



# DANCE ALIVE

## NATIONAL BALLET

Artistic Director.....Kim Tuttle  
 Choreography.....Kim Tuttle  
 Music ..... Mendelssohn  
 Curriculum .....Judy Skinner  
 Costume Sketches .....  
 Catherine Goldman Bloomfield

**Dance Alive National Ballet is a professional ballet company touring the Southeastern United States and Latin America representing the State of Florida.**

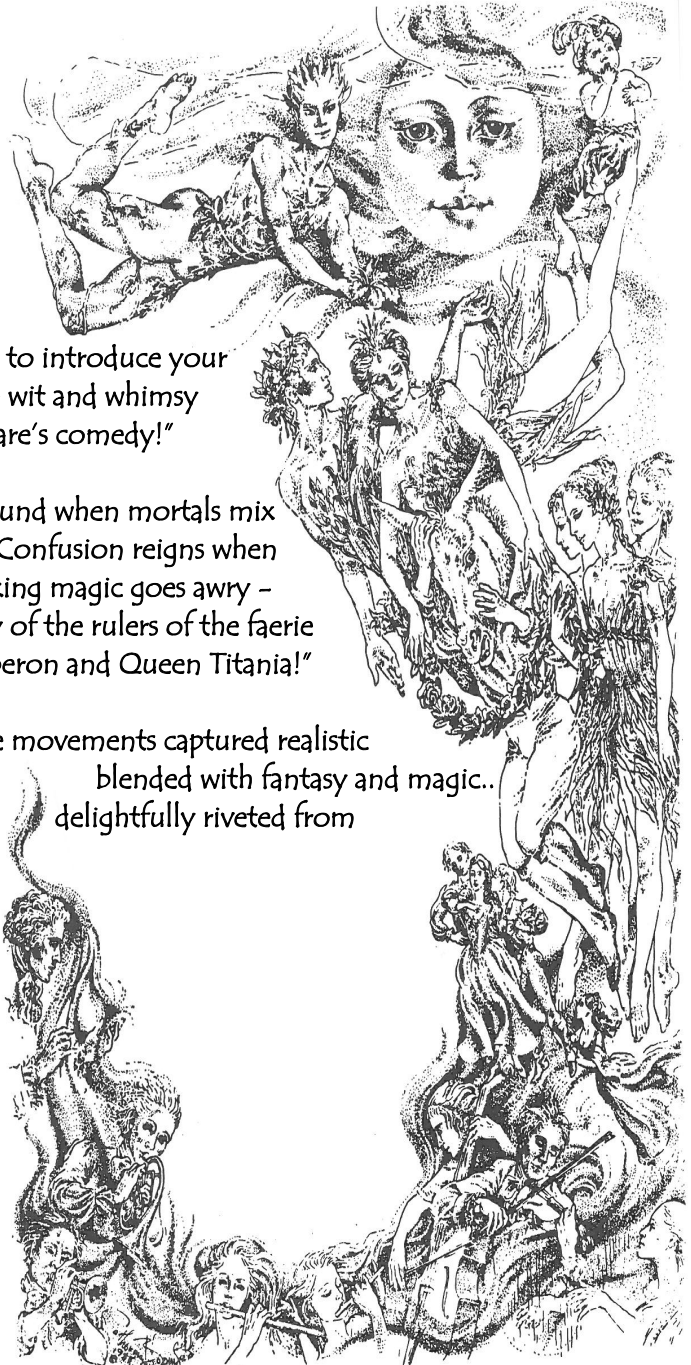
**Dance Alive National Ballet lives up to its name. Movement is at the heart of everything it does. With an extraordinary group of dancers from all over the world, and dynamic leader and Artistic Director, Kim Tuttle, Dance Alive National Ballet has developed into one of the most distinguished and creative ballet companies in the Southeast.**

**Dance Alive National Ballet continues to develop innovative arts education programming and is involved in artist residencies, developing dance curriculum and outreach performances for public schools.**

*DANB is sponsored in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, The State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Arts Council, the City of Gainesville, Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs and the Alachua County Commission.*

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## Dance Alive National Ballet's A Midsummer Night's Dream



"A wonderful way to introduce your students to the wit and whimsy of Shakespeare's comedy!"

"Comic chases abound when mortals mix with faerie people! Confusion reigns when Puck's mischief making magic goes awry - Much to the dismay of the rulers of the faerie kingdom, King Oberon and Queen Titania!"

"Costumes and dance movements captured realistic mannerisms that blended with fantasy and magic. Our senses were delightfully riveted from beginning to end."

*Illustrations by Catherine Goldman Bloomfield*

Welcome to A Midsummer Night's Dream curriculum guide! There are LOTS of materials in this guide! Great ways to use this arts education field trip to enhance your curriculum. Please use our suggestions as springboards and ENJOY!



This curriculum guide is designed to be an interdisciplinary resource for teachers K through grade 12.

The guide includes:

- pre-and post-performance activities for grades K– 5, with activities organized in a thematic and developmental order to stimulate the student's interest and heighten the value of their experience at the performance.
- materials that may be integrated into grade 6-12 existing courses of study. Activities are designed for easy integration into school subjects and skill areas so that materials can be utilized to teach required concepts and skills

**Many of the activities have been correlated with Florida Literacy Standards.**

This guide is organized into four major sections:

**Section One: Preparation (Pre-performance Activities) Grades K-5 (Pages 1-10)**

Activities in this section are designed to establish a foundation for active audience participation in the dance performance. The topics include dance and choreographic activities, the story, the music, introduction to the dancers and audience etiquette.

**Section Two: Reaction (Post-performance Activities) Grades K-5 (Pages 11-17)**

Activities in this section are designed to guide students in responding to the dance presentation. The process will help students make sense of their initial reactions to the dance presentation and come to a deeper understanding of the dance. Topics include first impression, and inventory of observations, interpretation and life applications.

**Section Three: Materials for Grade 6-12. (Pages 18-24)**

Activities in this section include suggestions for cooperative learning topics, reaction papers, discussion questions, and suggestions for creative projects.

**Section Four: Teacher Resources (Pages 25-39)**

This section includes background information on the original work, composer, choreographer and ballet. It also includes additional activities by subject area and a glossary/vocabulary.

**We hope you find these materials of use. Let us hear from you at any time with suggestions as to how to improve them, requests for additional information and assistance—and any news of your experiences and those of your students as you enjoy *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.**

## ABOUT DANCE ALIVE NATIONAL BALLET

Dance Alive National Ballet is a professional dance company that does indeed live up to its name! Movement is at the heart of everything it does and does this Company move! Enlivened by an extraordinary group of dancers and its dynamic and innovative Artistic Director Kim Tuttle, nobody creates finer dance performances in this part of the United States.

A fully professional ballet company, DANB has been selected for Florida's Touring Program for over 38 years; the only ballet company that has done so. Dancers are from the United States, Cuba, Brazil, Hungary, Ukraine, Brazil Italy and China and have won numerous international competitions. The Company has toured Costa Rica, Russia and Brazil and performed for HSH Prince Albert of Monaco at his request.

DANB has developed into one of the most distinguished and creative ballet companies in the Southeast. Recognized for its superb performances, choreography and educational programming, DANB continues to develop innovative arts education programming and is involved in artist residencies, developing dance curriculum for public schools and outreach performances for underserved urban and rural schools.

One of the region's artistic and cultural treasures, DANB continues to tour the US and Latin America representing the State of Florida. We invite you to enjoy this talented company of energetic and versatile dancers. Like the audiences in Costa Rica, you will,

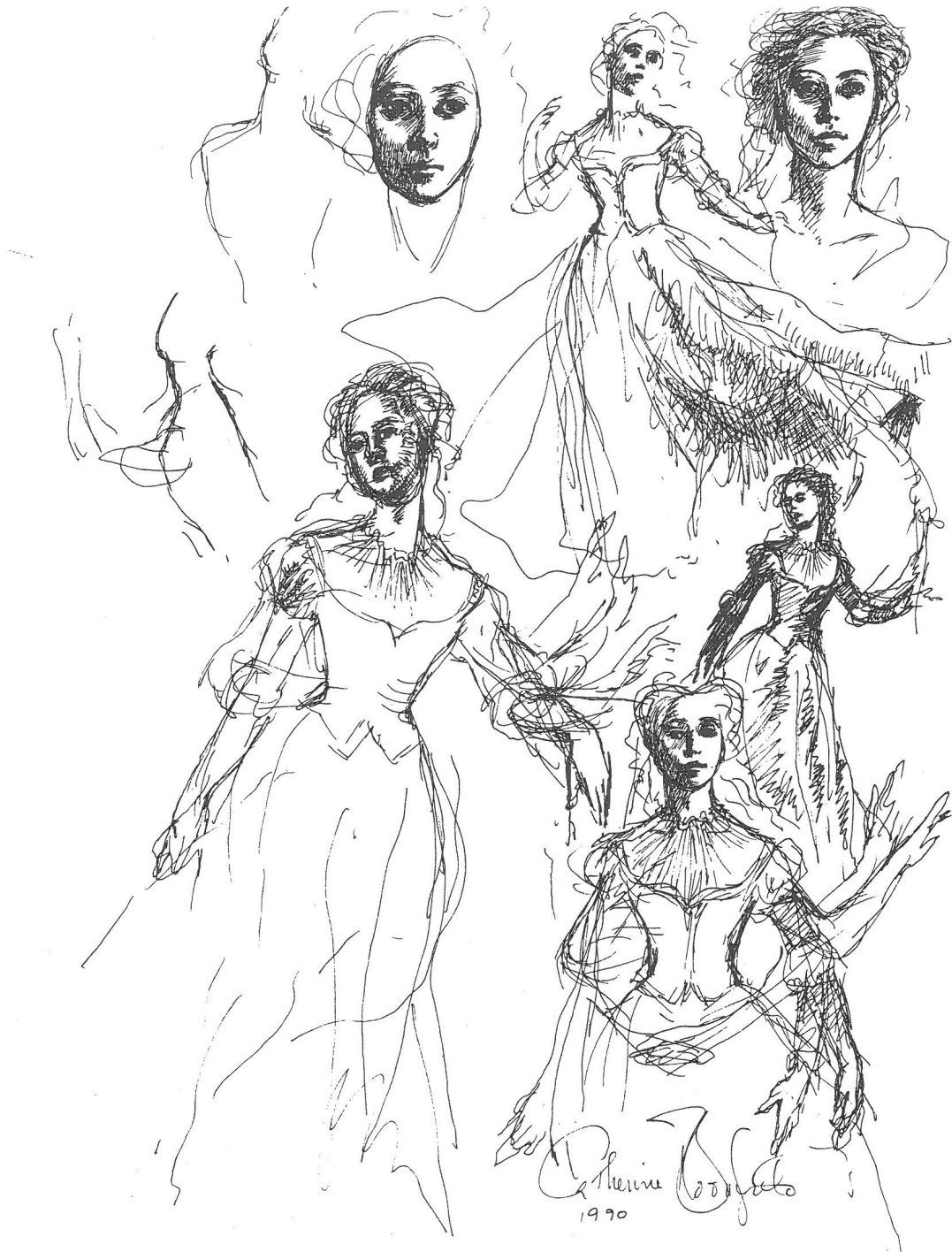
*"admire the exquisite combination of techniques .....the tradition of the Bolshoi, the spirit of jazz and the*



DANB in Festivo. Photo Johnston Photography.

