INLAND PACIFIC BALLET’S

The Nutcracker

STUDY GUIDE
FOR K-12 TEACHERS

PREPARED BY
Inland Pacific Ballet
in cooperation with
RIMS California Art Project

NOVEMBER 2013
Greetings!

As part of our effort to introduce young people to the magic of ballet, Inland Pacific Ballet is pleased to make available The Nutcracker Study Guide as a resource for K-12 teachers bringing their students to see an IPB educational outreach performance. This study guide, newly updated in 2013 to align with California State Content Standards for Dance, California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and the new California English Language Development Standards, allows teachers to choose classroom activities that best meets their needs and includes background information, a variety of specifically developed activities, and a list of available resources that can be used in the classroom before and after the performance.

It is our hope that you find the information in this guide easy to use, and helpful both in preparing your students for what they will see at the theater and discussing their experience afterwards. In addition to the pre- and post-activities we have included links to online resources such as video examples and extended learning sources. The companion PowerPoint presentation provides direct links to online resources.

I want to acknowledge that this revised study guide is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. Art Works. I also want to extend our sincere thanks to Armalyn De La O, Director of RIMS – California Arts Project, for coordinating the project, and educators Nicole Robinson and Michelle Riggs who researched and contributed new content.

See you at the ballet!

Victoria Koenig, Artistic Director

About Inland Pacific Ballet

Inland Pacific Ballet’s Founders and Artistic Directors are Victoria Koenig and Kevin Frank Myers. Both are southern California natives and bring a wealth of experience to their visionary leadership of this young Company. In just 19 years they have built IPB into the premier ballet company in the region, enjoying critical acclaim while performing the largest and most varied repertoire in the area.

The Company’s repertoire includes such classics as A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Les Sylphides, Graduation Ball and Swan Lake Act II. Full-length classical masterpieces include Giselle, Coppélia and a lavish production of The Nutcracker. Contemporary classics include masterpieces by the legendary George Balanchine including Serenade, Concerto Barocco and Who Cares? and a growing body of original work that includes creative adaptations of stories such as The Little Mermaid, Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, and Dracula.

IPB performs its home season from October to May as Company in Residence at Bridges Auditorium in Claremont and serves a far-reaching audience from Redlands to Los Angeles. Additional regular venues include the Lewis Family Playhouse in Rancho Cucamonga, and the Arcadia Performing Arts Center in Arcadia. Festival programs such as the Redlands Bowl Music Festival, Balletfest and Dance Kaleidoscope have allowed the Company to reach an ever-expanding regional audience. Regional touring has included the Luckman Fine Arts Complex in Los Angeles, the Civic Arts Plaza in Thousand Oaks and the Annenberg Theater in Palm Desert. National touring has included the Globe News Center for the Performing Arts, Amarillo Texas.
# Table of Contents

Welcome, About Inland Pacific Ballet  2  
Young Person’s Guide to Ballet Program Summary  4  
Program Objectives  
Correlation to California Visual and Performing Arts:  
  Dance Content Standards  5  
  Common Core State Standards  6  
Ballet as a Dance Form  
  What is Ballet?  7  
  Basic Ballet Positions  8  
  Ballet & Dance Vocabulary  9  
Pre-Activities  
  The Story of *The Nutcracker*  11  
  The Composer: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky  13  
  Music of *The Nutcracker*  14  
  Theatre Etiquette  15  
Pre-Activity Details  16  
Post Activities  22  
Resources and References  24  

Cover Photo: Copyright © 2012 E. Y. Yanagi
A Young Person's Guide to the Ballet
Program Summary

Program Goals and Mission
The goal of Inland Pacific Ballet's Educational Outreach Program is to present ballet to young people in a way that will have an enduring impact on their lives. With the decline of arts education in public schools, Inland Pacific Ballet’s Young Person’s Guide to the Ballet (YPG) is a vital cultural resource for children in the visual, musical, and movement arts in Los Angeles and the Inland Empire. Inland Pacific Ballet promotes the unique power of the performing arts to nourish our communities by enriching the lives of our children.

Program Description
Inland Pacific Ballet's Educational Outreach Program is the most extensive of its kind in Southern California, bringing the beauty of ballet and classical music to thousands of children each year. Students from public, private, home schooled and special needs schools take exciting field trips to the historic Bridges Auditorium in Claremont to see traditional ballets such as Coppélia and The Nutcracker as well as new classics like Inland Pacific Ballet's original children's ballet The Little Mermaid & Cinderella.

