



IPAC *Foundation*
and LANCASTER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

present

COPPELIA



ANTELOPE VALLEY BALLET

MAY 2024

Coppelia Study Guide

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Section 1: Before you go to the theater

Teacher's Notes

What to Expect at the Theater

It is a special privilege to attend a live performance at the Lancaster Performing Arts Center.

Polite behavior allows everyone, including the dancers, to fully enjoy and concentrate on the performance.

Discuss with your students the following aspects of audience etiquette:

- ◆ If anyone needs to use the restroom please do so before the performance begins.
- ◆ Programs will not be given to each student, please use this study guide to share the story and characters before coming to the theater.
- ◆ You may talk to your neighbor in a normal speaking voice prior to the performance and during “intermission”. We will have a brief break in the flow of the performance as we change scenery. Artistic Director Kathleen Burnett will come to the stage to talk with the students during this time. Remember the performance begins with the first note of the musical Overture.
- ◆ During the performance please give your attention to the stage and try to keep talking to a minimum.
- ◆ The taking of pictures or recording video is prohibited during a performance, so please turn off your cell phone once in the theater.
- ◆ Applause is the best way to communicate with the dancers. It tells them that you are enjoying the performance. If you see something you like, feel free to applaud! Or if you see something funny, please laugh!
- ◆ Remain with your class.
- ◆ Chewing gum, food and drink are not allowed in the theater.
- ◆ Have fun!

Local school children leaving the Lancaster Performing Arts Center after an Antelope Valley Ballet performance. The students are able to meet the dancers on their way out of the building.



Information about Coppelia

- * Originally Choreographed by Arthur Saint-Léon
- * Music by Léo Delibes
- * Libretto by Charles-Louis- ' Etienne Nutter

Coppelia is a comic ballet based upon two stories by E. T. A. Hoffmann: Der Sandmann (The Sandman) and Die Puppe (The Doll). Dr. Coppelius is an inventor who makes life-size dancing dolls. His most recent creation is Coppelia, a doll that is so lifelike that Franz, a village youth, becomes infatuated with it and sets aside his true heart's desire, Swanhilda. But Swanhilda shows him his folly by dressing as the doll, pretending to make it come to life and ultimately saving him from foolishly choosing a doll over her.

The ballet Coppelia was a trail blazer. It was the first ballet to incorporate traditional dances and music, including national dances like the Czárdás (Hungarian) and the Mazurka (Polish). Coppelia was the first ballet to use automata, marionettes or automatized dolls. The Industrial Revolution in France paved the way for the trend of automata as parlor entertainment for adults, starting in the mid-19th century. Until then, larger automata were hand-built to impress royalty while most aristocrats could only afford smaller handcrafted automata trinkets. The rise of the middle class meant more Europeans were wealthy enough to purchase automata devices to entertain guests at their homes, and advances in manufacturing meant parts for these clockwork robots could be produced and assembled like never before—particularly around Paris, which had the perfect mix of material resources, technology, and skilled craftsman to make these moving works of art. Thus, 1860 to 1910 is known as “The Golden Age of Automata.”

Background

Coppelia is one of the most frequently performed and well-loved comic ballets. It was first choreographed at the end of the Romantic era and is considered to be a precursor to the Classical Ballet Era. As George Balanchine put it, “Just as Giselle is ballet’s great tragedy, so Coppelia is its great comedy.” The ballet is an obvious deviation from Romantic ballets, which featured ethereal figures like sylphs and wilis, long tulle dresses for costumes (later known as Romantic tutus), and tragic endings. In contrast, Coppelia featured human characters (that is, apart from Dr. Coppelius’s dolls), and ended with the central characters, Swanilda and Franz, in blissful matrimony. Coppelia is the collaborative effort between librettist Charles Nutter, choreographer Arthur Saint-Léon, and composer Leo Delibes. Nutter worked on the libretto for Coppélia, adapting E.T.A. Hoffmann’s dark tale of Der Sandmann (1815) to focus on the more lighthearted aspects of the story.

Coppelia was also the first ballet to feature national dances: the Czárdás (Hungarian) and the Mazurka (Polish) from Act I. Both Saint-Léon and Delibes were folklore aficionados, and the trend at the time of expressing nationalism through the arts are reasons for their mutual agreement to include these. Coppelia premiered in Paris on May 25, 1870. Its initial success was interrupted by the outbreak of war, but it subsequently was presented more than 500 times, becoming the most performed ballet at the Paris Opera.