# Preparation Pre-Performance Activities Grades K-5

**Additional activities and accompanying standards can be found in the section designed for grades 6-12.**



## AUDIENCE MANNERS

### OBJECTIVE

Students will be able to recommend appropriate behavior for attending a dance performance.

### ACTIVITY

1. Initiate a discussion with your students on the effects different kinds of audience behavior can have on people's enjoyment of a performance.
2. Make a list of short statements which express the ideas of your students on the chalkboard or a chart. Ask the students to offer ideas in the form of audience behavior they would recommend.
3. Ask each student to choose one statement, draw a picture to illustrate it, and write the statement at the bottom of the page. Make copies of the pages. Help your students collate and staple the pictures together to make books to share with each other and with other classes.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Have the students color and display their pages on a bulletin board.
2. Have the students act out skits demonstrating different appropriate and inappropriate audience actions.

### THEATRE:

TH.K.S.1.1, TH.1.S.1.1, TH.3.S.1.1, TH.4.S.1.1, TH.4.O.1.2, TH.5.S.1.1

### MUSIC:

MU.K.F.3.1, MU.1.F.3.1, MU.R.C.1.1



Ready for the show!

## DANCE IS EVERYWHERE

### OBJECTIVE

The students identify and demonstrate movement elements common to dance.

### ACTIVITY

This is charades with an instructional purpose! In order to begin this activity, first create a space in the classroom that provides room for individual students to move freely and room for other students to observe.

1. Introduce the activity with a discussion of types of movements present in all areas of life. Encourage students to come up with examples from areas such as sports (ice skating, catching a fly ball), animals (hop like a bunny, run like a deer), occupations (policeman directing traffic, carpenter hammering a nail), everyday activities (sweeping the floor, driving a car), and recreation (catching a fish, riding a roller coaster).
2. Have each student take a small piece of paper, write on it a type of movement to be acted out, and drop it into a large container. *NOTE: For younger students, teachers may want to make the charade cards for them.*
3. The charades will be played in the order the teacher pulls the slips of paper from the container - or let the children take turns. A timekeeper says, "Begin," and the student on the "stage" dramatizes the movement chosen. A charade should be guessed by the audience within a ten-second time.

Follow the charades with a summary discussion about some of the following movement elements:

- ***non-locomotor movements*** such as bend, twist, stretch and swing.
- ***simple locomotor movements*** such as walk, run, hop, jump.
- ***compound locomotor movements*** such as gallop, slide and leap.
- ***kinesthetic awareness*** such as high, middle and low movements in space.
- ***tempo and rhythmic pattern of repetitive movements***
- ***movement follows straight and curved pathways.***

Encourage students to identify and describe rhythmic movements in everyday situations.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. One or more "movements" in the same space can "dance" together, representing their relationships (For example, a fox stalking a rabbit or a baseball catcher and pitcher).
2. Classify movements into categories such as high, middle or low, fast or slow, straight or curved and round or square/angular.
3. Students can play the game using movements which convey a particular emotion or feeling.

### THEATRE:

TH.K.F.1.1

### SCIENCE:

SC.K.P.12.1, SC.K.P.13.1, SC.1.P.13.1

### DANCE:

DA.K.C.1.1, DA.K.C.2.1, DA.K.S.1.1 & 1.2, DA.K.S.3.1 & 3.3 & 3.4, DA.K.O.1.1, DA.K.O.3.1 & 3.2, DA.1.C.2.1, DA.1.S.1.1 & 1.2

## DISCOVERING DANCE

### OBJECTIVE

Students can demonstrate movement elements and choreographic principles, processes and structures.

### ACTIVITY

1. Divide the students into small groups. Have each group choose a familiar children's song that tells a story and create a dance to tell the story. Some examples are THREE BLIND MICE, and PUFF THE MAGIC DRAGON. Encourage the students to use a variety of movements, high/low levels in space, floor patterns and groupings in telling their stories.
2. Have the groups perform their "ballets" for each other. Ask the "audience" to make observations about the presentation. In order to ensure a trusting atmosphere where the students are willing to take risks, all comments need to be kept to observations about the movements. For example, the comment, "I liked John's dance" might be restated as "I thought the jumps in John's dance really made him look like he was flying."

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Teach the children the five basic ballet positions. Tell them that all ballet movements begin and end in one of these five basic positions. Have them use the basic positions at the beginning and ending of their dances.
2. Have the students bring in contemporary music selections that have story lines and create "ballets" to their selections.
3. Have the students work with "round" or "circular" movements in their presentations.
4. Have the students work with "square" or "sharp/angular" movements in their presentations.
5. Have the students work with movements that create rhythmic patterns such as ABA forms in poetry.
6. On a large piece of paper, trace students in various dance poses. Have the students fill in the tracings with crayons or paint and make a display of the poses.
7. Explore what causes dancers to move or not move. How does energy impact movement?

### MATHEMATICS:

MACC.K.G.1.1

### THEATRE:

TH.4.H.3.3, TH.R.C.1.2

### MUSIC:

MU.K.C.2.1, MU.K.S.2.1, MU.K.S.3.2, MU.K.H.3.1

### SCIENCE:

SC.K.P.13.1, SC.K.E.5.1, SC.K.P.8.1, SC.1.P.12.1, SC.1.P.13.1, SC.4.P.12.1, SC.5.P. 13.1/13.2/13.3/13.4

### DANCE:

DA.K.C.1.1 & 1.2, DA.K.S. 1.1 & 1.2, DA.K.S. 3.1 & 3.3 & 3.4, DA.K.O.1.1, DA.K.O.2.1, DA.K.O.3.1 & 3.2, DA.2.S.3.1, DA.2.F.1.1.

## MEET THE CHARACTERS

### OBJECTIVE

The students will be able to identify the basic story elements and characters in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

### ACTIVITY

1. Arrange to have at least two different books based on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
2. Over time, read at least two versions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to the class and/or have a center where the students can become familiar with two or more different versions of the story.
3. Have the students make a list of story elements and characters that are the same in the versions they read and a list of the story elements and characters that are different. Let the students discuss their findings.
4. Have the students compare and contrast the illustrations in the different versions. Encourage them to consider the quality and style of the illustrations, the selection of the medium used, the use of color and intensity, the depiction of the individual characters as well as the choice of which scenes to illustrate.
5. Encourage the students to share their reactions to the different versions. Encourage by asking questions such as which version they liked best and why or how particular passages and illustrations make them feel.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Have the student draw a picture or write a story about their favorite characters from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
2. Have them describe what made that character special.
3. Have students design their own character dolls from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* using a variety of materials such as crayons, paints, clay and construction paper.
4. Have them describe why costumes were important to each character.
5. Have them act out a character from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
6. Count the number of character in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

### LANGUAGE ARTS:

LACC.K.RL.1.2 & 1.3, LACC.K.SL.2.4, LACC.K.SL.2.5, LACC.1.SL.2.5, LACC.3. RL. 1.3, LACC.4. RL. 1.3, LACC.4. RL. 3. 7,

### MATHEMATICS:

MACC.K.CC.2.5

### THEATRE:

TH.K.S.2.1, TH.1.D.1.1, TH.W.O.1.1 & 1.2

### SCIENCE:

SC.K.L.14.2.





## THE MAGIC OF MUSIC

### OBJECTIVE

The students can match brief excerpts from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

### ACTIVITY

Have available the following excerpts from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

- ⇒ March of the Fairies (Invisible to mortal man.)
- ⇒ Nocturne (Enchanted sleep.)
- ⇒ Scherzo (Demonstrates Puck's playfulness.)
- ⇒ Dance of the Clowns (Puck turns Bottom into a donkey.)
- ⇒ Wedding March (Traditional march for bride and groom.)

1. Make signs to identify each part. Play the music for the students and hold up the correct sign as each section plays.
2. After the students are familiar with the music, mix up the signs and let the students take turns selecting the correct sign as the music plays.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Mix the order in which the excerpts are played and see if the students can identify them correctly.
2. Make several smaller sets of the signs and place them in piles at one end of the classroom. Divide the students into relay teams at the other end. Each time a section of music is played, the student who is in the front must run to the pile and return with the correct sign for the excerpt that is played.
3. Mix excerpts from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with excerpts from other classical or contemporary composers. Let students identify the excerpts as "Mendelssohn" or "not Mendelssohn".
4. Have students listen very closely to the excerpts which represents music of the different characters and moods. Encourage students to describe how the basic elements of music (rhythm, melody, timbre, texture and dynamics) are used differently.

