

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

A CREATIVE & THEATRICAL STUDY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



KATHY BURKS THEATRE OF PUPPETRY ARTS
Music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Adapted for the stage by B. Wolf

AGES 4 AND ABOVE

NOVEMBER 18 – DECEMBER 16 STUDENT MATINEE

NOVEMBER 18 – DECEMBER 21 PUBLIC SHOWS

As part of DCT's mission to integrate the arts into classroom academics, the ***Behind the Curtain Resource Guide*** is intended to provide helpful information for the teacher and student to use before and after attending a performance. The activities presented in this guide are suggested to stimulate lively responses and multi-sensory explorations of concepts in order to use the theatrical event as a vehicle for cross-cultural and language arts learning.

Please use our suggestions as springboards to lead your students into meaningful, dynamic learning; extending the dramatic experience of the play.

Your Family Arts Center

DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER

Astonishing kids & families with the fun of Broadway-like plays & much more!

Dallas Children's Theater

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

A Creative & Theatrical Resource Guide for Teachers

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Play THE NUTCRACKER

Music By..... Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

By..... B. Wolf

Based on the books by the Brothers Grimm

Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts

Artistic Staff Kathy Burks, Douglass Burks, Sarah Jayne Fiorello,

..... Patricia Long, B. Wolf, Becky Burks Keenan

DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER, one of the top five family theaters in the nation, serves over 250,000 young people from 196 zip codes, 146 cities and 78 counties and 32 states each year through its main stage productions, touring, educational programming and outreach activities. Since its opening in 1984, this award-winning theater has existed to create challenging, inspiring and entertaining theater, which communicates vital messages to our youth and promotes an early appreciation for literature and the performing arts. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing on theater for youth and families, DCT produces literary classics, original scripts, folk tales, myths, fantasies and contemporary dramas that foster multicultural understanding, confront topical issues and celebrate the human spirit.

DCT is committed to the integration of creative arts into the teaching strategies of academic core curriculum and educating through the arts. Techniques utilized by DCT artists/teachers are based upon the approach developed in *The Integration of Abilities and Making Sense with Five Senses*, by Paul Baker, Ph.D.

DCT founder and Executive Artistic Director, Robyn Flatt defines the artistic mission and oversees the operations of the organization, consisting of twenty-five full time staff members and more than 200 actors, designers, theater artists and educators.

TEKS that your field trip to Dallas Children's Theater satisfies are listed at the back of this guide.

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CURTAINS UP ON PUTTING A PERFORMANCE TOGETHER

Every DCT performance you see is the result of many people working together to create a play. You see the cast perform on stage but there are people that you do not see who help before, during, and after every production.

The WRITER/ADAPTOR

Creates a script that combines the story, the music, and the creative vision of a puppet director.

The DIRECTOR

Much of the director's job in a puppet performance is in planning the behind the scenes movements of puppets and puppeteers.

The DESIGNERS

Design the puppets, their costumes, and the style in which the story will be presented

The CREW

All those involved in construction of the set pieces, puppets, lighting and sound tracks, as well as the puppeteers.

The CAST

In a puppet theatre production, the cast members are the puppets themselves.

The PUPPETEERS

The "invisible" folks who manipulate the puppets so that they come to life in a performance.

The AUDIENCE

That's right! There can be no performance without you- the audience. The role of the audience is unique because you experience the entertainment with the performers and backstage crew. You are a collaborator in the performance, and it is important to learn your role so you can join all the people who work to create this Dallas Children's Theater production.



CURTAINS UP ON THE ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE

Watching a play is different from watching television or a sporting event. When you watch T.V., you may leave the room or talk. At a sporting event you might cheer and shout and discuss what you're seeing. Your role as a member of the audience in a play means you must watch and listen carefully because:

- You need to concentrate on what the actors are saying.
- The puppeteers are affected by your behavior because they share the room with you. Talking and moving around can make it difficult for them to concentrate on their roles.
- Extra noises and movement can distract other audience members.



Are you ready for your role in this performance?

Check the box next to the statements that describe proper etiquette for an audience member.

- Try your best to remain in your seat once the performance has begun.
- Share your thoughts out loud with those sitting near you.
- Wave and shout out to the puppeteers on stage.
- Sit on your knees or stand near your seat.
- Bring snacks and chewing gum to enjoy during the show.
- Reward the cast and crew with applause when you like a song or dance and at the end of the show.
- Arrive on time so that you do not miss anything or disturb other audience members when you are being seated.
- Keep all hands and feet and items out of the aisles during the performance.

CURTAINS UP ON KATHY BURKS THEATRE OF PUPPETRY ARTS



Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts, a professional company, is the oldest resident puppet theatre in the Southwest. Established in 1973 as Kathy Burks Marionettes, and performing continuously since that time, the troupe has provided family entertainment for audiences in the Dallas/ Ft. Worth Metroplex and throughout the United States.

At its inception the company performed exclusively with the antique marionettes which belong to Kathy Burks. Formerly owned and toured throughout the world by The Sue Hastings Company, of New York City, this is one of the largest collections of antique marionettes in the country, consisting of approximately 1,000 unique figures from the 1920's and 30's. These antiques proved too fragile, however, to withstand the rigors of continual performance. They currently make their home at Dallas Children's Theater, where they appear in various exhibits celebrating the power of Drama, past and present. Now the public may enjoy both the beauty and the history of these incredible puppets.