The Story of Coppelia

Act I ~ The story begins during a town festival in celebration of the harvest. Anyone who wants to be married the next day will be awarded with a special gift of money. Swanhilda is engaged to Franz and plans to marry during the festival. Swanhilda asks Franz if he loves her and he answers yes, but she senses a lack of sincerity in his reply. She becomes unhappy with her fiancé because it seems he is more interested in getting another girl's attention. The girl is Coppelia who sits on the toymaker Dr. Coppelius's balcony reading all day long, paying no attention and showing no care for anyone trying to be social with her. Franz is mesmerized by her beauty and is determined to get her attention. Swanhilda is deeply hurt by his distractions and feels he does not love her despite his answers. Because she doesn't trust his words, Swanhilda decides to turn to an old wives' tale for guidance. She holds up a stalk of wheat to her ear; if it rattles when she shakes it, then she will know that he loves her. She shakes the wheat furiously, but no rattle can be heard. Confused and upset, she has Franz do the same thing. He tells her it does rattle. She does not believe him and runs away heartbroken. When Dr. Coppelius leaves his house, he is heckled by a group of boys. After running them off he finally goes on his way not knowing that he dropped his house key in the process of chasing the boys away. Swanhilda finds his key and is determined to learn more about Coppelia. She and her friends decide to go inside Dr. Coppelius's house. Meanwhile, Franz develops his own plan to meet Coppelia. He climbs up a ladder to Coppelia's balcony.

Act II ~ Swanhilda and her friends find themselves in a large room filled with life-size mechanical dolls. They quickly wind them up and watch them move. In her searching, Swanhilda finds Coppelia behind a curtain and discovers that she, too, is a doll. When Dr. Coppelius returns home, he finds the girls in his house. He becomes angry not only for getting into his house, but for also messing up his workroom, and kicks the girls out. All the girls run out except Swanhilda, who hides behind Coppelia's curtain. Dr. Coppelius begins cleaning up the mess and notices Franz coming in thru the balcony. When confronted, Franz expresses his interest in Coppelia and his desire to marry her. Dr. Coppelius offers his guest a drink to discuss the arrangement. Dr. Coppelius wants to bring Coppelia to life and in order to do that, he needs the spirit of a human. His magic spell will take some of Franz's lifeforce and transfer it to Coppelia. When Franz falls senseless to the chair having drunk too much, the doctor calls on his magical arts to transfer his lifeforce into the doll Coppelia, which he loves as if she were his own daughter. Swanhilda dresses up in Coppelia's clothes and falls in with the plan and pretending to progress gradually from mechanical movements to radiant human vitality. When she grows tired of the game, she capriciously turns the workshop upside down Dr. Coppelius becomes saddened to find a lifeless Coppelia behind the curtain. Franz sees that Coppelia is only a doll and is thankful that Swanhilda still agrees to marry him. The two young people go off happily together as Dr. Coppelius sadly embraces his cold automaton.

Act III ~ The villagers gather to celebrate the harvest, as well as the wedding of Swanhilda and Franz. Dr. Coppelius is upset and bitter, and threatens to take revenge for the intrusion to his home, but he is pacified by the Mayor who gives him a purse of gold. The festivities continue into the night, with the "Dance of the Hours" and the wedding Pas de Deux. [Please note: Act III is not in the school performances].

COPPELIA CAST OF CHARACTERS

Dr Coppelius is a lonely old toymaker who lives in a two-story house on the edge of the village square. He is regarded by the villagers as a sorcerer, someone who conducts strange experiments in his laboratory. They fear him and ridicule him.

Coppelia is his "daughter", a mechanical doll who is so lifelike she is able to fool the villagers into believing she is alive. Doctor Coppelius is so enamoured of this doll that he tries to use magic to bring her to life.

Swanilda is one of the most beautiful girls of the village, Swanilda loves life and her fiancé, Franz. She and several other young ladies of the village are to be married at a mass wedding during the Harvest Festival on the following day.

Franz is engaged to marry Swanilda, he causes her a great deal of dismay when he notices the beautiful "new girl" in the village, Coppelia, throwing kisses at him. Not realizing that she is only a mechanical doll, he is determined to discover whether she really loves him or not by breaking into Dr Coppelius' house, where he finds himself in great danger.

Other Characters include: The Mayor and his wife, the Tavern Owners, Villagers, Dolls



KD Reilly-Lewis as Swanhilda and Jesse Marks as Franz in AV Ballet's production of Coppelia 2014.

The Creators of Coppelia



Choreographer: person who creates the movement

Arthur Saint-Leon

Arthur Saint-Léon was one of the most sought after dancers, violinists, and choreographers of his time. He received invitations to perform and choreograph in almost every major city in Europe during the mid-19th century. He, along with the collaborators on this page, brought comedy and national dances into the world of ballet.