#### THEATRE:

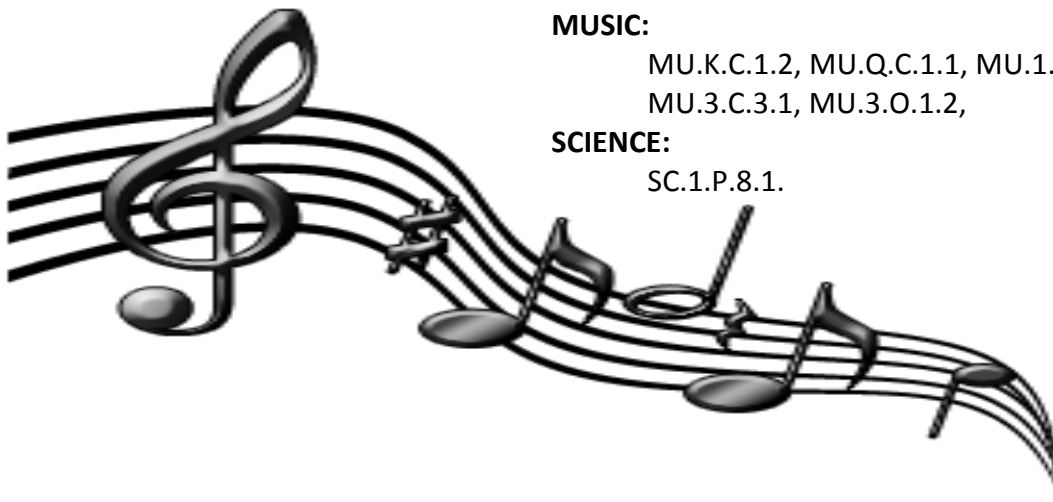
TH.5.C.1.2

#### MUSIC:

MU.K.C.1.2, MU.Q.C.1.1, MU.1.C.3.1, MU.2.O.3.1,  
MU.3.C.3.1, MU.3.O.1.2,

#### SCIENCE:

SC.1.P.8.1.



## MEET THE COMPANY

### OBJECTIVE

The students can locate, on a world map or globe, the geographical places where members of Dance Alive National Ballet have lived or performed. (Bios and pictures available on [www.dancealive.org](http://www.dancealive.org).)

### ACTIVITY

1. Using Dance Alive National Ballet biographical information pages [www.dancealive.org/company/dancers.html](http://www.dancealive.org/company/dancers.html) have the students locate the geographic places where members of the Company have lived or performed on a map of the world or a globe.
2. Display a bulletin-board sized map of the world. Print out and mount each biographical sketch separately. Optional, label the sketches according to their roles in the ballet. Place the sketches around the map and use colorful pieces of yarn or thin strips of construction paper to the geographical locations related to each member of Dance Alive National Ballet, or have the children take turns locating the geographical places on another map or globe.
3. Dance has been called a "universal language." Have the students discuss what they think this means. Also discuss the advantages and disadvantages of developing a company with such a variety of background

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Write the names of Dance Alive National Ballet members on small slips of paper and place them in a container. With the students working alone or in teams, have them play a game of "20 Questions" using the biographical information to guess which name was drawn. Remind the students that they can only ask questions which can be answered "yes" or "no" and that they can only ask a total of twenty questions.
2. Research the training and daily lives of dancers or the "behind the scenes" work of a ballet production.
3. Have students select one of the geographic areas from a cast biography and research the area.
4. Graph dancers by countries. Determine the ratio of Russian dancers to Hispanic dancers. Hispanics to Americans.

### MATHEMATICS:

MACC.K.CC.2.5, MACC.K.CC.3.6, MACC.K.MD.2.3, MACC.1.MD.3.4, MACC.2.OA.3.3, MACC.2.MD.4.10, MACC.3.MD.2.3,

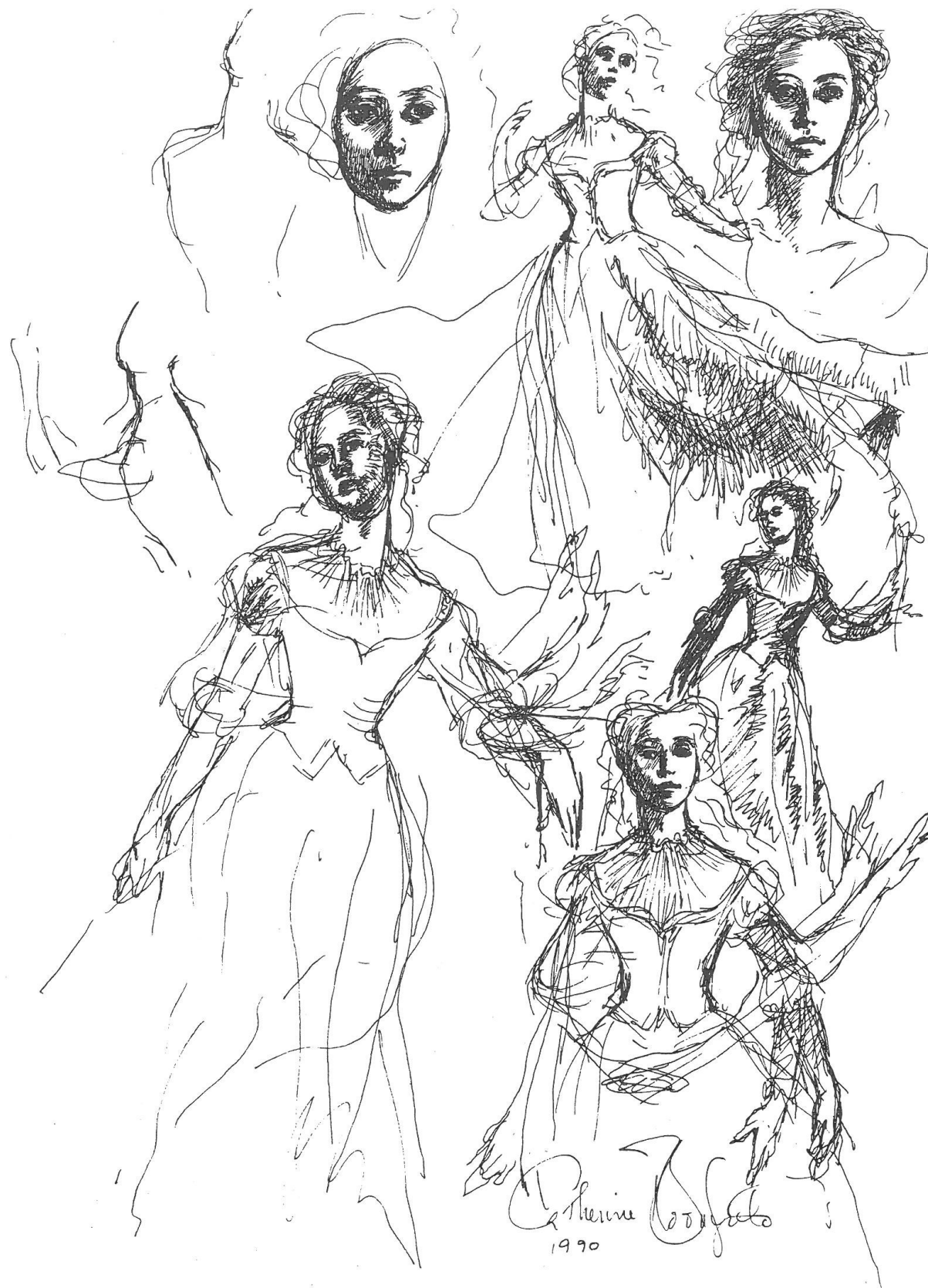
### THEATRE:

TH.K.S.2.1

### SCIENCE:

SC.1.L.17.1.

# Reaction Post-Performance Activities Grades K-5



## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

### OBJECTIVE

Students are able to express their reactions to the dance presentation.

### ACTIVITY

Provide a non-judgmental atmosphere where the students will feel comfortable giving their first reactions and where students' reactions will be accepted. Students must be made to feel that their unique contributions will be valued, that their opinions are valid, and that the opinions and perspectives of others are to be respected. This is a time to remind students that different people respond in different ways to the same dance presentation.

1. Prepare students by asking them to think about such things as:
  - a. What parts of the performance they liked the most, the least?
  - b. How particular parts of the dance made them feel?
  - c. Which was their favorite dancer/dancers?
  - d. Which costumes they liked the most, the least?
  - e. How the different parts of the music made them feel?
2. Ask students to draw a picture or write a reaction about their favorite scene from the performance.
3. Encourage the students to share their reactions with each other.
  1. Chart or graph class reactions to "favorite character" or "favorite costume"
  2. Ask students to read a story and then act or dance the same story. Compare.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Create a bulletin board display of the students' work.
2. Identify the beginning, middle and end of the ballet. Do the same with a story and then act out that story.

### LANGUAGE ARTS:

LACC.K.RL.1.3, LACC.K.RL.3.9, LACC.K.W.1.2, LACC.K.SL.2.4, LACC.K.SL. 2.5, LACC.K.SL.2.6, LACC.1.RL.1.2, LACC.1.RL.3.9, LACC.1.W.1.1, LACC.1.SL. 2.4, LACC. 1.SL.2.5, LACC.2.RL.1.1, LACC.2. RL. 1.3, LACC.2. SL. 1.2, LACC. 2. SL. 2.4, LACC.3. RL. 1.3, LACC.3. W. 1.3, LACC.3. SL. 1.2, LACC.4.SL.2.4

### THEATRE:

TH.K.C.2.1, TH.K.C. 3.1 & 3.2, TH.K.SL..1.3, TH.K.O.1.1, TH.K.O.2.1, TH.K.O.3.1, TH.K.H.3.1, TH.1.C.2.2, TH.1.C.3.1, TH.1.S.1.3, TH.1.O.1.1, TH.1. O.2.1, TH.2.C.1.1/1.2, TH.2.S.1.1 & 1.3, TH.2.O.1.1, TH.2.O.2.1, TH.2.R.3.1, TH.3.O.2.1, TH.4.S.3.3, TH.4.O.2.1

### MUSIC:

MU.2.C.1.2, MU.3.C.1.2, MU.4.C.1.2, MU.4.O.3.1,

### DANCE:

DA.1.C.3.1, DA.2.C.`3, DA.2.C.3.1, DA.2.O.3.2, DA.3.C.3.1, DA.4.C.3.1, DA.5.C.3.1

## RECALLING THE DANCE

### OBJECTIVE

The students will be able to state a variety of objective observations of what they heard and saw at the dance presentation.

