The Jefferson Performing Arts Society

Presents

The Nutcracker

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Teacher’s Notes

The Nutcracker
by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Direction and Choreography by Diane Carney
Featuring the JPAS Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Maestro Dennis G. Assaf

This JPAS production was named Best Ballet Presentation of 2015 at the Big Easy Classical Arts Awards. The story of The Nutcracker has been adapted several times. The original story, “Nußknacker und Mausekönig” or "The Nutcracker and the King of Mice," was written in German by E.T.A. Hoffman. It was published in 1816 in an anthology called Kinder-Märchen (Children’s Stories,) which also included tales by Carl Wilhelm Contessa and Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué. Ivan Vsevolozhsky and Marius Petipa adapted Hoffmann's story from German to Russian. They also adapted it from a story to dance; Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky wrote the music. Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov designed the dances. The Nutcracker was first performed as a ballet at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia, on 18 December 1892.

Although Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s inaugural performance of “The Nutcracker” ballet was not hailed as a success, it has since become the most widely performed dance production of all time.
In New Orleans and Baton Rouge alone at least 10 productions of this holiday classic on average are presented each year. JPAS continues to collaborate with esteemed choreographer Diane L. Carney on our production of The Nutcracker.

This Study Companion begins with history. This section includes a history of the Nutcracker Ballet, a history of ballet in New Orleans and a history of Harvey Hysell, notable New Orleans choreographer and Artistic Director of Ballet Hysell. Throughout the years, Ballet Hysell School trained many leading artists, including Rosalie O’Connor (American Ballet Theatre), Mireille Hassenboehler (Houston Ballet), and Devon Carney (associate artistic director, Cincinnati Ballet).

The lessons in this Companion enable students to develop a deeper understanding of dance, regardless of their dance ability. **The Nutcracker: A Hero’s Tale** guides students as they reflect on what they already know about The Nutcracker and then introduces variations on the Nutcracker story filled with concepts they may not be familiar with. This includes exploring The Nutcracker as a Hero’s Journey, a pattern of narrative identified by the American scholar Joseph Campbell that appears in drama, dance, storytelling and myth. Joseph Campbell describes the typical adventure of The Hero as the person who goes out and achieves great deeds on behalf of the group, tribe, or civilization. **The Science and Math of Dance** allows students to explore what they already believe about dance, including explaining the reasons for their opinions. They will learn ballet vocabulary as they investigate “The Land of the Sweets;” this investigation will include discovering the science and math that coincides with ballet terminology (the science and math needed to effectively execute ballet movements.) Students will document what they learn by developing a series of sketches. They will conclude by reviewing their original opinions about dance and reflecting on their opinions have/have not changed. This lesson is followed by
an article published in YALE Scientific that reflects on dancers’ ability to spin without getting dizzy. JPAS Coloring Pages are also included for our younger students; they were developed from production stills taken of the JPAS performance.

As Nutcracker jumped down, the squeaks and squeals began again. What a noise! Under the big Christmas table, the deadly hordes of mice waited, and over all of them the monstrous mouse with seven heads loomed.

What will happen next?

TEXT RETRIEVED FROM:
http://www.springhole.net/writing/the_nutcracker_and_the_mouse_king/chapter4.htm
Louisiana Educational Content Standards and Benchmarks

The arts facilitate interconnection. They provide tangible, concrete opportunities for students and teachers to explore academic concepts. Academic concepts are strengthened when learning integrates academic subjects like English language arts with arts. A system of Grade Level Expectations and Standards and Benchmarks is replacing the Common Core standards used since 2010 to measure student achievement. Here is some background information on Louisiana Common Core:

**LOUISIANA STATE STANDARDS**

In March, 2016 The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved the Louisiana State Student Standards in English language arts and mathematics. This action by BESE replaces the Common Core State Standards with unique state standards developed through a collaborative statewide process which included extensive public input and the work of Louisiana educator-led committees. Academic standards define the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn in a subject in each grade. Please visit these sites for more information:

http://bese.louisiana.gov/documents-resources/newsroom/2016/03/04/bese-approves-louisiana-student-standards-adopts-2016-17-education-funding-formula

http://www.louisianabelieves.com/academics/louisiana-student-standards-review

All Louisiana State Standards were retrieved from:

https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-toolbox-resources/k-12-ela-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=34
Background
HISTORY OF THE NUTCRACKER

The origin of the Nutcracker, a classic Christmas Story, is a fairy tale ballet in two acts centered on a family’s Christmas Eve celebration. Alexandre Dumas Père’s adaptation of the story by E.T.A. Hoffmann was set to music by Tchaikovsky and originally choreographed by Marius Petipa. It was commissioned by the director of Moscow’s Imperial Theatres, Ivan Vsevolozhsky, in 1891, and premiered a week before Christmas 1892. Since premiering in western countries in the 1940s, this ballet has become perhaps the most popular to be performed around Christmas.
time. The story centers on a young girl's Christmas Eve and her awakening to the wider world and romantic love. The composer made a selection of eight of the more popular pieces before the ballet’s December 1892 premiere, forming what is currently known as the Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a, as is heard in Moscow Ballet productions. The suite became instantly popular; however the complete ballet did not achieve its great popularity as a Christmas performance event until almost 100 years later.

1994 Great Russian Nutcracker with M Alexandrova and V Zabelin

Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker, Kissy Doll
2005 Tatiana Predenia and Felgmatov in Grand Pas de Deux

Stanislav Vlasov on Glasnost Tour

2010 A Elagina and A Ustimov in Snowflake Waltz
Performance History and the St. Petersburg Premiere

The first performance of the Christmas ballet was held as a double premiere together with Tchaikovsky’s last opera, lolanta, around the Christmas holiday season on December 18 [O.S. December 6] 1892, at the Imperial Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia. It is generally agreed that Lev Ivanov, Second Balletmaster to the St. Petersburg Imperial Theatres, worked closely with Marius Petipa, Premier Maître de Ballet of the St. Petersburg Imperial Theatres and widely regarded as the Father of Russian Ballet, to create the holiday ballet. It was conducted by Riccardo Drigo, with Antoinetta Dell-Era as the Sugar Plum Fairy, Pavel Gerdt as her Prince, Stanislava Belinskaya as Clara/Masha, Sergei Legat as the Nutcracker Prince, and Timofei Stukolkin as Uncle Drosselmeyer.

In Europe and the U.S.
The Christmas ballet was first performed outside Russia in England in 1934. Its first United States performance was in 1944 by the San Francisco Ballet, staged by its artistic director and Balanchine student Willam Christensen. The New York City Ballet first performed George Balanchine’s Nutcracker in 1954 but the holiday ballet did not begin to achieve its great popularity until after the George Balanchine staging became a hit in New York City. The now well-known Christmas story has been published in many book versions including colorful children-friendly ones. The plot revolves around a German girl named Clara Stahlbaum and her coming-of-age one Christmas holiday. In Hoffmann’s tale, the girl’s name is Marie or Maria, while Clara – or “Klärchen” – is the name of one of her dolls. In the Great Russian Nutcracker, she is affectionately called Masha.

Composition History
Tchaikovsky accepted the commission from director of Moscow’s Imperial Theatres, Ivan Vsevolozhsky, writing to a friend while composing the ballet, “I am daily becoming more and more attuned to my task.” While composing the music for the charming Christmas story, Tchaikovsky is said to have argued with a friend who wagered that the composer could not write a melody based on the notes of the octave in sequence. Tchaikovsky asked if it mattered whether the notes were in ascending or descending order, and was assured it did not. This resulted in the Grand Adage from the Grand Pas de Deux of the second act where Clara/Masha dances with her magical Christmas present, the Nutcracker Prince. Among other things, the score of The Nutcracker is noted for its use of the celesta, an instrument that the composer had already employed in his much lesser known symphonic ballad, The Voyevoda (premiere 1891). Although well-known in The Nutcracker as the featured solo instrument in the “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy” from Act II, it is also employed elsewhere in the same act.
**Moscow Ballet’s Great Russian Nutcracker**

Moscow Ballet’s version of the Nutcracker ballet, known as the “Great Russian Nutcracker,” includes other unique elements in the telling of the traditional holiday tale. In the Moscow Ballet version, the setting is in Moscow and the city’s famous onion-domed skyline is featured as a backdrop. Traditional Russian folk characters Ded Moroz (Father Christmas) and Snegurochka (Snow Maiden) escort Masha and the Nutcracker Prince to their dream world in Act II.

Finally the “Dove of Peace,” exclusive to Moscow Ballet’s version, welcomes the couple to the “Land of Peace and Harmony” traditionally called “The Land of Sweets.” The “Dove of Peace” was inspired by performances of Stanislav Vlasov, former Bolshoi Ballet dancer and choreographer/ballet master of Moscow Ballet’s inaugural 1993 *Great Russian Nutcracker*, and partner Lilia Sabitova, People’s Artist of Russia.

“The Russian ballet style is elegant, expansive, brimful with feeling, knockout male dancer…confers an unusual thrill, and…Kids…were wide-eyed with delight,” *The New York Times*, Alastair Macaulay, Chief Dance Critic, 2010

“Perhaps one of the most magical moments of all, was delivered by a truly excellent Snow Forest corps, a veritable highlight excelling in both synchrony and grace. Both male and female corps were outstanding all night.” *Calgary Herald*, Stephan Bonfield 2014

“Acclaimed dancers Anatolie Ustimov and Alisa Voronova…lead a cast of traditionalists who treat the *Great Russian Nutcracker* as the spectacular, globe-spanning institution that it is.” *Denver Post*, John Wenzel 2014

“[Moscow Ballet’s Great Russian Nutcracker]…lively and resourceful with an unusual array of bright, painted backdrops adding to the Christmas cheer…disarmingly poetic…faultless mastery of the steps…bravura expertise.” – *Los Angeles Times* 2013 Lewis Segal

Ballet Hysell

Founded in 1969 by the late Harvey Hysell, Ballet Hysell began staging “The Nutcracker” two years later with the former New Orleans Symphony. Of the many local dance companies now performing “The Nutcracker,” Ballet Hysell has the longest continuous tradition of presenting it.

Now staged under the auspices of the Jefferson Performing Arts Society, Diane Carney guides “Nutcracker” productions performed at the Jefferson Performing Arts Center in Metairie.

Ballet Hysell’s artistic director, Diane Carney, began working with Harvey Hysell in the early 1970s and assumed full leadership of the company following his death in 2008. She spoke with pride about her mentor who, she said, can be credited for directing 107 ballets, including “The Nutcracker,” to which he added some of his own embellishments.