Composer: person who creates the music

Leo Delibes

Leo Delibes was a French composer known for illustrating action, creating atmosphere, and inspiring movement. Coppelia was his first full-length ballet and is considered to be a great leap forward in the development of ballet music. Each of the characters is identified by a leitmotif: Coppelia's enigmatic tones and Dr. Coppelius' sinister undercurrent of vibrating strings, with the music clearly indicating the bustling village square in contrast to Dr. Coppelius' dark house.

Delibes was a folklore aficionado and was familiar with Eastern European dance music. This led Delibes to include a Polish Mazurka in Act I, now one of the ballet's most iconic passages. In addition, Delibes included Czárdás (Hungarian), and short Spanish and Scottish vignettes for Swanhilda in Act II.



Librettist: person who creates the storyline

Charles-Louis-Étienne Nutter

Charles Nutter was a lawyer, a fantasy author and the archivist for the Paris Opera. He based the story of Coppelia on two stories by E.T.A. Hoffmann *The Sandmann* and *The Doll* (Die Puppe). Coppelia introduced the ballet world to automatons, dolls, and marionettes that produced many thematic offshoots, leading to other ballets featuring dolls such as *The Nutcracker* and *Petrushka*.

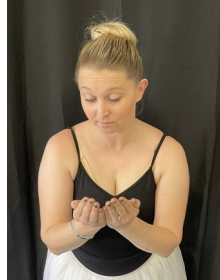


Pantomime in the ballet Coppelia

Ballets tell a story without the use of words. When we need characters to “speak” to each other we use pantomime gestures. Familiarize yourself with some of the gestures that you will see in Coppelia. KD Reilly-Lewis, who dances the role of Swanhilda, can be seen in the pictures below demonstrating for you some of the pantomime that will be included in Coppelia.



Kiss - dancer blows a kiss



Read - dancer seems to read a book



Love - hands over the heart



Marry - point to the Wedding finger



Old Man - bend over and walk holding a cane



Think - indicate your forehead with a thoughtful look



Crazy - circle your finger at the side of your head



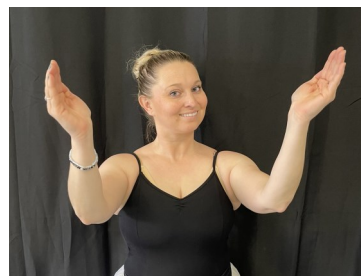
Build- make a fist and hit the palm of your other hand with it



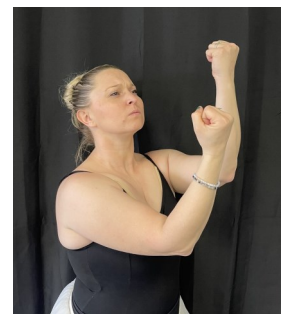
See - point to one eye and then the other



Mechanical Doll - Arms up with head down, and then arms down with head up



Human Form - Trace your hands through the air in the shape of an hour glass



Fight - Shake your Fists in the air

Standard pantomime gestures included pointed at your chest to say “Me“ or “I”, point at someone else to say “You”, 2 fingers in the air like the boy scout pledge to “swear”, circle your hands in the air above your head for “dance”.

Section 2: After the Performance

Student Activity ~ Read the Story of Coppelia

Distribute a copy of the **The Story of Coppelia** (p. 5) & **Coppelia: Cast of Characters** (p. 6), a note taking sheet and a pencil to each student.

As a class, read *The Story of Coppelia*. As the class reads, ask students to take notes on the characters, settings and events of *Coppelia*. Once the class finishes reading the synopsis aloud, ask students to write about their favorite character and favorite event.

Next, distribute a copy of the **Coppelia: Re-Writing the Ending** to each student. Ask students to write about the ending of the ballet. Ask students to consider a new way to end the story. Ask students to write down their ideas for a new ending. Once the class has written down their ideas, ask students to take turns reading their ideas for the new ending aloud to the class.



KD Reilly-Lewis as Swanhilda and Jesse Marks as Franz in AV Ballet's *Coppelia* 2014.