With the retirement of the Hastings collection, Kathy Burks Marionettes began to design and construct new marionettes for performance and to incorporate other styles of puppetry into its presentations. At last the company name seemed a misnomer, and in 1992, Kathy Burks Marionettes became Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts, one of the few puppet theatres in the country to perform using all styles of puppetry, including traditional bridge and cabaret marionettes, hand puppets, shadow puppets, and Black Theatre rod puppets. Performance material ranges from adaptations of classic stories and fairy tales, to scripts based on original themes, and to puppet theatre interpretations of musical masterpieces such as *The Nutcracker*, *Til Eulenspiegel*, and *Carnival Of The Animals*. The company has also collaborated with Dallas Children's Theater in live productions.

Although entertainment is the troupe's primary goal, educational aims are inextricably interwoven. Both the founder of the company and the playwright/composer possess degrees in education.

Each member of the company is a dedicated artist with an extensive background in various theatre arts. Skills in set and costume design, acting, directing, dance, lighting design, playwrighting, and musical composition all combine with expertise in puppet manipulation to produce a complete theatrical company which specializes in elaborate puppet productions.

CURTAINS UP ON A BRIEF HISTORY OF PUPPETRY

Puppetry, like music and dance, is an ancient art ever evolving and renewing itself. A puppet is an inanimate figure that is caused to move by human effort before an audience. The four most common kinds of puppets are:

SHADOW PUPPETS

Operated from below the stage behind a screen or curtain. Light shines through the holes to create a shadow on the screen



Hobey Ford

ROD PUPPETS

Manipulated from below the stage or from directly behind the playing area, as in Black Theatre



GLOVE OR HAND PUPPETS

Operated from below the stage



MARIONETTES OR STRING PUPPETS

Manipulated from above the stage.



CURTAINS UP ON A BRIEF HISTORY OF PUPPETRY (CONT'D.)

Puppets exist in a wide variety of types, and may be two- or three-dimensional. They vary in size from finger puppets to larger than life-size, and range from simplest shapes to elaborately articulated figures.

The origins of puppetry are veiled in antiquity, but it is known that primitive peoples made puppets long before the invention of writing. Puppets probably served a function in the ritual magic practices by early man. Extensive use of puppetry for religious purposes is recorded in every subsequent civilization.

For centuries, puppetry was effectively utilized in the church, but gradually some of the comic characters and scenes, originally introduced to lighten the miracle plays, got out of hand and became offensively boisterous and vulgar. Eventually, puppets were totally expelled from the church. Henceforth, the art of puppetry was practiced in the streets, fairgrounds, inns, and later, when it had gained status again, in theaters of its own. In the present day it has returned to some churches. Whatever the setting, audiences have always responded wholeheartedly to those qualities unique to the art.

When operated with skill and artistry, puppets can convey with great intensity every emotion known to humankind, distilling the essence of feelings common to everyone. Puppets eloquently express the gamut of dramatic styles, from slapstick to riotous comedy to heart rending pathos and soul wrenching drama.

CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Attending a play is an experience unlike any other entertainment experience. Because a play is presented live, it provides a unique opportunity to experience a story “as it happens”. **Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts** brings to life stories through its puppet performances. Many people are involved in the process. **Writers** adapt the stories you read in order to bring them off the page and on to the stage. **Designers and technicians** create lighting effects so that you can feel the mood of a scene. **Carpenters** build scenery and make the “place” of the story become a real place, while **craftspeople and costumers** make the puppets appear to be the characters in the story. **Directors** help the puppeteers bring the story to life and make it happen before your very eyes. All of these things make seeing a play very different from television, videos, computer games, or CDs and tapes of stories.



Hold a class discussion when you return from the performance. Ask students the following questions and allow them to write or draw pictures of their experience at DCT.

- What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the theater? What did you notice first on the stage?
- What about the set? Draw or tell about things you remember. Did the set change during the play? How was it moved or changed? Was there any space besides the stage where the action took place?

CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE (CONT'D.)

- How did the lights set the mood of the play? How did they change throughout? What do you think “house lights” are? How do they differ from stage lights? Did you notice different areas of lighting?
- What did you think about the costumes? Do you think they fit the story? What things do you think the costume designers had to consider before creating the costumes?
- Was there music in the play? How did it add to the performance?
- Did you feel caught up in the story? What things do you think the puppeteers had to work on in order to make you believe the characters were alive?



Draw a picture of what the audience might look like from the stage. Consider your work from the viewpoint of the puppeteers. How might things look from where they stand?

Write a letter to one of the puppeteers telling what you liked about the character they manipulated.

Write how you think it might feel to be one of the puppeteers. Are they aware of the audience? How might they feel about the reactions of the audience today? How would you feel before the play began? What about after the show ends?

Which job would you like to try? Puppeteering, Directing, Lighting and Sounds, Stage Manager or another role? What skills might you need to complete your job?

