

Unit 3: Nutcracker Style
Dance Grades 7 and 8
#9 Class Meetings

Created May 2021, Updated June 2022

Essential Questions

- What is the significance of the Nutcracker to various cultures and historical periods?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: *The Nutcracker* is a famous ballet that has become a household name and tradition for many families during the holidays.

- Evaluate and examine ballet history and the history of *The Nutcracker*.
- Analyze and practice key ballet step and sections of the Nutcracker ballet.

EU 2: *The Nutcracker* is considered a classic and therefore has had different interpretations through different dance styles.

- Research different versions of *The Nutcracker*.
- Apply the knowledge of different dance styles to create our own ISAAC version of *The Nutcracker*.

Standards

National Core Arts Standards:

DA:Cr1.1.8 a. Implement movement from a variety of stimuli (for example, music, observed dance, literary forms, notation, natural phenomena, personal experience/recall, current news or social events) to develop dance content for an original dance study or dance.

DA:Cr1.1.8 b. Identify and select personal preferences to create an original dance study or dance. Use genre-specific dance terminology to articulate and justify choices made in movement development to communicate intent.

DA:Cr2.1.8 a. Collaborate to select and apply a variety of choreographic devices and dance structures to choreograph an original dance study or dance with a clear artistic intent. Articulate the group process for making movement and structural choices.

DA:Cr2.1.8 b. Define and apply artistic criteria to choreograph a dance that communicates personal or cultural meaning. Discuss how the criteria clarify or intensify the meaning of the dance.

DA:Pr4.1.8 a. Sculpt the body in space and design body shapes in relation to other dancers, objects, and environment. Use focus of eyes during complex floor and air patterns or direct and indirect pathways.

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DA:Pr4.1.8 b. Analyze and select metric, kinetic, and breath phrasing and apply appropriately to dance phrases. Perform dance phrases of different lengths that use various timings within the same section. Use different tempi in different body parts at the same time.

DA:Pr4.1.8 c. Direct energy and dynamics in such a way that movement is textured. Incorporate energy and dynamics to technique exercises and dance performance. Use energy and dynamics to enhance and project movements.

DA:Pr5.1.8 a. Embody technical dance skills (for example, functional alignment, coordination, balance, core support, clarity of movement, weight shifts, flexibility/range of motion) to replicate, recall, and execute spatial designs and musical or rhythmical dance phrases.

DA:Pr5.1.8 c. Collaborate with peers to discover strategies for achieving performance accuracy, clarity, and expressiveness. Articulate personal performance goals and practice to reach goals. Document personal improvement over time (for example, journaling, portfolio, or timeline).

DA:Pr6.1.8 a. Demonstrate leadership qualities (for example commitment, dependability, responsibility, and cooperation) when preparing for performances. Use performance etiquette and performance practices during class, rehearsal and performance. Document efforts and create a plan for ongoing improvements. Post-performance, accept notes from choreographer and apply corrections to future performances.

DA:Pr6.1.8 b. Collaborate to design and execute production elements that would intensify and heighten the artistic intent of a dance performed on a stage, in a different venue, or for different audiences. Explain reasons for choices using production terminology.

DA:Re.7.1.8 a. Describe, demonstrate and discuss patterns of movement and their relationships in dance in context of artistic intent.

DA:Re.7.1.8 b. Explain how the elements of dance are used in a variety of genres, styles, or cultural movement practices to communicate intent. Use genre-specific dance terminology.

DA:Re8.1.8 a. Select a dance and explain how artistic expression is achieved through relationships among the elements of dance, use of body, dance technique and context. Cite evidence in the dance to support your interpretation using genre specific dance terminology.

DA:Re9.1.8 a. Use artistic criteria to determine what makes an effective performance. Consider content, context, genre, style, or cultural movement practice to comprehend artistic expression. Use genre-specific dance terminology.

DA:Cn10.1.8 a. Relate connections found between different dances and discuss the relevance of the connections to the development of one's personal perspectives.

DA:Cn10.1.8 b. Investigate two contrasting topics using a variety of research methods. Identify and organize ideas to create representative movement phrases. Create a dance study exploring the contrasting

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ideas. Discuss how the research informed the choreographic process and deepens understanding of the topics.

DA:Cn11.1.8 a. Analyze and discuss, how dances from a variety of cultures, societies, historical periods, or communities reveal the ideas and perspectives of the people.

ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

Competency 1: Write effectively for a variety of purposes.

Competency 2: Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.

Competency 3: Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.

Competency 4: Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.