Among those embellishments were what Carney termed “the most gorgeous snow scene that I’ve ever seen” (in Act I, Scene II).

He also made some notable adjustments to several of the pas de deux that, Carney said, “stabilized the production and gave it more balance.”

Carney, 77, who received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Big Easy Classical Arts Awards in 2015, also had words of praise for maestro Dennis Assaf. “I can always relax when he conducts,” Carney said. “He knows how to conduct for dance, and he is the best dance conductor we’ve ever worked with.”
New Orleans Ballet and Dance

Like all of the other major performing arts, New Orleans dance has a deep-rooted tradition in New Orleans. Long before professional dance companies were established in the United States, operas and stage productions featured dancers in colorful costumes, performing their graceful movement art to the accompaniment of classical music and what would later come known to be "show tunes."

In the days of the Old French Opera House, from the mid 19th century to the early 20th century, ballet was very much a part of some of the classic French operas, as well as the epic operas in the Wagnerian German repertoire. On board the steam-powered riverboats that once plied the waters of the Mississippi River, dance revues, to the accompaniment of rollicking barrelhouse pianos, were very much a part of the live entertainment of those traveling up and down the river. Burlesque, once considered risqué and vulgar to the more cultured, also has a long, colorful history in New Orleans, and is now recognized as the performance art form it actually is.

Today there are two major companies staging or presenting ballet in New Orleans, the New Orleans Ballet Association and the New Orleans Ballet Theatre. In addition, Delta Festival Ballet stages an annual production of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker around the Christmas holidays.

RETRIEVED FROM: http://www.neworleansonline.com/neworleans/arts/dance.html
Harvey Hysell: A Life of Beauty in Motion

Reflecting in 1994 on a 25-year career in New Orleans, choreographer, teacher, and costume designer Harvey Hysell wrote, "What has this shy little preacher’s boy accomplished?...I sigh and ponder and finally say, ‘You did your best, and you succeeded in producing Beauty, on stage and occasionally by helping people dance to find the Beauty in themselves.’"

*Harvey Hysell in* Carmina Burana as the Roasted Swan, 1969. (2009.0142.4) All images in this story are the gift of the estate of Harvey Benson Hysell III, Diane L. Carney, and Ian W.O. Carney.

Harvey Benson Hysell was born in New Orleans in 1936 to a Methodist minister and a church pianist. As a young boy he occasionally observed the ballet classes his mother accompanied at Newcomb College and immediately developed an interest in the art form. When Hysell was 11, his mother enrolled him with Lelia Haller, a prominent New Orleans ballet instructor and the first American dancer appointed première danseuse of the Paris Opera Ballet. Hysell was a natural and soon began performing with Haller’s Crescent City Ballet before attending high school in Shreveport, Louisiana, where he continued to be active in the performing arts. He attended Texas Christian University on full scholarship and, in 1960, became the first male in the country to receive a bachelor of fine arts degree in ballet.

In addition to dance classes, Hysell’s TCU curriculum included coursework in choreography and costume design. He excelled in both, making him particularly desirable in the world of professional dance. Upon graduation, Hysell moved to New York where he refined his technique under the tutelage of Vincenzo Celli, one of the most respected ballet instructors in the world.
While in New York, Hysell designed costumes for such ballet luminaries as Royes Fernandez, the New Orleans–born principal dancer with the American Ballet Theatre; Paula Tennyson, soloist with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo; and Maria Tallchief, the first Native American prima ballerina who was then with the New York City Ballet. In 1962 Hysell was signed as the premier danseur for the new company Allegro American Ballet, and within a few months he was performing the lead male roles for *Swan Lake* and *Giselle*. Shortly thereafter he became the company’s principal costume designer. After touring nationally with Ruth Page’s Chicago Opera Ballet in 1965, Hysell turned his focus solely to costume design.

He moved back to New Orleans with friend and business partner Lewis “Jamie” Greenleaf in 1966 and set up Greenleaf-Hysell Associates Inc., a costume design firm specializing in work for Mardi Gras krewes and local theater groups. The firm’s work in New Orleans quickly won acclaim. While reviewing the Gallery Circle Theatre’s 1966 production of *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Times-Picayune* critic Frank Gagnard noted, “Greenleaf and Hysell…have realized their ideas with wit, consistency of style and a professionalism that announces two classy designers have just settled in New Orleans.”

Hysell never lost his love of ballet, and he made occasional appearances in local dance performances. In 1969 he collaborated with the New Orleans Concert Choir on a production of Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, performing as well as providing the choreography and costume design. Later that year he formed the semiprofessional company Ballet Hysell, and in 1971 he opened Ballet Hysell School, located on Magazine Street until 1978, when it was moved to a renovated church just off St. Charles Avenue.

Ballet Hysell garnered immediate attention and praise for its sumptuous
productions. It was the first company in New Orleans to stage Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker* in its entirety, and two of its early productions, *A Day for Flower Children* and *King David*, were aired on regional PBS-affiliated television stations. As momentum grew, Hysell’s reputation became great enough to bring ballet luminaries such as Fernando Bujones and Natalia Makarova (both with the American Ballet Theatre) to perform with his company. In 1976 Ballet Hysell became the New Orleans Ballet, with more professional personnel and stronger financial support. One of the company’s highlights was receiving a commission from Elizabeth Arden to stage a ballet named after its latest perfume, *Cabriole*. The company toured this ballet along with other pieces in Guatemala in September 1982.

The New Orleans Ballet was dissolved in 1982, but Hysell remained busy as guest choreographer for various local and national companies and as the director of the very successful Ballet Hysell School. With the help of longtime associate Diane Carney, Hysell intensified the school’s class schedule. They instituted summer workshops that attracted students from Alaska to Maine to study with Hysell, Carney, and a roster of important instructors and performers. Throughout the years, Ballet Hysell School trained many leading artists, including Rosalie O’Connor (American Ballet Theatre), Mireille Hassenboehler (Houston Ballet), and Devon Carney (associate artistic director, Cincinnati Ballet).

Hysell was clearly not alone in thinking he succeeded in producing beauty both on stage and within his dancers. In 1988 he and Carney reestablished Ballet Hysell, which became the recipient of numerous awards. Hysell was honored in 1995 with the Big Easy Awards Lifetime Achievement Award and again in 1996 with the Mayor’s Arts Awards Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1998 he and Carney closed the Hysell Ballet School and later began teaching at the New Orleans Dance Academy, which since 1990 had been operating out of the Magazine Street building that originally housed Hysell’s school. Though Hysell passed away in 2008, his legacy is kept alive in his dancers and in Ballet Hysell, which can still be seen in its annual production of *The Nutcracker* and various other performances throughout the year.
Diane Carney generously donated the Harvey Benson Hysell Papers (MSS 608; 2009.0142) to The Historic New Orleans Collection in 2009. Through the papers, one can discover more about this New Orleans legend. Some of the highlights include Hysell’s Royes Fernandez tunic pattern, correspondence between Hysell and his guest stars, and photographs of the more than 100 ballets produced by Ballet Hysell and the New Orleans Ballet.

—Nina Bozak

Harvey Hysell, 1936—2008

Harvey Hysell performs as the Roasted Swan in a 1969 production of Carmina Burana. Hysell was the foremost male ballet professional in New Orleans during the latter half of the twentieth century. Learn more »

Harvey Hysell was a ballet dancer, choreographer, and instructor whose expertise in technique, lyricism, and design elevated the state of ballet in New Orleans for more than forty years. He was a student, and later instructor of the Cecchetti method, a rigorous method of ballet technique that focuses on repetitive training to build strength and proper alignment within the confines of classical ballet. Hysell became a professional ballet dancer in the 1960s and performed, among other things, the principal male roles in Swan Lake and Giselle on national tours with the Allegro American Ballet. In 1966, he returned to New Orleans and provided costumes and choreography for various local productions before starting his own successful dance company, Ballet Hysell, as well as the Hysell Ballet School in 1969. Ballet Hysell was restructured in 1976 to become the New Orleans Ballet and enjoyed continued success until it was dissolved in 1982, allowing Hysell to focus his attention on the Hysell Ballet School. Before retiring the school in 1998, Hysell, his partner Diane Carney, and their staff trained many students who became professional dancers with national and international ballet companies.
Education and Early Career

Hysell was born in New Orleans to a Methodist minister and a church pianist. As a young boy, he occasionally observed the ballet classes his mother accompanied at Newcomb College and immediately developed an interest in the art form. When Hysell was eleven, his mother enrolled him with Lelia Haller, a prominent New Orleans ballet instructor and the first American dancer appointed première danseuse of the Paris Opera Ballet. Hysell was a natural and soon began performing with Haller’s Crescent City Ballet. He went to high school in Shreveport, where he continued to be active in the performing arts. He attended Texas Christian University (TCU) on full scholarship and, in 1960, became the first male in the United States to receive a BFA degree in ballet.

In addition to dance classes, Hysell’s TCU curriculum included coursework in choreography and costume design. He excelled in both, making him particularly desirable in the world of professional ballet. Hysell moved to New York after graduation to refine his technique under the tutelage of Vincenzo Celli, one of the most respected Cecchetti ballet instructors in the United States and a former dancer at La Scala Opera House in Milan. At this time, Hysell also designed costumes for such ballet luminaries as Paula Tennyson, soloist with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, and Maria Tallchief, the first Native American prima ballerina who was then with the New York City Ballet. In 1962 Hysell was signed as the premier danseur for the newly formed Allegro American Ballet. Shortly thereafter, he became the company’s principal costume designer.

Return to New Orleans

Hysell toured with Ruth Page’s Chicago Opera Ballet in 1965, then returned to New Orleans and turned his focus to costume design. There, with friend and colleague Lewis “Jamie” Greenleaf, he founded Greenleaf-Hysell Associates, Inc., a costume-design firm specializing in work for local theater productions. The firm’s work in New Orleans quickly won acclaim. In the review of the Gallery Circle Theatre’s 1966 production of Once Upon a Mattress, Times-Picayune critic Frank Gagnard noted, “Greenleaf and Hysell … have realized their ideas with wit, consistency of style, and a professionalism that announces two classy designers have just settled in New Orleans.”

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Later in 1982 the New Orleans Ballet was dissolved, and Hysell created the nonprofit organization Hysell Ballet Arts, under which he could focus on his very successful Ballet Hysell School. With the help of longtime associate Diane
Carney, Hysell intensified the curriculum. They instituted summer workshops that attracted students from across the country to study with Hysell, Carney, and a roster of important performers and instructors including Hysell’s former teacher, Vincenzo Celli. Hysell closed the school in 1998, but he continued to teach until 2008. Throughout its nearly forty-year history, Ballet Hysell School trained hundreds of ballet students, many of whom became professional dancers, including Rosalie O’Connor (former dancer, American Ballet Theatre), Mireille Hassenboehler (principal dancer, Houston Ballet), and Devon Carney (former ballet master, Boston Ballet; associate artistic director, Cincinnati Ballet).