Choose a favorite story and draw or use the computer to create a program cover design for a puppet adaptation of your story.

CURTAINS UP ON ADAPTION OF THE NUTCRACKER FOR PUPPET THEATER

There are many ways to tell a story. That is the reason adaptations exist. The subject of adaptation can sometimes become very complicated. For instance, this puppet presentation of *The Nutcracker* was adapted from George Balanchine’s production of the Tchaikovsky ballet, which in turn was adapted from a combination of elements obtained from E.T.A. Hoffmann’s original story and from Alexander Dumas’s adaptation of that story. Complicated, indeed!

One of puppet theatre’s strongest characteristics is its proclivity to distill character and emotion, making it a powerful projector of symbolism, fantasy, surrealism, and other departures from reality. *The Nutcracker* is a tale well suited to puppetry interpretations because it presents a great variety of characters and moods, and contains many departures from realism.

CURTAINS UP ON ADAPTION OF THE NUTCRACKER FOR PUPPET THEATER (CONT'D.)

Any feat of adaptation involves numerous decisions. In this case, our very first decision had to be which style of puppetry could most effectively tell this particular story, which is divided into the following two distinct parts:

1. The Christmas Eve party at Clara's home, during which she receives *The Nutcracker*, and after which the Nutcracker fights the Mouse King and is transformed into a Prince.
2. Clara's adventures with the Prince in the Kingdom of Sweets.

In effect, producing *The Nutcracker* would be almost like producing two different puppet shows, the first with dialogue and musical underscoring, and the second with variety acts performed to music, and using no dialogue.

After much discussion the troupe concluded that two styles of puppetry were needed in order to convey the story most effectively. Black Theatre and shadow puppetry were chosen.

Because *The Nutcracker* is chiefly known as a vehicle for ballet dancers, many people come to our puppet production expecting to see puppet ballet dancers. They will not find them. They will, however, find a great deal of dancing, as defined in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*: "rhythmic movement having as its aim the creation of visual designs." The dancing in this production is performed by inanimate objects and by unique beings with no resemblance to ballet dancers.

There are many ways to tell a story. This is ours.



Write your own adaptation of a story in which your favorite toy comes to life as Clara's nutcracker did. How would it act? What adventure would you like to take with it?

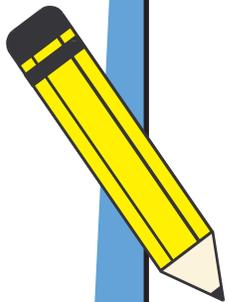
Pick some music that could accompany the action as Tchaikovsky's did in Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts performance.

Would it be easier to adapt for a puppet performance or a dance or stage performance? Let your imagination run wild and create pictures of the sets and characters you might use in your story.

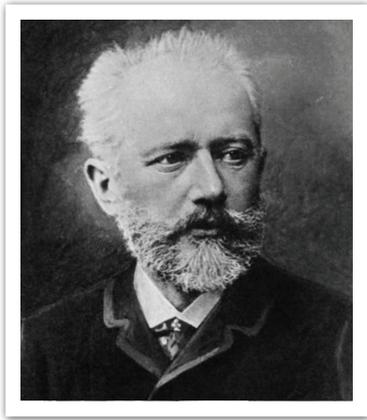
Or Try:

Writing a modern version of *The Nutcracker*. What would Clara be like in 2016? What about Drosselmeyer? To what kind of land would they travel? What would the main characters be in today's world?

TITLE



CURTAINS UP ON PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY: HIS LIFE AND TIMES



A composer named Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky wrote all the music for *The Nutcracker Ballet*. He composed a lot of other music, too.

You probably already know that 150 ago people lived very differently from the way we live today. Peter was born in 1840. When he was growing up in Russia, there were no telephones, or Internet, no movies, DVDs or iPods. Items such as automobiles, airplanes, and motorbikes were unheard of, as were skateboards, rollerblades and computers. Hamburgers had not yet been invented, and pizza parlors were nonexistent.

Of course, you'd quickly notice if all these things were absent from your life, but young Peter Tchaikovsky never missed them. He lived very comfortably with his family in a country village where his father was employed by the government, which furnished a large house, many servants and extensive property. Peter had horses to ride, cousins, brothers and a sister to play with and a governess who taught the children at home. His large family often gathered with friends to share delectable food, festive games, dancing, and much music.

However different those times were from ours, music was a very important part of life for many people then, just as it is today. The Russian countryside was alive with music. Often people played at least one instrument such as violin, flute, or a Russian sort of guitar called the balalaika. Throughout the land, singing was a greatly enjoyed activity. Peter heard peasants as they sang in the fields, Cossack soldiers singing in their barracks and on horseback, boatmen singing on the rivers. Perhaps you have heard of the very famous piece called "The Song of the Volga Boatman." In Peter's home, the servants often sang as they worked.

And so, despite the absence of CDs, MP3s and electronic keyboards, young Peter heard a great deal of music. When his mother played the piano, he watched and listened, fascinated. One joyful day, his father brought home a most unusual device called an orchestration. This was like a huge music box, larger than an upright piano, which played several compositions by famous composers including Mozart, who was Peter's favorite. He listened to those pieces again and again, and was so engrossed that often he forgot to come to meals. Soon he found that he could pick out all of the melodies on the piano, and then he spent long hours teaching himself to play the beautiful music he heard on the orchestration.

