A Teacher’s Guide to
Antelope Valley Ballet’s “Alice in Wonderland”
Introduction

Dear Educator,

As you make plans for your students to attend an upcoming presentation of the Arts for Youth program at the Lancaster Performing Arts Center, we invite you to prepare your students by using this guide to assure that from beginning to end; the experience is both memorable and educationally enriching.

The material in this guide is for you the teacher, and will assist you in preparing your students before the day of the event, and extending the educational value to beyond the walls of the theatre. We provide activity and/or discussion ideas, and other resources that will help to prepare your students to better understand and enjoy what they are about to see, and to help them connect what they see on stage to their studies. We also encourage you to discuss important aspects of the artistic experience, including audience etiquette.

We hope that your students find their imagination comes alive as lights shine, curtains open, and applause rings through Lancaster Performing Arts Center. As importantly, we hope that this Curriculum Guide helps you to bring the arts alive in your classroom!

Thank you for helping us to make a difference in the lives of our Antelope Valley youth.

Arts for Youth Program
Lancaster Performing Arts Center, City of Lancaster

Message from the Artistic Director

Welcome! We are so excited to have you consider joining us for Alice in Wonderland on May 12 - 15, 2011 at the Lancaster Performing Arts Center. This study guide has been created to assist you in classroom activities that relate to Alice in Wonderland. It is designed for preschool through middle school age children, so please pick out the items that seem to best fit your students! Hopefully, this study guide will give you ideas and resources to create other activities as well. The story of Alice in Wonderland gives an endless supply of possibilities and is a great literary experience for preschoolers through adults. This story can be enjoyed on a number of different levels and I have tried to include these many different levels within the study guide. I have enjoyed putting it together for you!

Kathleen Burnett,
Artistic Director
Antelope Valley Ballet
(661) 722 - 9702 AV Ballet phone number
(661) 802 - 9189 Artistic Director's Line

For questions or comments regarding this study guide or the performances, please send an email to avballet@verizon.net. We would love to get feedback on how we can assist you and support you in the education of the students in the Antelope Valley.
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*Arts for Youth is the title for K-12 educational programs at Lancaster Performing Arts Center*
Overview of the California Content Standards for Public Schools

Our Arts for Youth program addresses and supports California Content Standards for K-12 education.

- **Physical Education: Gr 1, 4** Students demonstrate knowledge of physical fitness concepts, principles, and strategies to improve health and performance.

- **Physical Education: Gr 2, 4.5** Explain how the intensity and duration of exercise, as well as nutritional choices, affect fuel use during physical activity.

- **Physical Education: Gr 3, 1.1** Chase, flee, and move away from others in a constantly changing environment.

- **Physical Education: Gr 4, 4.17** Explain the effect of regular, sustained physical activity on the body’s ability to consume calories and burn fat for energy.

- **Physical Education: Gr 7, 1.3** Combine manipulative, locomotor, and non-locomotor skills into movement patterns.

- **Physical Education: Gr 7, 4.4** Explain the effects of physical activity on heart rate during exercise, during the recovery phase, and while the body is at rest.

- **VPA-Dance: Proficient/Advanced**
  - **2.0 Creative Expression**
    - **Development of Partner and Group Skills: 2.6** Collaborate with peers in the development of choreography in groups.
  - **3.0 Historical and Cultural Context**
    - **Development of Dance: 3.2** Analyze the role dancers and choreographer play in the interpretation of dances in various historical and cultural settings.

LESSON PLAN IDEA: Looking at the dances demonstrated. Discuss with your students the differences in how the performers store and release energy with their bodies.
Overview of California Content Standards (Cont.)

LESSON PLAN IDEA: Instruct students that dance is both a visual and a physical activity. Students must learn to see and do in order to dance; to observe how the body makes straight lines, curves and other shapes. Instruct students to watch and listen closely in order to observe and repeat an action. Discover and create movement patterns that express information about the basic systems, organs and processes of the human body. Work alone, in pairs, and/or in small groups to make movement choices that communicate scientific concepts in creative movement.