The annual YPG program typically includes 8 to 10 special morning performances of ballets chosen from Inland Pacific Ballet's repertoire that are especially suited to young audiences. Each Educational Outreach performance includes a lecture/demonstration on ballet and stage technique, which also describes the workings of a live theater and shows how a dancer tells a story without words. During the lecture/demonstration audience members are encouraged to participate in simple movement activities in their seats. Students then view a lavish professional ballet performance, followed by a lively question and answer period and an opportunity to meet the performers afterwards. For YPG we utilize one of the Inland Empire's treasures, historic Bridges Auditorium. This grand structure has an immediate, awe-inspiring impact on young people, and has a seating capacity of 2,400 suitable for the large student audiences that attend.

Program History and Success
Inland Pacific Ballet's Educational Outreach Program has experienced sustained and resounding success in its 15-year history, consistently serving 8 to 10,000 K-12 students each year. Through successful partnerships with corporations, foundations and individuals this program thrives. Together we have made the Educational Outreach Program available to over 100,000 students from throughout southern California.

At a time when meaningful arts education in public schools is rare, A Young Person’s Guide to the Ballet is more important than ever and makes the performing arts accessible to public, private and home school children in culturally diverse communities. More than 52 public school districts have participated in YPG. YPG is one of the most affordable educational outreach programs in the region, provides students with an introduction to a world of culture and tradition, which would be otherwise unavailable to them.

Photo: Inland Pacific Ballet Educational Outreach Performance, Bridges Auditorium, Claremont, CA
Credit: Copyright © 2012 E. Y. Yanagi
Correlation to California Visual and Performing Arts:
Dance Content Standards

1.0 Artistic Perception
Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Dance

A Young Person's Guide to the Ballet presents ballet to young people in a way that will have an enduring impact on their lives. IPB presents a high quality production that connects learning in the arts to movement and music. IPB performances provide opportunities for students to learn about ballet and classical music, and to observe dance movement in ballet. Performers and the Artistic Director use lecture and demonstration models to share dance techniques with students, and encourage students to observe and listen for these components within the program.

2.0 Creative Expression
Creating, Performing, and Participating in Dance

To introduce the featured ballet excerpt, dancers are brought on stage to demonstrate how they convey the story and express feelings through movement. Students then have a chance to try the techniques shared with them by the artists. During the lecture/demonstration by the Artistic Director, students are invited to "dance in their seats," with direction on what to do, but no music. Students learn a sequence of movements from the production and then perform the sequence again with the music.

3.0 Historical and Cultural Context
Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Dance

Students are introduced to classical and contemporary ballet movement, as well as music and dances from around the world through IPB's varied repertoire. The Nutcracker includes music by Russian composer Peter Tchaikovsky and elements of Russian folk dance. Pre-performance comments include an introduction to the country of origin, the original literature, and how the traditions being represented in the performance relate to the students' contemporary world. Students are encouraged to compare and contrast differences between their own dance traditions and those they are learning about.

4.0 Aesthetic Valuing
Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgments About Works of Dance

Pre-visit background information is available this study guide and includes a composer biography, an introduction to basic ballet movements, dance vocabulary, and a review of theater etiquette. As students come into the theatre, they will see the stage curtains open and dancers warming up before they are in costume and without sets or stage lighting. They will also see some of the set pieces being moved onto the stage before the curtain closes. A post-performance question and answer session with the Artistic Director gives students an opportunity to ask questions about what they have seen.

5.0 Connections, Relationship, Applications
Connecting and Applying What Is Learned in Dance to Learning in Other Art Forms and Subject Areas and to Careers

Students are exposed to high quality production values at IPB outreach performances. These include music, lighting, set design, costumes and special effects. The Artistic Director makes a point to discuss the fact that the music is specific for production. Though some productions use a live orchestra, IPB works with music engineers to produce recorded music for The Nutcracker. Students also learn that costumes, sets and lighting are specifically designed for each production, and often made in-house by highly skilled designers and artisans.
California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

The Nutcracker’s activities provide avenues of extension to enhance the students’ live ballet experience. The Pre and Post Activities outlined in The Nutcracker Guide align with the California Common Core State Standards and the California Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards in Dance, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts. These activities provide teachers with instructional ideas for adaptation to their own classrooms. Each activity has a Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard identified that connects the overarching content literacy expectations. The activities alone are not designed to fully encompass all aspects of learning outlined in the various standards but provide a value added benefit for student learning.

NOTE: The suggested activities span grade levels K – 12. All videos should be previewed for appropriateness and activities should be adapted by the teacher for their specific grade level(s), students and teaching context.
Ballet as a Dance Form

Ballet Beginnings:
Ballet is distinctive from dance in that it requires a special technique, established almost 500 years ago, involving steps and body movements that are unique to this discipline. Its history can be traced back to the 16th century court entertainment for kings and queens when Catherine de Medici, an Italian noblewoman, wife of King Henry II of France and a great patron of the arts, began to fund ballet in the French court. A century later, King Louis XIV charmed his court with dances he created. King Louis XIV helped to popularize and standardize the art form. He was an enthusiastic and passionate dancer, who danced many roles himself, including that of the Sun King in Ballet de la nuit. Out of his court, evolved the wordless dance dramas we know as ballet.

