

NEWYORKCITYBALLET

Home > George Balanchine's The Nutcracker > Teaching Materials > Nutcracker Curriculum Ideas

IDEAS FOR INTEGRATING GEORGE BALANCHINE'S THE NUTCRACKER™ WITH YOUR CURRICULUM:

Students may wish to pursue any of these activities as a class, on their own, or with their parents. Teachers whose students watch *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™* may wish to collaborate with other teachers in their schools to create an interdisciplinary approach to studying the ballet.

History/Social Studies

- Study holiday traditions around the world, past and present, discussing the party scene in *George Balanchine's The Nutcracker™* as an example of a German Christmas celebration in the 18th Century, and a trip to see *The Nutcracker* as a modern holiday tradition in America.
- Study the history of The Nutcracker ballet and how it came to be a holiday favorite. Resources to consult include ballet history books, dance magazines, and encyclopedias.
- Study the biographies of people involved with *The Nutcracker*, either the original or New York City Ballet production.

Language Arts

- Study the story of *The Nutcracker* as a fairy tale - read the original E.T.A. Hoffman tale, "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King," the Alexander Dumas *père* version from which the ballet's original libretto was arranged, "The Nutcracker of Nuremberg," and various modern stories of the ballet. Discuss the similarities and differences between the tales. Consider the many ways popular stories or folk/fairy tales are retold: *The Nutcracker* has been presented in writing, in artwork, in music, and in dance. Compare *The Nutcracker* with other popular tales that have been retold in many ways, such as *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Beauty and the Beast*. Discuss the ways the various presentations of these stories are faithful to the original versions and the new dimensions they add.