Competency 5: Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

Unit Content Overview

1. Story/Plot of The Nutcracker.

- Dramatization
- Experience a professional version of The Nutcracker

Key Terms:

- Ballet
- Choreographer
- Ballet Company
- Corps de Ballet
- Composer
- *The Nutcracker*
- Pantomime
- George Balanchine
- Tchaikovsky

2. Different ways The Nutcracker can be performed

- Dance style
- Music style
- Setting

Key Terms and Vocabulary:

- Setting
- Classic
- Version
- Props

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- Set Design
 - Duke Ellington & Billy Strayhorn
 - Hip-hop Nutcracker
3. **Combine ISAAC Dances from Unit 2 to create an ISAAC Nutcracker that uses a style that expresses who we are through dance.**

Interdisciplinary Connection:

- Social Studies: history, communities
- Music: Rhythm, music styles, tempo
- Math (Geometry): Lines, shapes, angles in movement
- ELA: Story Elements
- Theater: Pantomime

Daily Learning Objectives with *Do Now Activities*

Students will be able to...

- Dramatize the story of *The Nutcracker* through pantomime.*
 - *Write on a sticky note on thing you remember about the ballet The Nutcracker.*
- Compare and contrast different versions of *The Nutcracker*.
 - *With a partner, practice the 5 ballet steps we have been working on.*
- Apply our ISAAC expression dance piece from unit 2 to an ISAAC community version of *The Nutcracker*.
 - *In your dance journal, write which version of The Nutcracker was your favorite and why.*
- Synthesize movement to music to express the story of *The Nutcracker*.***
 - *Write out the transitions connecting one section to the next in your dance journal.*
- Revise and rehearse *The ISAAC Nutcracker*.
 - *Write out your stage path using stage directions and put it in your dance journal.*
- Design costumes that fit the style of our dance piece.
 - *Consider: How can we use colors to signify the different characters in the dance piece?*
- Perform *The ISAAC Nutcracker* in an invited dress rehearsal for students.
 - *Check in: How are you feeling about the invited dress rehearsal?*
- Reflect on the performance experience.
 - *Write in your dance journal: Who is one class member you noticed who showed GRIT or Growth Mindset through the rehearsal and performance process? How did they do that?*

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Visuals of instructions for assignments
- Plan for the Day (Visual and Aural)
- Scaffolding (Building on dance skills)
- Repetition

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- Imagery
- Silent Cues
- Visual learning, Aural Learning, Kinesthetic learning
- Paragraph frames and sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Written feedback
- Turn and talk and small-group discussions
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Small group instruction
- Small group devising
- Virtual tools: Flipgrid, Padlet, Tiktok,
- Conferencing

EL Differentiated Instruction

- Word walls with visuals of dance vocabulary
- TWPS (Think, write, pair, share)
- Pre-reading strategies
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Explicit modeling of dance steps by teacher
- Key Vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- Strategic grouping
- Non-verbal Assessment

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Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Do Now
- Student discussions and responses
- Exit Slips
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Ballet and Nutcracker history trivia and vocabulary game (EU 1)
- Demonstrate key Ballet steps and technique (EU 1)
- Pantomime scene from the Nutcracker (EU 1)
- Individual and group participation (EU 1 and EU 2)
- Completed research sheet for different Nutcrackers. (EU 2)
- Graphic Organizer for creating small group Nutcracker piece (EU 2)
- Performance Task- “The ISAAC Nutcracker” (EU 1 & 2)
 - Future Rubric Assessment in 2021-2022

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Pantomime scene from the Nutcracker (EU 1)
- Completed research sheet for different Nutcrackers. (EU 2)
- Graphic Organizer for creating small group Nutcracker piece (EU 2)
- Performance Task, “Unique Nutcracker” (EU 1 & 2)

Google Form Assessment on Nutcracker

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: Performance Task- “The ISAAC Nutcracker Performance”

Description: In this task students will recreate sections from the ballet, *The Nutcracker*. (EU 1&2) They will use at least two dance movements and pantomime to make their scene clear. (EU 1) They will choose a style of dance to employ for their Nutcracker scene based on research of styles of dance as well as the styles of dance we connected to as an ISAAC community from unit 2. (EU 2) Students will choose music and costumes that reflects their chosen style of dance. (EU 2) Students will perform *The ISAAC Nutcracker* in a public concert.

Evaluation: Summative Assessment and Future Rubric in 2021-2022 school year

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Unit Resources

- “The Nutcracker”, by New York City Ballet, illustrated by Valerie Docampo
- Music: The Nutcracker Suite, Tchaikovsky
- “A Brief History of Ballet” <https://www.atlantaballet.com/resources/brief-history-of-ballet>
- “The Nutty History of The Nutcracker” <https://www.dancespirit.com/the-history-of-the-nutcracker-2623200236.html>
- “Not Your Average Nutcracker: The World’s Most Imaginative Productions” <https://www.dancespirit.com/the-worlds-most-imaginative-and-unusual-nutcracker-productions-2515915167.html>
- “Nutcracker Suite”, Duke Ellington and His Orchestra
- Dance journals
- Video Resources of Online Dance Clips
- Costume box
- Worksheets: Graphic organizer, Different styles of the Nutcracker research sheet
- *The Nutcracker* Trivia Game
- Laptops
- Desks
- Smart Boards
- Google Slides/ Power Point Presentations
- Music
- Speakers
- Paper
- Pencils/ Pens