Features of Ballet Movement:
The most striking feature of the technique is the turnout of the legs from the hip. This turnout enables ballet dancers to move to either side as well as forward and back with equal ease, giving them command over a full circle of movement. The dancer’s turnout from the hips and strong frontal orientation of ballet staging can be traced to the European court tradition that directed the performance toward the sovereign in attendance.

Ballet movement has an emphasis on a long spine and uplifted body with an unbending torso. Movement is focused on the arms and legs of the dancer. Dancers are trained to give the illusion of weightlessness and defying gravity.

Another feature of ballet training is the use of “relevé”. This position requires dancers to dance on the balls of the feet. It can be traced back to the early dances of King Louis XIV. The relevé position was the beginning of the development of another feature of ballet, the pointé shoe. Pointé shoes are specially made shoes worn by ballerinas to allow them to dance on the tips of their toes.

The Stories of Ballet:
There are two types of ballets: plot less and story ballets.

Ballets where there is no story to follow are often called “plot less ballets”, the audience’s attention is drawn toward the shape and speed of the dancers’ movements to the music as opposed to narrative.

Story ballets contain narrative action, characters, and a beginning and end. The Nutcracker and The Sleeping Beauty are famous story ballets from the 19th century. Ballet has drawn its plots from a variety of sources over the years. Classic stories and novels such as The Great Gatsby and The Three Musketeers have also been transformed into ballets.
Basic Ballet Positions

First Position: The balls of the feet are turned out completely. The heels touch each other and the feet face outward, trying to form a straight line.

Second Position: The balls of both feet are turned out completely, with the heels separated by the length of one foot. Similar to first position, but the feet are spread apart.

Third Position: One foot is in front of the other with the front foot touching the middle of the back foot.

Fourth Position: The feet are placed the same as third position, but one step apart.

Fifth Position: With both feet touching, the toes of each foot reach the heel of the other.

WEBLINK: [http://video.about.com/dance/The-Five-Ballet-Positions.htm](http://video.about.com/dance/The-Five-Ballet-Positions.htm)

Pirouette: The pirouette, a spin around on one foot, is one of the most difficult of all dance steps. To do a pirouette, you must make a complete turn around yourself, while balancing on one foot. A pirouette may be performed en dehors (turning away from the supporting leg) or en dedans (turning toward the supporting leg). Pirouettes usually begin in fourth, fifth or second position.

Bourree: Bourree is a classical ballet movement in which the dancer glides across the floor on pointe or releve with tiny steps.

Grand Jete: In ballet, jete means to jump or leap, and grand simply means big, so a grand jete is a big leap.

Pas de Deux: Pas de Deux is French for "Step of Two" and is what partnering is called in ballet. By dancing with a partner the lady can jump higher, take positions she would never be able to on her own, and "float" about the stage as she is carried by her partner. A partner allows a man to extend his line and show off his strength.
Ballet & Dance Vocabulary

**Abstraction** – An idea or concept conveyed through movement and removed from its original context.

**Aesthetic criteria** – Standards applied in making judgments about the artistic merit of a work.

**Axial movement** – Movement anchored to one spot by a body part. Movement is organized around the axis of the body and is not designed for travel from one location to another. Also known as nonlocomotor movement. Examples include stretching, bending, turning in place, gesturing.

**Accent** – A strong movement or gesture.

**Balance** – A state of equilibrium referring to the balance of weight or the spatial arrangement of bodies.

**Ballet** – A classical Western dance form that originated in the Renaissance courts of Europe. By the time of Louis XIV (mid-1600s), steps and body positions underwent codification.

**Ballerina** – A female ballet dancer of the highest ranking.

**Barre** – The place where a dancer goes to begin his/her class work. The barre is a long pole that gives the dancer support. After the dancer has done barre work to warm up, he/she will move to the center the classroom or studio to practice increasingly complex steps.

**Choreography** – ("dance writing") The creation and composition of dances by arranging or inventing steps, movements, and patterns of movements.

**Composer** – one who writes music.

**Corps de ballet** – A group of dancers who work together as an ensemble. They form the background for the ballerina and her partner and are the backbone of any ballet company.

**Dance Sequence** – The order in which a series of movements and shapes occurs.

**Divertissements** – Consist of a variety of short dances inserted in certain ballets as entertainment.

**Genre** – A particular kind or style of dance, such as ballet, jazz, modern, folk, tap.

**Gesture** – The movement of a body part or combination of parts, with emphasis on the expressive aspects of the move. It includes all movements of the body not supporting weight.

