1D: Express emotions and relate ideas using interpretive and planned movement and dialogue.
- 5.2A: Demonstrate safe use of the voice and body.
- 5.2B: Describe characters, their relationships, and their surroundings in detail.
- 5.3A: Demonstrate character, environment, action, and theme using props, costumes, and visual elements.
- 5.3D: Interact cooperatively with others in dramatizations.
- 5.5A: Analyze and apply appropriate audience behavior at a variety of performances.
- 5.5C: Identify and discuss how movement, music, or visual elements enhance ideas and emotions depicted in theatre.

### **MS THEATRE I**

- THEATRE.1.1.B: Expand body awareness and spatial perceptions using mime;
- THEATRE.1.1.C: Respond to sounds, music, images, and the written word, incorporating movement;
- THEATRE.1.2.A: Demonstrate safe use of the voice and body;
- THEATRE.1.5.A: Identify and apply audience etiquette at all performances;
- THEATRE.1.5.C: Identify production elements of theatre, film, television, and other media;

## **MS THEATRE II**

THEATRE.2.5.C: Demonstrate knowledge of production elements in theatre, film, television, and other media;  
THEATRE.2.1.B: Develop and apply theatre preparation and warm-up techniques;  
THEATRE.2.1.C: Create expressive and rhythmic movements  
THEATRE.2.2.A: Demonstrate safe use of the voice and body  
THEATRE.2.5.A: Understand and demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette at various types of performances;

## **MS THEATRE III**

THEATRE.3.5.C: Demonstrate knowledge of production  
THEATRE.3. 1.B: Explore preparation and warm-up techniques  
THEATRE.3. 1.C: Create expressive movement and mime to define space and characters;  
THEATRE.3.2.A: Demonstrate safe use of the voice and body;  
THEATRE.3.5.A: Understand and demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette at various types of live performances;

## **HS THEATRE I**

THEATRE.I.2A: Demonstrate safe use of the voice and body  
THEATRE.I.2B: Define creativity as it relates to personal expression  
THEATRE.I.5A: Analyze and apply appropriate behavior at various types of live performances

## **MS THEATRE I**

THEATRE.II.2A: Model safe, appropriate techniques to allow for physical, vocal, and emotional expression  
THEATRE.II.2B: Explore creativity as it relates to self and ensemble  
THEATRE.II.5A: Evaluate and apply appropriate audience etiquette at various types of performances

## **HS THEATRE II**

THEATRE.III.2A: Employ safe, appropriate techniques to allow for physical, vocal, and emotional expression;  
THREATRE III.2B: Creativity as it relates to self and ensemble and its effect on audience;  
THEATRE.III.5A: Compare behavior at various types of performances and practice appropriate audience etiquette;

## **HS THEATRE IV**

THEATRE.IV.2A: Model safe, appropriate techniques to allow for physical, vocal, and emotional expression;  
THEATRE.IV.2B: Demonstrate creativity as it relates to self and ensemble and its effect on audience;  
THEATRE.IV.5A: Evaluate and practice appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances;

## **Readiness Standards/Aligned Readiness**

# ATTENDING A BALLET PERFORMANCE

Going to see a ballet performance is the **SAME** as going to a movie:

- The lights dim before the performance begins and the theater stays dark during the ballet.
- Audience members are expected to quietly sit in their seats during the performance.
- Audience members may **NOT** take any pictures or video during the performance. This is distracting to the dancers and other audience members, **AND** *The Nutcracker* is copyrighted artistic material.



- All cell phones and other electronic devices should be powered **OFF** as soon as you enter the theater.

Going to see a ballet performance is **DIFFERENT** than going to a movie:

- Ballet is performed live. The dancers can see and react to the audience!
- Audience members can show the dancers when they appreciate their performance! If something is funny, you can laugh! If the dancers are doing a great job, you can clap!



- At the end of the show, the dancers all bow. This is called a **curtain call**. If you really loved the show, you can give the dancers a **standing ovation** to show that you appreciate their hard work!
- School clothes are appropriate, but some people like to dress up for ballet performances. Just make sure you are comfortable!

# THE NUTCRACKER



*Adapted from a poem by D.L. Groover  
Based on Stanton Welch's holiday ballet  
Designs by Tim Goodchild*



It's cold outside the Stahlbaum house  
On a German Christmas Eve,  
But inside warm and all dressed-up,  
Clara glows with make-believe.

Feisty Fritz with doggy Heinz  
Runs in and misbehaves,  
But he is stopped mid-prank and scolded  
By the stern and firm Housemaid.



“Put away your things, and wash your hands.  
Prepare for the party below.”  
Beloved toys are all picked up,  
Children cleaned and ready to go.

Older sister Louise believes that she's  
The fairest girl of all.  
She fusses and **primps** for she intends  
To be the belle of the ball.





Mother and father have gifts to bestow:  
For lovely Louise, a **corsage** for romance,  
Tin trumpet for Fritz, that will blurt and blow;  
And pointe shoes for Clara who loves to dance.



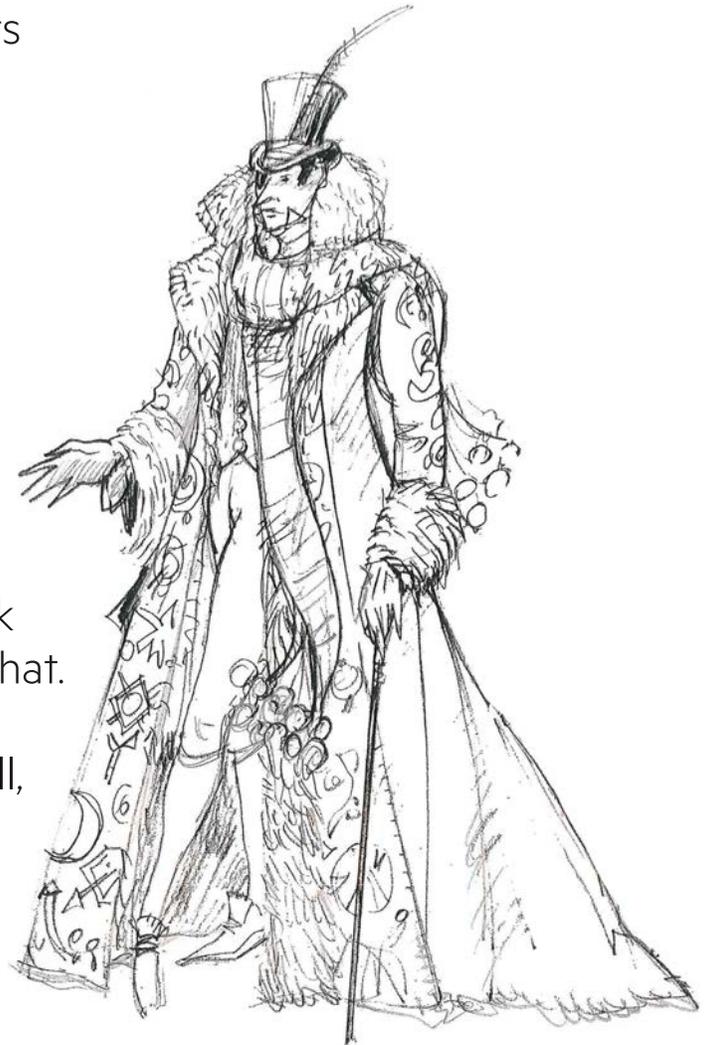
Surprise, surprise, when the family leaves,  
The toys jump out dancing with glee!