When he grew older, Peter Tchaikovsky tried to please his parents by studying to become a lawyer, but composing music was the most important thing in his life. Finally, he gave up law school to study music. After graduating, he obtained work as a teacher in a music school. At night, he composed his music, sometimes working all night long. In many of his compositions he used the Russian folk melodies from his childhood.

His reputation grew; a great number of people liked his compositions. One of them was a rich lady who wrote him a letter. She offered to send him enough money to be able to stop teaching and devote himself full time to composing music. But she requested that they communicate only by letter. Tchaikovsky must never try to see her. He agreed, and was now free to compose as much as he liked,

CURTAINS UP ON PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY: HIS LIFE AND TIMES (CONT'D.)

which was practically all the time! Later on, his music earned him so much money that he never had to worry about financial matters again.

Tchaikovsky was always looking for unusual sounds to put into his music. In one very exciting composition called the *1812 Overture*, real cannons are fired and church bells ring!

Tchaikovsky was searching for a sparkling, magical sound to use in The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy, one of the pieces from his new *Nutcracker Ballet*. One day he learned that a man in Paris, France had invented a small new keyboard instrument called a celesta (pronounced chi-les-ta.) When Tchaikovsky heard it play, he was entranced. The sound was so silvery and magical that it was perfect for his new piece! Tchaikovsky wanted to be the very first composer to use the celesta, so he arranged to have it secretly shipped to Russia, where it was kept a big secret until *The Nutcracker* opened. Everyone was amazed at the heavenly new sound. Tchaikovsky was so proud that he had been the first to use it.

Throughout his life, Tchaikovsky was fond of animals and of living in the country. He was fond of children, too. When he learned that the children in the village near his country home had no school, he provided the money to start one. *The Nutcracker Ballet* was one of his favorite compositions because it featured many children.

In his later years, Tchaikovsky became Russia's most famed composer. He wrote overtures, symphonies, concertos, ballets, and much other music which is still known and loved throughout the world.

CURTAINS UP ON THE NUTCRACKER: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT FROM STORY TO BALLET

THE STORY: German author E.T.A. Hoffmann originated the tale of *The Nutcracker* in 1816. Entitled *Nussknacker und Mausekonig* - (*Nutcracker and Mouseking*), it contained many elements of a dark and sinister nature which rendered it a story more suited to adults than the children.

Several years later famed French writer Alexander Dumas created an adaptation which served as the basis for Tchaikovsky's ballet, composed in 1891-92.

THE BALLET: The worldwide renown of *The Nutcracker Ballet*, and its now traditional role as a seasonal entertainment, is actually a recent phenomenon. In 1892, when it premiered in St. Petersburg, *The Nutcracker* drew mixed reviews, and closed after only eleven performances. In the light of the enormous popularity *The Nutcracker* presently enjoys, it seems extraordinary that the ballet was not produced again in Russia until 1919. *The Nutcracker* received a slow start outside Russia as well

THE SUITE: For many years following its 1892 premiere, *The Nutcracker Ballet* was known by only eight individual numbers which Tchaikovsky had extracted from the ballet score and published as *The Nutcracker*

CURTAINS UP ON THE NUTCRACKER (CONT'D.)

Suite. It was this suite which Walt Disney and Leopold Stokowski included in their animated color cartoon, *Fantasia*, in 1940. This popular entertainment undoubtedly contributed to the public's awareness and appreciation of Tchaikovsky's work, as well as a desire for a more thorough knowledge of that work.

THE GROWTH OF THE TRADITION: Prior to *Fantasia*, the ballet itself was not presented in Western Europe until 1934, when the Sadler's Wells Company performed it in London. After that, it waited six years for its United States debut, a much abbreviated version presented in New York by the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1940. Four years later the San Francisco Ballet produced *The Nutcracker* in its entirety.

It was not until 10 years later that *The Nutcracker's* star began its brilliant ascent. In 1954 the New York City Ballet presented the work choreographed by George Balanchine, and *The Nutcracker* became a standard piece in the troupe's repertoire. When the company moved into Lincoln Center in 1964, Balanchine's version was featured in a five-week run which has been repeated during every subsequent Christmas season. Since that time, productions of *The Nutcracker* have proliferated throughout the Western world. It has now become such a traditional part of the seasonal celebration that its holiday absence would be unthinkable.

CURTAINS UP ON READING

THE STORY OF THE NUTCRACKER

Long ago there was a young girl named Clara, who lived with her parents and her small brother Fritz in a very large house. Every year on Christmas Eve, a wonderful celebration took place there, with much music and laughter and dancing as relatives and friends gathered to decorate the Christmas tree.

On the evening when this story takes place, Clara eagerly awaited the arrival of her godfather, Herr Drosselmeier, who always brought incredible gifts which seemed quite magical.

When Herr Drosselmeier appeared, he first produced a magic rocking horse for Fritz. With just a wave of Fritz's hand, the horse began to rock all by itself! Then both children were presented a small stage, complete with puppets and scenery, upon which Herr Drosselmeier performed a little puppet show. Finally, Clara received a wonderful Nutcracker which completely charmed her.