In 1988 Hysell and Diane Carney reestablished Ballet Hysell, which became the recipient of numerous Big Easy Awards for best ballet production. Hysell was honored in 1995 with the Big Easy Awards’ Lifetime Achievement Award and again in 1996 with the Mayor’s Arts Awards’ Lifetime Achievement Award. Harvey Hysell died on December 27, 2008, but his legacy, Ballet Hysell, can still be seen in its annual production of The Nutcracker and in various other performances throughout the year.

Written By Nina Bozak, The Historic New Orleans Collection
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Suggested Reading

Would you like to learn more about this topic from books and other reading materials?

Harvey Benson Hysell Papers, MSS 608, Williams Research Center, The Historic New Orleans Collection.


RETRIEVED FROM: http://www.knowla.org/entry/1394/
New Orleans has an almost unbroken tradition of opera that began in 1796. Indeed, the city is the birthplace of opera in the United States. The first documented ballet was presented three years later. Especially during the nineteenth century, New Orleans was also a leader in the development of theaters, boasting some of the largest and most sophisticated in the country. During the twentieth century, world wars, economic depressions, and natural disasters failed to dampen the popularity of opera and ballet in New Orleans. The state as a whole continued to develop and contribute new talent to the national and international stage.

**Opera in the Nineteenth-Century Louisiana**

The first known opera in New Orleans, André Ernest Grétry’s *Sylvain*, was presented on May 22, 1796, at the Théâtre St. Pierre, on St. Peter Street between Royal and Bourbon streets. Since that time, with only a few exceptions, New Orleans has had a resident company for an established opera season. The St. Pierre closed in 1803, and in 1808 the St. Phillipé Theater opened on the corner of St. Philip and Royal streets. The opening night performance of January 30, 1808, presented the American premiere of Étienne Méhul’s opera *Une Folie*. The repertoire slowly expanded to include such composers as Nicolo Isouard, Nichoas Dalayrac, and Francois Boieldieu, as well as Italian composers Giovanni Paisiello and Luigi Cherubini.

In 1815 the Théâtre d’Orléans opened. Located in the French Quarter on Orleans Street between Royal and Bourbon streets, it fell prey to fire, which was an ever-present danger to nineteenth-century buildings made of wood. It was
rebuilt and opened again in 1819 under the management of John Davis. Davis, and later his son Pierre, imported singers, musicians, and dancers. Until the Civil War, the Théâtre d’Orléans remained the primary venue for opera. Ever the impresario, rather than disbanding his company during the hot and humid New Orleans summer months, John Davis organized tours of northeastern cities beginning with the 1826/27 season. As a result, the Théâtre d’Orléans introduced French opera to New York and other cities. Unfortunately, these “touring” performances are frequently credited as being American premieres, while the earlier New Orleans dates have failed to gain the recognition they deserve.

Davis was not the only impresario in New Orleans. In 1824, James Caldwell opened his Camp Street Theatre and appealed to the English-speaking population. Caldwell produced Carl Maria von Weber’s Der Freischütz and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s Don Giovanni and Le Nozze di Figaro. By 1835 both the Théâtre d’Orléans and the Camp Street Theatre competed to introduce Giocomo Meyerbeer’s Robert le diable. Caldwell opened his St. Charles Theatre in 1835. With a seating capacity of 4,100, it was considered one of the finest in the country. Caldwell brought from Europe such musicians as Thomas Cripps of England to serve as chorus master. Even more important was the fact that he imported Italian opera companies that were performing in Havana. He staged the U.S. premieres of operas by Vincenzo Bellini, Gaetano Donizetti, and Gioachino Rossini. Caldwell’s introduction of such operas resulted in an expanded rivalry between the two impresarios and their theaters. The rivalry came to a tragic end when the St. Charles Theater succumbed to fire in March 1842.

With the glamorous St. Charles Theatre a ruined memory, the Théâtre d’Orléans took center stage until the eve of the Civil War. Between 1841 and 1860, there were 1,550 performances of some 109 different operas by thirty-five composers. The Théâtre d’Orléans introduced the latest works produced in Europe to American audiences through their premieres and touring productions.

As the 1850s ended, the famed Théâtre d’Orléans was in poor condition. The combination of the building’s physical condition and a dispute between the theatre’s owner and impresario Charles Boudouquisé resulted in a decision to build a new opera house. Constructed in a matter of months, the new theater—known as the French Opera House—opened on December 1, 1859, with a performance of Rossini’s opera, Guillaume Tell. Soon, however, the Civil War challenged the operatic tradition of New Orleans. Opera would not flourish again until the 1870s, when the city resumed its preeminence in opera production in the United States by presenting premieres of works by Charles Gounod, Édouard Lalo, and Jules Massenet. In the early twentieth century, the French Opera House hosted the first visit of the Metropolitan Opera to New Orleans (1901), as well as the company’s 1905 visit that introduced Richard Wagner’s opera Parsifal to the region.

In December 1919, fire struck the French Opera House. Within hours it joined the ranks of the Théâtre d’Orléans, Crisp’s Gaiety, the German National Theatre, and the second St. Charles Theatre, which had previously succumbed to fire.

**Ballet in Nineteenth-Century Louisiana**

The first known ballet presented in New Orleans was in 1799, and by the 1820s John Davis was presenting some of the best ballet in the United States. One of the reasons for the enormous popularity of ballet in New Orleans is that ballet—with its reliance on the art of pantomime—had universal appeal to a linguistically diverse city with a population of 20,000 (half African American) and two opera houses. Davis, the proprietor of the Orleans Theater, went to Europe.
in 1822 to recruit both dancers and singers. He returned with performers such as Jean Rousset, the premier danseur at Paris’s Porte Saint-Martin theater. Also returning with Davis was Monsieur Olivier, a pupil of ballet at the Paris Opera, and his young dancer wife.

By the spring of 1824, Rousset and the Oliviers, after returning from performances in Havana, presented two ballets by Dauberval: Annette et Lubin and La Fille mal gardée. The April 1, 1824, performance of La Fille mal gardée is believed to be the first performance of that work in the United States. In 1839, “Madame” Lecompte and her famed corps de ballet arrived in New Orleans. Her entourage included a father and son unknown to the American public—Jean and Marius Petipa, who were later teachers and choreographers at the Imperial Ballet in St. Petersburg. Among the company’s offerings were scenes from Meyerbeer’s Robert le diable, which was critical to the development of nineteenth-century ballet music and technique.

Opera and Ballet in Twentieth-Century Louisiana

After fire destroyed the French Opera House in 1919, New Orleans welcomed visiting opera companies. In 1943, a group of music lovers under the leadership of Walter Loubat established the New Orleans Opera House Association. Initial performances were held outdoors. However, the Municipal Auditorium soon became its permanent home and served in that capacity through 1973, when the Theater for Performing Arts opened. Two critical positions were filled by Louisiana residents. Former Metropolitan Opera conductor and Louisiana State University faculty member Louis Hasselmans was recruited, as was New Orleanian Leila Haller, formerly of the Paris Opera Ballet. Renata Cellini was recruited as director in 1954. Recognizing the importance of training young singers for the operatic stage, Cellini launched the Experimental Opera Theatre of America. Although it was short-lived (1956 and 1958–1960), its impact was significant. As performing arts activities increase throughout the state, so do opera productions. The Jefferson Performing Arts Society regularly presents opera, and Baton Rouge established Opéra Louisiane in late 2006.

Organizations such as Ballet Alexandria, Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre, Delta Festival Ballet, Hysell Ballet, Lafayette Ballet Theatre, Lake Charles Civic Ballet, and the New Orleans Ballet Association continue to nurture ballet throughout the state. The contributions of New Orleans and Louisiana to the world of opera and ballet, both locally and to the United States, signal the importance of nineteenth-century of New Orleans as a geographic and economic crossroads, while the activities of the twentieth century clearly indicate how firmly the roots of opera and ballet were planted. The pioneering efforts of both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are also indicative of a region that was not isolated socially or culturally.

Written By Alfred E. Lemmon, Historic New Orleans Collection

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Entry Citation

Chicago Manual of Style


MLA Style
Suggested Reading

Would you like to learn more about this topic from books and other reading materials?


RETRIEVED FROM: [http://www.knowla.org/entry/547/](http://www.knowla.org/entry/547/)
Diane L. Carney is a New Orleans native who has spent her life dancing, choreographing and teaching. She is the artistic director of Ballet Hysell, and she has choreographed and designed productions for Tulane Opera Theatre, Tulane Summer Lyric Theatre, Le Petit Theatre du Vieux Carre, Dashiki Theater and Jefferson Performing Arts Society.
"The ballets, too, in their stories, were about serious and personal matters. *Giselle* and *The Sleeping Beauty* - these had to do with the great blessings and disasters that are the center of our lives, the things one is usually too embarrassed or too frightened to talk about."

Mikhail Baryshnikov
Ballet
A form of classic academic dancing based on the accepted five positions of the feet and using a vocabulary of movement developed since the 17th century; originally descended from court dances and spectacles of the 15th and 16th century. The most popular and well-known ancient dance form in the Western world.

1400s - 1600s ~ The Age of Court Spectacles

The Valois Tapestry, showing the wedding of Marguerite de Lorraine to the Duc de Joyeuse - The occasion for the Balet Comique de la Reine

"In late Renaissance society, dance was not considered merely a source of light-hearted entertainment or physical recreation, but a profoundly intellectual experience for both participants and spectators. Sixteenth-century dance, like the arts of poetry, music and painting, was infused with new meaning and innovations as a direct result of the findings of humanist scholars as they poured over ancient Greek texts in an attempt to recreate the powerful and effects of ancient Greek drama. The court ballets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were intended to enlighten and edify audiences. As the art of choreography developed it became increasingly informed by humanist ideals and imbied with layers of meaning that were moral, philosophical, and political in nature. It was the task and the delight of the educated viewers of these court spectacles to decipher the 'truths' underlying the dances."