**Libretto** – The text on which a ballet is choreographed; the story of a ballet.

**Motif** – A distinctive and recurring gesture used to provide a theme or unifying idea.

**Pantomime** – The art of telling a story, expressing a mood or an emotion or describing an action without words.
**Partner and group skills** – Skills that require cooperation, coordination, and dependence, including imitation, lead and follow, echo, mirroring, and call and response.

**Pas de Deux** – a dance for two people, traditionally between a ballerina and the male dancer of the highest ranking.

**Phrasing** – The way in which the parts of a dance are organized.

**Pointe Shoes** – Shoes worn by female dancers that enable them to dance on the tips of their toes. The area covering the toe is made of layers of fabric glued together in the shape of a “box” covered in satin and hardened. The sole is made of hard leather to prevent the shoe from breaking when bent. To keep the shoes on tightly, the dancers sew satin ribbons and elastic to the sides and tie the ribbons securely around their ankles. A pair of pointe shoes may only last for 3 to 4 days of work.

**Rehearse** - to practice.

**Set Designer** – a person who creates the scenic design.

**Scenic design** – Like costumes and makeup, scenic design helps to tell the story or set the mood of the ballet. The set must be designed so that the dancer can enter and exit according to the choreographer’s wishes.

**Shape** – The positioning of the body in space: curved, straight, angular, twisted, symmetrical, or asymmetrical.

**Technique** – The physical skills of a dancer that enable him or her to execute the steps and movements required in different dances. Different styles or genres of dance often have specific techniques.

**Tempo** – The speed of music or a dance.

**Turnout** – The ability of the dancer to turn their feet and legs outward from the hip joints to close to a 180-degree position.

**Tutu** – Ballet skirt, usually made of net or tulle. Tutus may be of varying lengths. While the style and mood of the ballet help to determine the preferred tutu length, the dancer’s technique is most clearly visible when she wears a short tutu.
Inland Pacific Ballet's Story of “The Nutcracker”

(Pre-Activity 1)

**History**

The Nutcracker has become the most popular ballet of our times. It was first presented in 1892 at the Maryinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, Russia. The ballet was an adaptation of the 1816 story by E. T. A. Hoffman, The Nutcracker and the Mouse King. The Nutcracker was choreographed by Lev Ivanov with music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Marius Petipa, the reigning choreographer at the Maryinsky, fell ill, so the job passed to Ivanov. Tchaikovsky only reluctantly accepted the commission to compose the score which, when completed, he considered “infinitely worse than 'Sleeping Beauty'.” At the premiere, the ballet was deemed a complete failure. More than 60 years and many productions would pass before The Nutcracker would become a staple of the repertoire in ballet companies around the world and one of the universal traditions of the holiday season.

(Pre-Activity 1)

**Synopsis**

(Pre-Activities 2, 3)

**ACT I**

Guests are arriving for a Christmas Eve party at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum and their children, Clara and Fritz. Clara’s godfather, the eccentric Herr Drosselmeyer, arrives with toys for all the children and a mysterious vision of something special in store for Clara. With the party in progress, Drosselmeyer produces another wonderful surprise, life-size dolls, who dance to the children’s delight. He then presents Clara with a special gift, a wooden nutcracker in the shape of a soldier, a strange gift for a little girl; but Clara falls in love with the doll and proudly shows it to everyone. Fritz, wanting the Nutcracker for himself, breaks the doll. Clara is heartbroken, but Drosselmeyer fixes the Nutcracker to everyone’s relief.

As the party comes to an end, the Stahlbaum children are sent off to bed. Clara, however, is too excited to sleep, and she sneaks downstairs to be with her new Nutcracker doll. Strange things begin to happen. Huge mice almost as big as she, scurry across the floor. The clock strikes midnight and her whole house begins to transform. The Christmas tree grows to an enormous size, and a great battle ensues between the mice, led by the Mouse King, and the
Nutcracker, now life-sized, leading an army of toy soldiers. It looks as though the Mouse King might win the battle when, just in time, Clara steps in and hits him with her shoe, distracting him so that the Nutcracker can kill him. The mice carry off their fallen leader. The Nutcracker transforms into a Prince and leads Clara on a fantastic journey, which begins with the wintry Kingdom of Snow. In the final tableau, the entire Snow Kingdom sends Clara on to the Sugar Plum Fairy’s palace in the magical Land of the Sweets.

