

Cinderella



Connor Walsh, Karina Gonzales & Artists of the Houston Ballet in *Cinderella (2017)* Photo by: Amitava Sarkar

Study Guide

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EXPOSE.EDUCATE.INTEGRATE.

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What is a Ballet Talk?

A *Ballet Talk* is an interactive storytelling experience! Students will discuss the basic elements of ballet, be introduced to props & costumes and watch a condensed, interactive version of a ballet performed by Houston Ballet Artists.

What Should My Class Expect?

- A teaching artist will arrive to your classroom or designated area 10-15 minutes early to set up.
- 2. The Teaching artist will spend 5-10 minutes introducing his/herself to the students, & discussing the basic elements of ballet and performance.
- 3. The teaching artist will present a condensed version of the ballet with commentary & dialogue (ranging from 25-40 minutes)
- 4. A 5-10 minutes question & answer session for students/teachers/ parents.

Average time for a ballet talk range from 50 minutes to 1 hour.

Learning Outcomes

Students who participate in a *Ballet Talk* and utilize the included extension activities will be able to:

- Describe how ballets tell stories without using words;
- Explain and give examples of the four elements of Storytelling in Dance;
- Sequence and/or summarize the main events of a story ballet;
- Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior.



Karina Gonzales, Connor Walsh, Jared Matthews & Artists of the Houston Ballet in *Cinderella (2017)* Photo by: Amitava Sarkar

"IT'S ABOUT STANDING UP FOR YOURSELF, MAKING YOUR OWN DECISIONS, CHOOSING YOUR OWN PATH, YOUR OWN LOVE".

- STANTON WELCH (DESCRIBING HIS BALLET, CINDERELLA)

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The Story of Cinderella

Ballets are like books, except that instead of having chapters, they have **Acts** and **Scenes. Acts** divide the story into smaller parts and **Scenes** show you where the story is taking place.

Act 1: Scene 1

The Breakfast Room at Chez Cinderella

It is mid-morning on the day of the prince's carnival. Cinderella serves her stepmother and stepsisters, Grizabella and Florinda, who are excited at the prospect of the evening's royal ball. **Couturiers**, or dress makers, arrive with the step family's ball attire. A dance instructor teaches all three of the girls the evening's steps.

The stepsisters, encouraged by their mother, destroy Cinderella's hope of attending the ball by throwing her dead mother's wedding dress into the fireplace. Comforted only by Buttons, the **chimney sweep**, Cinderella puts on the dress and imagines the ball. But when she sees her reflection in the mirror, she realized the dress is ruined, and she runs from the house.

Act 1: Scene 2

A Street

Cinderella, followed by faithful Buttons, fights through a festive crowd as she seeks to escape to her mother's grave.

Act 1: Scene 3 A Graveyard

At the tomb, Cinderella's tears awaken the spirit of her mother who **conjures** all the spirits of the dead back to life. The spirit of Cinderella's mother calls the ghosts to create a magical dress for Cinderella, and Buttons is transformed into her attendant. After warning that she must return by midnight, the ghosts transport them to the royal ball.

Act 2: Scene 1 The Royal Pavilion

The ball is in progress when the stepmother and stepsisters arrive with excitement; because this evening the prince is expected to choose a bride. All of the ladies **anticipate** the arrival of the prince's royal companions and the entrance of the king. Then the prince makes his entrance. All the ladies try to get his attention when, suddenly, a chill breeze announces the arrival of a lovely, mysterious young woman. The prince invites her to dance and Cinderella accepts the invitation. But she soon realizes he is **vain** and self-absorbed.

Breaking free of his **grasp**, she encounters Dandini, the prince's secretary, and dances with him. The prince is furious and demands to know more about her. Cinderella is saved form discovery by the announcement of supper. While the other gusts eat, Cinderella and Dandini sneak to another room to get to know each other and slowly fall in love.

After dinner, Cinderella tries to leave but is **detained** by the prince, who insists that she stay. The clock strikes midnight and the ghosts come to reclaim the magic dress. Cinderella flees, leaving only a slipper.