Downstairs, the Christmas party guests  
Celebrate and feast,  
Suddenly, the window opens.  
Who could it be?

It's Drosselmeyer! The magic man,  
Here to amaze with his own Caravan.

His ghostly troupe tells the tale  
of Soldier Brave who in love fell  
with Princess Fair, who loved him back  
But the jealous King wouldn't stand for that.

He turns the soldier into a wooden doll,  
And the princess' tears begin to fall.  
Her tears are enchanted so it seems,  
And just like that, rat á la king!





“But what’s the ending,” Clara cries  
But Drosselmeyer will not say.  
Instead he gives her a Nutcracker doll,  
A gift for Christmas day.

The little toy is strong and brave,  
And Clara laughs with glee;  
But jealous Fritz is not amused  
And breaks it on his knee.

Drosselmeyer knows what to do  
And heals the doll with ease;  
He puts it high upon a shelf  
Out of Fritz’ reach.

The party’s over, the guests go home  
And the family all goes to bed.  
Clara sneaks down to find her doll,  
“He’s gone!” She’s filled with **dread**.

Out of the clock, the magician appears  
And puts Nutcracker under the tree.  
With a wave of his hand, he casts a spell,  
His magic powers are released!



The tree grows and grows, and grows with a roar,  
Then bursts through the roof and grows some more.  
The magic is strong, the toys are life-sized.  
The rats grow too and are ready to fight.

Against the rats the Nutcracker fights  
With brave Clara by his side.  
The evil Rat King then appears  
With fierce anger in his eyes.

He stomps, he fumes, he throws a fit!  
Furious with their nerve.  
“How dare a mere girl  
and toy of wood  
Seek to destroy my royal world?”

He leads from behind, so like a rat.  
Letting others fight, bullies do that.

Clara snatches his crown, bops him once,  
And sends him on his way.  
The Rat King’s defeated,  
she’s broken the spell.  
Her doll’s a Prince, but all is not well.





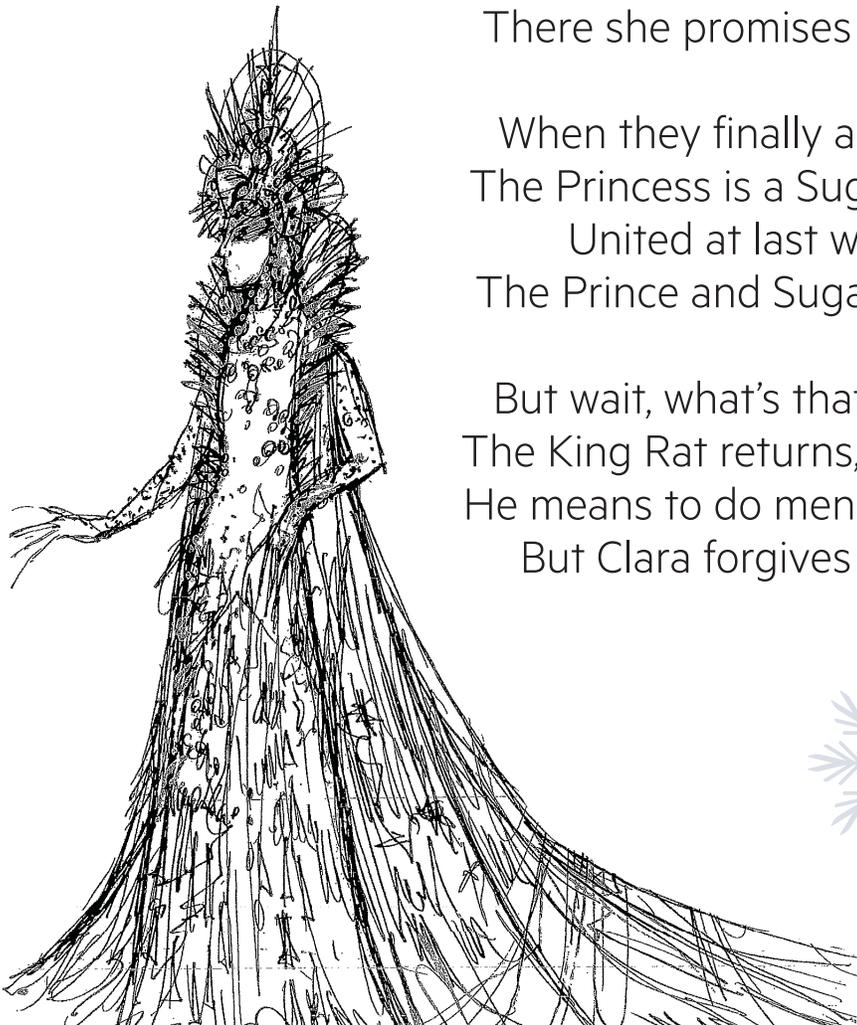
The Prince is sad as he looks around  
For Princess Fair is not to be found.  
“Let us find her,” said Clara, always so bold.  
So they set off together, out into the cold.

The wind blows, the snow falls fast  
But they were determined to accomplish their task.  
To their rescue comes a dazzling vision.  
The Queen of Snow, in icy **precision**.

As Clara tells of the Rat King’s defeat,  
The Queen is amazed at their bravery.  
She leads them all to the Land of the Sweets.  
There she promises the Princess they’ll meet.

When they finally arrive, they find in delight  
The Princess is a Sugar Plum, a beautiful sight.  
United at last with his long lost love,  
The Prince and Sugar Plum embrace in a hug.