Content standards adopted by the California State Board of Education. For more information, visit: http://www.lpac.org/arts-for-youth.cfm

Theatre Etiquette

- **Arrive on time**
  
  *Plan for possible delays in travel and parking. Please arrive 30 minutes prior to show time.*

- **Students: Leave recording devices of any kind at home or in your backpack at school**
  
  *Video or audio recording and photography, including camera phones, are often prohibited by law and may disrupt the performance. They are not permitted and are considered very rude to the others around you.*

- **Teachers: Turn off or silence all personal electronics**
  
  *Beeps, clicks, tones and buzzes and light pollution emanated by personal electronics such as watches, pagers, Bluetooth devices, cell phones, etc. interrupt the performance and spoil the theatre experience.*

- **Observe the instructions of ushers**
  
  *The ushers are present to offer assistance, ensure rules are observed and provide guidance in the case of an emergency evacuation. Please show them consideration. You will be asked to exit to the left of the theatre at the end of the performance.*

- **Be respectful**
  
  *While entering and exiting the theatre: Put your hands in your pockets or behind your back. Talk very quietly.*
  
  *Once seated: Do not talk. Keep your feet on the ground. Put your hands in your lap or fold your arms.*
Theatre Etiquette (Cont.)

- Abstain from eating or drinking inside the theatre
  
  Crackling wrappers and containers and food messes in the auditorium are unwelcome. Food, candy, gum and drinks should never be brought inside the theatre.

- Avoid talking, waving and shouting during the performance
  
  Laughing and applauding are encouraged at appropriate times. Shouting to actors/friends is disrespectful to others. Save personal conversation for after the show.
  
  If you must talk, please whisper very quietly.

- Do not exit the auditorium during the performance except in the case of emergency
  
  If you must leave, please wait for an appropriate break in the performance. Teachers, please arrive early enough to escort students to the restroom prior to the start of the show.

- Do not get onto the stage or place items on the edge of the stage
  
  To ensure the safety and security of performers and audiences, this behavior is strictly prohibited unless expressly permitted by a performer or staff member.

- Dispose of garbage in proper receptacles
  
  Help preserve a pleasant environment by depositing all debris in appropriate receptacles.

- Extend common courtesy and respect to your fellow audience members
  
  Civility creates a comfortable and welcoming theatre experience for all.

- Bring very small children only to age-appropriate performances
  
  Small children easily become restless at programs intended for older children, and may cause distractions.

Be a Theatre Critic

During the performance watch for:

- Facial expressions and actions
- Costumes
- Props
- Music and sound effects
- Vivid stories and word pictures
What’s Important to Know?

A Summary of Alice in Wonderland

Alice sits on a riverbank on a warm summer day, drowsily reading over her sister’s shoulder, when she catches sight of a White Rabbit in a waistcoat running by her. The White Rabbit pulls out a pocket watch, exclaims that he is late, and pops down a rabbit hole. Alice follows the White Rabbit down the hole and comes upon a great hallway lined with doors. She finds a small door that she opens using a key she discovers on a nearby table. Through the door, she sees a beautiful garden, and Alice begins to cry when she realizes she cannot fit through the door. She finds a bottle marked “DRINK ME” and downs the contents. She shrinks down to the right size to enter the door but cannot enter since she has left the key on the tabletop above her head. Alice discovers a cake marked “EAT ME” which causes her to grow to an inordinately large height. Still unable to enter the garden, Alice begins to cry again, and her giant tears form a pool at her feet. As she cries, Alice shrinks and falls into the pool of tears. The pool of tears becomes a sea, and as she treads water she meets a Mouse. The Mouse accompanies Alice to shore, where a number of animals stand gathered on a bank. After a “Caucus Race,” Alice scares the animals away with tales of her cat, Dinah, and finds herself alone again.

Alice meets the White Rabbit again, who mistakes her for a servant and sends her off to fetch his things. While in the White Rabbit’s house, Alice drinks an unmarked bottle of liquid and grows to the size of the room. The White Rabbit returns to his house, fuming at the now-giant Alice, but she swats him and his servants away with her giant hand. The animals outside try to get her out of the house by throwing rocks at her, which inexplicably transform into cakes when they land in the house.