### ACTIVITY

1. Use a long strip of butcher paper or a spacious chalkboard for recording students' observations.
2. Use a separate paper or chalkboard area for each act or unit of the performance.
3. Ask the students to list as many words as they can about something they saw or heard during that time.
4. Encourage the students to stick to auditory and visual observations rather than interpretative words. Ask them to think about the dance movements, the sets and the props, the lighting, the costumes and the music.
5. Keep students stretching into new areas by suggesting examples and categories of ideas if they get bogged down. Such examples might include:
  - a. A description of the movements; for example, strong, high leaps, fast turns, slinking movements on the floor. List and graph.
  - b. The relationship of the dancers; for example, solos, duets, trios, a group of three dancers, with a fourth moving in, a pinwheel.
  - c. The way the space on the stage was used; for example, the dancers moved in a circle, on a diagonal, in a small space, in a large space, had round body shapes or angular body shapes. List and graph.
  - d. The dynamics or qualities of the movements; for example, lyrical movements, fast and sharp movements, collapsing or suspended movements. List and graph.
  - e. The entrances and exits of the dancers.
  - f. Description of the sound score; for example, loud, soft, high, low, fast, slow, waltz, march, ethnic rhythms, different instruments used. List and graph.
  - g. Description of costumes, props, sets, lighting and special effects; for example, colors, intensity, design, texture, historical or ethnic qualities.
6. Using the list of words that were recorded, ask students (alone or in groups) to create a word tree, or webs of related words.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Have the students copy their webs/trees onto different colors of construction paper. Create a class book or bulletin board with the students' pages.
2. Use the word webs/trees to form Diamante poetry

A Diamante poem is shaped like a diamond, following a pattern of parts of speech like this

noun  
adjective adjective  
participle participle participle  
noun noun noun  
participle participle participle  
adjective adjective  
noun

tree  
beautiful bright  
sparkling stretching growing  
tinsel branches ribbons candles  
twinkling dancing reaching  
higher taller  
star

**LANGUAGE ARTS:**

LACC.K.RL.3.9, LACC.K.W.2.5, LACC.K.W.3.8, LACC.1.W. 1.3, LACC.1.SL.1.2, LAA.2. SL. 1.2, LAA.2. SL. 2. 5, LACC.3. W. 3.8, LACC.4.SL.2.4

**MATHEMATICS:**

MACC.K.CC.2.5, MACC.K.CC.3.6, MACC.K.MD.2.3, MACC.K.G.1.1, MACC.1.MD.3.4, MACC.2.OA.3.3, MACC.2.MD.4.10, MACC.3.MD.2.3

**THEATRE:**

TH.K.S.1.2, TH.K.S. 3.1/3.2/3.3, TH.1.S.3.3, TH.1.S.1.2, TH.R.O.2.1

**MUSIC:**

MU.3.O.3.1, MU.3.O. 1.2, MU.4.C.1.2, MU.4.O.3.1, MU.5.O.3.1

**SCIENCE:**

SC.K.P.8.1, SC.1.P.8.1, SC.4.P.10.1, SC.4.P.10.2, SC.4.P.12.1,

**DANCE:**

DA.K.C.2.1, DA.2.O.3.2, DA.5.C.3.1



## CRITIC'S CHOICE

### OBJECTIVE

Students are able to evaluate *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

### ACTIVITY

1. Ask students to imagine that they have been asked to write a review of the ballet for their local paper or television/radio station. Younger students can write a letter to a friend who has not seen the production, or prepare a review to read on the radio, similar to those produced aired on public radio.
2. Discuss the purpose of a review and what information could be included and brainstorm a list and record it on the blackboard. The list might include ideas such as
  - a. The story of the dance (or a story it made them imagine).
  - b. The ideas and feelings expressed by the dance.
  - c. A description of the set, costumes, props, special effects and how they contributed to the presentation.
  - d. How sound or music was used and whether it suited the dance.
  - e. Whether the dance was visually interesting.
  - f. Comments about the cast of dancers and whether they were capable in their performance of the dance.
  - g. The thoughts or feelings of the reviewer (student) about the work (what did the dance mean to them).
  - h. Whether the dance worked as a whole.
3. Show examples of reviews of other performances or movies found in newspapers or magazines. Have the students analyze the reviews to see if they included the ideas they listed on the blackboard. Were there ideas the students did not include?
4. Ask students to write their reviews using some of the ideas they have listed.
5. Make a display of the students' reviews or have them share their reviews with the class.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

1. Make a videotape recording of the students giving their reviews. Let the students share their reviews live or on tape with other classes that did not attend the performance
2. Have the students write "thank you" letters to individual members in the company. Encourage them to think of "behind the scenes" people like the choreographer, set designer, technical director, lighting director and costume designer as well as some of the individual dancers.

### LANGUAGE ARTS:

LACC.K.RL.1.3, LACC.K.W.1.2, LACC.K.W.3.8, LACC.2.W. 1.1, LACC.2.W. 1.2, LACC. 2.W. 1.3, LACC.3. W. 1.1, LACC.3.W. 1.3, LACC. 3. W. 2.4, LACC.4.W. 1.1, LACC. 4.W.1.2, LACC.4.W.1.3, LACC.4. SL. 2.4, LACC.6.RL.3.7, LACC.6.RI.3.7, LACC.6.RI.3.9

### THEATRE:

TH.2.S.1.3, TH.W.F.3.1, TH.3.C.2.2, TH.3.C.3.1, TH.3.S.1.3, TH.3.S.3.4, TH.4.S.1.3, TH.4.S.3.3

### MUSIC:

MU.2.O.3.1, MU.3.C.1.2

### SCIENCE:

SC.K.N.1.1

### DANCE:

DA.2.O.3.2, DA.4.C.3.1, DA.5.C.3.1

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

### OBJECTIVE

Students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired to different areas of study.

### ACTIVITY

Ask students to make individual lists of at least three topics and/or projects related to dance or *A Mid-summer Night's Dream* which they would like to explore. Make a class brainstorm list of topics/projects. The list of topics might include ideas such as :

1. The history of dance or a particular style of dance such as ballet or African.
2. The work of various dancers, choreographers or composers.
3. Watch a video of or attend another dance performance and write a review.
4. Research the personal/daily life of a dancer.
5. Research the training and health practices of a dancer.
6. The history/culture of *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream*.
7. Other music by Mendelssohn.
8. Other plays by Shakespeare.
9. Other ballets.
10. Community resources for dance.
11. Books/magazines/videos about dance.
12. Learning additional dance steps/styles.
13. The elements of choreography, set design, lighting or costume design.
14. Create a costume or set for a story.
15. Create dance phrases.

Have the students work alone or in groups to design a project to share their topic of choice with the whole group. FOR YOUNGER students the teacher may want to select the topics and projects, or have the students vote on one or two choices on which the entire class can work.

Encourage the students to be creative in sharing their projects with the group. Projects might include such activities as:

- Making a video.
- Giving a presentation or report.
- Writing a report.
- Interviewing resource people.
- Inviting resource people to class.
- Setting up a display.
- Writing a story or poem.
- Drawing, painting, sculpting or creating other art forms.
- Giving a demonstration.

### EXTENSIONS/VARIATIONS

Have the students use the brainstorm list to create word trees or webs. Display the trees or webs on construction paper. This activity works particularly well as a culminating/closure activity if students cannot actually do their projects.

\*Note: Many of the above activities are appropriate for grades 6-12.



**LANGUAGE ARTS:**

LACC.5.SL.2.4

**THEATRE:**

TH.3.C.1.1, TH.3.F.3.1, TH.4.O.2.2

**MUSIC:**

MU.R.H.1.2

**SCIENCE:**

SC.K.N.1.1

**DANCE:**

DA.4.C.3.1, DA.4.H.2.1, DA.4.H.3.3,

DA.5.C.3.1, DA.5.H.2.2



DANB in *Latin American Symphonette*. Photo Johnston Photography.