But wait, what’s that scratching, I smell a rat!  
The King Rat returns, how dare he come back?!  
He means to do menace, he means to do harm,  
But Clara forgives him, such is her charm.



In honor of kindness, the people rejoice,  
And celebrate loudly in sweet candy voice.  
Ambassadors from far and wide,  
shower their guests with gifts of all kind.



The Spanish click in and bring their own bull,  
with fiery flamenco in chocolate mouthful.  
Arabs with lion have coffee to serve,  
Spicy and hot, an oasis **hors d'oeuvre**.



With dragon and panda the Chinese parade,  
presenting their hosts with tea green as jade.  
With polar bears and sweets, the Russians arrive,  
But don't be alarmed, they're really quite kind.



With strong and sleek wolf, the Danes strut on.  
Their sweetmeats are almonds: **Copenhagen chiffon**.  
Sailors and bull dog from England appear,  
with sticky, sweet toffee and holiday cheer.



France hops in with a frog in tow,  
Bakers and chefs bring treats to bestow.  
Seated on the throne, with **scepter** and crown,  
Clara is Queen in bright-candy gown.

The Prince and his Princess are married at last.  
Clara waltzes with flowers, her troubles long past.



But something's not right, what's that in the air?  
The sweets fade away, but do not despair.  
For where does she wake, and whom does she spy?  
Family faces around her, Christmas Day has arrived!

Her Nutcracker doll held tight in her arms;  
Clara is fearless, no cause for alarm.  
She's home once again, her voyage complete,  
with a family who loves her –  
Her own Land of Sweets.



# THE NUTCRACKER:

## GLOSSARY



**COPENHAGEN CHIFFON:** Chiffon is a dessert made with eggs whites beaten until they are light and fluffy such as lemon meringue

**CORSAGE:** Flowers worn pinned to a woman's clothes.

**DREAD:** Great fear or apprehension.

**HORS D'OEUVRE:** The French word for appetizer.

**PRECISION:** Quality of being exact and accurate.

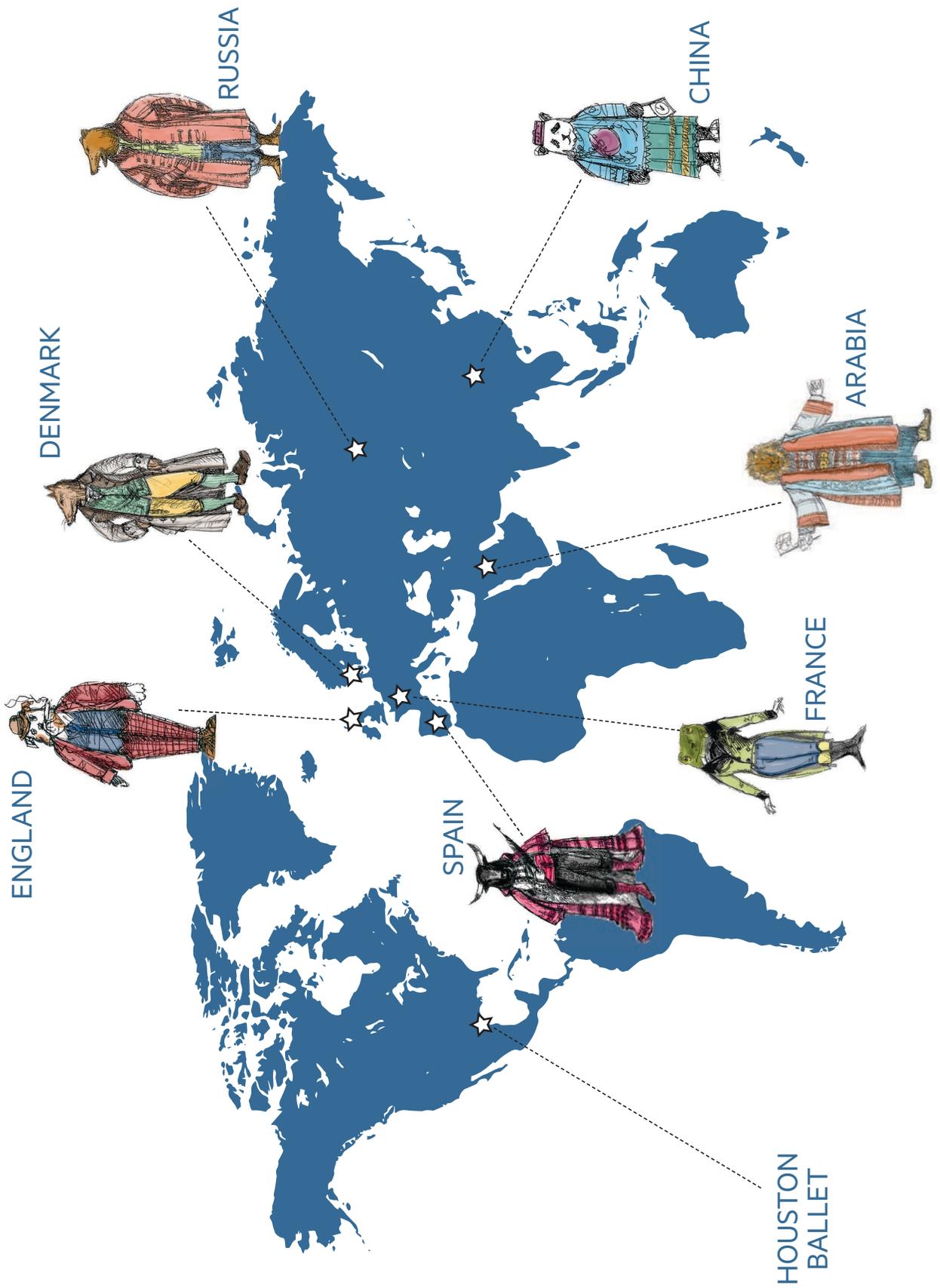
**PRIMPS:** Spending time making minor adjustments to one's hair, makeup, or clothes.

**SCEPTER:** A staff carried by rulers on ceremonial occasions.



# WHERE IN THE WORLD?

THE ANIMALS IN ACT II OF *THE NUTCRACKER* COME FROM COUNTRIES ALL AROUND THE WORLD! IN EACH DIVERTISSEMENT, LOOK FOR THESE ANIMALS TO BRING SPECIAL TREATS FROM THEIR COUNTRIES.