ACT II

The scene opens in the palace of the Sugar Plum Fairy, where everyone is gathering to welcome Clara. As the Angels move about the palace, the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier meet Clara and the Nutcracker Prince and call all the characters to enter for a royal greeting. In the language of mime, the Nutcracker Prince describes to all assembled how the fearless Clara helped to win the battle with the Mouse King. Then the Sugar Plum Fairy arranges a great party with grand entertainment.

Dancers from far away places like China, Spain, Arabia and Russia have come to perform for Clara. The Mirletons dance and Mother Ginger is there with her sixteen children! The Dew Drop Fairy leads the beautiful Waltz of the Flowers, and then the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Cavalier perform the most beautiful dance of all. Finally, all the characters gather to say goodbye to Clara and send her on her journey home.
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Kamsko-Votinsk, Russia on May 7, 1840. He was a very bright child who could read Russian, French and German by the time he was six years old. He also hated physical exercise, did not like to wash and didn’t care about how he looked or what he wore. He showed an interest in music that was so strong for a young child that his governess worried about him. If he could not find a piano to try out the music he made up, he would use his fingers to tap out his tunes on the windowpanes of his house. One time while he was doing this he tapped so hard that he broke the glass of the window, and cut himself very badly.

Peter began taking piano lessons when he was six years old. After attending boarding school he studied law and mathematics and got a job as a clerk working in the Ministry of Justice. After just four years he quit his job to go to music school full time in order to study composition. He was soon invited to teach classes. Tchaikovsky was a nervous, unhappy man all his life, yet his beautiful music made him the most popular of all Russian composers.

He wrote the music for the three most famous ballets of all time, *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*. In his lifetime he also wrote nine operas, six symphonies, four concertos, three string quartets, and numerous songs, suites, and overtures. One of his most famous pieces is the 1812 Overture, which uses cannons and church bells; because it sounds so grand it is often chose to accompany fireworks at 4th of July celebrations. Tchaikovsky was only 53 when he died in St. Petersburg in 1893. He had just completed his sixth symphony, which he felt was the best piece of music he ever created.

**Web Links:**

More on the Life of Tchaikovsky [http://www.balletmet.org/Notes/Tchaikovsky.html](http://www.balletmet.org/Notes/Tchaikovsky.html)


1812 Overture [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkS9THJjp38&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkS9THJjp38&feature=related)

The Best of Tchaikovsky: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_WWz2DSnT8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_WWz2DSnT8)
Music of *The Nutcracker*  

*(Pre-Activity 6)*  

Ballet music evolved significantly over the course of the 19th century. In the early years of ballet, the music was simply used as background music. By the end of the century, music for ballet had become an important part of the performance with musicians arranging music to match the dance perfectly. As a result, a wider variety of symphonic instrumentation into ballet music that allowed the music to tell a story alongside the performance of the dancers. Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky is regarded to be one of the finest of these musical pioneers.

**Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy:**  
*(Pre-Activity 7)*  

The Dance Of The Sugar Plum Fairy features the sounds of an instrument called a celesta. The celesta is similar in appearance to a piano, but contains metal plates instead of strings. The strings are hit by hammers, producing a very soft, bell-like sound. Tchaikovsky discovered this instrument while he was in Paris. Although the celesta is part of the percussion section in an orchestra, it is almost always played by a pianist. This unique instrument gets its name for its celestial, tinkling sound.  
http://wn.com/celesta_instrument

**Russian Dance:**  
*(Pre-Activity 8)*  

The Russian Dance, also known as the Trepak, is a rapid piece of music, which brings excitement to the ballet. The Trepak is performed by men only. It is a brisk dance that is done in 2/4 time. The music and the danced steps start at a slow tempo that is increased throughout the performance. This song uses a full orchestra with emphasis on percussion instruments.  
http://youtu.be/ScsfBEWRR6E

**Divertissements: Breaks in the Action**  
*(Pre-Activities 9 – 12)*  

*What is a divertissement?*  
In ballet and opera, a divertissement creates a pause in the action. “The Nutcracker” contains several divertissements. After the main characters, Clara and the Nutcracker, defeat the Mouse King, they return to the Nutcracker’s palace, where many of his subjects perform dances for them. These dances are often considered the highlights of the ballet, even though very little happens in the storyline. The divertissement in “The Nutcracker” is inspired by delicious Christmas treats from different countries. The dancers’ costumes resemble the “sweets” they bring from their countries. When the ballet was created, several of the featured foreign delicacies were very special and rare.

- 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
Theatre Etiquette
Grade K – History/Social Studies: K.1-3.
Grade 3 – Dance: 2.6, 4.2
Grade 4 – Dance: 4.4

General Information:
● The performance will begin promptly and lasts from 60-75 minutes.
● Let your children know in advance what behavior is expected of them. This is a LIVE performance. Unlike television of the movies, the people on stage are there at that moment and are dancing for the audience’s pleasure. Any noise distracts them. The performance will be exciting, but let your children know that they will be required to sit quietly in their seats for a fairly long period of time.
● School clothes are appropriate dress, however, some children may choose to “dress up.”
● Please plan to arrive to Bridges Auditorium at least 30 minutes prior to the performance, as latecomers cannot be seated once the performance has begun.