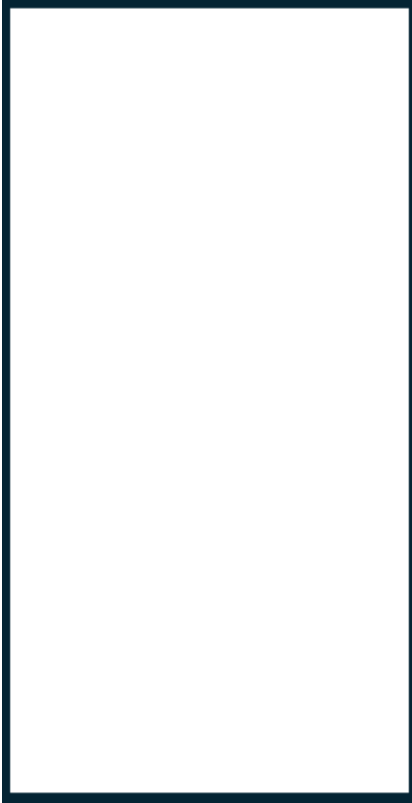


Hayley Horney, KD Reilly-Lewis, Clarissa Wohlers, and Amanda Gibbs as Swanhilda and her friends in AV Ballet's *Coppelia* 2014.

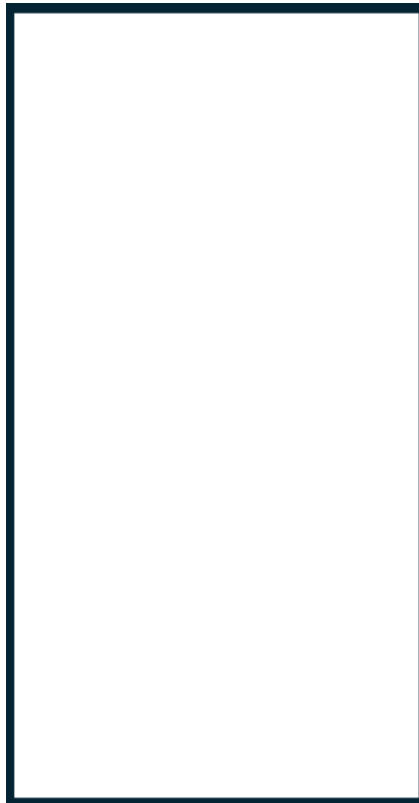
Coppelia: Characters and Events

Name _____

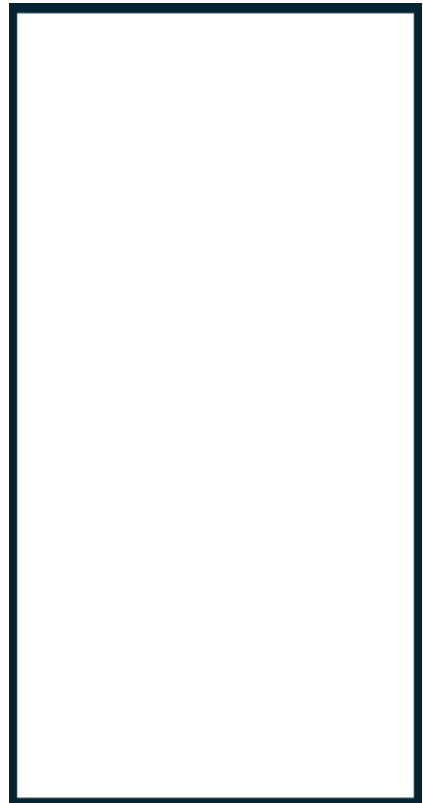
Characters



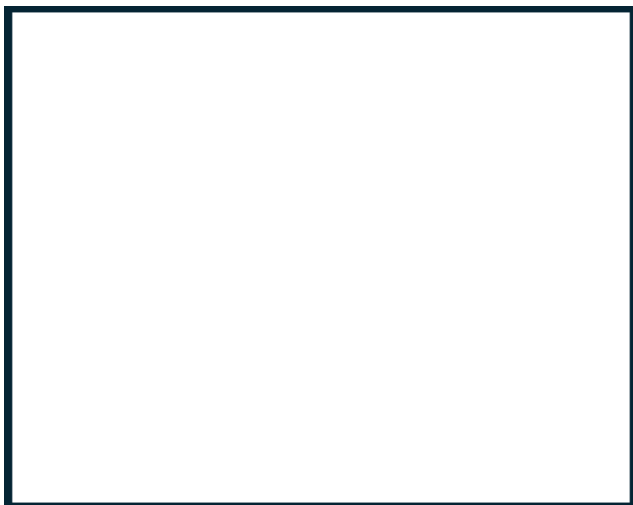
Setting



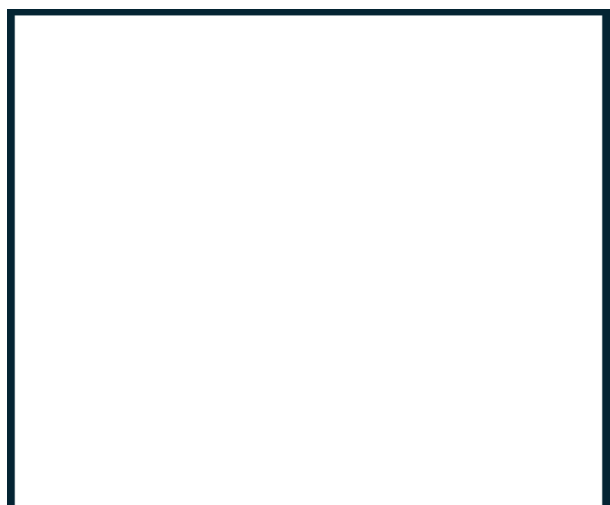
Main Events



Favorite Character



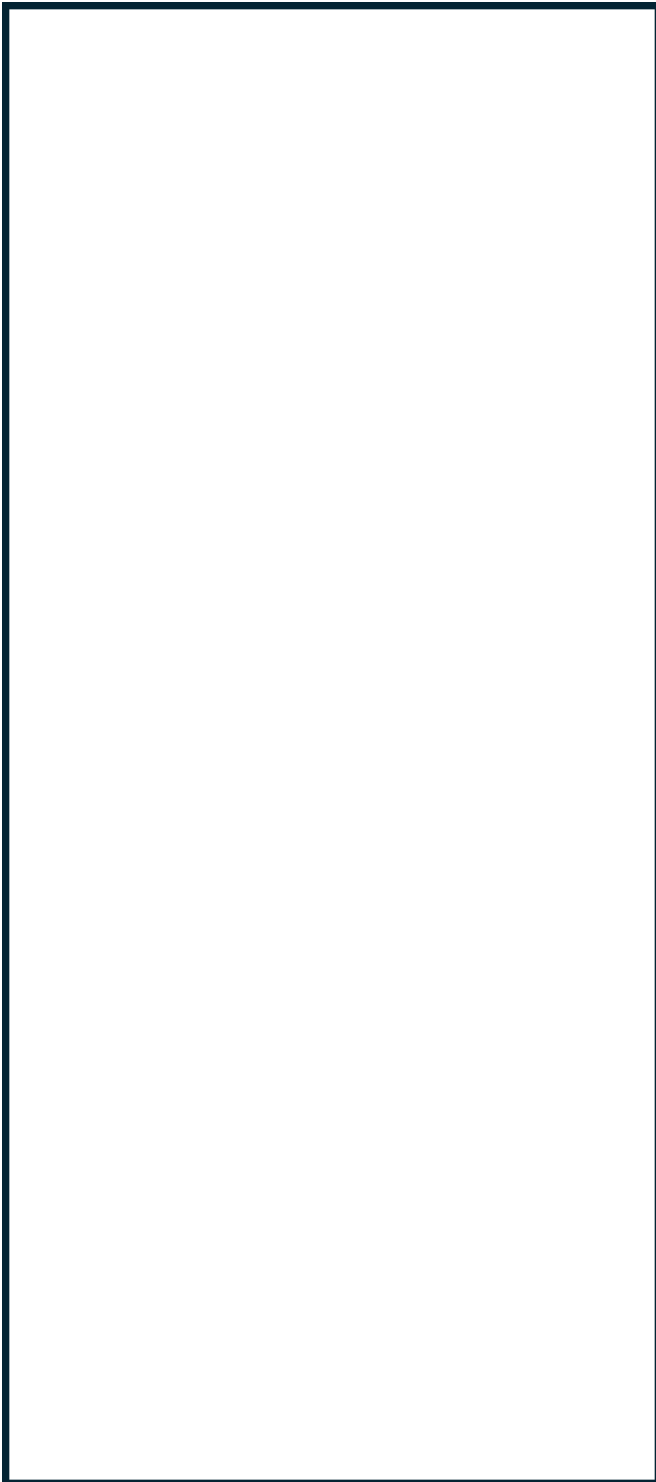
Favorite Part



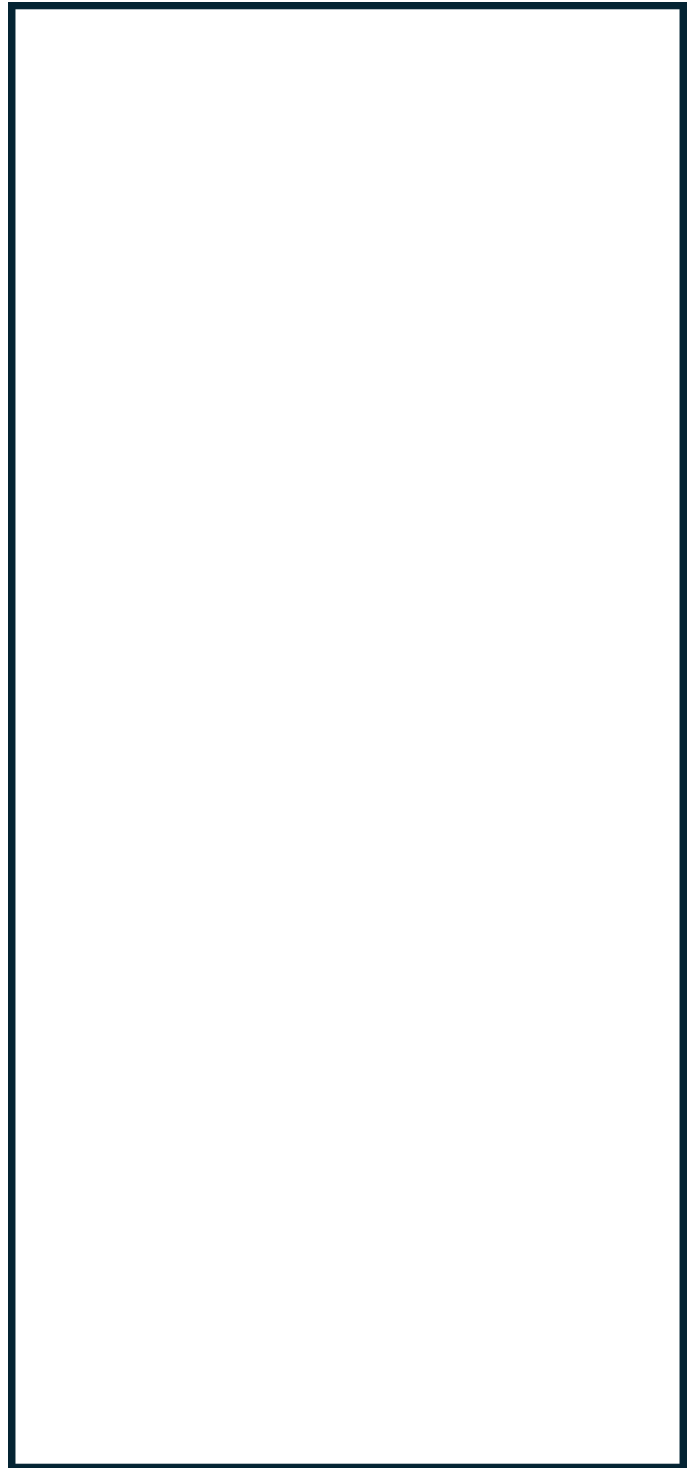
Coppelia: Rewriting the Ending

Name _____

Original Ending



New Ending



Coppelia: Questionnaire

Name _____

Exploring Your Opinions about Coppélia

Directions: After each statement, write

SA (strongly agree), A (agree), D (disagree), or SD (strongly disagree).

Then, in the space provided, briefly explain the reasons for your opinions.

