

Curriculum for *The Nutcracker* – 6th-8th Grade

1. Introduction to Ballet and The Nutcracker

- **Objective:** Provide background on ballet as an art form and introduce the significance of *The Nutcracker*.
- **Activity:**
 - Discuss the origins of ballet and how *The Nutcracker* became a beloved holiday tradition.
 - Watch a short clip of the ballet and ask for their reactions. SEE LINK IN GOOGLE PRESENTATION

Discussion:

- Why do they think *The Nutcracker* has become a holiday tradition?
 - What do they notice about how the dancers tell the story without using words?
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2. Choreography & Dance Interpretation

- **Objective:** Introduce students to how dancers use movement to tell stories.
 - **Activity:**
 - Watch and analyze a few different types of dance from *The Nutcracker* (e.g., the battle scene vs. the Sugar Plum Fairy's dance).
 - Have students create short, simple choreography in groups based on a scene or a character's emotions.
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3. Behind the Scenes: Set, Costumes, and Production Design

- **Objective:** Explain how the visual elements of *The Nutcracker* enhance the story.
 - **Activity:**
 - Show a video or pictures of set designs and costumes.
 - Have students create their own designs for a character or scene and explain their choices.
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4. Discussion on Adaptation & Artistic Choices

- **Objective:** Encourage students to think critically about how *The Nutcracker* can be adapted in different ways.
- **Activity:**
 - Think of different versions of *The Nutcracker* (e.g., a traditional ballet version and a modern or hip-hop version).
 - Have students compare and contrast an adaptation.

Discussion:

- How do different styles change the way the story feels or is told?
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6. Creative Project

- **Objective:** Let students combine what they've learned in a creative way.
- **Activity:**
 - Project ideas:
 - Write a short play, poem, or story inspired by *The Nutcracker*.

- Create a modern-day adaptation of one of the scenes.
- Develop a marketing poster or video trailer for *The Nutcracker* targeting young audiences.