# WHERE IN THE WORLD?

JUST LIKE THE ANIMALS IN ACT II OF THE NUTCRACKER, HOUSTON BALLET DANCERS COME FROM AROUND THE WORLD

**HOUSTON BALLET**

Dancer Name	Role	Origin
Christopher Gray	Soloist	Vancouver, B.C.
Harper Watters	Soloist	Dover, New Hampshire
Syvvert Lorenz Garcia	Corps de Ballet	Oslo, Norway
Linnar Looris	First Soloist	Vijandji, Estonia
Soo Youn Cho	First Soloist	Incheon, Korea
Monica Gomez	Soloist	La Havana, Cuba
Karina Gonzalez	Principal Dancer	Caracas, Venezuela
Chun Wai Chan	Principal Dancer	Guang Dong, China
Stanton Welch	Artistic Director	Melbourne, Australia
Yuriko Kajiya	Principal Dancer	Aichi, Japan

# WHERE IN THE WORLD?

EACH DIVERTISSEMENT IN ACT II OF THE NUTCRACKER INTRODUCES A DIFFERENT ANIMAL THAT BRINGS SPECIAL TREATS FROM THEIR COUNTRY. COMPLETE THE CHART BELOW BY LISTING ALL THE ANIMALS AND TREATS YOU SEE!

COUNTRY	ANIMAL	TREAT
1. SPAIN		
2. ARABIA		
3. CHINA		
4. RUSSIA		
5. DENMARK		
6. ENGLAND		
7. FRANCE		

# THE CREATORS OF *THE NUTCRACKER*: CHOREOGRAPHER



A **choreographer** is the person who makes up the steps that the dancers do in the performance. *The Nutcracker* was first choreographed by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov in 1892 for the Imperial Ballet in Russia.

**Marius Petipa** is known as the father of modern Classical Ballet and had a career, spent mostly in the Russian Imperial Ballet, that lasted nearly sixty years. Marius Petipa was both a dancer and choreographer, best remembered for masterpieces still performed by companies across the world such as *The Nutcracker*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *Don Quixote*. From dancing to designing to researching, Marius Petipa was able to revolutionize ballet, especially in Russia where he served as ballet master for the Imperial Ballet.

**Stanton Welch AM** was born in Melbourne, Australia to Marilyn Jones, O.B.E., and Garth Welch, AM, two of Australia's most gifted dancers of the 1960s and 1970s. In 1986 he began his training at the late age of seventeen, quickly winning a scholarship to San Francisco Ballet School. In 1989 he was engaged as a dancer with The Australian Ballet, where he rose to the rank of leading soloist.

In 1990 he received his first choreographic commission from The Australian Ballet, the beginning of a series of commissioned works over the next 14 years as he developed his diverse choreographic style. He has created works for such prestigious international companies as Houston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, The Australian Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, and Royal Danish Ballet. In July 2003, Mr. Welch assumed the leadership of Houston Ballet, America's fourth largest ballet company, as artistic director. Since his arrival, Mr. Welch has transformed Houston Ballet by raising the level of classical technique, infusing the company with new energy, drive and vision; introducing works by distinguished choreographers to the repertoire; and attracting some of the world's best coaches to Houston to work with the dancers.

For his contributions to the world of dance, Mr. Welch was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in June 2015. The prestigious Order of Australia Award, established in 1975, is bestowed on Australian citizens for meritorious service in a particular area or field of activity. Mr. Welch was recognized for his significant service to the performing arts as a ballet dancer, mentor, choreographer and artistic director.



Stanton Welch AM. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.

# THE CREATORS OF *THE NUTCRACKER*: COMPOSER



A **composer** is the person who makes up the music that the dancers move to in the performance. *The Nutcracker* was composed by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky for the first production at the Imperial Ballet in Russia in 1892. Companies all over the world use the same music today for this holiday tradition!

**Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky** was born in 1840 in present-day Udmurtia, Russia. He began piano lessons at the age of five and could read music as well as his teacher within three years.

In 1861, Tchaikovsky began his studies at the Russian Musical Society. In the following year, he followed his teacher to the St. Petersburg Conservatory where he accepted a post. It was at the conservatory that he met and studied with Anton Rubinstein, director and founder of the Conservatory. Rubinstein was impressed with Tchaikovsky's talent.

In 1869 Tchaikovsky composed his first recognized master-piece, the Overture-Fantasy *Romeo and Juliet*. His compositions are some of the greatest works used for ballets, including *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Nutcracker*, which has become a Christmas season favorite. When composing *The Nutcracker*, Tchaikovsky used an entirely new instrument called the céleste (or celesta). This instrument is responsible for the well-known musical accompaniment to the Sugar Plum Fairy's solo! (pictured below)

Flute

### Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy

from *The Nutcracker*

P. Tchaikovsky

Andante ma non troppo (♩=56)

pp

pp

pp sf pp



# THE CREATORS OF THE NUTCRACKER: DESIGNER

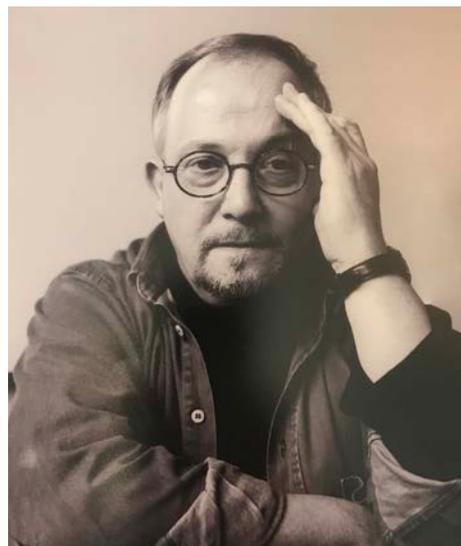
A **designer** is the person who decides how the costumes and sets should look. Tim Goodchild designed the costumes and sets for Houston Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker*. When designing for ballet, the designer must be sure that the dancers can move fully in the costumes, and that there is enough space on the stage for all of the dancers to move around.

Tim Goodchild is an international award winning designer who has designed for stage, television, film, opera and ballet. He has designed over a hundred productions for London's West End Theatre. He also designed Olivier award winning productions for The Royal Shakespeare Company. Internationally he has worked in Egypt, Stratford - Ontario Canada, Vienna, Los Angeles Opera, Chicago Opera, The Marinsky Opera - St. Petersburg, Sydney Opera, Houston Opera, Houston Ballet and Broadway. In 1988 he made theatre history designing the first Anglo-Soviet production of "*Swan Lake*" for Moscow's Classical Ballet, seen in London, Japan, USA and Moscow. He also designed the ballet "*A Simple Man*" for BBC2 which won a BAFTA award. BBC2's musical "*The look of Love*" and costume designs for the film "*The Little Prince*".