# Activities Grade 6-12

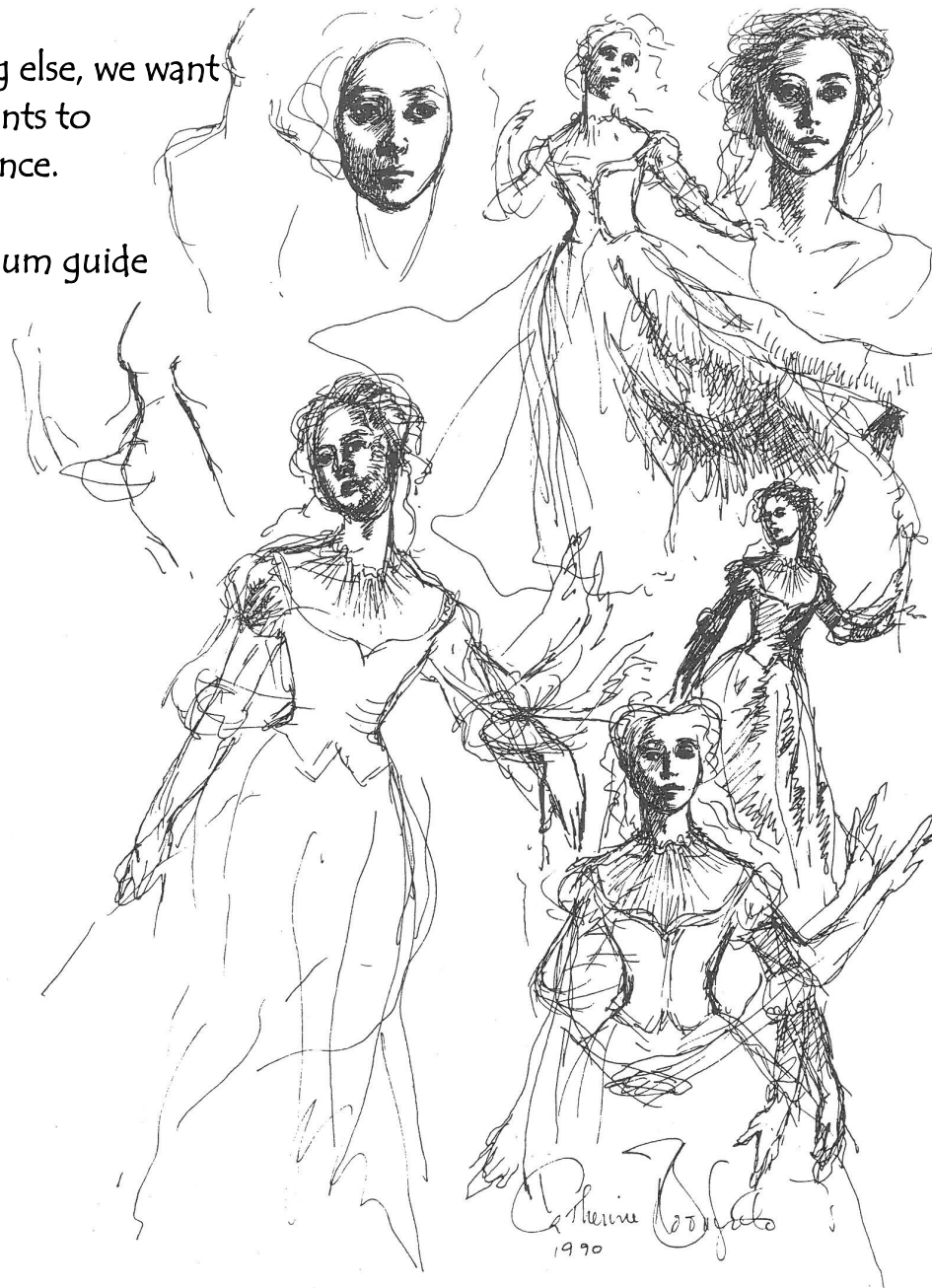
The following pages have many activities that can be utilized for grades 6-12. We have placed at the top of each page those activities that we have specifically tied to Florida Literacy Standards.

We invite you to link additional Literacy Standards—or not!

In our county (Alachua County, Florida) *A Mid-Summer Night's Dream* is addressed in 8th grade. However, Shakespeare is taught throughout high school, so we have presented activities for a variety of ages and grades.

More than anything else, we want you and your students to enjoy the performance.

Explore the curriculum guide at your leisure.



## REACTION PAPER

Write your reaction to one aspect of the ballet or to the total ballet experience. Your paper might include, but need not be limited to the following: **All are LACC.5.W.1.1.**

1. The musical presentation of the ballet. **Th.68 C.3.2, LACC .6 SL.2.5, LACC.8 R.L. 3.7, LACC. 910 RL. 3.7, MU. 912 C.3.1, MU.68 C.3.1**
2. The dance presentation of the ballet. **LACC. 910 RL. 3.7, MU. 912 C.3.1, MU.68 C.3.1, TH 5.0.1.3, LACC.7 RI. 1.3, LACC. 7.RI. 3.7**
3. The character (s) in the ballet. **TH. 5.0.1.1, LACC. 5 RL. 1.2, LACC. 7 RL. 1.3**
4. The “mingling” of dance and pantomime. **TH. 5.H. 3.1**
5. The use of ballet as a vehicle for presenting drama. **TH. 5. H. 3.2, TH. R.H. 3.3, LACC. 6. RL. 2.6, LACC .6. RL. 3.7, LACC. 8 RL. 3.7, LACC. 8 RI. 3.7., LACC. 910. RL. 3. 7.**

### **MORE!**

- Your change of attitude toward ballet.
- Your reaction to the narrative ballet.
- The ideas in the story line.

At the end of your paper, summarize your thoughts.

## BASIC STORY ELEMENTS

Describe the following literary elements of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.

1. Settings:  
ACT I  
ACT II
2. Main Characters: (4)
3. Conflict:
4. Plot Summary:

## SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Research the evolution of the pointe shoe.  
Research the evolution of the tutu.

## COOPERATIVE LEARNING TOPICS

Directions: Choose a topic to learn about with a partner or group. Present your information. If possible use visual aids or demonstration.

### Topics related to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

Story/comic ballet	How is <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> different from earlier ballets? <b>DA.68 C.3.1</b>
Mendelssohn	Relate to music of the time. Relate to art and the period he lived in. <b>MU. 5 H.2.1, MU. 68 H.1.2 &amp; 1.5, MU.68 TI. 2.1, MU.912. H. 1.1 &amp; 1.2, MU. 912 H. 2.1</b>
Ashton/Balanchine	Compare their "Dreams". <b>DA.68 C.1.1, DA.68 C.3.1, DA.912 C.1.1, DA.912 H.1.2</b>
Beliefs	How did what people of that age believe in impact what Shakespeare wrote and what was presented in the ballet? <b>TH 5. H. 1.1, TH. 5. H. 2.1</b>
Compare	Compare the dance presentation to 2 or 3 other art forms. <b>TH. 5. H. 1.1</b>
Time	Research what it was like in the time Shakespeare wrote <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> and then the time the first ballet <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> was produced.

### Topics related to the ballet:

Louis XIV	His influence on dance.
Training	Compare Russian training to that of the United States.
Change	Research and describe what happened to ballet after Isadora Duncan.
Turn-out	What it is and why it is important to ballet and contemporary dance. How do dancers get "turn-out"? Why must they be careful not to force turn-out?
Life	Research and describe "what it takes" to be a professional ballet dancer. What is their life like?
Choreographers	Research and describe the work of a major choreographer such as Balanchine, Cranko, Robbins, Tudor, Fokine, Tharp, Petipa, Ashton or Kilian.
Ballerina	Compare two famous ballerinas—or research and describe the work of just one. Compare what was expected of a dancer in the 1800's to what is expected of a dancer today.
Danseur	Compare two famous danseurs—or research and describe one.
Companies	Compare two major ballet companies—or describe one. Every company has a special look. What gives the company you select that look?
Finance	How do ballet companies (and dancers) support themselves?
TV & Movies	How have both television and the movies impacted the world of dance? Describe.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Shakespeare concerned himself with the affairs of the common man rather than royal personages in writing this play? **TH.912 H.1.1, LACC.5.RL.2.6**
2. Build character sketches of two women and two men in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Contrast. **TH.68.C.1.2, TH.912. S.2.3, LACC.5.RL.1.3, LAAC. 5.RL.1.3**
3. What do you think was Shakespeare's intent in writing *A Midsummer Night's Dream*? **TH.68.C.1.3, TH.912.H.2.4**
4. Why is Shakespeare considered one of our greatest playwrights? **TH.68. H.1.3**
5. Why do you think Shakespeare selected a long-ago mythical era in ancient Greece for the setting?
6. Why is Shakespeare considered a genius?
7. How are Titania and Oberon bound together? Discuss needs as related to character.
8. Describe the relationship between Puck and Oberon.
9. How does Titania differ from other women in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*?
10. What is the cause of the quarrel between Titania and Oberon?
11. Why do you think this play was written for entertainment?
12. Discuss the comical complications of love shown in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
13. Shakespeare's audiences believed that on the eve of May 1st, all sorts of supernatural happenings might occur. Why is it essential for our imaginations must believe as "midsummer madness"?
14. How are Puck and Bottom alike? How Different? Describe.
15. The theme of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is that "love hath no law but his own" and "all's fair in love and war". Provide examples.
16. What part does Bottom want to play?
17. What does Puck give Bottom?
18. Who plots revenge on Titania?
19. Provide examples where Shakespeare flip-flops the notion of fairy-like tranquility and the ideal of love and marriage.



4 mortals  
Johnston Photography.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR CREATIVE PROJECTS

1. Design and construct a model of a stage set for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. **TH 912.S.2.1**
2. Write a story for your own ballet. **TH. 68 C.1.1**
3. Design costumes for ballet set in today's world or Shakespeare's day or the 1900's. **TH. 912 O. 2.3**
4. Make a character sketch of Puck or Oberon. (Written or visual) **TH. 68 C.3.2**
5. Compare Titania, Helena or Hippolyta to another woman you have seen in movies or television or life. **TH. 68 C. 3.2**
6. Research the time when Shakespeare wrote *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Report what you have found. **TH. 5 H. 2.1**
7. Design and make a poster advertising a ballet.
8. Interview a person who has performed in a ballet. Present the information to the class.
9. Observe a professional class or rehearsal. Describe to the class what you have learned.
10. Demonstrate some of the basic steps in ballet. Include steps done at the barre and center.
11. Make some puppets and put on a ballet.
12. Design and make a costume.
13. Using contemporary music, create your own ballet. What would the story be? Explain why you select the music that you do.
14. Form a group and act out excerpts from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
15. Create a visual of the wedding scene of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
16. Create a visual of the fairy scene in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.