Elizabeth Cooper from The Underground Stream

RETRIEVED FROM: http://www.coreofculture.org/ballet.html
LESSONS

The Nutcracker
The Nutcracker: A Hero’s Tale

BY: Karel Sloane-Boekbinder

The story of The Nutcracker has been adapted several times. The original story, “Nußknacker und Mausekönig” or "The Nutcracker and the King of Mice," was written in German by E.T.A. Hoffman. It was published in 1816 in an anthology called Kinder-Märchen (Children’s Stories,) which also included tales by Carl Wilhelm Contessa and Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué. Ivan Vsevolozhsky and Marius Petipa adapted Hoffmann's story from German to Russian. They also adapted it from a story to dance; Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky wrote the music. Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov designed the dances. The Nutcracker was first performed as a ballet at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia, on 18 December 1892.

This lesson guides students as they reflect on what they already know about The Nutcracker and then introduces variations on the Nutcracker story filled with concepts they may not be familiar with. This includes exploring The Nutcracker as a Hero’s Journey, a pattern of narrative identified by the American scholar Joseph Campbell that appears in drama, dance, storytelling and myth. Joseph Campbell describes the typical adventure of The Hero as the person who goes out and achieves great deeds on behalf of the group, tribe, or civilization.

Begin the lesson by asking students if they are familiar with the story of The Nutcracker. Tell students that in just a moment they will have a chance to share what they know about the story. Also tell students that they will be looking at two versions, or adaptations, of The Nutcracker and exploring how this story has developed over time. Define adaptation by writing down a definition on a dry erase board or Promethean Board where it can be visible to the whole class. As a suggestion, here is a definition that comes from Merriam-Webster on-line:

something that is adapted; specifically: a composition rewritten into a new form
This definition from Merriam-Webster also comes with some suggested examples:

**Examples of ADAPTATION**

1. His stage *adaptation* of the novel was a success.
2. The film is an *adaptation* of a book of the same title.

Discuss the definition of a literary adaptation with the class.

Next, distribute the KWL handouts. As a class, have students discuss the **What I Know** and **What I Want to Know** sections. Ask students to write down the responses.

It may be possible that some students are already familiar with other versions of The Nutcracker, such as the version of the E.T.A. Hoffmann tale illustrated by Maurice Sendak (translated by Ralph Manheim, published 1984.) If so, ask them to share what they know. Include what they share about these other versions in the **What I Know** section.

Next, distribute a copy of the **Comparing Stories** Venn diagram graphic organizer to each student. As a class, review the **Tales of Faerie, ETA Hoffmann's The Nutcracker**. Display the **Tales of Faerie** where the information sheets can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Explain that this is an over view of the original story, written by E.T.A. Hoffmann. Explain also that this overview is an adaptation; the original story was written in German. When a story is adapted from one language to another, sometimes there are small changes—a word may have a different meaning in one language that it has in another. As a class, read and discuss the story; have students take turns reading aloud to the class. Ask students to use the back of the **Comparing Stories** Venn diagram to take notes (characters, setting, plot.) Once the story has been read, ask students to write responses in the “What I Learned” section of their KWL graphic organizers.

Follow this with a review of **The Nutcracker Ballet Synopsis** and **Characters of The Nutcracker Ballet**. Display the **Synopsis** and **Characters** where the information can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. As a class, read and discuss this version of The Nutcracker; have students take turns reading aloud to the class. Ask students to use the back of the **Comparing Stories** Venn diagram to take notes on this version of the story (characters, setting, plot.) Once the story has been read, ask students to write responses in the “What I Learned” section of their KWL graphic organizers. After students have completed the “What I Learned” section of their KWL graphic organizers, ask students to flip their **Comparing**
Stories Venn diagram over; ask students to use their notes on the back to compare and contrast the two versions of the story.

Next, explain The Nutcracker story is a variation of the Hero’s Journey, a kind of narrative that can be found in drama, dance, storytelling and myth. The Hero is the person who goes out and achieves great deeds on behalf of the group, tribe, or civilization.

Next, distribute a copy of the Clara Stahlbaum: A Hero’s Tale graphic organizer to each student. As a class, review The Nutcracker The Hero’s Journey Outline and Diagram. Display The Hero’s Journey Outline and Diagram where the information sheets can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. As a class, read and discuss the information; have students take turns reading aloud to the class. Once the information has been read, ask students to complete their Clara Stahlbaum: A Hero’s Tale graphic organizer.

Explain that students will now develop essays on what they have learned about The Nutcracker. Distribute The Nutcracker: A Hero’s Tale Essay Organizer. Using their KWL, Comparing Stories and Clara Stahlbaum: A Hero's Tale graphic organizers, ask students to complete their Essay Organizer.

Once students have completed their Hero’s Tale Essay Organizer, ask students to write an essay that explores what they already knew about The Nutcracker and what they have learned. Assist them with drafting (punctuation, grammar, word choice, etc.) as needed.
The Nutcracker: A Hero’s Tale

Name__________________________

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The Nutcracker: A Hero’s Tale

Name__________________________

Comparing Stories

ETA Hoffmann’s The Nutcracker

Ivan Vsevolozhsky, Marius Petipa and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s The Nutcracker
The evolution of the Nutcracker reminds me of the evolution of Beauty and the Beast—they both started as longer, drawn out stories, including stories-within-stories that explain the characters' background. As versions of the tales were simplified—condensing the action to a shorter period of time and cutting out the backstories, they became more popular and well known. And now the original tales are hardly known at all, whether Villeneuve's Batb or Hoffmann's "Nutcracker and the King of Mice" (although for whatever reason, Beaumont is always credited with Batb and not Villeneuve, but Hoffmann always credited for Nutcracker and not Dumas.) Nutcracker also has a very beauty and the beast-esque theme running through it, so it's no surprise I love it so much.

Hoffmann's story starts, like the ballet, with the young heroine and her brother Fritz eagerly awaiting Christmas Eve festivities. The original name is Marie—she's become Clara in many versions, and interestingly Clara was Marie's Christmas doll. They also have an older sister Louise, who has been forgotten, but her character's not very important anyway.

Christmas Eve does not bring a large party with many guests, but a small family gathering, complete with Godpapa Drosselmeier, who brings them a castle he made with mechanical pieces, the genius of which is rather lost on the children. An ugly nutcracker soldier doll was discovered among the gifts, "but Marie remembered that Godpapa Drosselmeier often appeared in a terribly ugly morning jacket, and with a frightful-looking cap on his head, and yet was a very very darling godpapa." Marie "had quite fallen in love with at first sight" this ugly man. Fritz did break the Nutcracker, but not out of spite—he simply broke him trying to crack an extremely large nut. Marie was terribly upset, and Godpapa Drosselmeier laughed at her for being so concerned with such an ugly man.

That night Marie begged to be allowed to stay up a little longer to take care of her dolls. Her mamma allowed this, and as the clock struck, she saw Godpapa Drosselmeier on top of the clock, and heard the screeching of many mice. Marie was not afraid of mice, but when she saw the Mouse King with seven heads, she became frightened. Fritz' toy soldiers followed the Nutcracker out of the cupboard—note that they do not grow to life-sized proportions (which makes more sense when the throwing of a shoe causes so much distress to the Mouse King). The Nutcracker rejected a token of affection from
Marie's doll Clara, since he already treasured above all else the ribbon Marie had tied around his wound. After a perilous battle, in which the Nutcracker's troops were forced to retreat and the Nutcracker in grave danger, Marie threw her left shoe straight at the King and fell senseless to the floor.

Marie woke the next morning in bed. She had cut her arm on the glass of the toy cupboard the night before and had a fever. Her parents did not believe her story of the toys and mice, but she heard a voice telling her, "Marie! Dearest lady! I am most deeply indebted to you. But it is in your power to do even more for me."

Godpapa Drosselmeier appeared, and Marie accused him of not being of any help in the battle. At first he answered very mysteriously in a way that made her parents uneasy, but after laughing at their response to his "Watchmaker's Song," he produced a Nutcracker to Marie that he had fixed, and told Marie and Fritz the Story of the Hard Nut, over a succession of nights.

In a kingdom was born a Princess named Pirlipat that had strong teeth and could bite anything as soon as she was born. Her parents adored her. One day as the Queen was making sausages for the King, the Queen of Mice asked for a bit of the browned fat. The Queen assented, but was soon troubled by all the friends and relations of the mouse Queen, and the sausage had very little fat in it. The King was very upset by all this and ordered mousetraps put all over the palace. This was done by the Clockmaker, Christian Elias Drosselmeier. The Queen was too clever to be caught in a trap, but she lost her family, including seven sons, and cursed Pirlipat with ugliness—an enormous head on top of a crumped up body, wooden eyes, and a mouth that stretched from one ear to another.

The Clockmaker, Drosselmeier, found through the Princess' horoscope the solution to the curse—to eat the kernel of the nut Crackatook, cracked in the Princess' presence by the teeth of a man whose beard had never known a razor, and who had never worn boots, and must take seven steps backwards before handing the kernel to the Princess. Drosselmeier traveled the world in search of the nut and the man destined to crack it, with no success. Finally he returned home to Nuremberg, where the solutions turned out to be in his own family—his cousin had the nut Crackatook and his cousin's son fit the exact description of the man needed to crack it.
The young Mr. Drosselmeier returned with the Clockmaker to the kingdom, where he performed his duty, but on the seventh step he took backwards, he was tripped by the Mouse Queen, cursing him with the ugliness that had been Pirlipat's and to remain that way until he slew the Queen's son with seven heads, and until a lady should fall in love with him despite his deformity (see? I told you it was just like Beauty and the Beast...)

Not long after Marie was told the history of her Nutcracker, the Mouse King-who had survived the battle-began to blackmail her for her treats and Christmas presents, threatening to chew the Nutcracker to dust if she didn't do as he said. With a heavy heart, Marie sacrificed her beautiful things- until the Mouse King wanted her picture books and dresses. The Nutcracker pleaded with her not to sacrifice any more for him, but to provide him with a sword. Fritz gives the Nutcracker one of his retired Colonel's swords, and the Nutcracker is equipped. That night the Nutcracker appears to Marie, and gave her the seven crowns of the Mouse King, who has finally been vanquished.

The Nutcracker takes her through a ladder in the wardrobe to fantastic lands like Christmas Wood and the metropolis of Sweetmeatburgh (a land where their leader is "Pastrycook"), where he tells his subjects of Marie's loyalty and help in his victory. They are all grateful and invite her to pound sugar-candy with them, which she does until she falls asleep.

Once again her parents are not convinced, even when Marie shows them the seven tiny crowns (Drosselmeier claims he gave them to her on her second birthday). Even Fritz doubted the story (that, plus the wardrobe, reminded me of Narnia). It wasn't until Marie told the Nutcracker, "Ah, dear Mr. Drosselmeier, if you really were alive, I shouldn't be like Princess Pirlipat and despise you because you had had to give up being a nice handsome gentleman for my sake!" that there was a tremendous bang and there was Godpapa Drosselmeier with his nephew from Nuremberg, who thanked Marie for freeing him from the spell and asked her to be his Queen in Marzipan Castle, to which she agreed. They were married in a year and a day.