Tim would like to dedicate his designs for this production to the late brilliant designer Desmond Heeley and Tim's late beloved agent David Watson.



*The Nutcracker* set design by Tim Goodchild



Tim Goodchild

# MY PREDICTIONS

## PRE-PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY

**Make a prediction about What you will see at the performance.**

Think about what you already know about ballet and the story of *The Nutcracker*.

What do you think you will see and hear?

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**Draw a picture of what you think you will see.**

# EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

# STORYTELLING IN DANCE

Dancers have to make the audience understand the story and make their **characters** believable. How do they do that? Four important elements work together to make that possible.

## 1) DANCE/MOVEMENT

The **choreographer** makes up the steps in ballet. He or she chooses steps and **gestures** (expressive movements made with 1 or 2 body parts) that help tell who a character is and how he or she is feeling.

- *How does your body look when you are excited? Sad? Angry?*
- *How do you move across a room when you are excited? Sad? Angry?*



## 2) DRAMA

Dancers have to act while they dance, and they use their bodies, or **posture**, and **facial expressions** to do this. These **expressions** help the audience understand each character's feelings and the characters' relationships with one another.

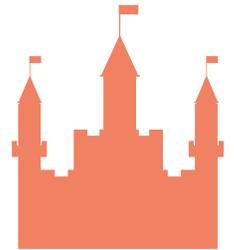
- *How do you stand next to a friend? A stranger? An enemy?*
- *What does your face look like when you are excited? Sad? Angry?*



## 3) DÉCOR

The **setting** of a ballet tells us when and where a ballet takes place. The clothes dancers wear (**costumes**), what the background looks like (**set**), and the items they carry in their hands (**props**) all help give the audience clues about the setting of a story. Some ballets take place in real places, like Europe in the 1600s; others might take place in imaginary places, like the Kingdom of Sweets.

- *Give examples of décor you would see in a classroom? A restaurant? A hospital?*



## 4) MUSIC

The composer is the person who writes the music. Sometimes music is written especially with a ballet in mind (like *The Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty*), and other times the choreographer is inspired by a piece of music that has already been written. Music is also used to set the mood of a scene or action.

- *What kind of music inspires you to dance?*
- *What kind of music do you hear at a birthday party? A parade? A baseball game?*



# STORYTELLING IN DANCE

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Help your students get a better understanding of how stories are told in dance by trying out some of these activities!

### 1) DANCE – EXPRESS YOURSELF\*

Using the **Feelings Cards**, have students demonstrate different feelings to his/her classmates. Students should use **facial expressions, posture, and gestures** to demonstrate.

- Start the whole group by drawing a card and having students demonstrate a matching facial expression.
- Next, have the student add one or two matching gestures to their expression.
- Pick a few examples to share whole group.  
*\*Emphasize that expressions and gestures should be CLEAR and BIG\**
- Finally have students work in small groups to create a movement phrase that demonstrates a specific feeling.  
*\*Challenge students to use different expressions and gestures to express the same feeling\**

While a group is performing, other students are expected to observe, interpret what they see, and practice appropriate audience behavior.

### 2) DRAMA – RELATIONSHIPS\*

In this activity, students will use **pantomime**. Pantomime is using movements and facial expressions to tell a story or express information without words.

Using the table below (and/or create your own), have students pantomime scenes that show relationships.

- Start by dividing students into groups of 2-3 and explaining that they will be working with their partner(s) to create a pantomime scene that shows a specific relationship. (Model if necessary)
- Next, give each group a type of relationship to portray (double one role for groups of three i.e. 2 parents, 1 child).
- Give students 1-3 mins to create a pantomime scene with their partner(s).
- Finally, have students take turns performing their scene for each other. Audience members can think and/or write critically about what relationship they think is being shown in each scene (scenes should not exceed 30secs in length).

\*\*Encourage students to **exaggerate** their movements to help their audience better understand their relationship.

#### TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS

Friends	Enemies
Parent/Child	Siblings (Brothers & Sisters)
Bully/Victim	Hero/Rescued
Teach/Student	Employer/Employee

### 3) DÉCOR – YOU DESIGN IT!

Using the set **Design Template**, have students draw a setting for a ballet or story to take place. This can be a story they already know or one they make up. Students should be able to answer the following:

- Is your setting a real or imaginary place?
- What details did you include to help your audience know when and where your ballet takes place?

Using the costume design template, have students design a costume for a ballet character. This can be a character from a story they already know or one they make up. Students should be able to answer the following:

- Can a dancer move in your costume?
- What fabric/material will you use to make your costume?

### 4) MUSIC – LET THE MUSIC MOVE YOU!\*

Make a playlist or CD with a variety of instrumental music that evokes different moods/feelings, and/or has tempo changes. *(Using instrumental music is important! Sometimes lyrics make students feel they have to interpret them with their movement)*

- Start whole group by discussing/reviewing how movement can help express how a person is feeling and how music can be used to set the mood.
- Next, allow students to move to the music while focusing on how it makes them feel and want to move.
- Have students explore movement:
  - while staying in one spot
  - while moving around the room
  - while changing levels (high, middle, low)
- Finally, have students work in small groups to create a dance to one of the selections. Groups take turns performing their choreography for each other. Audience members can think or write critically about what they think the dancers were trying to express to the music.

*\* Throughout these activities, remind students to move safely, stay focused, use face and body, and try different moves*