1. In Coppelia, Swanhilda is the hero of the story. _____

Your reasons:

2. In Coppelia, Franz falls in love with the doll Coppelia because she is quiet and likes to read. _____

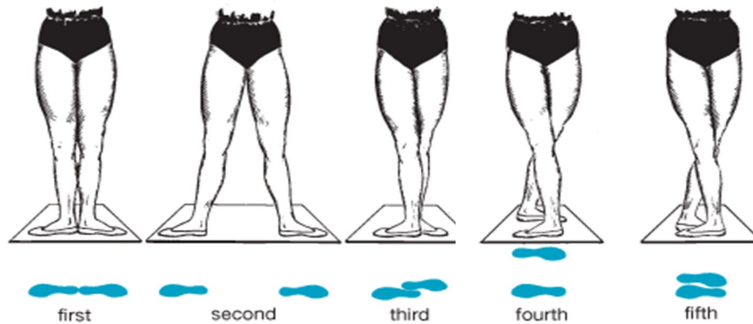
Your reasons:

Activity: Movement

Positions of the Feet and Arms & Movements in Dance

Assignment ~ Learn the Positions of the Feet, The Positions of the Arms and 3 Movements

Positions of the Feet: In ballet there are five basic positions of the feet, numbered one through five. Refer to the pictures below and match your feet to each of them.



Positions of the Arms: There are also various positions of the arms. Match your arms to the pictures shown below.



Movements in Dance: There are multiple steps referred to as the "movements in dance." There are three movements that ballet/dance beginners are taught. First learn to pronounce the terminology given below, learn the definition, and then attempt to do the movement described.

plier (plee-ay): to bend. Keeping both feet flat on the floor at all times, bend your knees. Remember to send your knees directly out over your toes!

relevé (ruh-leh-vay'): to rise. This can be done on one foot or both feet together. Start with the feet together, keep the knees straight, and lift the heels high enough so all of your body weight is on the balls of the feet – NOT the tips of your toes. Repeat this on one foot.

sauter (soh-tay): to jump. This sort of jump is performed "two feet to two feet." This means that you leave the ground by jumping off of both feet at the same time, and you land on both feet at the same time. Begin in a plié (as described above). Using your feet the same way you did to perform relevé, propel yourself into the air. Be sure to straighten and extend your legs in the air, but land in plié to cushion your knees.