Fairies

Johnston Photography

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER STUDENTS

### **Arts-Dance**

- Research the impact of the computer on dance.
- Dance and mime excerpts from the ballet. Or: Create another act for the ballet.
- Dance exercises:
  - Define a space with chalk or desks and have the students create movement that touches every corner or all sides.
  - Working in partners, ask students to create movement without touching. Now ask them to do the same thing WITHOUT losing contact with each other.
  - Working in partners, ask students to face each other and take turns mirroring each other's movements.
  - In partners, have students "dance" a conversation using large gestures and movements.
    - Encourage them to incorporate emotions such as: anger, amazement, disbelief, boredom or surprise.
- Have the class teach dance steps to a class of younger students.
- Have students present dance creations to a class of younger students.
- Compare and contrast two different styles of dance.
- Find another version of a ballet or story on video and encourage the students to compare this to the Dance Alive National Ballet production.
- Create Act III for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

### **Arts-Music**

- Research the impact of the computer on music.
- Explore how different music or different musical instruments "inspire" different moods and styles of dance.

### **Arts-Theater**

- Research the impact of the computer on theater.
- Compare and contrast musical and non-musical versions of the same story.
- Act out a scene from the ballet, with a script or improvised dialogue.

### **Arts-Visual Arts**

- Research the impact of the computer on the visual arts.
- Design and make a poster advertising a ballet or concert.
- Make a diorama of a scene from the ballet.
- Design and make a costume for a dance presentation

### **Foreign Language**

- Learn the French words used for simple ballet movements. Follow and give ballet directions in French.
- Depending on the ballet, have students figure out how to encode their names in the Russian alphabet, or act out a scene from the ballet using American Sign as well as dance movement.

### **Language Arts**

- Imagine what a world without dance would be like and write a story about it.
- Do a "talk show" with students acting the roles of ballet characters.
- Write a story for a sequel to the ballet.
- Create a word search puzzle using character names and words associated with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Share with the class.
- Write a story about a modern day version of these characters' adventures.
- Use the computer to find information on topics related to dance or to this particular story.

### **Physical Education/ Health Education**

- Compare and contrast the training and lifestyles of professional athletes and professional dancers.
- Compare and contrast respiration and pulse rates during different physical activities including different types of dance.
- Research the use of dance therapy for people with illnesses and disabilities.
- Research the care and prevention of injuries and diseases common to dancers.
- Have students create dances about healthy/unhealthy and safe/unsafe behaviors.

### **Science**

- Have students dance the three states of matter (solid, liquid, gas).
- Explore the concept of gravity, force and energy in jumps, turns and aerial movements.
- Have the students create "dances" to illustrate different weather patterns.
- Have students "dance" the life cycle of a plant.
- Research the use of different surfaces for dance performances.
- Explore all of the ways science contributes to a dance performance.

### **Social Studies**

- Have students create dances about different periods in history.
- Have an international dance festival and explore music and dance from around the world.
- Have students write letters to the city commissioners in support of funding dance performances for the community.

### **Mathematics**

- Define specific geometric shapes with chalk and have students create a dance which utilizes that specific shape.
- Have students create different two or three dimensional geometric shapes with their bodies—alone or with other students.
- Obtain a full casting list, make a graph of the number of costumes needed for each dance. Calculate how many costumes the wardrobe mistress must keep in order.



# Teacher Resources

Make use of the great resources on-line.

Our public library provided a list of resources available on ballet, Shakespeare, Mendelssohn and A Midsummer Night's Dream. Books, DVD's, videos, music, etc.

**USE YOUR  
LIBRARY!**



## CAST OF CHARACTERS

**Theseus, Duke of Athens:** Represents authority.

**Egeus, Father to Hermia:** Insists his daughter marry who he has chosen for her.

**Lysander, Beloved of Hermia:** Egeus believes that Lysander can't be trusted. However, he really does love Hermia deeply. He is both a romantic and a realist.

**Demetrius, Suitor to Hermia:** Egeus approves of this suitor. A fanciful man, her really loves Helena.

**Hippolyta, Queen of Amazons, betrothed to Theseus:** Once a war-like creature, she now abides by Theseus' every word.

**Hermia, Daughter of Egeus, in love with Lysander:** A vixen with spirited and independent temper. She has a deep love for Lysander and a soft teasing side.

**Helena, in love with Demetrius:** Has a fierce and fiery love for Demetrius and knows their love is not hopeless.

### Courtiers

**Nick Bottom, A weaver:** An impromptu master of wit who carries his talents to extreme so that he often seems an "ass" - which is why the donkey or ass head is so appropriate.

**Peter Quince, a carpenter:** A patient friend to Bottom

**Oberon, King of the Fairies:** This King has mortal feelings. He will stop at nothing to get what he wants ... in this case a changling boy who is one of Titania's attendants.

**Titania, Queen of the Fairies:** Titania is most concerned with beauty and sweetness. She adores lovely things and is devoted to her subjects. Oberon is a constant test of her good nature.

**Puck, or Robin Goodfellow:** Puck is Oberon's jester and never still. He is the spirit of mischief and irresponsibility—and loves to play practical jokes.

**Peaseblossom, a fairy**

**Cobweb, A fairy**

**Moth, a fairy**

**Mustardseed, a fairy**

**Changling Boy, a member of Titania's court.**

**Small Fairies**



## **A Midsummer Night's Dream (Synopsis)**

### **ACT I**

Theseus, Duke of Athens, is about to celebrate his marriage to Hippolyta, Queen of Amazons. His friend, Egeus, and the Athenian lovers are introduced and their story unfolds.

Hermia, Egeus' daughter, loves Lysander and wants to marry him. Her father, however, wants her to marry Demetrius, who has earlier professed his love to her friend, Helena, and is now in love with Hermia. With the determination of Hermia and Lysander to fly from Athens and elope, and of Helena to warn Demetrius of the flight and lure him to accompany her to the woods, the complication is fully foreshadowed!

A group of rustic men, among them Quince, the village carpenter, and Bottom, the weaver, are introduced. They are preparing a play, an "interlude" entitled "Pyramus and Thisbe" to be given before the Duke and Duchess the evening of their wedding. Outside the palace gates in the nearby woods live the fairies, invisible to mortal man. Oberon and Titania, King and Queen of the Fairies, are arguing over a little changeling boy. Oberon orders Puck, his mischievous "Court jester" to bring him the flower called "love—in—idleness" . He will lay its magic liquor on Titania's sleeping eyelids. This potion will cause the wearer to fall in love with the first person seen upon awakening.

The story of the lovers is connected with that of the fairies. Oberon overhears Demetrius scorning the fond Helena, and sympathizing with her, he instructs Puck to anoint the eyes of the disdainful youth with the love juice. Puck sees Hermia and Lysander, and thinking Lysander to be Demetrius, anoints his eyes. Act I is brought to a brilliant conclusion with Puck joyously playing Cupid.

### **ACT II**

When Lysander awakens, he first sees Helena and falls madly in love with her. Hermia is left alone, bewildered.

We leave the lovers briefly to join the rehearsal of the play by the rustic men. Puck merrily decides to turn the doltish Bottom into a donkey. Titania awakens to the sound of his braying, which she hears as angels singing and falls in love with him at once. They fall asleep, and soon the lovers return. The complication is at its height when Puck anoints the eyes of Demetrius, who first sees Helena, falling madly in love with her. The quarreling of the lovers, whose original relations to one another are now so completely reversed, causes them to tire and, spellbound by Puck, they fall asleep.

Oberon decides it is time to put a stop to all this playful confusion and orders Puck to anoint Lysander's eyes. He also feels it is time enough to awaken Titania from her infatuation with Bottom, and the fairy King and Queen are reconciled. The human lovers readjust and reconcile. Theseus, Hippolyta and Egeus come upon the lovers waking up. Egeus realizes Hermia's love for Lysander and gives his blessing to the union. All is well and the wedding festivities, including the "interlude", take place with great joy. After the "iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve", the fairies come and invoke their blessings, leaving with us a lasting impression of Puck's most memorable words, "Look, what fools these mortals be!"

*Confused? The ballet makes it all clear! Simply enjoy!*

## A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (Background)

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a ballet about the transforming power of love. This ballet is based on William Shakespeare's comedy about the romantic adventures and misadventures, quarrels and re-unitings, of two pairs of mortal lovers and the King and Queen of the Fairies. Shakespeare's poetic dream drama was written circa 1600. It is one of the most original conceptions in literature. This originality lies in the imaginative skill with which the main plot—that of Theseus and the Athenian lovers—and two subplots, that of the fairies and the rustic "patches" - are compacted into a harmonious and convincing whole.

As a ballet, certain liberties are taken to simplify the complexities of the story, without losing the content. Through its themes of reality versus illusion, change versus constancy, the ballet displays love in all its guises. In the first act there are dances of unrequited love and love that is reconciled. There is a pas de deux for the Fairy Queen Titania and Bottom, who has been turned into a donkey—a perfect illustration in dance of the old proverb, "love is blind". In the second act, which opens with Mendelssohn's familiar "Wedding March", there is a pas de deux representing ideal untroubled love.

Midsummer Night, which is June 23rd (St. John's Eve) has long been associated with love and magic. In European folklore it is the one night of the year when supernatural beings such as fairies are about and can interact with the real world. It is also a date that falls near the summer solstice which in earlier civilizations was traditionally a time for fertility rites and festivals devoted to love.

Shakespeare's 1595 play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, has been the source for films, an opera by Benjamin Britten (1960), and a one-act ballet by Frederick Ashton, called "the Dream" (1964).

George Balanchine's version, which premiered in 1962, was the first wholly original evening-length ballet he choreographed in America. On April 24, 1964, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* opened New York City Ballet's first repertory season at the NY State Theater. Balanchine had been familiar with Shakespeare's play from an early age. As a child of eight he had appeared as an elf in a production in St. Petersburg, Russia, and he could recite portions of the play by heart. Balanchine loved Mendelssohn's overture and incidental music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (composed in 1826 and 1843). It is this score, Balanchine later said, that inspired his choreography. Mendelssohn had written only about an hour's worth of music for the play, so for twenty years Balanchine studied the composer's other works, finally selecting a number of additional overtures, a nocturne, an intermezzo and a portion of Symphony #9 to weave together the ballet score.

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE Author (1564-1616)

William Shakespeare was an English dramatist and poet born in Stratford-on-Avon. He is considered the greatest playwright who ever lived. In 1582, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, eight years his senior and pregnant at the time of the marriage. They had three children: Susan, and twins Hamnet and Judith.