Alice eats one of the cakes, which causes her to shrink to a small size. She wanders off into the forest, where she meets a Caterpillar sitting on a mushroom and smoking a hookah (i.e., a water pipe). The Caterpillar and Alice get into an argument, but before the Caterpillar crawls away in disgust, he tells Alice that different parts of the mushroom will make her grow or shrink. Alice tastes a part of the mushroom, and her neck stretches above the trees. A pigeon sees her and attacks, deeming her a serpent hungry for pigeon eggs.

Alice eats another part of the mushroom and shrinks down to a normal height. She wanders until she comes across the house of the Duchess. She enters and finds the Duchess, who is nursing a squealing baby, as well as a grinning Cheshire Cat, and a Cook who tosses massive amounts of pepper into a cauldron of soup. The Duchess behaves rudely to Alice and then departs to prepare for a croquet game with the Queen. As she leaves, the Duchess hands Alice the baby, which Alice discovers is a pig. Alice lets the pig go and reenters the forest, where she meets the Cheshire Cat again. The Cheshire Cat explains to Alice that everyone in Wonderland is mad, including Alice herself. The Cheshire Cat gives directions to the March Hare’s house and fades away to nothing but a floating grin.
Alice travels to the March Hare’s house to find the March Hare, the Mad Hatter, and the Dormouse having tea together. Treated rudely by all three, Alice stands by the tea party, uninvited. She learns that they have wronged Time and are trapped in perpetual tea-time. After a final discourtesy, Alice leaves and journeys through the forest. She finds a tree with a door in its side, and travels through it to find herself back in the great hall. She takes the key and uses the mushroom to shrink down and enter the garden.

After saving several gardeners from the temper of the Queen of Hearts, Alice joins the Queen in a strange game of croquet. The croquet ground is hilly, the mallets and balls are live flamingos and hedgehogs, and the Queen tears about, frantically calling for the other player’s executions. Amidst this madness, Alice bumps into the Cheshire Cat again, who asks her how she is doing. The King of Hearts interrupts their conversation and attempts to bully the Cheshire Cat, who impudently dismisses the King. The King takes offense and arranges for the Cheshire Cat’s execution, but since the Cheshire Cat is now only a head floating in midair, no one can agree on how to behead it.

The Duchess approaches Alice and attempts to befriend her, but the Duchess makes Alice feel uneasy. The Queen of Hearts chases the Duchess off and tells Alice that she must visit the Mock Turtle to hear his story. The Queen of Hearts sends Alice with the Gryphon as her escort to meet the Mock Turtle. Alice shares her strange experiences with the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, who listen sympathetically and comment on the strangeness of her adventures. After listening to the Mock Turtle’s story, they hear an announcement that a trial is about to begin, and the Gryphon brings Alice back to the croquet ground.

The Knave of Hearts stands trial for stealing the Queen’s tarts. The King of Hearts leads the proceedings, and various witnesses approach the stand to give evidence. The Mad Hatter and the Cook both give their testimony, but none of it makes any sense. The White Rabbit, acting as a herald, calls Alice to the witness stand. The King goes nowhere with his line of questioning, but takes encouragement when the White Rabbit provides new evidence in the form of a letter written by the Knave. The letter turns out to be a poem, which the King interprets as an admission of guilt on the part of the Knave. Alice believes the note to be nonsense and protests the King’s interpretation. The Queen becomes furious with Alice and orders her beheading, but Alice grows to a huge size and knocks over the Queen’s army of playing cards.

All of a sudden, Alice finds herself awake on her sister’s lap, back at the riverbank. She tells her sister about her dream and goes inside for tea as her sister ponders Alice’s adventures.

Character Profiles and Analysis

Alice: The young protagonist of the novel, Alice is based on Lewis Carroll’s real-life friend, the young Alice Liddell, daughter of Carroll’s boss. Alice, in the novel, is a girl struggling with adolescence and her transformation from an idle child to a conscientious adult.
Alice is a sensible prepubescent girl from a wealthy English family who finds herself in a strange world ruled by imagination and fantasy. Alice feels comfortable with her identity and has a strong sense that her environment is comprised of clear, logical, and consistent rules and features. Alice’s familiarity with the world has led one critic to describe her as a “disembodied intellect.” Alice displays great curiosity and attempts to fit her diverse experiences into a clear understanding of the world. Alice approaches Wonderland as an anthropologist, but maintains a strong sense of noblesse oblige that comes with her class status. She has confidence in her social position, education, and the Victorian virtue of good manners. Alice has a feeling of entitlement, particularly when comparing herself to Mabel, whom she declares has a “poky little house,” and no toys. Additionally, she flaunts her limited information base with anyone who will listen and becomes increasingly obsessed with the importance of good manners as she deals with the rude creatures of Wonderland. Alice maintains a superior attitude and behaves with solicitous indulgence toward those she believes are less privileged.