# FEELING CARDS

**HAPPY**

**SAD**

**ANGRY**

**EXCITED**

# FEELING CARDS

**TIRED**

**SHY**

**NERVOUS**

**SUPRISED**

# FEELING CARDS

**BORED**

**AFRAID**

**EMBARRASSED**

**ANNOYED**

# FEELING CARDS

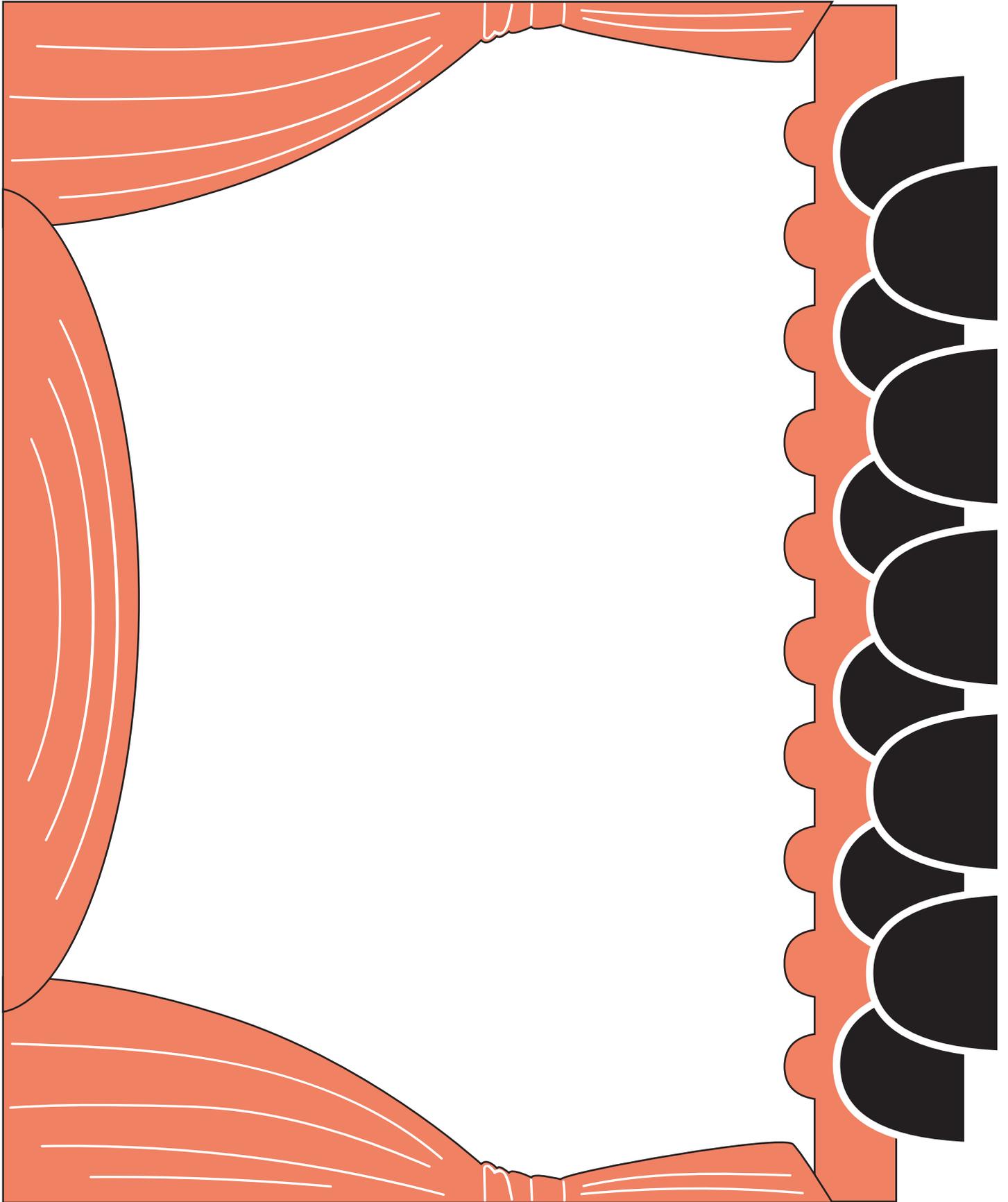
**PROUD**

**DISGUSTED**

**CONFUSED**

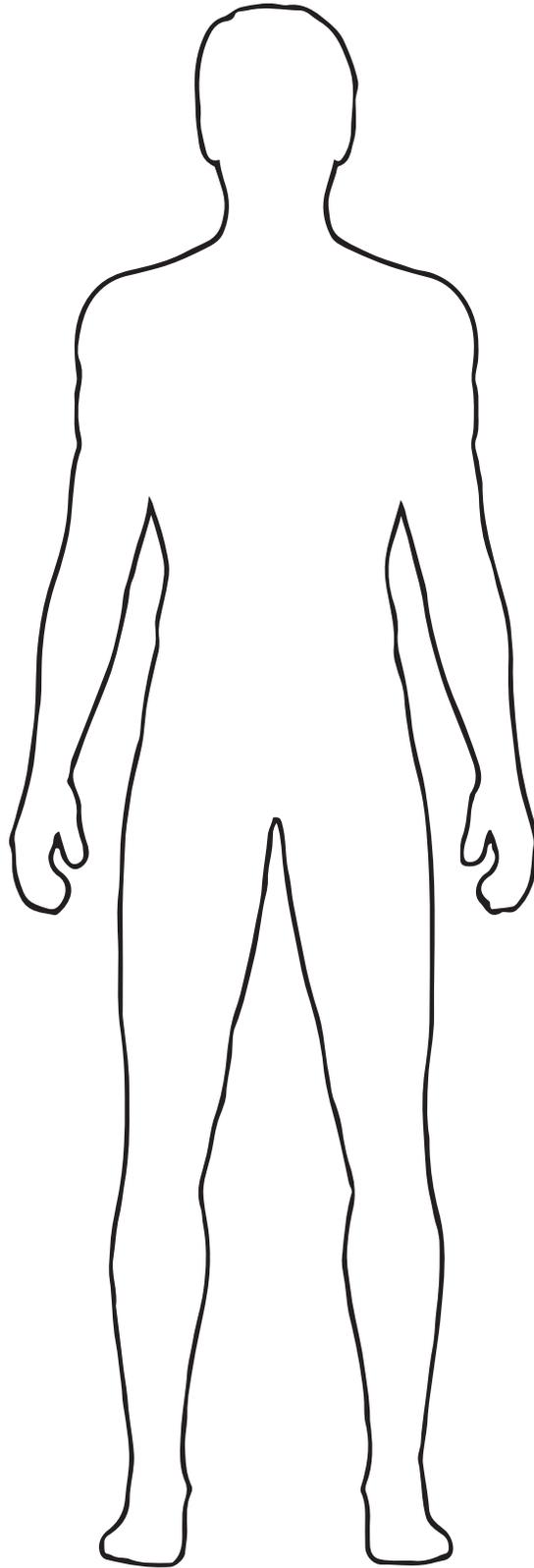
**BRAVE**

# Decor: Set Design

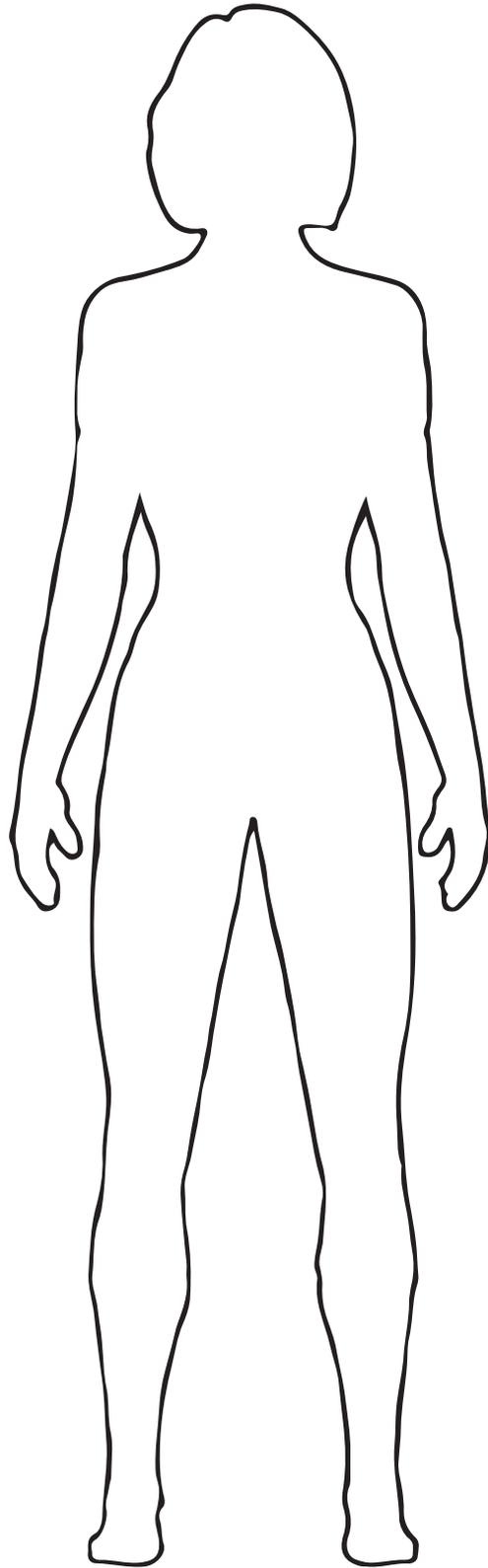


EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

# Decor: Costume Design



# Decor: Costume Design





# THE MAGIC BEHIND THE SNOW



When water falls to the ground as rain, this is called **precipitation**. Just like rain, snow is also a type of precipitation. When it is very cold, water in the clouds freezes and falls to the ground as snow.

During the Snow Scene at the end of Act I of *The Nutcracker*, we see it snowing on stage. It's not cold enough in the theater for real snow to fall, and melted snow would make it very dangerous to dance on stage. So, how do we make it look like it's snowing inside?

The snow you see falling is actually tiny snowflakes made out of paper! These paper snowflakes are very lightweight, which makes them float as they fall to the ground, just like real snow. The paper used to make these snowflakes is flame resistant to keep it from catching on fire as it floats down past the hot lights.

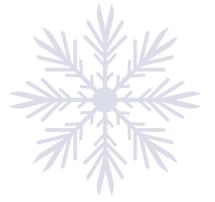