Tchaikovsky’s *Nutcracker* Ballet is perhaps the composer’s most famous work. It is often performed during Christmas due to the ballet’s content, and many families make it an annual tradition to attend a performance.

**The Nutcracker Ballet Synopsis**

*Act I*

It’s a cozy Christmas Eve at the Stahlbaum’s house. Their house is decorated with Christmas ornaments, wreaths, stockings, mistletoe and in the center of it all, a majestic Christmas tree. As the Stahlbaum’s prepare for their annual Christmas party, their children, Fritz and Clara, wait anxiously for their family and friends to arrive. When the guests finally appear, the party picks up with dancing and celebration. A mysterious guest arrives dressed in dark clothing, nearly frightening Fritz, but not Clara. Clara knows he is Godfather Drosselmeyer, the toymaker. His surprise arrival is warmly accepted and all the children dance and carry on with laughter.

The celebration is interrupted again when Drosselmeyer reveals to the children that he has brought them gifts. The girls receive beautiful china dolls and the boys receive bugles. Fritz is given a beautiful drum, but Clara is given the best gift of all, the Nutcracker. Fritz grows jealous, snatches the Nutcracker from Clara and plays a game of toss with the other boys. It isn’t long until the Nutcracker breaks. Clara is upset, but Drosselmeyer fixes it with a handkerchief. Drosselmeyer’s nephew offers Clara a small make-shift bed under the Christmas tree for her injured Nutcracker.

The party grows late and the children become sleepy. Everyone generously thanks the Stahlbaum’s before they leave. As Clara’s family retires to bed, she checks on her Nutcracker one last time and ends up falling asleep under the Christmas tree with the Nutcracker in her arms.

At the stroke of midnight Clara wakes up to a frightening scene. The house, the tree and the toys seem to be getting larger. Is she shrinking? Out of nowhere large mice dressed in army uniforms, lead by the Mouse King, begin to circle the room while the toys and Christmas tree come to life. Clara’s Nutcracker groups the soldier toys into battle formation and fights the mouse army. The Mouse King traps the Nutcracker in the corner, but the Nutcracker can’t overcome the Mouse King’s strength. Clara makes a desperate move to save her Nutcracker from defeat and throws her slipper at the...
Mouse King. She hits him directly in the head! The Nutcracker is able to overcome the stunned Mouse King and claims victory. The mice army quickly carries away their King.

Clara falls onto the Nutcracker’s bed, over-whelmed by the moment. As angels and delightful music hover over their heads, the bed turns into a magical sleigh, floating higher and higher. The Nutcracker is transformed into a human prince (who looks strikingly similar to Drosselmeyer’s nephew). He gets on Clara’s sleigh and drives through a snowy forest where the snowflakes turn into dancing maidens.

**Act II**

After their magical journey through the snow forest, they come to their destination in the **Land of Sweets**. Clara can’t believe her eyes; ladyfinger mountains topped with whipped cream whiter than snow, sweetly glazed flowers and butter-cream frosting everywhere she looks. Upon their arrival, they are greeted by the Sugar Plum Fairy. As they reenact the night’s events, the **Sugar Plum Fairy** becomes impressed with Clara’s bravery and the Nutcracker’s heroism. In their honor, the Sugar Plum Fairy takes them inside the Candy Castle and throws a lavish festival. They are treated like royalty and presented with every imaginable sweet. Shortly thereafter, the dancing begins. Hot coco dances to the lively music of trumpets and castanets of the Spanish fandango. The women of coffee dance in veils and move their bodies like rising steam to an Arabian song, while Mandarin tea dances to an exotic Asian flute chorus. Matroishkas (Russian dolls) follow the Mandarin tea leaping and dancing to an invigorating Russian Trepak.

To Clara’s enjoyment there is still more to be seen. A giant gingerbread house, known as Mother Ginger, dances onto the Sugar Plum Fairy’s court. She opens her skirt and eight little gingerbread children come dancing out circling around her. After the Mirliton dance is over, the children quickly file back into the large gingerbread house and Mother Ginger leaves the room. Soon after Mother Ginger exits, the dancing flowers enter to the tune of the harp. Perhaps the most beautiful **waltz** she has ever heard, Clara and the Nutcracker Prince watch with amazement. The flowers dance in beautiful mesmerizing patterns as a single Dewdrop floats above them.

Silence quickly follows the end of their dance. Clara doesn’t know what to expect next. A handsome Cavalier enters the scene and escorts the Sugar Plum Fairy to the center of the room. They dance to the most recognizable song in the entire work. The captivating pair dance lighter than air. This beautiful dance completes Clara’s most perfect evening. The festival concludes when everyone comes together on the court and bids Clara and the Nutcracker Prince farewell. She tells the Nutcracker she wishes the adventure would never end and he tells her it won’t for those who have an eye to see it.

Clara wakes up the next morning under the Christmas tree with her Nutcracker still in her arms.

RETRIEVED FROM: [http://classicalmusic.about.com/od/balletsynopses/a/thenutcracker.htm](http://classicalmusic.about.com/od/balletsynopses/a/thenutcracker.htm)
Characters of The Nutcracker Ballet

By Treva Bedinghaus
Dance Expert

Updated August 24, 2016.

Summary of Characters

Many characters appear onstage during a performance of The Nutcracker. The two-act story ballet is a popular holiday favorite. As the story begins, a young girl named Clara is hosting a holiday party with her family, including her brother Fritz. The strange Uncle Drosselmeyer, Clara's godfather, appears late and brings gifts for the children. He introduces entertainment for the guests that includes three windup dolls, including a ballerina doll, harlequin, and soldier doll. He then presents Clara with a toy nutcracker which Fritz promptly breaks during a fit of jealousy. Uncle Drosselmeyer magically repairs the doll to Clara's delight.

During the night, Clara sets out to find her nutcracker under the Christmas tree. When she finds it, mice begin to fill the room and the Christmas tree begins to grow. The nutcracker magically grows to life size.

Suddenly the nutcracker is fighting the mouse king with swords. After the nutcracker defeats the mouse king, he transforms into a handsome prince. Clara travels with the prince to a place called the Land of the Sweets where they meet many friends, including the Sugar Plum Fairy.
The friends entertain Clara and the prince with sweets from around the world including chocolate from Spain, coffee from Arabia, tea from China, and candy canes from Russia all dance for their amusement; Danish shepherdesses perform on their flutes; Mother Ginger and her children appear; a group of beautiful flowers perform a waltz, and the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier perform a dance together.

List of Characters

Part of the enchantment of The Nutcracker Ballet comes from the many characters who appear on stage during the performance. The diversity of the cast allows dancers (and some non-dancers) of all ages the opportunity to participate in the ballet.

The following list of characters, in order of appearance, varies slightly among ballet companies. Although the overall story line generally remains the same, directors and choreographers sometimes tweak the cast according to the specific needs of their corps of dancers.

Act I:
- Mr. Stahlbaum, the town mayor
- Mrs. Stahlbaum, the mayor’s wife
- Party guests, family and friends
- Clara and Fritz, the Stahlbaum children
- Uncle Drosselmeyer, godfather of Clara and Fritz
- Mechanical dolls, harlequin and soldier
- Owl, changing into Drosselmeyer
- Mice
- Hare-Drummers
- Nutcracker
- Soldiers of the Nutcracker
- Mouse King
- Gnomes, with torches
- Cavelier, Nutcracker prince
- Snowflakes
- Snow Queen

Act II:
- Sugar Plum Fairy
- Clara
- Cavalier, prince
12 Pages
Spanish dancers
Arab dancers
Chinese dancers
Russian dancers
Shepherdess
Mirliton dancers, reed-flutes
Mother Ginger
Buffoons
Dew Drop Fairy
Rosebuds
Flowers

**Popularity**

The Nutcracker is a favorite of many ballet companies because of the number of roles that can be cast. Even though the dancing may be minimum for a few of the roles, dancers of different levels can be cast together.

The Nutcracker: A Hero’s Tale

Name ________________________________

Clara Stahlbaum: A Hero’s Tale
The Ordinary World

Call to Adventure

The Return

The Mentor

The Road Back

The Threshold/The Unknown

Allies

Enemies

The Reward

The Ordeal
The Hero's Journey Outline

The Hero's Journey is a pattern of narrative identified by the American scholar Joseph Campbell that appears in drama, storytelling, myth, religious ritual, and psychological development. It describes the typical adventure of the archetype known as The Hero, the person who goes out and achieves great deeds on behalf of the group, tribe, or civilization.

Its stages are:

1. **THE ORDINARY WORLD.** The hero, uneasy, uncomfortable or unaware, is introduced sympathetically so the audience can identify with the situation or dilemma. The hero is shown against a background of environment, heredity, and personal history. Some kind of polarity in the hero’s life is pulling in different directions and causing stress.

2. **THE CALL TO ADVENTURE.** Something shakes up the situation, either from external pressures or from something rising up from deep within, so the hero must face the beginnings of change.

3. **REFUSAL OF THE CALL.** The hero feels the fear of the unknown and tries to turn away from the adventure, however briefly. Alternately, another character may express the uncertainty and danger ahead.

4. **MEETING WITH THE MENTOR.** The hero comes across a seasoned traveler of the worlds who gives him or her training, equipment, or advice that will help on the journey. Or the hero reaches within to a source of courage and wisdom.

5. **CROSSING THE THRESHOLD.** At the end of Act One, the hero commits to leaving the Ordinary World and entering a new region or condition with unfamiliar rules and values.

6. **TESTS, ALLIES AND ENEMIES.** The hero is tested and sorts out allegiances in the Special World.

7. **APPROACH.** The hero and newfound allies prepare for the major challenge in the Special world.

8. **THE ORDEAL.** Near the middle of the story, the hero enters a central space in the Special World and confronts death or faces his or her greatest fear. Out of the moment of death comes a new life.
9. THE REWARD. The hero takes possession of the treasure won by facing death. There may be celebration, but there is also danger of losing the treasure again.

10. THE ROAD BACK. About three-fourths of the way through the story, the hero is driven to complete the adventure, leaving the Special World to be sure the treasure is brought home. Often a chase scene signals the urgency and danger of the mission.

11. THE RESURRECTION. At the climax, the hero is severely tested once more on the threshold of home. He or she is purified by a last sacrifice, another moment of death and rebirth, but on a higher and more complete level. By the hero’s action, the polarities that were in conflict at the beginning are finally resolved.