Activity: Movement

Positions of the Feet and Arms & Movements in Dance

Assignment ~ Try Dancing!

Next Steps Now, combine what you have learned. Using the information on page 13, choose one position of the feet to stand in and one position of the arms to hold at the same time. Next, perform each of the movements of dance listed above while continuing to hold the positions of feet and arms you chose. Now you're dancing!



Plie



Releve



Sauter

Activity: Mime and Movement

Assignment ~ Try adding Pantomime!

Next Steps Now, combine what you have learned. Using some of the pantomime gestures on page 8, put together a phrase or a sentence. Next, perform each of the movements for your friends and see if they can interpret what you are saying!

Activity: Mime, and Movement

Doll or Human?

Introduction During the second act of Coppelia, Swanilda and her friends sneak into Dr. Coppelius' home. He soon returns to find them there and all escape, with the exception of Swanilda. Fearing that he will find her, she disguises herself as the doll Coppelia. It is also during this act that Dr. Coppelius attempts to bring the doll to life. Swanilda goes along with the game and begins moving with a stiff, almost robotic-like quality. She is supposed to be a doll coming to life so her movements are disjunct and lack a fluid quality often associated with ballet. Slowly, however, Swanilda, pretending to be Coppelia, gains more of a human movement quality. She becomes more fluid, softer, and more lively.

Assignment Think of the characteristics that define doll or robot-like movements and compare those to characteristics that define human-like movements. After defining these qualities, create movements that represent each quality. Once you've created specific movements of both qualities, focus on transitions between the two. Go from being a robot to a human and vice-versa.

Next Steps Choreograph a series of movements from robot/doll-like to life-like or vice-versa and teach your series of movements to someone else in the class. Have them teach you their series of movements and then put the two series together. Expand your group and find two more people to teach. After you learn their series, incorporate it into your own. Eventually, you will have your own dance "routine."



KD Reilly-Lewis as Swanilda pretending to be Coppelia in AV Ballet's production of Coppelia 2014.