Artists of Houston Ballet in *The Nutcracker*. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.





# THE MAGIC BEHIND THE SNOW



For the snow scene 200 lbs. of the paper snowflakes are kept in a bag above the stage. This bag has holes in it, and whenever the bag is moved snowflakes drop through the holes. A backstage crew member pulls on ropes that create the snow you see falling from above the stage. If the crew member pulls slowly, a light snow, or **flurries**, falls. If the crew member pulls quickly, then a lot of snow falls, creating a **blizzard**.

Look for these dancing snow **flurries** on stage! Can you see the light snow falling as they dance?

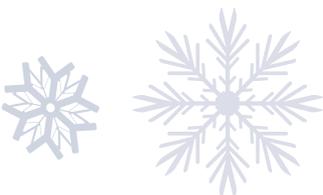
Look for these characters on stage! They are a part of the **blizzard**. More snow falls when these dancers are on stage.



Demi Solist Mackenzie Richter in *The Nutcracker*. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.



Artists of Houston Ballet in *The Nutcracker*. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.



# MAKE YOUR OWN SNOW!

Want to make your own snowflakes?!

Scan the QR Code below for printable snowflake templates.



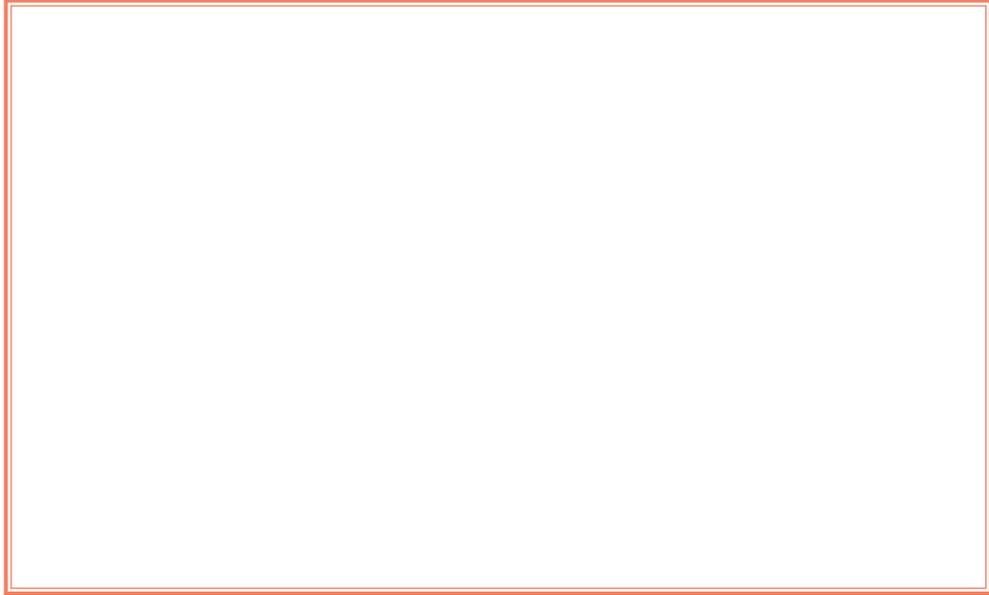
Challenge students to design their own snowflakes by using a blank snowflake template!

# Show what you know

Use the frames below to draw and/or write the beginning, middle and end of one of the story of *The Nutcracker*.