The tension of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland emerges when Alice’s fixed perspective of the world comes into contact with the mad, illogical world of Wonderland. Alice’s fixed sense of order clashes with the madness she finds in Wonderland. The White Rabbit challenges her perceptions of class when he mistakes her for a servant, while the Mad Hatter, March Hare, and Pigeon challenge Alice’s notions of urbane intelligence with an unfamiliar logic that only makes sense within the context of Wonderland. Most significantly, Wonderland challenges her perceptions of good manners by constantly assaulting her with dismissive rudeness. Alice’s fundamental beliefs face challenges at every turn, and as a result Alice suffers an identity crisis. She persists in her way of life as she perceives her sense of order collapsing all around her. Alice must choose between retaining her notions of order and assimilating into Wonderland’s nonsensical rules.

**White Rabbit:** The Rabbit is the through line of the novel. That is, he is the character that Alice follows, and he reappears to get things moving again. In a way, he is a sort of guide, though he is too worried about himself to really be guiding anyone.

**Cheshire Cat:** A smiling cat who can disappear and reappear at will. The Cheshire Cat is the ironic middle between adulthood and childhood. He reveals to Alice how, after you have mastered the rules (a skill which the Caterpillar basically teaches Alice) then rules can start to master you. He sends her forward to the Mad Hatter and then to
the Queen as a lesson in what happens when the rules get out of hand: madness, a sort of childhood for adults. The Cheshire Cat is unique among Wonderland creatures. Threatened by no one, it maintains a cool, grinning outsider status. The Cheshire Cat has insight into the workings of Wonderland as a whole. Its calm explanation to Alice that to be in Wonderland is to be “mad” reveals a number of points that do not occur to Alice on her own. First, the Cheshire Cat points out that Wonderland as a place has a stronger cumulative effect than any of its citizens. Wonderland is ruled by nonsense, and as a result, Alice’s normal behavior becomes inconsistent with its operating principles, so Alice herself becomes mad in the context of Wonderland. Certainly, Alice’s burning curiosity to absorb everything she sees in Wonderland sets her apart from the other Wonderland creatures, making her seem mad in comparison.

March Hare: A mad creature who takes tea all of the time because he lives in a state of frozen time.

Mad Hatter: The leader of a perpetual tea time. Hatters were mad because they used mercury in the production of hats from fur, which will cause madness after long exposure.

Queen of Hearts: The mad tyrant who rules Wonderland. The Queen is best seen as an old person (an adult) who has lost sight of civility and so has become quite mad. In a sense, she is really an overgrown child who just happens to be old. The novel explains this by positioning her in opposition to Alice’s youthful growth. As Alice is growing stronger and more reasonable, the Queen is degenerating into frailty and madness. As Alice becomes a fertile, red woman, the Queen wanes to become a pale, old matron.

As the ruler of Wonderland, the Queen of Hearts is the character that Alice must inevitably face to figure out the puzzle of Wonderland. In a sense, the Queen of Hearts is literally the heart of Alice’s conflict. Unlike many of the other characters in Wonderland, the Queen of Hearts is not as concerned with nonsense and perversions of logic as she is with absolute rule and execution. In Wonderland, she is a singular force of fear who even dominates the King of Hearts. In the Queen’s presence, Alice finally gets a taste of true fear, even though she understands that the Queen of Hearts is merely a playing card. The Gryphon later informs Alice that the Queen never actually executes anyone she sentences to death, which reinforces the fact that the Queen of Hearts’ power lies in her rhetoric. The Queen becomes representative of the idea that Wonderland is devoid of substance.
What’s Important to Know? (Cont.)

**King of Hearts:** The Queen's simpering husband.

**Edith, Alice’s Sister:** A reasonable adult, Alice's older sister is the one who, in the end, recognizes Alice's own adult-like qualities. Carroll closes with her adult interpretation of Wonderland so as to reinforce the sense that Alice has truly grown emotionally.