Act 3: Scene 1 The Palace

The Prince's companions are ordered to find the owner of the slipper. They search the princesses of the world but do not find a match. Ignoring his son's objections, the king insists that the **common folk** of the country try on the slipper. Town ladies rush to get in line, except Cinderella, who is avoiding detection. Instead, she finds the lovesick Dandini, who gradually recognizes her as his mysterious beloved from the ball.

The stepmother tries unsuccessfully to fit the slipper to her daughters' feet, leaving only Cinderella to try it on. She is proved to be the true owner of the slipper.

The prince is forced by the king to propose. Cinderella rejects his offer in favor of Dandini, who then must defend himself against the Prince's outrage.

Cinderella has found her love and true prince, Dandini, and they go forward to begin their own Happily Ever After.

The End

Cinderella Around the World:

Every region of the world has their own version of Cinderella

MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS: AN AFRICAN TALE By John Steptoe

This version is about a father, Mufaro, and his two beautiful daughters, Nyasha & Manyara. Nyasha has a kind and considerate heart while her sister is selfish and bad-tempered. The African King in the story has decided to take a wife and he invites the most beautiful and worthy daughters in the land to appear before him. Both of Mufaro's daughters wish to be Queen. Who will the King choose?





CINDERELLA: AN ISLAMIC TALE By Fawzia Gilani

Zahra is a sweet, gentle and pious young girl from the Middle East. She has suffered the tragedy of losing both of her biological parents and now is at the mercy of her cruel stepmother and stepsisters. Despite her mistreatment, Zahra maintains her faith and through intervention from her grandmother, eventually finds love and compassion.

Cinderella Around the World:

THE HIDDEN ONE, A NATIVE AMERICAN LEGEND

Told by Aaron Shepard

This tale illustrates the importance of having a pure and true heart. Little Scarface is a Native American girl who is constantly tortured by her older sister. In their village, lives the Hidden One; a wealthy, handsome, and great hunter. Only the young woman who can see the Hidden One will become his bride. Many women have claimed to see the Hidden One but in the end, only one proved herself true.



ADELITA: A MEXICAN CINDERELLA STORY By Tomie dePaola

In this Mexican Cinderella story, Adelita begins her life as a happy and loved young girl. Yet, with the passing of her father, Adelita is belittled by her jealous stepmother and is reduced to being a mere kitchen-maid. Learn how an old family friend helps Adelita reconnect with a childhood friend and find love and happiness again.



Cinderella Around the World:



YEH-SHEN: A CINDERELLA STORY FROM CHINA By Ai-Ling Louie

Sweet Yeh Shen lives in a cave in rural China with her mean stepmother and stepsister. Yeh Shen's only friend is a magical golden fish who not only helps her with her chores but also helps Yeh Shen find her happily ever after. Find out how having a kind heart and a good friend can lead to a lifetime of happiness.

Compare & Contrast

| Think about the version of Cinderella you know best. How is that version different from Stanton Welch's ballet version? How are the two stories the same ? |
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The Creators of Cinderella

Choreographer



Stanton Welch AM was born in Melbourne, Australia to Marilyn Jones, O.B.E., and Garth Welch, AM, two of Australia's most gifted dancers of the 1960s and 1970s. In 1986 he began his training at the late age of seventeen, quickly winning a scholarship to San Francisco Ballet School. In 1989 he was engaged as a dancer with The Australian Ballet, where he rose to the rank of leading soloist.

In 1990 he received his first choreographic commission from The Australian Ballet, the beginning of a series of commissioned works over the next 14 years as he developed his diverse choreographic style. He has created works for

such prestigious international companies as Houston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, The Australian Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, and Royal Danish Ballet. In July 2003, Mr. Welch assumed the leadership of Houston Ballet, America's fourth largest ballet company, as artistic director. Since his arrival, Mr. Welch has transformed Houston Ballet by raising the level of classical technique, infusing the company with new energy, drive and vision; introducing works by distinguished choreographers to the repertoire; and attracting some of the world's best coaches to Houston to work with the dancers.