Beginning



Middle



End



# LEARN MORE

LEARN MORE

# ALL ABOUT ARMS



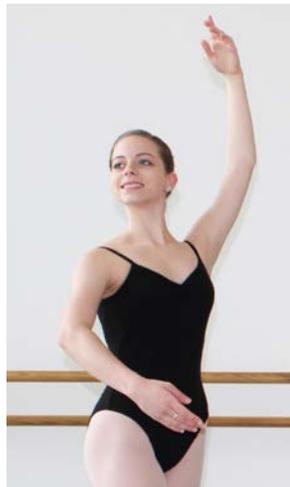
FIRST  
POSITION



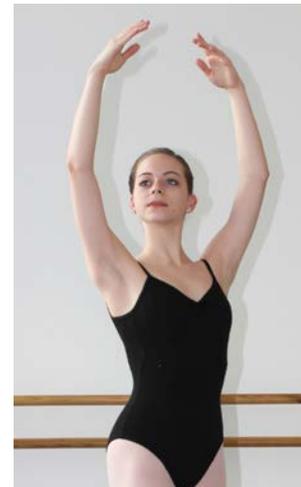
SECOND  
POSITION



THIRD  
POSITION



FOURTH  
POSITION



FIFTH  
POSITION

LEARN MORE

Try making all 5 positions.  
Can you keep your back straight while you do them?

# ALL ABOUT LEGS

Ballet dancers use 5 positions of the feet when they dance. Their legs are turned out, meaning their toes point to the side instead of the front.

Men and women use the same positions.



FIRST  
POSITION



SECOND  
POSITION



THIRD  
POSITION



FOURTH  
POSITION



FIFTH  
POSITION

LEARN MORE

Try making all 5 positions. Which one is the hardest

# WHY DO THEY WEAR THAT?

Dancers, like athletes, have to wear special clothes for both practice and performance.

## Class and Rehearsal:

In rehearsal, both boys and girls wear **leotards** and **tights**. Just like football players at the line of scrimmage, dancers need to move fast. It's best not to have lots of clothing in the way to add **friction**. So dancers and many other athletes wear extra tight pants to help them move faster and without constraint.



## Performances:

Houston Ballet dancers wear all different kinds of costumes, depending on the ballet they are performing. In classical ballets, women wear **tutus**, and men wear **tonics**. In the photo to the left, the female dancer is wearing a classical tutu, **pointe shoes** and **tiara**. Her Cavalier is wearing a tunic, tights and ballet slippers. Pointe shoes are satin ballet slippers that have a hard tip that allows female dancers to dance on the tips of their toes.



In contemporary ballets, dancers wear all kinds of costumes. In the bottom left photo, the male dancer is wearing tights and ballet slippers, and the female dancer is wearing a leotard, skirt and pointe shoes.

# HOUSTON BALLET

## A BRIEF HISTORY

The mission of Houston Ballet is to inspire a lasting love and appreciation for dance through artistic excellence, exhilarating performances, innovative choreography and superb educational programs.

Houston Ballet Foundation was formed in 1955 as an academy for nurturing talented dance students with dreams of professional dancing. In 1969, the professional company was founded and drew upon the strength of the Houston Ballet Academy.

In 1976, Houston Ballet conducted an international search for an Artistic Director. Ben Stevenson, former director of the National Ballet of Washington D.C., Principal Dancer and Ballet Master with the London Festival Ballet, was hired and served as Artistic Director until 2003. Through his exceptional leadership and direction, Houston Ballet developed a broad repertory including both classical and contemporary works as well as an Academy with a first-rate professional training school.

In 1987, the company moved into its new performing home, the magnificent Wortham Theater Center, a facility with which few performing arts houses in the world can compare.

In July 2003, the acclaimed Australian choreographer Stanton Welch assumed the artistic leadership of Houston Ballet, now America's fifth largest ballet company. Mr. Welch has transformed Houston Ballet by raising the level of classical technique and infusing the company with new energy, drive and vision. He continues to introduce new and existing works by distinguished choreographers and to attract some of the world's best coaches to work with the Houston Ballet dancers. He has created works for such prestigious international companies as Houston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, The Australian Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, and Royal Danish Ballet.

In 2011, Houston Ballet moved into its new home, the Houston Ballet Center for Dance. With over 70,000 square feet and a bridge connecting it to the Wortham Theater Center, it is the largest facility dedicated to professional dance in North America.

Today, the Houston Ballet continues to delight and inspire audiences through artistic excellence and innovative choreography. The 2019-2020 year will mark the 50th anniversary of the Houston Ballet.

Want to Learn More?  
Scan this QR Code



[houstonballet.org](http://houstonballet.org)



[wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Houston_Ballet)

# GLOSSARY

**Act:** How the story of the ballet is divided up. Similar to chapters in a book.

**Blizzard:** A severe snowstorm with high winds and low visibility.

**Characters:** The people, animals, or other creatures that the dancers portray.

**Choreographer:** The person who makes up the steps for a dance.

**Composer:** The person who writes the music.

**Costume:** A performer's clothing and accessories.

**Curtain Call:** The bow dancers take at the end of a performance.

**Designer:** The person who decides how the costumes and/or sets should look.

**Exaggerate:** To make more dramatic or expressive.

**Expression:** The way a person moves their body and/or face to express a feeling or emotion.

**Flurry:** A small swirling mass of snow moved by sudden gusts of wind.

**Friction:** A force that holds back the movement of a sliding object.

**Gesture:** An expressive movement with 1 or 2 body parts that communicates an idea.

**Intermission:** A break between acts that allows the dancers to rest and the audience to get up and move around.

**Mood:** The overall feeling of a written work or performance piece.

**Pointe Shoe:** A ballet shoe with a hard tip worn by women that allows them to dance on the tips of their toes.

**Pantomime:** Using body movements and facial expressions to express information or indicate an action without the use of words.

**Posture:** The way a person holds their body when standing or sitting.

**Precipitation:** Water that falls from clouds in the form of rain, freezing rain, sleet, snow, or hail.

**Props:** Objects on stage that dancers can pick up and dance with.  
(short for properties)

# GLOSSARY

(CONTINUED)

**Set:** The stage decorations that help us understand where and when a ballet takes place.

**Setting:** When and where a story takes place.

**Standing Ovation:** A period of prolonged applause during which those in the audience rise to their feet and clap for the performers .

**Tiara:** A small crown that a female dancer wears on her head.

**Tunic:** A long shirt worn by a male ballet dancer in classical ballets.

**Tutu:** The costume traditionally worn by female dancers in classical ballets. (can be long or short).



Principal Melody Mennite in *The Nutcracker*. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.

# YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT TO US

1. Download any QR reader app on your mobile phone or tablet