He emerged as a playwright in London in 1592 and was known for modeling his work after the Roman comedy. In 1594 he became a professional actor and playwright. By the end of his London career, Shakespeare was not a wealthy man, but was prosperous enough to buy New Place in Stratford, which later became his home in his retirement years.

The chronology of his plays is uncertain. His early plays include:

- *Henry VI*
- *Richard III*
- *The Comedy of Errors*
- *Titus Andronicus*
- *The Taming of the Shrew*
- *Two Gentlemen of Verona*
- *Love's Labor's Lost*
- *Romeo and Juliet*

Later plays include:

- *Venice*
- *Henry IV*
- *Much Ado About Nothing*
- *Henry V*
- *Julius Caesar*
- *As You Like It*
- *Twelfth Night*
- *Hamlet*
- *Othello*
- *King Lear*
- *Macbeth*
- *Anthony and Cleopatra*



Shakespeare mixed comedy and tragedy and failed to observe the unities of time and place prescribed by the classical rule of drama. He was accused of corrupting the English language. Shakespeare's view was that man knows nothing of life, yet must still behave well and combat evil. This vision may explain the persistent appeal of Shakespeare's plays.

## FELIX MENDELSSOHN Composer (1809–1847)

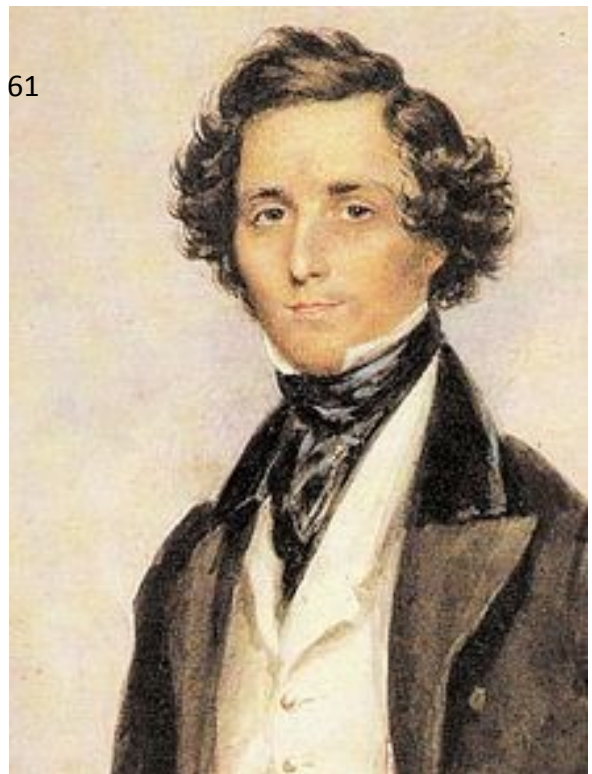
Mendelssohn was a terrifyingly gifted child. He painted with skill, wrote fine poetry, was an excellent athlete, spoke several languages and played many instruments. In 1825, at the age of sixteen, he composed one of the greatest pieces of chamber music—his “octet for strings”. He went on to produce many other pieces of excellent music.

He was born into a wealthy Jewish-German family. His talents were encouraged by his mother and elder sister, Fanny, who was almost as gifted a pianist as her brother. He made his concert debut in 1818 at the age of nine and had some of his music performed the following year. In 1826 he wrote his overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a work that established his name internationally. In 1826 he gave the first performance of Bach's music since Bach's death and was one of the principle influences behind the European revival of Bach's music. In the same year he made his first visit to England. The English loved him and for many years he was the country's most popular foreigner.

After touring Scotland, he returned to mainland Europe, to spend two years touring Germany, Austria and Italy. Mendelssohn's misfortune was that he excelled in a number of roles—as pianist, conductor, organizer of musical events and educator. He married in 1837, at the age of 38. For the last fifteen years of his life his composing was carried on amid the distractions of a public performing career. On his tenth and last visit to England he became friends with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, teaching the Prince to play the piano. In May of that year his beloved sister Fanny died. The shock of this loss, together with the pressure of severe overwork, led to his death from a stroke six months later.

For this ballet choreographer Kim Tuttle used the following music:

- Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 21
- Overture to *The Fair Mesuline*, Op. 32
- Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in E Minor, Op. 64
- Incidental Music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 61
- Songs Without Words: *May Breezes*, *Spring Song*, *On Wings of Song*
- Scherzo for the Octet in G Minor, Op. 20



## KIM TUTTLE Choreographer (1948-)

Kim Tuttle is presently Artistic/Executive Director and Resident Choreographer for Dance Alive National Ballet.

Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1948, Tuttle grew up in a musical and dance oriented family. She began classes in dance at the age of four and piano at the age of seven. At this early age she began experimenting creatively in the areas of music, dance and the written word. By the age of twelve she was writing songs and poems. Noted composer/teacher Russell Danburg was her primary piano teacher. Early dance instruction was from Mary Ellen Pofahl.

Ms. Tuttle majored in music on scholarship at the University of Florida, accompanied the majority of faculty concerts and subsequently became a recording artist. Ms. Tuttle left Gainesville for Stuttgart Ballet where she was a ballet coach and staff pianist under the genius of John Cranko. Skills as a teacher were enhanced with work from gifted teacher Anne Wolliams.

Ms. Tuttle returned to Gainesville, continuing her career as a dancer and choreographer. Ms. Tuttle left Gainesville to serve as Ballet Mistress for the Zurich Ballet in Zurich, Switzerland under Patricia Neary; a wonderful opportunity to see, work with and set Balanchine ballets. Ms. Tuttle returned from Zurich in 1985 to take the reins of Dance Alive National Ballet.

Ms. Tuttle has a reputation throughout the southeastern United States as an exceptional teacher, coach and choreographer. She has been awarded three Individual Fellowships from the State of Florida and choreographed well over one hundred ballets. Among the most recent; *Bolero*, *Rite of Spring*, *Dracula*, *Queen of the Night*, *Fire and Ice*, *Robin Hood*, *Phantom: A Tale of Obsession*, *Cleopatra: A Rock Ballet*, *Lady Bug: Action Hero!*, *Zoom*, *Constellation*, *Soar*, *L'Amour*, *Red Tutu*, *Frankenstein* and numerous smaller works.



## WHAT IS BALLET?

### BACKGROUND:

The word “ballet” is derived from the Italian word “ballare”, meaning “to dance”. The original French names for steps and jumps are still used. Music, dance and mime combine in ballet to tell a story. In ballet, each step and movement is planned in advance. This is called choreography. Performing ballet is very hard work and requires hours of practice. Most ballet dancers begin training at an early age. Just as in athletics, dancers must take very good care of their bodies. Women must work particularly hard to learn a very special technique called “pointe”, wearing special shoes which allow them to dance on the tips of their shoes.

Dance in ballet is based on the five classic positions of the feet and must be performed by dancers trained in classic technique. All ballet movements begin and end with one of the five positions. They were created in the 18th century to provide balance and to make the feet and hands look graceful. The five positions are based on the foundation which underlies ballet dance—the turn out. “Turn out” is the ability of the dancer to rotate the legs outward much further than is normal or natural in everyday life. “Turn out” must come from the hip if injury is to be avoided.

### HISTORY

Ballet began as entertainment for the royal families of Europe more than 300 years ago. It has a long and rich history growing out of noble and courtly manners and behaviors. Ladies and gentlemen of the court were the performers. The first “ballet” was presented at the court of Catherine De Medici in 1581. Soon these “ballets” became so popular in France and Italy that, if you were a member of the nobility, you had to have dance training. By the time of France’s Louis XIV there were hundreds of “dance” teachers in Paris alone. The king, an accomplished dancer himself, decided to put ballet in the hands of the professionals. He created a school—the Academie Royale de la Danse. Classical ballet style has developed gradually since that time. In the 19th century “romantic” ballet became popular. Dancers in floating white dresses performed La Sylphide and Giselle.

The Ballets Russes was one of the most influential ballet companies in the world. Great choreographers such as the Michael Fokine, Nijinsky, Massine and Balanchine arranged dances for Ballet Russe. During this time artists such as Picasso, Stravinsky, Debussy, Bakst and Matisse collaborated in creating works that changed the face of dance.

For a time, ballet companies were able to tour even the smaller cities. During the time of Anna Pavlova (ballet dancer) and Isadora Duncan (modern dancer), dance became the thing for people to see and talk about. Gradually it became too expensive for companies to tour and ballet became less in favor.

Neo-classical ballet and modern ballet are two twentieth century variations on classical ballet. Both have their origins in traditional European ballet.

Neo-classical ballet is a style of dance developed by choreographer George Balanchine who was trained in classical Russian ballet technique at the Kirov Ballet School in St. Petersburg, Russia in the twentieth century.



From his classical training, Balanchine kept the line, the elegance, the precision and the presence, but eliminated the heaviness of style—the obvious preparation, the slowness of movement and the amount of time between steps. In choreography, Balanchine chose carefully. He did not completely eliminate storytelling. Instead, he reduced the plot and character to a minimum and drew on his audiences' cultural knowledge through the use of gestures, costumes and properties to convey his story. He retained both classical and folk steps and poses which reflected humanity generously.

Balanchine also explored the movements of other dance styles –modern dance from Middle Europe, folk, jazz and Western dance from the United States. He also utilized the visual forms of modern art; cubism, surrealism and the new harmonies and rhythms created by Stravinsky.

Modern ballet (what has evolved into contemporary dance) is a much more inclusive style of dance than Neo-classical ballet. It is the creation of many choreographers and dancers who were taught in many dance styles.

A modern ballet choreographer can call on the whole range of dance styles and incorporate jazz, various styles of modern dance, ethnic dance and ballet. Today's choreographers collaborate with composers, visual artists and the newest of technology to create new works.



DANB in Balanchine's masterpiece *Apollo*. Tak Kwan Chu was the first person from China to dance the role in the United States.