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**Literary Themes in *Alice in Wonderland***

(Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work.)

**The Tragic and Inevitable Loss of Childhood Innocence**

Throughout the course of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, Alice goes through a variety of absurd physical changes. The discomfort she feels at never being the right size acts as a symbol for the changes that occur during puberty. Alice finds these changes to be traumatic, and feels discomfort, frustration, and sadness when she goes through them. She struggles to maintain a comfortable physical size. In Chapter I, she becomes upset when she keeps finding herself too big or too small to enter the garden. In Chapter V, she loses control over specific body parts when her neck grows to an absurd length. These constant fluctuations represent the way a child may feel as her body grows and changes during puberty.

**Life as a Meaningless Puzzle**

In Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, Alice encounters a series of puzzles that seem to have no clear solutions, which imitates the ways that life frustrates expectations. Alice expects that the situations she encounters will make a certain kind of sense, but they repeatedly frustrate her ability to figure out Wonderland. Alice tries to understand the Caucus race, solve the Mad Hatter’s riddle, and understand the Queen’s ridiculous croquet game, but to no avail. In every instance, the riddles and challenges presented to Alice have no purpose or answer. Even though Lewis Carroll was a logician, in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland he makes a farce out of jokes, riddles, and games of logic. Alice learns that she cannot expect to find logic or meaning in the situations that she encounters, even when they appear to be problems, riddles, or games that would normally have solutions that Alice would be able to figure out. Carroll makes a broader point about the ways that life frustrates expectations and resists interpretation, even when problems seem familiar or solvable.
Death as a Constant and Underlying Menace

Alice continually finds herself in situations in which she risks death, and while these threats never materialize, they suggest that death lurks just behind the ridiculous events of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland as a present and possible outcome. Death appears in Chapter I, when the narrator mentions that Alice would say nothing of falling off of her own house, since it would likely kill her. Alice takes risks that could possibly kill her, but she never considers death as a possible outcome. Over time, she starts to realize that her experiences in Wonderland are far more threatening than they appear to be. As the Queen screams “Off with its head!” she understands that Wonderland may not merely be a ridiculous realm where expectations are repeatedly frustrated. Death may be a real threat, and Alice starts to understand that the risks she faces may not be ridiculous and absurd after all.

Theme Analysis

Alice in Wonderland is a coming of age story. It is the growth of Alice from an undisciplined child to a wise young woman. The principle arrangement of this growth is two parted. First Alice must learn that rules are essential to civil, adult life. Then she must learn that if rules are adhered to blindly, and without a merciful sense of justice, then society becomes worse than childish anarchy, it becomes a tyranny. These truths are played out in the metaphors of children’s games and rhymes. In the end, Alice must overcome the nonsense of the young and the old before she truly understands what adulthood is all about.

Motifs in Alice in Wonderland

(Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, or literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text’s major themes.)

Dream

Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland takes place in Alice’s dream, so that the characters and phenomena of the real world mix with elements of Alice’s unconscious state. The dream motif explains the abundance of nonsensical and disparate events in the story. As in a dream, the narrative follows the dreamer as she encounters various episodes in which she
What’s Important to Know? (Cont.)

attempts to interpret her experiences in relationship to herself and her world. Though Alice’s experiences lend themselves to meaningful observations, they resist a singular and coherent interpretation.

Subversion

that it will frustrate her expectations and challenge her understanding of the natural order of the world. In Wonderland, Alice quickly discovers during her travels that the only reliable aspect of Wonderland that she can count on is that her lessons no longer mean what she thought, as she botches her multiplication tables and incorrectly recites poems she had memorized while in Wonderland. Even Alice’s physical dimensions become warped as she grows and shrinks erratically throughout the story. Wonderland frustrates Alice’s desires to fit her experiences in a logical framework where she can make sense of the relationship between cause and effect.

Language

Carroll plays with linguistic conventions in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, making use of puns and playing on multiple meanings of words throughout the text. Carroll invents words and expressions and develops new meanings for words. Alice’s exclamation “Curious and curiouser!” suggests that both her surroundings and the language she uses to describe them expand beyond expectation and convention. Anything is possible in Wonderland, and Carroll’s manipulation of language reflects this sense of unlimited possibility.