Once you arrive at the theatre, please….
● No food, drink, chewing gum, cameras or recording equipment is allowed inside the theatre. Please leave these items at home as we do not have provisions for storing these items at the theatre.
● It is important to accompany your children to the restrooms before the performance begins. It is inappropriate to visit the restrooms during a live performance, unless there is an emergency. Ushers will direct you to restrooms.
● We recommend that you provide your children with some guidelines of things to look and listen for during the performance. You may also want to encourage your children to add to the following list.

Children should be encouraged to:
   a. Watch the dancers
   b. Listen to the music
   c. Look at the costumes and set designs
   d. Laugh when they see the dancers doing something funny
   e. Clap when the dancing has finished to show the dancers that they are enjoying the performance. It is customary to applaud when the dancers take a bow.

Children should be encouraged not to:
   a. Talk or make noise because they might miss something important.
   b. Chew gum or eat because it is disruptive to others and makes a mess in the theatre.
   c. Leave their seats before the lights go on because this is very disruptive to their neighbors
   d. Bring cameras, ipods, or headphones to the theatre because this is disruptive to the dancers and other members of the audience.
## Pre-Activity Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  To introduce <em>The Nutcracker</em>, share facts from the History section of the Guide and view in parts or as a whole, depending on the students’ grade levels, “The History of the Nutcracker” <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGkWczs4_1c">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGkWczs4_1c</a></td>
<td>R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</td>
<td>D 3.3.2 Describe aspects of the style, costumes, and music of a dance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Ask the students questions from their viewing to reinforce their understanding:  
  •  *The Nutcracker* is the most popular ballets of our times and has been seen by many audiences throughout the world  
  •  *The Nutcracker* was an adaptation of a story  
  •  Throughout the years different choreographers have designed dance movements for *The Nutcracker* (Note: choreography literally means dance writing) | | |
| 2  Read a book version of “The Nutcracker” in class. | R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. | |
| After reading the book have a class discussion around these topics:  
  •  setting  
  •  plot  
  •  characters and their descriptions | R2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.  
R3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of the text. | |
| Based on the reading, pair students with a partner to illustrate three scenes they determine important from the story. Their illustrations should include specific details from the chosen scenes. | SL5: Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations. | VA 5.2.7 Communicate values, opinions, or personal insights through an original work of art. |
As a whole class, have each pair hold up their first scene, letting the class guess which scene it is. It is okay if some are single illustrations of part of the story. Once all illustrations are grouped as scene groups, then have the groups sequence the illustrations to create a story line.

Post the sequenced groups of scene illustrations as a visual story line the wall or on butcher paper.

As a whole class, review the story line looking at the book to answer these questions:
- What events are most represented on the story line?
- What events from the story are missing?
If events are missing, have pairs of students illustrate the missing parts to complete the storyline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>After reading the synopsis of <em>The Nutcracker</em> Have each student illustrate a family event, holiday, or celebration based on personal experience.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SL5: Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VA3.2.4 Create a work of art based on the observation of objects and scenes in daily life, emphasizing value changes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on their illustration have each student write a short narrative about their family event, holiday or celebration.

W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences

4 | Read *The Composer* section of the Guide. Remind the students of the composers role in the creation of the ballet (use segments from the History of *The Nutcracker* that talk about Tchaikovsky’s role as composer) Ask the students questions to reinforce their understanding: |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M5.5.2 Identify and discuss who composes and performs music. (M3.5.2; 6.5.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do we know about Tchaikovsky’s early life? Why did he become a composer? What other musical works did Tchaikovsky compose? Can you imagine yourself as a composer or musician?

Watch all or parts of the various videos to learn more about Tchaikovsky’s life and his work.