After Herr Drosselmeier left to join the party around the Christmas tree, Fritz tried to take Clara's Nutcracker away from her. During their struggle the Nutcracker was knocked to the floor and broken. Clara began to cry. Horrified at having caused this disaster, Fritz begged her not to tell anyone. Downcast, he left the room. Soon Herr Drosselmeier returned and mended the Nutcracker.

Later that night Clara lay in her bed, drowsy, but unable to sleep. What a wonderful party it had been! Then she thought of her Nutcracker, lying where she had left him under the Christmas tree. Perhaps he was frightened there, all alone in this big house! Clara tiptoed downstairs to find him. As she held the Nutcracker and watched the snow falling outside the window, Clara became quite drowsy. Then she heard the sounds of scurrying and squeaking. Hundreds of mice were scampering about the room!

CURTAINS UP ON READING (CONT'D.)

She was trying to drive them away when the big grandfather clock struck midnight. Soldier mice appeared with a cannon. Clara's small nutcracker had now grown much larger, as big as Clara herself! He fought with the mice, when suddenly the enormous Mouse King looked up. In their duel the Mouse King knocked the Nutcracker unconscious, and was about to deliver a death blow when Clara threw a golden cannonball at him. The Mouse King exploded in a ball of fire.

Hurrying to help the poor Nutcracker, Clara found that he had now turned into a handsome prince who was most grateful for her aid in ridding them of the evil Mouse King. Clara and the Prince then flew away in a golden sleigh to a magical kingdom full of strange and wonderful sights.

FURTHER READING ON TCHAIKOVSKY:

For Older Readers

Balanchine's New Complete Stories of the Great Ballets by George Balanchine. Doubleday, 1968

Tchaikovsky by Herbert Weinstock. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1959

Tchaikovsky - The Man Behind The Music by Lawrence and Elisabeth Hanson. Dodd, Mead & Co., 1996

For Young Readers

Famous Composers for Young People by Gladys Burch and John Wolcott. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York, 1939

Masters of Music - Tchaikovsky by Percy M. Young. Illustrated by Richard Shirley Smith. David White, New York, 1968

Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky (Composer's World Series) by Wendy Thompson. Viking (a division of Penguin Books) New York, 1993

Stormy Victory - The Story of Tchaikovsky by Claire Lee Purdy. With decorations by Vera Bock. Julian Messner, Inc., New York, 1962

Unfinished Symphony and Other Stories of Men and Music by Freda Pastor Berkowitz. Drawings by Joseph Schindelman. Atheneum, New York, 1963

For The Youngest Readers

A Very Young Dancer by Jill Krementz. Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1980

Peter Tchaikovsky (Getting To Know The World's Greatest Composers Series) Written and illustrated by Mike Venezia. Children's Press, Chicago, 1994

P.I. Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker, based on Tchaikovsky's ballet after the story by E.T. A. Hoffmann, Adapted by Magoichi Kushida. Translated by Ann King Herring, Illustrated by Fumiko Hori. Gakken Co., Tokyo, Japan, 1971

The Story of Peter Tschaikowsky by Opal Wheeler. Illustrated by Christine Price. E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1966

CURTAINS UP ON SCIENCE

GET CRACKING!

While students may be familiar with the story of *The Nutcracker* and the image of the Nutcracker soldier, they will likely be less familiar with the application. Begin the activity by explaining that the Nutcracker given to Clara was actually meant for cracking nuts. The traditional Christmas nutcracker was shaped like a soldier and the nuts were cracked in his strong jaw. Use the following activity to help students understand the principles of *leverage*.

You will need:

Nutcrackers- a variety of types if available

Unshelled nuts

Images of Christmas nutcrackers

Introduce students to levers by describing them as a simple machine made of two parts: the handle or arm, and the fulcrum where the balance of the object rests. After discussing the three classes of levers, encourage students to name levers they use in school or at home. Allow time to investigate the nutcrackers and determine in which class each belongs.

Three Classes of Levers

Class 1- the fulcrum is placed between the load and the force. (teeter totter)

Class 2- the load is placed between the force and the fulcrum. (wheelbarrow)

Class 3- the force is situated between the fulcrum and the load arm. (fishing rod)

MASS AND LEVERS

To further explore levers, build a simple lever on a table using a book and a ruler. Use a medium-sized book and place it on top of the ruler at the edge of the table. Leave 6-8 inches of the ruler off the table. Ask students to catapult the book from the table by pressing down quickly on the ruler. Experiment with different sized books and by using different ruler lengths from the table's edge.

CURTAINS UP ON ART



DESIGN AND CREATE A NUTCRACKER OF YOUR OWN.