12. RETURN WITH THE ELIXIR. The hero returns home or continues the journey, bearing some element of the treasure that has the power to transform the world as the hero has been transformed.

RETRIEVED FROM: http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero's_journey.htm
The Hero's Journey

The Nutcracker: A Hero’s Tale

Essay Organizer

Name__________________________

Paragraph 1: What did I already know about the story of The Nutcracker?
1.
2.
3.

Paragraph 2: Who is Clara Stahlbaum? Why is she a hero?
1.
2.
3.

Paragraph 3: Who is The Nutcracker?
1.
2.
3.

Paragraph 4: How did Ivan Vsevolozhsky, Marius Petipa and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky adapt E.T.A. Hoffman’s Nutcracker?
1.
2.
3.

Paragraph 5: What did I learn about the story of The Nutcracker?
1.
2.
3.
Student Standards for English Language Arts: Grade 4

Reading Standards for Literature

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Key Ideas and Details

1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

2. Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.

3. Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text.

9. Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

Key Ideas and Details

1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Craft and Structure

5. Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

9. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Writing Standards

The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Text Types and Purposes

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

a. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

c. Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).

d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

a. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
b. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.

c. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.

d. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

**Production and Distribution of Writing**

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

6. With some guidance and support from adults, produce and publish grade-appropriate writing using technology, either independently or in collaboration with others.

**Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

7. Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

9. Draw relevant evidence from grade-appropriate literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

a. Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature (e.g., “Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text [e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions].”).
The Science and Math of Dance

BY: Karel Sloane-Boekbinder

Dance involves a lot of science and math. In this lesson, students will begin by exploring what they already believe about dance, including explaining the reasons for their opinions. They will then learn ballet vocabulary as they investigate “The Land of the Sweets;” this investigation will include discovering the science and math that coincides with ballet terminology (the science and math needed to effectively execute ballet movements.) Students will document what they learn by developing a series of sketches. They will conclude by reviewing their original opinions about dance and reflecting on their opinions have/have not changed.

Begin the lesson by explaining students will be learning about many different aspects of ballet, including vocabulary and descriptions of various movements that they will see in the JPAS production of The Nutcracker (at this point, do not reveal that students will be studying the scientific and mathematical aspects of ballet. Not revealing these details is important so that students will be able to effectively express their initial opinions about dance and then, at the end of the lesson, reflect on how their opinions have changed.) Distribute a copy of The Science and Math of Dance: Opinionnaire to each student. Ask students to read each statement and reflect on whether they agree or not. Ask students to elaborate on their choices as they record the reasons for their opinions. Collect the Opinionnaires once students have completed them.

As a class, review the Land of Sweets, Act II of The Nutcracker Ballet. Display the Land of Sweets where the information sheet can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Explain that Act II will be the potion of the ballet the students will see during the JPAS Arts Adventure Series. Discuss the terms found at the conclusion of the hand-out: balance (arabesque,) leaps (such as the pas de chat) and spins (pirouettes.) Ask students if any take dance and are already familiar with these terms; if they are, ask them to explain the terms to the class.

Explain that students will now begin exploring the science and math of ballet, and, that science and math are very important when dancers are balancing (arabesque,) leaping (the pas de chat) and spinning (pirouette.) As a class, review the Arabesque Ballet Term Definition. Display the Arabesque Ballet Term Definition where the information can be
seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Discuss the angles found in Arabesque. As a class, consider the following questions: how do dancers create an arabesque?; what is a very common arabesque?; which arabesque is the most difficult?; why?

As a class, review the three Arabesque_Dancers’ degree of Angles images. Display the Arabesque_Dancers’ degree of Angles images where they can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Discuss the angle pictured in each sketch. Explain that students will have opportunities to create their own sketches of arabesques, including choosing which angle to sketch.

Next, explain there are many different kinds of leaps found in ballet. The JPAS Land of Sweets, Act II of The Nutcracker Ballet students will be viewing has many leaps, including the pas de chat. Review the lovetoknow ENTERTAINMENT Common Ballet Leaps information sheet. Display the information sheet where it can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Discuss the definitions and review the examples within the definitions.

Follow this with a more detailed discussion of the pas de chat. As a class review the three Pas de Chat_Dancers’ center of gravity images where they can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Discuss the dancer’s line of gravity and the trajectory created by the dancer’s body when they perform the pas de chat leap. Explain that students will have opportunities to create their own sketches of leaps, and, that a dancer’s center of gravity follows the same graph line (a parabola) no matter what kind of leap it is.

Review the Math is Fun Parabola information sheet. Place the Parabola information sheet where it can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Continue discussing how when dancers leap, their center of gravity changes and follows the trajectory of a parabola when they leap.

As a class, review the Pirouette Ballet Term Definition. Display the Pirouette Ballet Term Definition where the information can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Discuss the information. As a class, consider the following questions: what makes a pirouette more difficult?; why?; how do dancers’ spins (pirouettes) relate to science?

Next, as a class review the What rotational mechanics must traditional ballet dancers apply to correctly perform pirouettes? information sheet where it can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Discuss the terms velocity, force and momentum and why these things are important when dancers spin (pirouette.)
Deepen the discussion. Review *Newton’s Three Laws of Motion* information sheets as a class. Discuss how velocity, force and momentum are part of *Newton’s Three Laws of Motion*, and how ballet dancers utilize *Newton’s Three Laws of Motion* for balance, leaping and spinning. As a class, consider the following questions: Which ballet movement relies most on *Newton’s First Law of Motion*, balance (arabesque,) leaps or spins (pirouettes?) Why? Which ballet movement relies most on *Newton’s Second Law of Motion*, balance (arabesque,) leaps or spins (pirouettes?) Why? Which ballet movement relies most on *Newton’s Third Law of Motion*, balance (arabesque,) leaps or spins (pirouettes?) Why?

Follow this with a review of the *Basic Biomechanics* information sheet. As a class, discuss

Review the three *Arabesque_Dancers’ degree of Angles* images as a class by displaying the images where they can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board. Follow this with a review of the loveto know

ENTERTAINMENT Common Ballet Leaps information sheet. Display the information sheet where it can be seen by the whole class, such as on an Elmo, Promethean or SMART board.

Distribute a copy of *The Science and Math of Dance: SQPL Writing Literacy Strategy* to each student. Explain that students will now have a chance to create sketches of the ballet terms they have learned. As they complete the *Writing Literacy Strategy*, ask students to choose five ballet movements; ask that they Include Balance (Arabesque) and Spins (Pirouettes) in their choices. Collect the *Writing Literacy Strategy* sheets once students have completed them.

Return the *Opinionnaires* students completed at the very beginning of this lesson. Ask students to reflect on the answers they wrote. Have their opinions changed? Why or why not? Distribute a copy of the FOLLOW UP *The Science and Math of Dance: Opinionnaire* to each student. Ask students to record any changes; if their opinion did not change, ask them to record that as well. Collect the FOLLOW UP *Opinionnaires* once students have completed them.
The Science and Math of Dance: Opinionnaire
Name: ___________________

Explore Your Opinions about different movements in ballet

Directions: After each statement, write SA (strongly agree), A (agree), D (disagree), or SD (strongly disagree). Then in the space provided, briefly explain the reasons for your opinions.

1. Dance has a lot to do with mathematics._______
   Your reasons:

2. Dancers only work with movement, not angles._______
   Your reasons:

3. Dancers use Newton’s Laws of Motion when they dance. ______
   Your reasons:

4. A dancer’s center of gravity follows a path that can be described by a graph shape._______
   Your reasons:

5. Velocity is important in dance._______
   Your reasons:
Land of Sweets

Act II of The Nutcracker Ballet

By Treva Bedinghaus
Dance Expert

Updated March 01, 2016.

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Updated March 01, 2016.

Everything Clara could see was made of sugar. There were trees laden with sweets, and a gleaming palace built out of jelly beans with a shiny white roof made of sugar icing. A sugar plum fairy arrived to greet them.

In the second act of The Nutcracker Ballet, the Prince escorts Clara to the Land of Sweets where they are welcomed by the Sugar Plum Fairy. When the Prince describes their daring battle with the mice army, she rewards them with a celebration of dances. Different nationalities are represented by the dances of the sweets. When the ballet was created, several foreign delicacies were very special and rare. People did not travel the world frequently, so foreign products were much harder to get. The following dances performed by the sweets represent delicacies that were considered special enough to be a part of Clara’s fantasy world. The dancers' costumes resemble the "sweets" they bring from their countries.

- Spanish Dance: Chocolate
- Arabian Dance: Coffee
- Chinese Dance: Tea
- Russian Dance: Candy Canes
- Mother Ginger: Bon-bons
- Reed Flutes: Marzipan
- Waltz of the Flowers
- Dance of the Dew Drop Fairy
- Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy

The dances in the Land of the Sugar Plum Fairy are usually standard in performances of The Nutcracker, but are not always performed in this order. Clara’s dream fades away as the people of the Land of Sweets bid her farewell. The dances in “The Land of Sweets” include movements of balance (arabesque,) leaps and spins (pirouettes.)

RETRIEVED FROM: http://dance.about.com/od/famousballets/a/Land_of_Sweets.htm
Arabesque
Ballet Term Definition

How to say & pronounce Arabesque:
air-uh-BESK

In ballet, arabesque is a position where the body is supported on one leg, with the other leg extended directly behind the body with a straight knee.

The standing leg can be straight or in plie, but the back leg must always be straight. Arabesque can be found in almost every aspect of a ballet, both contemporary and classical, as well as other dance forms. Arabesque can be done with the back leg either on the ground (a terre) or raised in the air (en l’air).

Different Arabesque Positions

Arabesque has several different versions, all defined by the position of the dancer’s arms. The one constant is that the dancer must have a straight leg directly behind them, or it is not an arabesque. The different positions that can be done are first arabesque, second arabesque or third arabesque.
First Arabesque

*First arabesque* is when a dancer in arabesque has the arm that is on the same side as the supporting leg extended out in front of their body, with the other arm extended side or towards the diagonal back.

Second Arabesque

*Second arabesque* is when a dancer in arabesque has the arm that is on the same side as the back leg extended out in front of their body, with the arm on the side of the supporting leg to the side or diagonal back.

Third Arabesque

*Third arabesque* is when a dancer in arabesque now has both arms extended in front of the body, with the arm on the same side as the supporting leg slightly higher than the other so the hand is anywhere between the top of their head to a foot above their head. The arm on the side of the leg in arabesque should never move higher than the shoulders.