For his contributions to the world of dance, Mr. Welch was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) in June 2015. The prestigious Order of Australia Award, established in 1975, is bestowed on Australian citizens for meritorious service in a particular area or field of activity. Mr. Welch was recognized for his significant service to the performing arts as a ballet dancer, mentor, choreographer and artistic director.

The Creators of Cinderella

Composer

A **composer** is the person who makes up the music that the dancers move to in the performance. Cinderella was composed by Sergei Prokofiev. Companies all

over the world use the same music today for their own productions of this classic ballet.

Sergei Prokofiev (23 April 1891 – 5 March 1953) was a Russian and Soviet composer, pianist and conductor. As the creator of acknowledged masterpieces across numerous musical genres, he is regarded as one of the major composers of the 20th century.

Prokofiev's first ballet was commissioned by Serge Diaghilev's for his Ballets Russes. Prokofiev composed four works for the Ballets Russes, the most famous of

which is Prodigal Son, with choreography by George Balanchine. Prokofiev's other well-known ballets include Romeo & Juliet and Cinderella





The Creators of Cinderella Designer

A **designer** is the person who decides how the costumes and sets should look. When designing for ballet, the designer must be sure that the dancers can move fully in the costumes, and that there is enough space on the stage for all of the dancers to move around.

Kristian Fredrikson (1940 – 2005) was one of the most experienced and sought after designers in Australia. His designs have been featured in productions for opera, drama, ballet, film and television. Kristian was on the specialized team of designers which worked on the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Kristian designed a large number of productions for a variety of Australian and New Zealand opera, theatre and ballet companies including the Australian Ballet (Cinderella, Coppelia and The



Nutcracker), The Australian Opera (Turandot, The Merry Widow and Salome), & The Royal New Zealand Ballet (Swan Lake, Peter Pan and A Christmas Carol). He also designed Pecos Bill for Houston Ballet's triple bill The Tales of Texas.

Kristian is a recipient of four Erik Design Awards and won prestigious Green Room Awards for After Venice (Sydney Dance Company - 1985), King Roger (1991), Turandot (1991), The Nutcracker (1992), Salome (1993), Swan Lake (2002) and an AFI award for Undercover. Kristian also received a Penguin Award for The Shiralee (1988). In 1999 Kristian received the Australian Dance Award for Services to Dance.





The sets of *Cinderella*: On the left is the village which will later tranform into the castle scene on the right.

Behind the Scenes

The Step Family

Look closely at the stepmother and stepsisters. In his version of Cinderella, Mr. Welch decided to cast male dancers as the evil step mother and evil step sisters. One reason for this choice was to create a clear and distinct feminine contrast between the step family and Cinderella. Unlike other male dancers, these men had to learn to dance in **pointe shoes**; something that typically only women wear. Mr. Welch also chose to cast men as the stepmother and step- sisters so that they could easily lift, toss, and catch Cinderella during certain parts of the **choreography**



Oliver Halkowich, Phillip Broomhead, Steven Woodgate; Photo: Drew Donovan

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Storytelling in Dance

Dancers have to make you understand their stories and believe their characters without using words. How do they do that? Four important things work together to make that possible.

1) DANCING

The choreographer makes up the steps in ballet. He or she chooses steps and gestures (expressive movements made with 1 or 2 body parts) that help tell who a character is and how he or she is feeling.

- How does your body look when you are excited? Sad? Angry?

- How do you move across a room when you are excited? Sad? Angry?

2) DRAMA

Dancers have to act while they dance, and they use their bodies, or posture, and facial expressions to do this. These expressions help the audience understand each character's feelings and the characters' relationships with one another.

- How do you stand next to a friend? A stranger? An enemy?

- What does your face look like when you are excited? Sad? Angry?