Curious, Nonsense, and Confusing

Alice uses these words throughout her journey to describe phenomena she has trouble explaining. Though the words are generally interchangeable, she usually assigns curious and confusing to experiences or encounters that she tolerates. She endures is the experiences that are curious or confusing, hoping to gain a clearer picture of how that individual or experience functions in the world. When Alice declares something to be nonsense, as she does with the trial in Chapter XII, she rejects or criticizes the experience or encounter.
What’s Important to Know? (Cont.)

Symbols in Alice in Wonderland

(Symbols are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.)

The Garden

Nearly every object in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland functions as a symbol, but nothing clearly represents one particular thing. The symbolic resonances of Wonderland objects are generally contained to the individual episode in which they appear. Often the symbols work together to convey a particular meaning. The garden may symbolize the Garden of Eden, an idyllic space of beauty and innocence that Alice is not permitted to access. On a more abstract level, the garden may simply represent the experience of desire, in that Alice focuses her energy and emotion on trying to attain it. The two symbolic meanings work together to underscore Alice’s desire to hold onto her feelings of childlike innocence that she must relinquish as she matures.

The Caterpillar’s Mushroom

Like the garden, the Caterpillar’s mushroom also has multiple symbolic meanings. Some readers and critics view the Caterpillar as a sexual threat, its phallic shape a symbol of sexual virility. The Caterpillar’s mushroom connects to this symbolic meaning. Alice must master the properties of the mushroom to gain control over her fluctuating size, which represents the bodily frustrations that accompany puberty. Others view the mushroom as a psychedelic hallucinogen that compounds Alice’s surreal and distorted perception of Wonderland.

Food

Food is used in this novel as a metaphor for growth. Carroll is literalizing the old notion that food helps you grow big and strong, that food is the path to adulthood. Ironically, Carroll is also pointing out that growing up is only half the way to adulthood. Alice can control her size and therefore her position as an adult with the food provided by the Caterpillar, but it isn't until the Cheshire Cat shows her the dangers of adulthood that she is able to be truly adult. Food can make you big in Wonderland (as in life) but only mercy and experience can make you wise.
What’s Important to Know? (Cont.)

Red

Red is the symbol of adulthood (literally it can be taken to refer to menstrual blood, and thus fertility and vigor). The Queen and Alice are on opposite sides of this color, Alice just growing into her adulthood, the Queen just growing past it. It is over this place, this wise middle ground, that the novel fights. Red is, hopefully, a place (or an age) of balance between rules and mercy, between young and old, between wisdom and nonsense.
A Brief History of the Antelope Valley Ballet

The Antelope Valley Ballet was founded in the fall of 1998 by Kathleen Burnett and Lara Arnaiz. The mission statement for AV Ballet is to provide dancers from across the Antelope Valley region with professional quality performance opportunities in a company setting; to provide high quality performances locally and regionally, stimulating interest in and appreciation for dance as a performing art; to be a positive force in the cultural climate of the Antelope Valley and the state of California, interacting with and supporting all the arts.

Since its founding, the Antelope Valley Ballet has produced two to three productions each year at the Lancaster Performing Arts Center in Lancaster, CA. We have always had morning performances for school children, home-schooled children and disabled people. In addition to our productions at LPAC, we also present lecture demonstrations and smaller performances for classrooms and organizations across the Antelope Valley.

Our productions have included The Nutcracker, Giselle, Cinderella, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, Alice in Wonderland, Fractured Fairy Tales, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Sports, Pointe and Shoot, Hansel and Gretel, and the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet.

We are proud to have had our dancers accepted to the finest professional ballet summer programs in the United States including Houston Ballet Academy, School of American Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Texas Ballet Theatre, The Rock, Atlanta Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Anaheim Ballet, Inland Pacific Ballet, and Arizona Ballet. Former dancers have danced professionally with Houston Ballet, Hubbard Street II, North Carolina Dance Theatre, Memphis Ballet, and Complexions Contemporary Dance.

The Antelope Valley Ballet has received grants from Ralph M. Parson’s Foundation, Boeing, Deluxe Checks, the LPAC Foundation, and the LA County Arts Commission. We also receive very generous support from individual donors who live here in the Antelope Valley.