More on the Life of Tchaikovsky  
http://www.balletmet.org/Notes/Tchaikovsky.html

More About *The Nutcracker* History  
http://www.nutcrackerballet.com/libretto.html

1812 Overture  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkS9THHjp38&feature=related

The Best of Tchaikovsky:  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_WW2DSnT8
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **5** | Listen to Tchaikovsky’s – Nutcracker Suite and discuss the mood evoked by the music in each movement. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB1-axKpmSM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB1-axKpmSM)  
In small groups, have the students select one of the Nutcracker Suite’s movements as an inspiration to write a narrative story. They will be sharing their narrative story with the class accompanied by the music from the selected movement.  
Allow the students to add dance movements to emphasize words, phrases, figurative meanings, word choices or tone to their narrative that represent the moods expressed in the music and their narrative.  
Each group shares their narrative stories with movements to the class. | **R4** - Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.  
**W3** - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences) | **M4.5.3** Relate dance movements to express musical elements or represent musical intent in specific music. (M3.5.2: 3.4.3; M2.4.3; 6.4.2; 9-12P4.4) |
| **6** | Read the Music of the Nutcracker section of the guide. Compare and contrast a ballet orchestra (pit orchestra) with a symphonic orchestra.  
Questions to explore:  
Does a ballet orchestra use the same instrumentation as a symphonic orchestra?  
Are the orchestras the same size?  
How does the size of the orchestra change the quality of the sound?  
What is the role of the conductor in the ballet orchestra compared to the symphonic orchestra?  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchestra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchestra) | **W8**: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, access the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. | **Music 5.1.5** Identify vocal and instrumental ensembles from a variety of genres and cultures. |
| **7** | The Celesta, an instrument invented in 1896, gets its name for it’s “celestial” tinkling sound. In The Nutcracker it provides the distinctive music that accompanies the dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy. The sound of this Celesta gives the audience the “sound” of the sugar plum fairy. The Celesta is best known as a solo instrument because of The Nutcracker.  
Have students in pairs or small groups research the following questions.  
How is a Celesta constructed?  
How is sound created by the Celesta?  
What other musical works use the Celesta?  
Have students share their discoveries with the class.  
As a closing, listen to the selections found on the website listed below. As a class, select one to compare and contrast with the “Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy.” [http://wn.com/celesta_instrument](http://wn.com/celesta_instrument) | **W8**: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, access the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism. | **Music 7.3.5** Identify instruments from a variety of cultures visually and aurally. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>What is a Musical accent?</th>
<th>SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</th>
<th>4.3.2 Name the musical accompaniment and explain how it relates to the dances they have studied.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Share with the students that musical accents do the same thing as onomatopoeia words in a comic book (BOOM, BAM, BANG, CRASH). In music explain that an accent shows where the music goes BOOM or BAM.</td>
<td>Suggested Music Reference: “Russian Dance” (Trepek) from The Nutcracker Suite <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB1-axKpmSM">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB1-axKpmSM</a> or <a href="http://youtu.be/ScsfBEWRR6E">http://youtu.be/ScsfBEWRR6E</a></td>
<td>2.2.5 Convey a range of feelings through shapes/postures and movements…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce the Russian Dance from The Nutcracker. As the students are listening to the Russian Dance, have the students raise their hands when they hear an accent. Model for students the first few accents and then remove the scaffold, letting them listen and decide on their own.</td>
<td>Have the students listen to the music again, this time asking the students to clap, make a shape or move a body part other than their hand on the accent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the class has access to classroom instruments, they can be played on the accent either on the second or third listening.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View the clips from The Nutcracker below. Compare and contrast as a class the cultural dance and music of Spain, Arabia, China and Russia.</td>
<td>SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</td>
<td>K.4.1 Explain basic features that distinguish one kind of dance from another (e.g., speed, force/ energy use, costume, setting, music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.</td>
<td>4.4.1 Use dance vocabulary to describe unique characteristics of dances they have watched or performed from other countries…(rhythms, spatial patterns, gestures, intent).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Spain**

**Chinese:**
http://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/dance/peony-pavilion?ref=term&refcat=/genre/cultural