3) DÉCOR

The setting of a ballet tells us when and where a ballet takes place. The clothes dancers wear (costumes), what the background looks like (set), and the items they carry in their hands (props) all help give the audience clues about the setting of a story. Some ballets take place in real places, like Europe in the 1600s; others might take place in imaginary places, like the Kingdom of Sweets. - Give examples of décor you would see in a classroom? A restaurant? A hospital?

4) MUSIC

The composer is the person who writes the music. Sometimes music is written especially with a ballet in mind (like The Nutcracker and Sleeping Beauty), and other times the choreographer is inspired by a piece of music that has already been written. Music is also used to set the mood of a scene or action.

- What kind of music inspires you to dance?

- What kind of music do you hear at a birthday party? A parade? A baseball game?









Storytelling in Dance

Extension Activities

Help your students get a better understanding of how stories are told in dance by trying out some of these activities!

1) DANCE – EXPRESS YOURSELF*

Using the Feelings Cards, have students demonstrate different feelings to his/her classmates. Students should use facial expressions, posture, and gestures to demonstrate.

- Start the whole group by drawing a card and having students demonstrate a matching facial expression.
- Next, have the student add one or two matching gestures to their expression.
- Pick a few examples to share whole group.
 Emphasize that expressions and gestures should be CLEAR and BIG
- Finally have students work in small groups to crate a movement phrase that demonstrates a specific feeling

Challenge students to use different expressions and gestures to express the same feeling

While a group is performing, other students are expected to observe, interpret what they see, and practice appropriate audience behavior.

2) DRAMA – RELATIONSHIPS*

In this activity, students will use pantomime. Pantomime is using movements and facial expressions to tell a story or express information without words.

Using the table below (and/or create your own), have students pantomime scenes that show relationships.

- Start by dividing students into groups of 2-3 and explaining that they will be working with their partner (s) to create a pantomime scene that shows a specific relationship. (Model if necessary)
- Next, give each group a type of relationship to portray (double on role for groups of three i.e. 2 parents, 1 child).
- Give students 1-3 minutes to create a pantomime scene with their partner(s).
- Finally, have students take turns performing their scene for each other. Audience members can think and/or write critically about what relationship they think is being shown in each scene (scenes should not exceed 30secs in length).

**Encourage students to exaggerate their movements to help their audience better understand their relationship.

TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS

| Friends | Enemies |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Parent/Child | Siblings (Brothers & Sisters |
| Bully/Victim | Hero/Rescued |
| Teacher/Students | Employer/Employee |

3) DÉCOR – YOU DESIGN IT!

Using the set Design Template, have students draw a setting for a ballet or story to take place. This can be a story they already know or one they make up. Students should be able to answer the following:

- Is your setting a real or imaginary place?
- What details did you include to help your audience know when and where your ballet takes place?

Using the costume design template, have students design a costume for a ballet character. This can be a character from a story they already know or one they make up. Students should be able to answer the following:

- Can a dancer move in your costume?
- What fabric/material will you use to make your costume?

4) MUSIC – LET THE MUSIC MOVE YOU!*

Make a playlist or CD with a variety of instrumental music that evokes different moods/feelings, and/or has tempo changes. (Using instrumental music is important! Sometimes lyrics make students feel they have to interpret them with their movement)

- Start whole group by discussing/reviewing how movement can help express how a person is feeling and how music can be used to set the mood.
- Next, allow students to move to the music while focusing on how it makes them feel and want to move.
- Have students explore movement:
 - while staying in one spot
 - while moving around the room
 - while changing levels (high, middle, low)
- Finally, have students work in small groups to create a dance to one of the selections. Groups take turns performing their choreography for each other. Audience members can think or write critically about what they think the dancers were trying to express to the music.

* Throughout these activities, remind students to move safely, stay focused, use face and body, and try different moves*





| BORED | AFRAID |
|-------------|---------|
| EMBARRASSED | ANNOYED |







Décor: Costume Design





Do You Remember?