Although we do not have a ballet school, the AV Ballet supports the local dance studios. We are fortunate to have had strong support from several of the local dance schools as well. Our future plans include increasing our lecture demonstrations and creating a small group of professional dancers who can perform regionally year round.
Play Your Part

You have an important role to play; it wouldn’t be a play without you! Your part is to pretend the play is real. Part of this includes accepting certain theatre ways, or conventions:

1. Actors tell the story with words (dialogue), actions (blocking), and songs.
2. Actors may sing songs that tell about the story or their feelings.
3. Actors may speak to the audience.
4. An actor may play several different characters (doubling) by changing their voice, costume or posture.
5. Places are suggested by panels on the set, and by props.

How to play your part:

A play is different from television or a movie. The actors are right in front of you and can see your reactions, feel your attention, and hear your laughter and applause. Watch and listen carefully to understand the story. The story is told by the actors and comes to life through your imagination.
Discussion Questions

Sample Discussion/Essay Questions for K-3rd grade

1. What was your favorite part of the ballet? (for example: the music, the costumes, the scenery, the movement)
2. Was it hard to follow the story without using words?
3. Do you think it is hard to dance up the tips of your toes?
4. Do you think the dancers who were animals danced like animals? (for example: did the birds move like birds?)
5. Did you like the ballet?
6. Would like to see another ballet in the future?

Sample Discussion/Essay Questions for 3rd-5th grade

1. What was your favorite part of the ballet? (for example: the music, the costumes, the scenery, the movement)
2. Was it hard to follow the story without using words? Why or Why Not?
3. Pick a character. What emotion did you see in that character? (for example: The Queen of Hearts was mad)
4. Do you think that ballet is an athletic activity similar to football or gymnastics? Why or why not?
5. What did you feel when you were watching the ballet?

Sample Discussion/Essay Questions for Middle School Students-Adults

1. What was your favorite part of the ballet? (for example: the music, the costumes, the scenery, the movement)
2. Do you think that the scenery and costumes helped you to figure out where the story was taking place and who the characters were? Why or Why Not?
3. Was it hard to follow the story without using words? Why or Why Not?
4. Do you think that ballet is a highly physical activity similar to a sport? Why or Why Not?
5. What is the difference between sport and art?
6. What is art?
Resources

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES for further ideas, resources, and information.
(Contents of links on the World Wide Web change continuously. It is advisable that teachers review all links before introducing them to students.)

AV Ballet’s website http://avballet.wordpress.com/
Lancaster Performing Arts Website http://www.lpac.org (See the Arts for Youth Page)
Spark Notes http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/alice/summary.html
History of Nutcrackers http://www.nutcrackermuseum.com/history.htm
Creative Activities http://www.ruthannzaroff.com/wonderland/

RECOMMENDED VERSIONS OF THE BOOK (according to age)

Walt Disney’s Alice in Wonderland (Little Golden Book Series) (for preschool - kindergarten)
By Walt Disney Studio (Illustrator), Al Dempster (Adapted by), Lewis Carroll
(Hardcover) Pub. Date: January 2010
Publisher: Random House Children's Books
Series: Little Golden Book Series
ISBN: 0736426701

Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland (for ages 4 - 8)
By Deborah Hautzig, Kathryn Rathke (Illustrator)
(Paperback) Pub. Date: February 2010
Publisher: Penguin Group (USA)
Series: All Aboard Reading Series
ISBN: 0448452693

Alice in Wonderland - The Stepping Stone Series (for ages 8 - 12)
By Lewis Carroll, Adapted by Mallory Loehr
Paperback Pub. Date: December 2009
Publisher: Random House Children's Books
ISBN: 03758666418

Alice in Wonderland - Scholastic Junior Classics (for ages 9 and up)
by Lewis Carroll, John Tenniel (Illustrator)
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This study guide for “Alice in Wonderland” was originally created by Antelope Valley Ballet, and was extended or otherwise modified by Lancaster Performing Arts Center Staff.

Other resources consulted:
(Contents of links on the World Wide Web change continuously. It is advisable that teachers review all links before introducing them to students.)

www.avballet.wordpress.com