You will need:

A toilet paper roll

Sturdy paper like construction paper

Scissors

Glue

Crayons, markers, colored pencils or paints

A copy of the Nutcracker template page

Here's How:

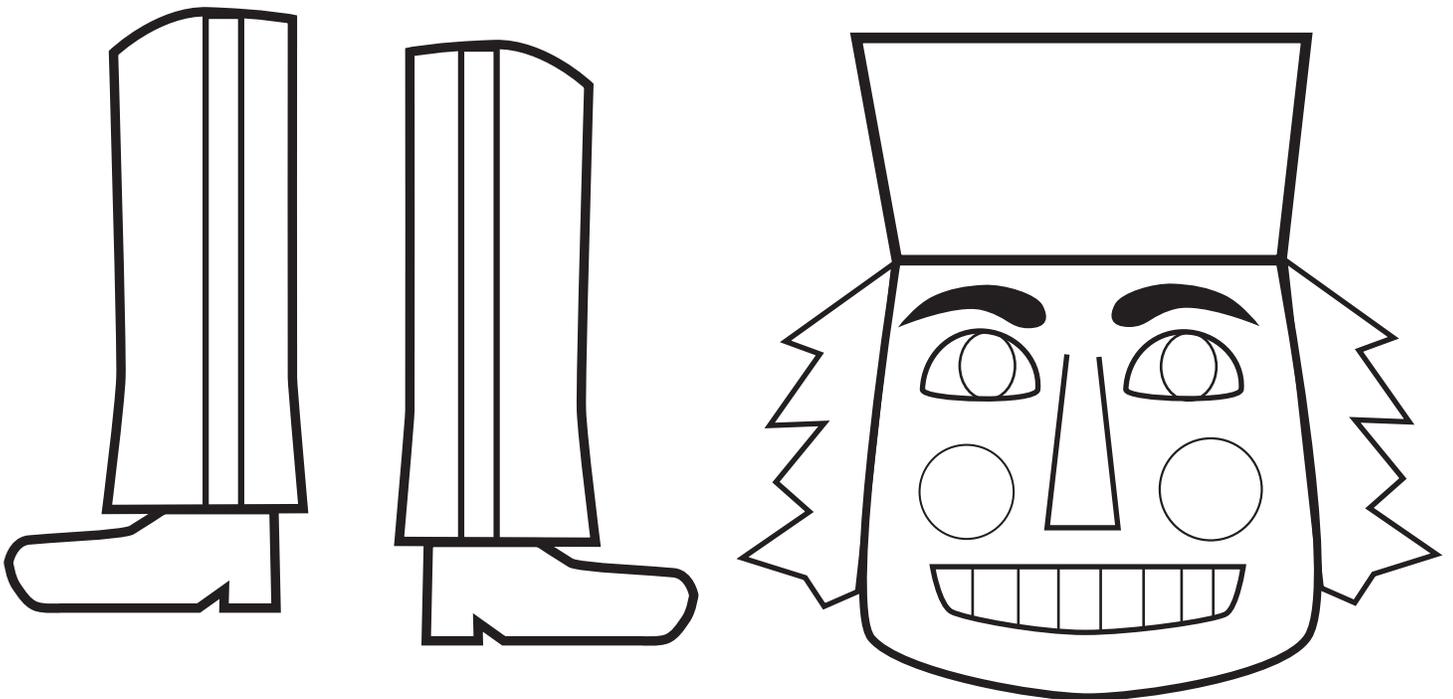
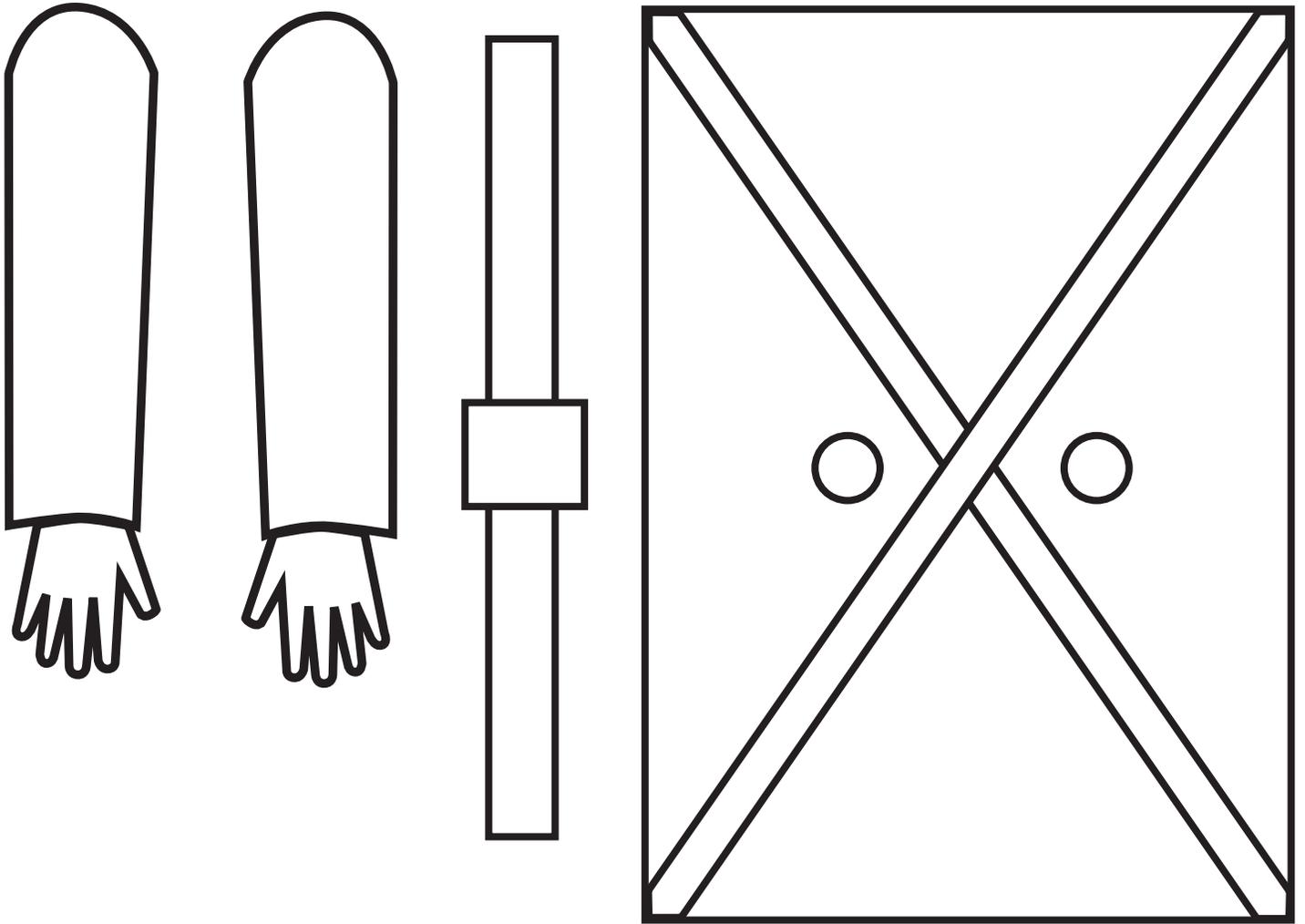
Print a copy of the nutcracker templates and color or decorate them as you like.