Be sure to use complete sentences

Characters: Name and describe 2 main characters from Cinderella.

Setting: Where and when did the story take place? Was the setting real or imaginary

Write a short summary of the version *Cinderella* you watched. (Remember to write a beginning, middle, and end.)



Review & Reflect

Think about *Cinderella*. What was your favorite part? Why? Who was your favorite character? Why? Be specific. Discuss the movement, music, costumes, lights and set.

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LEARN NORE

All About Legs

Ballet dancers use 5 positions of the feet when they dance. Their legs are turned out, meaning their toes point to the side instead of the front. Men and women use the same positions.



Try doing all 5 positions. Which one is the hardest for you to do?

All About Arms



First Position



Second Position



Third Position



Fourth Position



Fifth Position

Try making all 5 positions. Can you keep your back straight while you do them?

WHY DO THEY WEAR THAT?

Dancers, like athletes, have to wear special clothes for both practice and performance.

CLASS AND REHEARSAL:

In rehearsal, both boys and girls wear **leotards** and **tights**. Just like football players at the line of scrimmage, dancers need to move fast. It's best not to have lots of clothing in the way to add **friction**. So dancers and many other athletes wear extra tight pants to help them move faster and more clearly.



PERFORMANCES:

Team USA Track Outfits



Houston Ballet Academy in class Photo: Cameron Durham



U of H football uniform

Houston Ballet dancers wear all different kinds of **costumes**, depending on the ballet they are performing.

In classical ballets, women wear **tutus**, and men wear **tunics**. In the top left photo, the female dancer is wearing a classical **tutu**, **pointe shoes** and **tiara**. Her Cavalier is wearing a tunic, tights and ballet slippers. **Pointe shoes** are satin ballet



Houston Ballet Academy Dancers Photo: Cameron Durham

slippers that have a hard tip that allows female dancers dance on the tips of their toes.

In contemporary ballets, dancers wear all kinds of **costumes**. In the bottom left photo, the male



Houston Ballet Academy Dancers Photo: Cameron Durham

dancer is wearing tights and ballet slippers, and the female dancer is wearing a leotard, skirt and **pointe shoes**.

Houston Ballet

The mission of Houston Ballet is to inspire a lasting love and appreciation for dance through artistic excellence, exhilarating performances, innovative choreography and superb educational programs.

Houston Ballet Foundation was formed in 1955 as an academy for nurturing talented dance students with dreams of professional dancing. In 1969, the professional company was founded and drew upon the strength of the Houston Ballet Academy.

In 1976, Ben Stevenson, former director of the National Ballet of Washington D.C., Principal Dancer and Ballet Master with the London Festival Ballet, was hired and served as Artistic Director until 2003. Through his exceptional leadership and direction, Houston Ballet developed a broad repertory including both classical and contemporary works as well as an Academy with a first-rate professional training school.

In 1987, the company moved into its new performing home, the magnificent Wortham Theater Center, a facility with which few performing arts houses in the world can compare.

In July 2003, the acclaimed Australian choreographer Stanton Welch assumed the artistic leadership of Houston Ballet, now America's fifth largest ballet company. Mr. Welch has transformed Houston Ballet by raising the level of classical technique and infusing the company with new energy, drive and vision. He

continues to introduce new and existing works by distinguished choreographers, and continues to attract some of the world's best coaches to work with the Houston Ballet dancers.

In 2011, Houston Ballet moved into its new home, the Margaret Alkek Williams Center for Dance. With over 70,000 square feet and a bridge connecting it to the Wortham Theater Center, it is the largest facility dedicated to professional dance in North America. In 2023, Julie Kent joined Stanton Welch as Artistic



Houston Ballet Center for Dance Building

Director. Ms. Kent had an illustrious career as a Principal Dancer with American Ballet Theatre, dancing many lead roles, including the original cast of Stanton Welch's *Clear*. Ms. Kent served as Artistic Director of the Washington Ballet from 2016-2023.

Today, the Houston Ballet continues to delight and inspire audiences through artistic excellence and innovative choreography.