**Arabian:**
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8XGiRLwec4o

**Russian:** Joshua and Twitch/So You Think You Can Dance/Russian Dance
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NiNOMcV_kU
| Then as a class select two of the countries to examine more closely. Compare and contrast the music, movement choices and costuming from each country. | R7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words. (W6, 9)  
SL4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. | 3.3.1 Describe commonalities among and differences between dances from various countries  
(D9-12P4.4 Research and identify dances...)  
(M8.3.4 Compare and contrast distinguishing characteristics....) |
|---|---|---|
| **10** | **Engage the class in exploring the world through visuals of the various foods found in the dances, while listening to the related music within The Nutcracker.**  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB1-axKPmSM  
Examples:  
China: Tea, rice  
Spain: Chocolate, rice  
Arabia: Coffee beans  
Russia: Peppermint, caramel  
Expand the exploration by showing pictures of the costumes and locating the countries on the map. (See PowerPoint for Costuming Examples) |  
| **11** | **The dances, or divertissements, of Act II reflect the ethnic and national cultures through the costumes, body movements, and dance steps.**  
In small groups or individually, have students choose a new country to explore that is of interest to them.  
Research the traditional dress, music and dance of that country. Share research findings with diverse partners to gather input prior to the final presentation.  
Have students present their findings as a broadcast journalist or oral historian. | **SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.**  
**SL4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the**  
**D9-12P3.2 Describe ways in which folk/traditional, social, and theatrical dances reflect their specific cultural context.** |
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td>Before telling the class the titles of the pieces, and without showing the visual images in the video, play “The Battle” and “The Waltz of the Snowflakes.” As they are listening, ask the students to imagine what is happening in each scene. What does the music make them imagine? Why? Discuss the kinds of instruments, tone, tempo and volume that are used in each. Have a class discussion about how the music in a ballet can help convey the storyline. After the class discussion play each video again, this time allowing the students to view the dances. Discuss how the classes’ descriptions of the scenes compared to the actual ballet scenes.</td>
<td>R 4 - Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. 1.4.1 Use basic dance vocabulary to identify and describe a dance observed or performed (e.g., shapes, levels, directions, tempo/fast-slow). (2.4.1) 1.4.3 Describe how they communicate an idea or a mood in a dance (e.g., with exaggerated every day gesture or emotional energies). (D4.3.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# POST ACTIVITIES: K–12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>After viewing <em>The Nutcracker</em>, design an invitation to Clara’s party. Students may use technology, if available, to produce and publish the invitation. The text of the invitation should include a detailed description of the event and written in a way to excite the people to attend the party. Determine and include other important information needed by the partygoers to make a decision about attending. Using the details from <em>The Nutcracker</em> ballet, justify the invitation’s design and written choices.</td>
<td>W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task. W6 - Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.</td>
<td>VA 5.2.3; 5.2.7; 6.2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>After viewing <em>The Nutcracker</em>, have each student write a narrative that retells the story from the perspective of another character (i.e., The Mouse King, Drosselmeyer, The Nutcracker, etc). Include experiences or events that the selected character would have had using details and a structured event sequence. In a small group, have students each present their stories followed by their reasoning in making the decisions they made in creating their retelling.</td>
<td>W3 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences. SL4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
<td>Theatre K.3.1; 2.2.2; 6.2.2; 9-12A2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>After viewing <em>The Nutcracker</em>, watch a video version of <em>The Nutcracker</em> and using a Venn diagram or other graphic organizer compare the similarities and differences between the Inland Pacific Ballet’s production of <em>The Nutcracker</em> and the video version.</td>
<td>R9 - Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the author takes.</td>
<td>6.4.4 Distinguish the differences between viewing live and recorded dance performances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4 | Have the students create a poem based on their experience attending *The Nutcracker* using a poetic form, which has been studied, such as Haiku, Limerick, or Cinquain.

   As a class, recount *The Nutcracker* experience through their senses to create a Word Wall.

   What did they see in traveling to and from the ballet?
   What did they see at and during the ballet?
   Where there any smells?
   Textures to the touch?
   What did they hear in traveling to and from and during the performance?

   Students can use these words to use in their poems.

   Share poems in small groups to gain constructive peer feedback. Students can then choose to re-write, revise or refine their poem. Students can then share their revised poem with the class in a poetry reading setting. | W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.  
W5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, rewriting, or trying a new approach. |  |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | What happens next?

   After viewing *The Nutcracker*, engage students in creating what happened next in the story.

   What happens when Clara returns home after her adventure with the Nutcracker?
   How does the Nutcracker spend his days after he returns home?
   What happened to Drosselmeyer?

   Students should write their *The Nutcracker* extension using details and building upon the storyline.

   Provide time for the students to share their stories and their reasoning behind their choices. | W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences) | Theatre K.3.1; 2.2.2; 6.2.2; 9-12A2.1 |
| 6 | Write a review of the Inland Pacific Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker*.

   The students' reviews should describe how the production qualities (e.g., movement, music, lighting, costuming other artistic choices) contributed or not to the success of *The Nutcracker* performance. | W1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. | Dance 9-12P4.1 |
Online Resources

See companion PowerPoint presentation available on IPB website
http://www.ipballet.org/teacherResources.php

Inland Pacific Ballet
http://www.ipballet.org

VIDEO: Inland Pacific Ballet - The Nutcracker #1
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPSRXKvOv9s

VIDEO: Inland Pacific Ballet - The Nutcracker #2
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15Uy9nnRE7g&feature=related

"Telling A Story Through Dance" Lesson Plan
http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2347

PBS Royal Ballet Lesson Plans for Teachers
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/gperf/education/plan_nutcracker_overview.html

References

California Department of Education - Content Standards & Framework

San Francisco Ballet – Activity Guide for Adults & Children
http://www.sfballet.org/

New York City Ballet Study Guide for George Balanchine’s The Nutcracker™
http://www.nycballet.com/nutcracker/intro/study-guide.html