Activity: Design a Costume

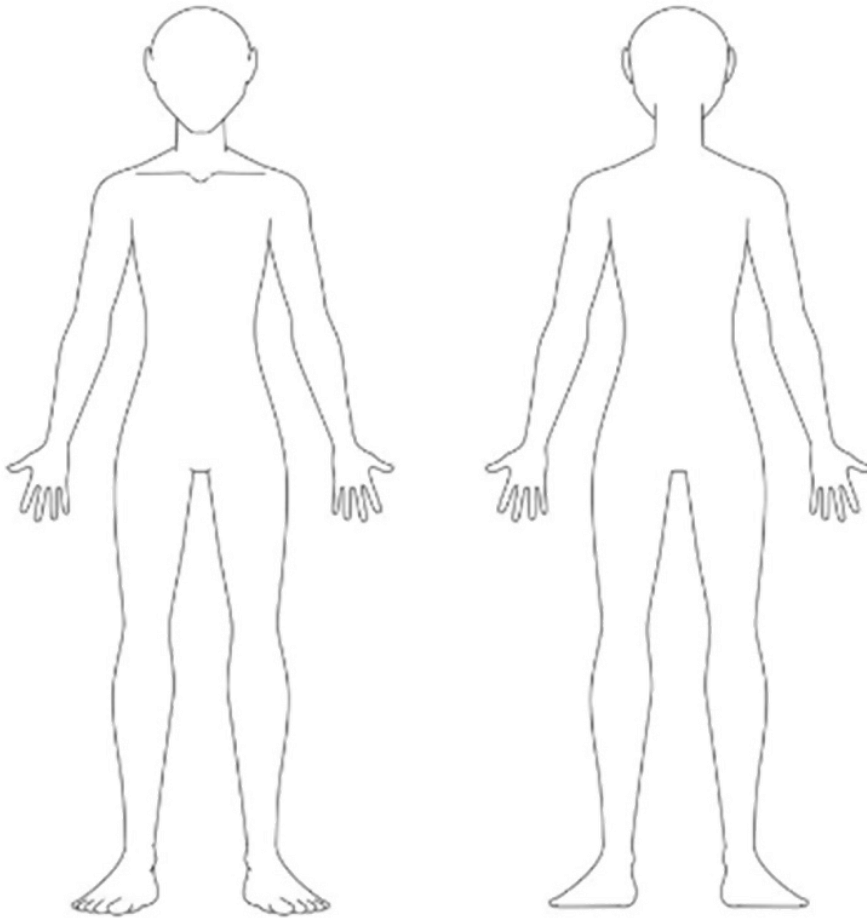
Name of Designer _____

Introduction Costume designers are an integral part of the production process of a ballet. What a dancer wears on stage must not only fit the part, but must also take into consideration that the dancer is going to be moving, a lot. How can you design a costume in which a dancer can move freely? Remember there can be no constraints on arms or legs and no fear that a snap will come undone, a button will fall off, or a large flowing skirt will restrict the level of a jump or kick!

Assignment Pick one character from the "Cast of Characters" and create a costume. Answer the questions as part of your planning process. Use this page to draw and color your design. Answer some of the typical questions that designers have to answer before creation officially begins.

Next Steps Display your costume renderings and explain the choices you made. How do the designs of your classmates differ?

Name of Character _____



1. How much money do you have in the costume budget? _____
2. What is the theme of the production? _____
3. Does the production take place during a specific time period? If so, when?

4. When do the costumes have to be finished? _____
5. How should the costume hang, flow, and move? _____

6. What is the color palette? _____

Coppélia Word Search

D Q K S M I Z B R I I C C R Q
Q D P W F S X Y V H Y O O M P
F W D A X R X C K S P T B Q M
V F O N T Y K E O P C L A D Y
Y E L H Q E Y C E O M X R E D
Y J L I T Z L L D I T A E C E
H P W L S S I L S O Q D G B M
U J U D P A Y W A T O Q E I O
Q V N A R C U X H B E A C E C
H T E G A I R R A M F R A N Z
U K W H P F D N Y F C B K A T
J U Z S H B K W P B W M D R Q
K V I R Q I L Q B P N E K V D
P Q U J Q K E O N T H Z J G B
D Q E F E E A U K Z I S G W R

BALLET
COMEDY
COPPELIA
DOCTOR
DOLL

FRANZ
KEY
MAGIC
MARRIAGE
SWANHILDA

Sources for this Study Guide

Jefferson Performing Arts Society

- ◆ <https://www.jpas.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Coppe%CC%81lia-Study-Companion.pdf>

Pittsburgh Ballet Theater

- ◆ <https://www.pbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Coppelia-Teacher-Resource-Guide.pdf>
- ◆ <https://www.pbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/AUDIENCE-PRODUCTION-GUIDE-Coppelia-web.pdf>

CA State Standards for Education Fulfilled by this Study Guide

Activity	Page	Standards Met
Coppelia: Read the Story	9	RI.K.2, RI.K.1, <i>RI.K.3</i> , <i>RI.1.1</i> , <i>RI.1.2</i> , <i>RI.1.3</i> , <i>RI.2.1</i> , <i>RI.2.2</i> , <i>RI.3.1</i> , <i>RI.3.2</i> , <i>RI.4.1</i> , <i>RI.4.2</i> , <i>RI.5.3</i>
Coppelia: Characters & Events	10	RI.K.2, RI.K.1, <i>RI.K.3</i> , <i>RI.1.1</i> , <i>RI.1.2</i> , <i>RI.1.3</i> , <i>RI.2.1</i> , <i>RI.2.2</i> , <i>RI.3.1</i> , <i>RI.3.2</i> , <i>RI.4.1</i> , <i>RI.4.2</i> , <i>RI.5.3</i>
Coppelia: Re-write the end of the story	11	W.K.1, W.K.2, W.1.1, W.1.2, W.1.3, W.2.1, W.2.3, W.3.3, W.4.2, W.5.3
Coppelia; Questionnaire	12	W.K.1, W.K.2, W.1.1, W.1.2, W.1.3, W.2.1, W.2.3, W.3.3, W.4.2, W.5.3
Movement: Positions	13	PK.DA.Cr1, 1.DA.Cr1, 2.DA.Cr1, 3.DA.Cr1
Movement: Dancing & Pantomime	14	PK.DA.Cr1, 1.DA.Cr1, 2.DA.Cr1, 3.DA.Cr1
Movement: Doll or Human	15	4.DA.Cr1, 5.DA.Cr1, 6.DA.Cr1
Design A Costume	16	PK.VA:Cr1.2, PK.VA:Cr2.3, K.VA:Cn10, 2.VA:Cn10, 3.VA:Cr1.1, 3.VA:Re7.1, 4.VA:Cr1.1, 4.VA:Cr2.3, 8.VA:Cr1.1