Want to Learn More? Scan these QR Codes!





Wikipedia.org

HoustonBallet.org

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Glossary

ACT: One of the main divisions of a ballet, play or opera.

ANTICIPATE: To expect that something is about to happen.

CHARACTER: The people, animals, or other creatures that the dancers portray.

CHIMNEY SWEEP: A person whose job is cleaning out the soot from chimneys.

CHOREOGRAPHER: the person who makes up the sequences of steps in a ballet.

CHOREOGRAPHY: the sequence of steps and movements in dance.

COMMON FOLK: Someone that is not in the royal family.

COMPOSER: the person who writes the music for a ballet.

CONJURES: To call upon (a spirit or ghost) to appear, by means of a magic ritual.

COSTUME: A performer's clothing and accessories.

COUTURIERS: A fashion designer who manufactures and sells clothes that have been tailored to a client's specific size.

CURTAIN CALL: The bow at the end of the performance.

DESIGNER: the person who decides how the sets and costumes for a ballet should look.

DETAINED: Keep (someone) from going forward; hold back.

EXAGGERATE: To make more dramatic or expressive.

EXPRESSION: The way a person moves their body and/or face to express a feeling or emotion.

FRICTION: A force that holds back the movement of a sliding object.

GRASP: A firm hold or grip LEOTARD AND TIGHTS: Practice clothes worn by ballet dancers.

GESTURE: An expressive movement with 1 or 2 body parts that communicates an idea.

LEOTARD: A close-fitting, one-piece garment made of a stretchy fabric that covers a dancer's body from the shoulders to the hips.

MOOD: The overall feeling of a written work or performance piece.

PANTOMIME: Using upper body movements and facial expressions to express information or indicate an action without the use of words.

Glossary

POINTE SHOE: A ballet shoe with a hard tip worn by women that allows them to dance on the tips of their toes.

POSTURE: The way a person holds their body when standing or sitting.

PROPS: Objects on stage that dancers can pick up and dance with.

RENDERING: a sketch that gives an idea of what a costume should look like.

SCENE: A time or location in a ballet.

SET: The stage decorations that help us understand where and when a ballet takes place.

SETTING: When and where a story takes place.

TIARA: A small crown that a female dancer wears on her head.

TIGHTS: Close-fitting, one-piece garment made of a thin-fabric that covers a dancer's body from the waist down.

TUNIC: A long shirt made of heavy material worn by a male dancer in classical ballets.

TUTU: The costume worn by female dancers in classical ballets. It can be long or short.

VAIN: Having or showing an excessively high opinion of one's appearance, abilities, or worth



Karina Gonzalez as Cinderella with Artists of Houston Ballet in Cinderella (2017) Photo by: Amitava Sarkar

TEKS Addressed

§117.106. MUSIC, ELEMENTARY

(5) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures.

§114.22. LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH LEVELS I AND II

(4) Comparisons. The student develops insight into the nature of language and culture by comparing the student's own language

§110.25. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING, READING

(9)The student reads to increase knowledge of own culture, the culture of others, and the common elements of cultures and culture to another.

§110.14. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING, GRADE 3

(5) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

(B) compare and contrast the settings in myths and traditional folktales.

§110.16. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING, GRADE 5

(16) Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas.

§110.20. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING, GRADE 8

(3) Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

(B) compare and contrast the similarities and differences in mythologies from various cultures

(e.g., ideas of afterlife, roles and characteristics of deities, purposes of myths)

§117.205. DANCE, MIDDLE SCHOOL

(5) Critical evaluation and response. The student makes informed personal judgments about dance and the meaning and role of dance in society.

§117.306. DANCE, HIGH SCHOOL

(5) Critical evaluation and response. The student makes informed personal judgments about dance and the meaning and role of dance in society.

§110.32. ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND READING, ENGLISH II

(5) Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

(B) analyze differences in the characters' moral dilemmas in works of fiction across different countries or culture