## GLOSSARY/VOCABULARY

Theatre and dance have developed vocabulary of their own over the years. The terms listed below are common with all dance people.

**AB** A two part compositional form with an A theme and a B theme; the binary form consists of two distinct, self-contained sections that share either a character or quality (such as the same tempo, movement, quality or style).

**ABA** A three part compositional form in which the second section contrasts with the first section. The third section is a restatement of the first section in a condensed, abbreviated, or extended form.

**ABSTRACT** To remove movement from a particular or representative context and (by manipulating it with elements of space, time and force) create a new sequence or dance that retains the essence of the original.

**ACTION** A movement event.

**AESTHETIC CRITERIA** Standards on which to make judgments about the artistic merit.

**APRON** The part of the stage in front of the curtain.

**ALIGNMENT** The relationship of the skeleton to the line of gravity and the base of support.

**ARABESQUE** A dance position taken with the dancer standing on one leg with the other leg extended behind.

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** Person responsible for the total production of a ballet; person responsible for the total “look” of a ballet company.

**AXIAL MOVEMENT** Any movement that is anchored to one spot by a body part using only the available space in any direction without losing the initial body contact. Movement is organized around the axis of the body rather than designed for travel from one location to another’ also known as nonlocomotor movement.

**BACKDROP** Usually a canvas or velour hanging at the back of the set which depicts a scene or mood.

**BACKSTAGE** Area behind the stage.

**BALANCHINE** Famous choreographer.

**BALLERINA** Female ballet dancer.

**BALLET** form of classical theatrical dance based on the five positions and the turnout of the legs from the hips.

**BALLET MASTER/MISTRESS** The person in a company who teaches the professional dancers each day.

**BALLON** Ability to get up or quality of getting up in the air.

**BARRE** Section of wood or metal that dancers hold onto when doing “a barre” - that part of a ballet class that prepares the ballet dancer’s body for more difficulty work.

**BLACKOUT** A sudden elimination of all stage lights to indicate the end of something.

**BOX OFFICE** Where the public purchases tickets.

**CALL** Announcement of the time at which dancers or actors should be in the theatre.

**CANNON** Choreographic form that reflects the musical form of the same name, in which individuals and groups perform the same movement/phrase beginning at different times.

**CASTING** The selection of dancers or actors for a role.

**CHANCE** The choreographic process in which elements are specifically chosen and defined but randomly structured to create a dance or movement phrase. This process demands high levels of concentration in performance to deal effectively with free association and surprise structures that appear spontaneously.

**CHARACTER ROLES** Roles based on specific physical qualities.

**CHOREOGRAPHER** the person who creates the ballet.

**CHOREOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE** The specific compositional forms in which movement is structured to create a dance.

**CLASSICAL** Dance that has been developed into highly stylized structures within a culture. Generally developed within the court or circle of power in society.

**COMPANY** The group that creates the performance.

**COMPOSER** The person who creates the music.

**CONTEXT** A set of interrelated conditions (such as social, economic, political) that influence and give meaning to the development and reception of thoughts, ideas, or concepts that define specific cultures and eras.

**CORPS DE BALLET** The chorus or ensemble of a ballet company.

**CORYPHEE** Rank between corps de ballet and soloist. No full solo, but a few special phrases.

**COSTUME DESIGNER** Person who procures or designs and builds the costumes.

**CURTAIN CALL** The raising of the curtain so that the performers may acknowledge the applause of the audience.

DANSEUR Male ballet dancer.

DANSEUR NOBLE A classical male dancer; soloist and partner to the prima ballerina.

DIMMER An electrical device to control the intensity of the light.

DIVERTISSEMENT A series of dances set into a classical ballet or group of dances put together for the purpose of presenting several individual dancers in a series of separate numbers.

DOWNSTAGE The area closest to the audience.

DRESS REHEARSAL the final rehearsal of a ballet in which the dancers and the stage are dressed as if for a performance with an audience.

DYNAMICS the expressive content of human movement, sometimes called qualities or efforts. Dynamics manifest the interrelationships among the elements of space, time and force/energy.

ELEVATION The body's propulsion into the air away from the floor such as in a leap, hop or jump.

ENTRANCE The act of coming onto the stage.

EPAULEMENT the use of shoulders in presenting a step to the audience.

EXIT The act of leaving the stage.

EXPRESSIVE FEATURES Elements evoking affects such as joy, sadness, or anger.

EXPRESSION A process of conveying ideas, feelings and meanings through selective use of the communicative possibilities of the particular art form.

EXTENSION The stretching of the leg or arm at an angle of the body.

FLAT A wooden frame covered with canvas and painted to represent something such as walls, etc.

FLOOR PLAN A scaled line drawing of the stage.

FOLK DANCES Dances that are usually created and performed by a specific group within a culture. Generally these dances originate outside the courts or circle of power within a society.

FOOTLIGHTS A row of low-wattage lamps placed along the curtain line; used mainly in musical comedy.

FORESHADOWING A suggestion of some action or event that will occur later in the story.

FRONT OF HOUSE Box office and lobby.

HOUSE all parts of the theatre in front of the stage. Also refers to the audience members.

HOUSE MANAGER Person responsible for the off-stage.

**IMPROVISATION** Movement that is created spontaneously, ranging from free-form to highly structured environments, but always with an element of chance. Provides the dancer with the opportunity to bring together elements quickly, and requires focus and concentration. Improvisation is instant and simultaneous choreography and performance.

**INITIATION** Point at which a movement is said to originate. This particularly refers to specific body parts and is generally said to be either distal (from the limbs or head) or central (from the torso).

**KINESPHERE** The movement space, or the space surrounding the body in stillness and in motion, which includes all directions and levels both close to the body and as far as the person can reach with limbs or torso. See "personal space".

**KINESTHETIC** Refers to the ability of the body's sensory organs in the muscles, tendons and joints to respond to stimuli which dancing or viewing a dance.

**LEFT OR RIGHT STAGE** The dancer's left or right as he faces the audience.

**LEOTARD** Item of clothing that male and female dancers wear on their bodies.

**LEVELS** The height of the dancer in relation to the floor.

**LIGHT MAN** The person who may design the light plot and operate the light board.

**LOCOMOTOR MOVEMENT** Movement that travels from place to place, usually identified by weight transference on the feet. Basic locomotor steps are the walk, run leap, hop and jump and the irregular rhythmic combinations of the skip (walk and hop), slide (walk and leap), and gallop (walk and leap).

**MOVEMENT QUALITY** The identifying attributes created by the release, following through, and termination of energy, which are key to making movement become dance. Typical terms denoting qualities include sustained, swing, percussive, collapse, and vibratory and effort combinations such as float, dab, punch, and glide.

**MOVEMENT THEME** A complete idea in movement that is manipulated and developed within a dance.

**MUSICALITY** The attention and sensitivity to the musical elements of dance while creating or performing.

**NARRATIVE** Choreographic structure that follows a specific story line and intends to convey specific information through that story.

**PERCEPTION** Visual and sensory awareness, discrimination, and integration of impressions, conditions, and relationships with regard to objects, images and feelings.

**PERSONAL SPACE** The "space bubble" or the kinesphere that one occupies; it includes all levels, planes, and directions both near and far from the body's center.

**PHRASE** A brief sequence of related movements that has a sense of rhythmic completion.

**PROJECTION** A confident presentation of one's body and energy to vividly communicate movement and meaning to an audience; performance quality.

**PANTOMIME** Acting out without words.

**PAS DE DEUX** A dance for two; usually a man and a woman.

**PIROUETTE** To turn; a specific kind of turn done in classical ballet.

**POINTE** Dancing usually done only by female ballet dancers. Such dance is done "on the toes" with specifically constructed shoes called "pointe shoes".

**PRIMA BALLERINA** If a company has several ballerinas, the principal ballerina receives "top billing" and is given the label of "Prima" or first.

**PRIMA BALLERINA ASSOLUTA** The highest rank, given to the greatest female dancer of a nation or of an era.

**PRODUCER** The person who produces an event.

**PROJECT** The instruction to the dancer or actor to intensify his communication to the audience.

**PROPERTIES** Props, pieces of furniture and all objects used on stage.

**PROPERTY MAN** Person responsible for all props.

**REGISSEUR** Person responsible for rehearsing ballets.

**ROYALTY** the fee paid to a choreographer or company who owns the "rights" to a ballet. The fee paid to the composer or publishing company for permission to use music for a ballet or play.

**SCENE** A division of an act.

**SET DESIGNER** The person who designs and builds, or supervises the building of a set.

**SOUND MAN** Person responsible for creating all sound effects and making sure they all work.

**STAGE MANAGER** Person responsible for all stage activities during the production.

**STAGECRAFT** All the arts and crafts of stage production.

**STUDENT** A person who is learning ballet or theater.

**STYLE** A distinctive manner of moving; the characteristic way dance is done, created or performed that identifies the dance of a particular performer, choreographer or period.

**SYMBOLISM** Use of one thing to represent another.

**THEATRICAL DANCE** Genres primarily developed for the stage (such as jazz and tap).

**THEME** The central statement of a ballet—what the ballet is all about.

**TIGHTS** Item of clothing that male and female dancers wear on their legs.

**TRADITIONAL DANCE** The term “traditional” is used to denote those dances and dance forms that have arisen out of the tradition of a people, such as the dances of bharata natyam, noh, or the folk dances of indigenous peoples of Europe and other areas.

**TURNOUT** The rotation of the legs outward from the hips.

**TUTU** Standard ballet skirt worn by female ballet dancers.

**UNDERSTUDY** A dancer who rehearses a role so that he or she can be ready to perform in an emergency.

**USHERS** People responsible for the distribution of programs and for service to members of the audience.

**WARMUP** Movements and/or movement phrases designed to raise the core body temperature and bring the mind into focus for the dance activities to follow.

**WINGS** The off stage area to the left and right of the actual stage (dancing) area, usually masked by flats in the production.



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