Different Heights in Arabesque

An arabesque can be done at almost any height where the back foot is off the floor. Higher does not mean better! Past 90 degrees, many dancers begin to sacrifice quality for extra height by opening their hips toward the side.

Low

Sometimes a teacher or choreographer may ask for a dancer to do a “low arabesque.” This usually means around 20 degrees. Much lower, and the step may not show well from a distance.

45 Degrees

A very common height, a 45 degree arabesque is quite common in variations, quick, and slow movement. Since 45 degrees is just half of 90 (in the middle between directly horizontal and directly vertical), it is easier for dancers to know where that height is since it’s an actual measure, and not just a description. This also makes for smoother corps work.
90 Degrees

The next height typical for arabesques doubles straight to 90 degrees. There isn’t much in between because it doesn’t look deliberate enough. Slightly below 90, and it may look like the dancer can’t get an arabesque to 90. Slightly above 45, it may look like a sloppy or over-exaggerated 45 degree arabesque!

90 degrees is often considered the “target” arabesque for many reasons.

1. It is very easy to tell if an arabesque is exactly at 90 degrees or not. If it is parallel with the ground, the dancer looks like they are at 90.

2. It looks very clean. Line of corps dancers all at 90 (Giselle 2nd act for example) looks very deliberate and uniform. Audiences love this!

3. At 90 degrees, there are other things you can do to improve the overall look that don’t involve lifting your leg higher. For example, keep your back more upright, or squaring your hips more. Being able to understand this idea is considered an advanced level way of thinking about technique and measure of quality since it doesn’t involve the obvious “get your leg higher!”

Over 90

Dancer Shelby Dyer demonstrates an arabesque above 90 degrees with a straight back!

Past 90 degrees in an arabesque is common too, but is often reserved when a dancer is featured alone or for the ballerina with her partner.

Because an arabesque gets considerably harder to do correctly past 90 due to average limitation in hips, asking an entire corps to hit a certain degree above 90 is asking for trouble!

RETRIEVED FROM:

https://ballethub.com/ballet-term/arabesque/
The Science and Math of Dance

Arabesque: Dancers’ degrees of Angles
Arabesque: Dancers’ degrees of Angles
Arabesque: Dancers' degrees of Angles
Ballet Leaps

By Brian Brinlee

A big part of learning ballet is learning how to do the ballet leaps. Ballet is a graceful dance with a long history and tradition. It can take years of study to become proficient and even longer before you master it. Most dancers start learning the basics of ballet leaps when they are very young. If they have the drive and passion for the art, they might turn it into a career. To do that, they first need to know their leaps.

Common Ballet Leaps

The art of ballet has its roots in Italian renaissance and includes many precise steps and movements. Just learning the ballet terms can be a challenge. The most common leaps include the following:

1. **Jeté** - This is a ballet leap from one leg to the other in which one leg is thrown to the side, front, or back of the dancer. There are several kinds of jetes such as petit jete and grand jete.

2. **Grand Jeté** - One of the harder leaps but one that is most associated with ballet. It is a long horizontal jump, starting from one leg and landing on the other. The dancer usually performs a full leg split in mid-air before she lands. If performed correctly, it can make the dancer appear as if he is gliding through the air.

3. **Sissone** - This is a simple leap where the dancer moves from two feet to only one foot. In some occasions, the dancer may land with both feet.

4. **Pas de Chat** - Translated, it means the "step of the cat." A difficult leap to perform, it is where the dancer jumps sideways. While in the air, she bends both legs up as high as possible while keeping her knees apart. The result is the legs form a diamond shape while in the air.

5. **Sauté** - Literally meaning "jump," a saute is used to add a jump to another movement.

6. **Petit Saut** - This is a small jump where the feet do not change position while the dancer is in the air.

7. **Emboîté** - A ballet leap performed while turning and traveling. With the right leg forward, the dancer jumps up and bends the leg to 45 degrees. He then lands on the right foot and places his left foot in front of the right ankle.

8. **Entrechat** - A fast leap in which the dancer jumps into the air and quickly crosses the legs in front and behind. While in the air, the dancer beats her right thigh on the back and front of her left thigh before landing.

RETRIEVED FROM: [http://dance.lovetoknow.com/Ballet_Leaps](http://dance.lovetoknow.com/Ballet_Leaps)
The point in the human body where all the parts are in balance is called the center of gravity; when a person is standing or moving on their feet, their hips are a natural pivot point. This natural pivot point is where the weight of the body is concentrated and balanced. This pivot point is a person’s center of gravity.

The line of gravity is an imaginary vertical line that passes through the center of gravity.
The Science and Math of Dance

Pas de chat leap

When a dancer is in motion, their center of gravity follows a line that can be graphed.
A special curve, shaped like an arch.

Any point on a parabola is at an equal distance from ...

... a fixed point (the focus), and ...
... a fixed straight line (the directrix)

RETRIEVED FROM: https://www.mathsisfun.com/geometry/parabola.html
Pirouette

Ballet Term Definition

How to say & pronounce Pirouette:

peer-owet

What does Pirouette translate to?

spin

Pirouette is a classical ballet term meaning “spin.” It describes when a dancer is turning around one leg with the other off the ground and in a position, most commonly in passé. A pirouette can be
done either en dedans, turning in towards the supporting leg that the dancer is turning on, or en dehors, which is turning away from the supporting leg.

Pirouettes are often considered one of the most fun ballet steps to practice and do. Also, since they are quite hard to do cleanly with multiple turns (double pirouettes, triple pirouettes and so on) it becomes very rewarding for dancers once they feel they’ve improved their pirouettes. A pirouette can come in many different forms since it basically describes any turn that is done on one leg. A pirouette, while close in definition, is not done with a piqué, but with a relevé despite the definitions of pirouette and pique turn being similar.

**Pirouette in Ballet Class**

A pirouette is an intermediate step that is practiced and performed all the way up to the professional level. A pirouette combination in center is an essential part of every intermediate and advanced ballet class.

**Pirouette in Performance**

Pirouettes are also extremely common in performances of classical and contemporary ballets and even many other types of dance such as jazz and tap. They are very common in pas de deuxes, male variations, female variations, codas and group corps de ballet dances.

RETRIEVED FROM: https://ballethub.com/ballet-term/pirouette/

IMAGE RETRIEVED FROM: http://www.yalescientific.org/2013/12/qa-how-do-dancers-spin-without-becoming-dizzy/
What rotational mechanics must traditional ballet dancers apply to correctly perform pirouettes?

Sunday, 14 April 2013

_Pirouette_: “An act of spinning on one foot, typically with the raised foot touching the knee of the supporting leg.” (Free Dictionary, 2013)

---

_In order to comprehend the mechanics which permit ballet dancers to perform pirouettes (spins) there are several biomechanical principles which must initially be understood._

Firstly, **velocity** is used to describe how fast an object is moving and in what direction. Its scientific formula is distance divided by time plus direction. Secondly, **momentum** is the mass of an object multiplied by its velocity. Lastly **force**, “is a product of mass and acceleration” (Blazevich, 2010). It induces a change in the current object and therefore in order to change the objects momentum, force must be applied over a period of time. Force additionally encompasses both magnitude and direction, making it a vector quantity. This demonstrates why arrows graphically represent forces. (Keznetsova, 2003) There are multiple forces that act upon ballet dancers. Gravity, acts as a downward force, the support from the floor is an upward force and friction from the floor aids as a sideways
force. (Keznetsova, 2003) The surface of the floor when performing pirouettes in fact can have a huge impact on dancer’s success. The floor should be smooth enough to proficiently turn, not to slippery to fall and lastly not produce excessive amounts of grip. If the floor produces too much grip the kinetic energy provided by the dancer will transfer down to where the ball of the foot hits the surface. This turns the energy into heat which will cause the dancer to decelerate. (First Post, 2012) This is called friction “force opposing motion at the interface of two surfaces.” (Blazevich, 2010)

**How is the initial torque generated?**

A single pirouette is a 360° turn of the body on one foot. **Angular velocity** describes how fast the object or dancer spins. Angular velocity is also a vector quantity as it is characterized not only by the direction of the rotational axis but also its magnitude. **Rotational Inertia** can be perceived as the inertia of a rotating object. Inertia is the tendency for an object to remain in its current state of motion. Similarly **Angular momentum** is rotational inertia multiplied by angular velocity and consequently if an object has a large angular momentum it is harder to stop it spinning. A pirouette however can have both a ‘repetitive’ and ‘non repetitive’ nature meaning it has a definite beginning and end as demonstrated in the case of a singular turn. It can additionally be ‘non repetitive’ as pirouettes can have a continuous nature or cycle, solely dependent on the expertise of the dancer. (First Post, 2012) Torque measures how much force acting upon an object causes it to rotate. Torques formula equals distance multiplied by force. Change in angular momentum is additionally equal to the exerted torque on an object multiplied by the time the torque was acting. (Blazevich, 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion</th>
<th>Motion with spin</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Velocity</td>
<td>Angular Velocity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>Rotational Inertia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Momentum</td>
<td>Angular momentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force</td>
<td>Torque</td>
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</table>

(Figure 2) (Blazevich, 2010)
The table above can aid in overall understanding when comprehending the differences in biomechanical terminology.

A dancer can ultimately be considered as an object moving as a result of influential physical forces. The motion of the body is determined by forces operating outside of the body. Factors such as distribution of body mass and body configuration can only be controlled by the bodily system itself. (Laws & Swope, 2002) The turns examined in this paper have no linear acceleration and because of gravity the vertical forces of the body and floor are balanced, with the total horizontal force equaling zero. (Laws, 1979) As demonstrated above no change in bodily angular motion can occur without a torque. When initiating a turn the ballet dancer spins around a vertical axis, giving rise to the torque. This is biomechanically given by the force and the vertical distance from the line of action of the force to the rotational axis. (Laws, 1979) Here the total horizontal force on the body equals zero and a torque can be formed by a force, consisting of equal and opposite forces with certain distance between the lines of the forces.

When a ballet dancer applies a horizontal force to the floor, Newton’s third Law demonstrates that the floor then exerts an equal and opposite force back against the dancer’s foot. This aids as an external force acting upon the dancers body and produces a rotational motion, commonly known as a pirouette. The torque used to initiate a turn can be applied with one or two feet with little or more distance between them. For example a turn from fifth position, with a small distance between the feet requires a greater force to produce the same torque than a turn in which the distance is larger.

![Figure 3](Pirouettes, 2010)
In conclusion, biomechanical analysis can help give dancers, both elite and professional, a greater understanding of the underlying principles of biomechanics and can help dance teachers alike give students constructive and correct advice regarding technique, body placement and physics.