Glue the pieces on to the roll in the following order:

- Rectangle jacket
- Belt
- Head, arms, and legs

Attach a ribbon or string to hang your nutcracker if you wish.

CREATE YOUR OWN NUTCRACKER TEMPLATE



CURTAINS UP ON ART (CONT'D.)

MAKE A SIMPLE PUPPET

Making a puppet can be incredibly easy, or prodigiously complex and difficult, depending on the ages of the children and the patience and skill of the teacher. Perhaps the simplest and quickest way to make a puppet is to use the hand itself as a puppet.

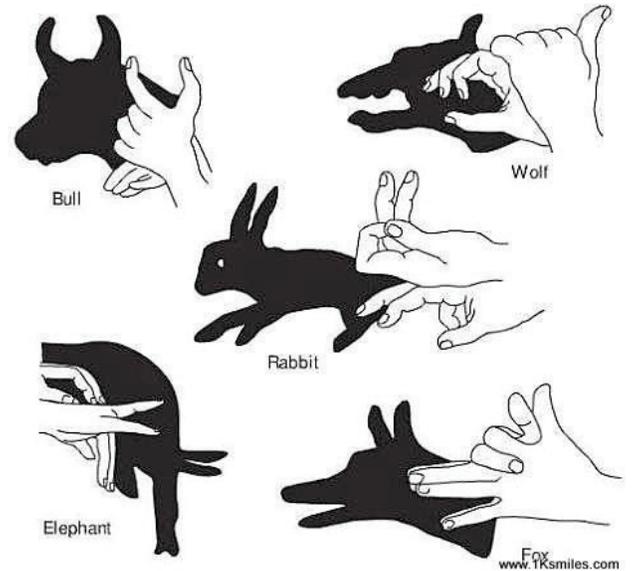
1. RABBIT HAND PUPPET

You will need:

A pair of human hands!

Here's How:

Direct the children to make a fist, then hold up index and middle fingers to represent rabbit ears. Wiggle the fingers. Let the rabbits hop about. Try it with music. Work out a routine—four hops to the right, four to the left, forward, backward, etc. The possibilities are endless!



2. STICK PUPPETS

You will need:

- Colored pencils, crayons or paints
- Scissors
- Popsicle sticks or tongue depressors
- Glue

Here's How:

Have each child draw and color a figure (animal, vegetable, or human) on cardboard or pasteboard. Cut the figure out and glue it to a flat stick. Have each child kneel or sit on the floor behind a table and perform with the puppet on the table. Encourage students to manipulate their puppets to interact with one another.



CURTAINS UP IN THE KITCHEN

The Land of Sweets is filled with all kinds of delightful goodies. Try your hand at making your own batch of sugar plums with the recipe below.

SUGAR PLUMS

2 cups whole almonds

½ tsp. ground nutmeg

¼ cup honey

1 c. finely chopped dried apricots

2 tsp. grated orange zest

1 c. finely chopped pitted dates

1½ tsp. ground cinnamon

1 c. confectioners' sugar

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Arrange almonds on a baking sheet in a single layer and toast in oven for 10 minutes. Set aside to cool, then finely chop.
2. Meanwhile, combine honey, orange zest, cinnamon, allspice, and nutmeg in a medium mixing bowl. Add almonds, apricots, and dates and mix well.
3. Pinch off rounded teaspoon sized pieces of the mixture and roll into balls. Roll the balls in sugar, then refrigerate in single layers between sheets of waxed paper in airtight containers.