References


RETRIEVED FROM: http://ballerinabiomechanics.blogspot.com/
According to Newton's first law...

An object at rest will remain at rest unless acted on by an unbalanced force. An object in motion continues in motion with the same speed and in the same direction unless acted upon by an unbalanced force.

This law is often called "the law of inertia".

What does this mean?

This means that there is a natural tendency of objects to keep on doing what they're doing. All objects resist changes in their state of motion. In the absence of an unbalanced force, an object in motion will maintain this state of motion.

Second Law of Motion

According to Newton's second law...
Acceleration is produced when a force acts on a mass. The greater the mass (of the object being accelerated) the greater the amount of force needed (to accelerate the object).

What does this mean?

Everyone unconsciously knows the Second Law. Everyone knows that heavier objects require more force to move the same distance as lighter objects.
However, the Second Law gives us an exact relationship between force, mass, and acceleration. It can be expressed as a mathematical equation:

\[ F = MA \]

or

\[ \text{FORCE} = \text{MASS times ACCELERATION} \]

This is an example of how Newton's Second Law works:

Mike's car, which weighs 1,000 kg, is out of gas. Mike is trying to push the car to a gas station, and he makes the car go 0.05 m/s/s. Using Newton's Second Law, you can compute how much force Mike is applying to the car.
Answer = 50 newtons

According to Newton's third law...

For every action there is an equal and opposite re-action.

What does this mean?

This means that for every force there is a reaction force that is equal in size, but opposite in direction. That is to say that whenever an object pushes another object it gets pushed back in the opposite direction equally hard.

Let's study how a rocket works to understand
Newton's Third Law.

The rocket's action is to push down on the ground with the force of its powerful engines, and the reaction is that the ground pushes the rocket upwards with an equal force.

UP,
UP,
and
AWAY!

RETRIEVED FROM:
http://teachertech.rice.edu/Participants/louviere/Newton/law1.html
http://teachertech.rice.edu/Participants/louviere/Newton/law2.html
http://teachertech.rice.edu/Participants/louviere/Newton/law3.html
BASIC BIOMECHANICS

“It is important when learning about how the body moves (kinesiology) to also learn about the forces placed on the body that cause the movement.”

Lippert, p93
FORCE

• To create a force, one object must act on another.
• Force can be either a push, which creates compression, or a pull, which creates tension.
• Movement occurs if one side pushes or pulls harder than the other.
• Therefore, force is any action or influence that moves an object.

Lippert, p95
FORCE...CONTINUED

- Kinetics is the effect of forces on the human body
- Force is any action or influence that moves the body or influences the movement of the body
- Forces “control” movement of the body and can be internal or external

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Forces</th>
<th>External Forces</th>
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Lippert, p94
FORCE COUPLE

- A force couple occurs when two or more forces act in different directions, resulting in a turning effect.
- Example: the upper trapezius pulls superiorly and medially, the lower trapezius pulls inferiorly, and the serratus anterior pulls anteriorly. The combined effect is that the scapula rotates.

Lippert, p97
TORQUE

• Torque is the ability of force to produce rotation around an axis
• Therefore, torque can be thought of as rotary force
• The amount of torque a lever has depends on two things:
  • The amount of force exerted
  • The distance between the force and the axis of motion (this distance is called the moment arm)
• Everyday example: use of a wrench
• Clinical Example: strengthening shoulder abductors

Lippert, p97 & Mansfield, p11
STABILITY

1. **State of Equilibrium:** when an object is balanced and all forces acting on it are even

2. **Gravity:** the mutual attraction between the earth and an object

3. **Gravitational Force:** always directed vertically downward, toward the center of the earth

4. **Center of Gravity (COG):** the balance point of an object at which torque on all sides is equal. It is also the point at which the planes of the body intersect

5. **Base of Support (BOS):** that part of the body that is in contact with the supporting surface

6. **Line of Gravity (LOG):** an imaginary vertical line passing through the COG toward the center of the earth

DIAGRAMS AND INFORMATION RETRIEVED FROM: BasicBiomechanicsandgravity.PDF
Name: __________________________

**Directions:**
As a class, read through the information sheets of **Ballet Leaps**, Balance (**Arabesque**) and Spins (**Pirouette**.) Choose five ballet movements from the information sheets. Include Balance (**Arabesque**) and Spins (**Pirouettes**) in your choices. For each one you choose, describe and sketch what you see; when you sketch your image of Balance (**Arabesque**,) choose a degree of angle (20°, 45° or 90°) for the potion of the dancer’s leg:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballet Movement 1: Description:</th>
<th>Sketch of ballet movement 1:</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>What is the definition of this ballet movement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How does this ballet movement involve science and math?</td>
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**Ballet Movement 2: Description:**

What is the name of this ballet movement?

What is the definition of this ballet movement?

How does this ballet movement involve science and math?

**Ballet Movement 3: Description:**

What is the name of this ballet movement?

What is the definition of this ballet movement?

How does this ballet movement involve science and math?
The Science and Math of Dance:  
*SQPL Writing* Literacy Strategy

Name: ______________________

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<td>How does this ballet movement involve science and math?</td>
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FOLLOW UP: Explore Your Opinions about different movements in ballet

Directions: Review the Opinionnaire you completed at the beginning of this lesson. Have your opinions changed? Why or why not? After each statement, record your changes; write SA (strongly agree), A (agree), D (disagree), or SD (strongly disagree). If your opinion did not change, write NC. Then in the space provided, briefly explain the reasons for your opinions.

1. Dance has a lot to do with mathematics. _______
   Your reasons:

2. Dancers only work with movement, not angles. _______
   Your reasons:

3. Dancers use Newton’s Laws of Motion when they dance. _______
   Your reasons:

4. A dancer’s center of gravity follows a path that can be described by a graph shape. _______
   Your reasons:

5. Velocity is important in dance. _______
   Your reasons:
Student Standards for English Language Arts: Grade 4

Reading Standards for Literature
The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year and help ensure that students gain adequate exposure to a range of texts and tasks. Rigor is also infused through the requirement that students read increasingly complex texts through the grades. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Key Ideas and Details
1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
7. Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text.

Key Ideas and Details
1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

Craft and Structure
4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.
5. Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
7. Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
8. Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.
9. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Writing Standards
The following standards offer a focus for instruction each year to help ensure that students gain adequate mastery of a range of skills and applications. Each year in their writing, students should demonstrate increasing sophistication in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary and syntax to the development and organization of ideas, and they should address increasingly demanding content and sources. Students advancing through the grades are expected to meet each year’s
grade-specific standards and retain or further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

**Text Types and Purposes**
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
   b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
   d. Use precise **language and domain-specific vocabulary** to inform about or explain the topic.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear **event sequences**.
   d. Use **concrete words and phrases** and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

**Production and Distribution of Writing**
4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Research to Build and Present Knowledge**
7. Conduct **short research projects** that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
8. Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from **print** and digital sources; **take notes and categorize information**, and provide a list of sources.
9. Draw relevant evidence from grade-appropriate literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Student Content Standards for Mathematics: Grade 4

Measurement and Data 4.MD

C. Geometric measurement: understand concepts of angle and measure angles.
5. Recognize angular geometric shapes as formed wherever two rays share a common endpoint, and understand concepts of angle measurement:
   a. An angle is measured with reference to a circle with its center at the common endpoint of the rays, by considering the fraction of the circular arc between the points where two rays intersect the circle.
   b. An angle that turns through 1/360 of a circle is called a "one-degree angle," and can be used to measure angles.
   c. An angle that turns through n one-degree angles is said to have an angle measure of n degrees.
6. Measure angles in whole-number degrees…Sketch angles of specified measure.

Geometry 4.G
A. Draw and identify lines and angles, and classify shapes by properties of their lines and angles.
   1. Draw points, lines, line segments, rays, angles (right, acute, obtuse), and perpendicular and parallel lines. Identify these in two-dimensional figures.
   2. Classify two-dimensional figures based on the presence or absence of parallel or perpendicular lines, or the presence or absence of angles of a specified size. Recognize right triangles as a category, and identify right triangles.
   3. Recognize a line of symmetry for a two-dimensional figure as a line across the figure such that the figure can be folded along the line into matching parts. Identify line-symmetric figures and draw lines of symmetry (this relates directly to a dancer’s line of gravity.)
Q&A: How do dancers spin without becoming dizzy?

By Caroline Ayinon December 24, 2013 12:43

Everyone is familiar with the not-so-pleasant feeling that follows a ride on a merry-go-round — even though we are standing still, our brains still perceive movement. Even just briefly spinning around in circles can leave one dizzy and disoriented.

While on stage, ballet dancers must stay focused and balanced, even when performing numerous consecutive pirouettes. Courtesy of Herbert Migdoll.
Interestingly enough, ballet dancers can execute multiple pirouettes without becoming dizzy. Of course, practice plays an important role. Professional dancers train themselves to focus on one spot while performing complex spins, a technique known as “spotting.” However, researchers at Imperial College London have also found a physiological basis for this ability: Their brains have adapted to become less sensitive to dizziness.

Professional ballet dancers execute countless pirouettes while training. Courtesy of Suzanne Kreiter.

The culprit responsible for dizziness is fluid-filled chambers of the inner ear, known as vestibular organs. After we stop spinning, the fluid continues moving, sending signals to the cerebellum and creating the sense that our bodies are still in motion. However, MRI scans of the brains of ballet dancers demonstrated that this signal processing area in the cerebellum is significantly smaller in dancers’ brains than in brains of the general population, suggesting that dancers have come to rely less on information from their vestibular organs. The study also found that fewer signals were being sent to the cerebral cortex, a region of the brain responsible for the perception of dizziness.
A ballerina can execute multiple pirouettes without becoming dizzy. Courtesy of Bill Cooper.

This research, besides demonstrating the amazing ability of the brain to adapt to the needs of its bearer, could be essential in treating patients suffering from chronic dizziness. Perhaps in the near future, that nausea-inducing carnival ride will be something everyone can safely enjoy.

RETRIEVED FROM: http://www.yalescientific.org/2013/12/qa-how-do-dancers-spin-without-becoming-dizzy/
The Nutcracker Coloring Pages
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

http://books.openedition.org/obp/612?lang=en
http://www.the-ballet.com/russianballet.php
http://dance.about.com/od/famousballets/a/Nutcracker.htm
http://www.nutcracker.com/about-us/history-of-nutcracker
http://www.salon.com/2014/12/24/the_nutcrackers_disturbing_origin_story_why_this_was_once_the_worlds_creepiest_ballet/
http://www.storyboardthat.com/articles/e/heroic-journey
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