CURTAINS UP ON MUSIC

Materials needed: A recording of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker Suite*, and a machine upon which to play the music.

In the first act of the puppet presentation, excerpts from the full ballet score are used as underscoring. The second act features seven separate pieces which Tchaikovsky extracted from the work and published as *The Nutcracker Suite*. These exuberant, colorful selections are among the most popular in our culture, holding a unique place in our Western musical heritage

Before the performance:

Using a separate day for each selection, introduce the class to as many of the pieces as you wish, in the following manner:

1. First play the piece without revealing its title. If some students recognize it, ask them not to reveal the title to others.
2. After the students have listened, ask that each one write down a proposed secret title for the piece.

CURTAINS UP ON MUSIC (CONT'D.)

3. Lead a discussion concerning their thoughts and impressions of the music. These will probably differ considerably from one student to the another. Emphasize to the students the fact that there are no right or wrong answers.
4. Play the selection again while students draw or paint their impressions.
5. Suggest that students write descriptive words, phrases, sentences or poems while listening to the selection one more time. Students too young to write may dictate to the teacher.
6. Ask students to share with the class their secret titles; then reveal to them the actual name of the selection.
7. Guide a discussion concerning the power of music to paint mental pictures and to stimulate imagination.

After the performance:

1. Lead a class discussion about the puppet production.
2. Play *The Nutcracker Suite* in its entirety, pausing between pieces to discuss briefly the puppet show's interpretation of each number.
3. Teachers: encourage students to write, draw or paint their impressions of the puppet show while listening to selections from *The Nutcracker Suite*. **If you wish, send their writing and artwork to us at The Rosewood Center for Family Arts, 5938 Skillman, Dallas, TX 75231. We are all most interested in what they produce, and would like to display examples at the theater.**
4. Lead a discussion concerning other places where student might have heard parts of *The Nutcracker Suite*. For instance, during the holiday season, commercials on TV and radio frequently use phrases from one or another of the selections.

CURTAINS UP ON WRITING REVIEWS

CRITIC - (n.) one who judges books, music, plays, etc. as for a newspaper.

Following is a quote from the first review of *The Nutcracker*. "For dancers there is rather little in it, for art absolutely nothing, and for the artistic fate of our ballet, one more step downward."



Write your own review of the puppet performance of *The Nutcracker*. Be sure to include specific items you remember about the music, the puppets, and the story.

OR:

Write a letter to the reviewer whose quote you read. Do you agree or disagree with the opinions of that writer. How would you address the fact that *The Nutcracker* has become a perennial favorite among people all over the world?

CURTAINS UP ON MORE

Online:

These are sites where you can see photos and hear the music of *The Nutcracker*.

www.nutcrackerballet.net

www.midiworld.com

www.nutcracker.com/nut_photogallery.html

Just for fun:

Check out www.12days.com and try your hand at The Nutcracker Game. It's very like hangman but you've got to try to solve the puzzle before the nutcracker cracks all the nuts.

T.E.K.S. satisfied by THE NUTCRACKER

117.4 - Theatre, Kindergarten.

K.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

K.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Begin to identify appropriate audience behavior.

B - Respond to dramatic activities.

C - Demonstrate awareness of the use of music, creative movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

D - Observe the performance of artists and identify theatrical vocations.

117.7 - Theatre, Grade 1.

1.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

1.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Identify appropriate audience behavior.

B - Respond to and begin to evaluate dramatic activities.

C - Identify the use of music, creative movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

D - Observe the performance of artists and identify theatrical vocations.

117.10 - Theatre, Grade 2.

2.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

2.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Identify and apply appropriate audience behavior.

B - React to and begin to evaluate dramatic activities.

D - Observe the performance of artists and identify theatrical vocations.

117.13 - Theatre, Grade 3.

3.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

3.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Evaluate and apply appropriate audience behavior consistently.

B - Evaluate simple dramatic activities and performances.

D - Observe the performance of amateur and professional artists and begin to compare vocations in theatre.

117.16 - Theatre, Grade 4.

4.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

4.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Identify and apply appropriate audience behavior at performances.

D - Compare theatre artists and their contributions.

T.E.K.S. satisfied by THE NUTCRACKER (CONT'D.)

117.19 - Theatre, Grade 5.

5.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

5.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Analyze and apply appropriate audience behavior at a variety of performances.

D - Analyze and compare theatre artists and their contributions.

117.34 - Theatre, Grade 6.

6.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

6.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Analyze and apply audience behavior at all performances.

D - Compare selected occupations in theatre.

117.37 - Theatre, Grade 7.

7.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

7.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Identify and demonstrate appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances.

D - Compare career and avocational opportunities in theatre.

117.40 - Theatre, Grade 8.

8.1 - Perception. The student develops concepts about self, human relationships, and the environment, using elements of drama and conventions of theatre.

8.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Analyze and practice appropriate audience behavior at various types of live performances.

D - Compare career and avocational opportunities in theatre.