Supplemental Guide

Created By:

COLORADO BALLET
EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Francesca Martoccio and Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson

How long will it be?

Act 1 - 35 min **Intermission -** 20 min
Act 2 - 35 min **Intermission -** 20 min
Act 3 - 25 min **Total Run Time -** 2 hour 15 min*
*Times are approximate

Synopsis of the Ballet

Prologue
Driven by the vision of Dulcinea, Don Quixote begins his adventures with his trusty squire, Sancho Panza, in tow.

Act I
A marketplace in Seville. Kitri, Lorenzo's daughter, is in love with Basilio. Much to her chagrin, she learns of her father's plans to marry her to Gamache, a foppish nobleman. Don Quixote and Sancho Panza enter the village, causing great commotion. Noticing Kitri, Don Quixote wonders if he has, at last, found his Dulcinea, the woman of his dreams. At the height of merriment, Kitri and Basilio, aided by their friends, Espada and Mercedes, sneak off followed by Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Gamache and Lorenzo attempt to pursue the young couple.

Francisco Estevez, Asuka Sasaki and Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson

Act 2, Scene 1: Romani Camp
Don Quixote and Sancho Panza discover the fleeing couple in a friendly Romani camp. All are inspired by the romance of the night. As the vision of Dulcinea appears to him, Don Quixote realizes Kitri is not his "ideal", but indeed belongs with Basilio. Suddenly the wind gains momentum. Don Quixote foolishly attacks a windmill, believing it to be a giant threatening Dulcinea's safety. Failing miserably, he collapses into a deep sleep.

Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson

Act 2, Scene 2: The Dream
Don Quixote has an enchanted dream of beautiful maidens in which the image of Kitri symbolizes his Dulcinea.

Act 2, Scene 3: Sunrise
Awoken from his dream by Sancho Panza, Don Quixote is sympathetic to the plight of the young lovers. Don Quixote attempts to lead Lorenzo and Gamache astray in their search for the young lovers.

Act 2, Scene 4: A Tavern
Kitri enters with Basilio and they join in the dancing. Lorenzo and Gamache enter looking for Kitri. Basilio draws a knife and pretends to stab himself. Kitri implores Lorenzo, her father, to unite her with Basilio as his dying last wish, but Lorenzo refuses. Don Quixote appears with Sancho Panza and challenges Lorenzo for refusing a man's dying wish. Lorenzo then agrees to unite Basilio and Kitri. At this moment Basilio returns to life, admitting he was only playing a joke. Triumphantly, Kitri leaves to prepare for marriage while Don Quixote and Basilio salute Lorenzo and Gamache for stoically accepting the inevitable.

Act 3, The Wedding
The village celebrates the marriage. Don Quixote congratulates the couple, bids them a warm farewell, and resumes his ever-lasting adventures.

Nicolas Pelletier and Morgan Buchanan by Mike Watson

Behind the Ballet

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra published his novel, El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha, in two parts in 1605 and 1615. This book has earned him the title of the "father of the modern novel." It was very successful, inspiring countless other works of art including drama and painting. The book is so long that the Don Quixote you will see performed on the stage only spans a few chapters of the work.

Several choreographers created a ballet from the story, but it is Petipa's work which remains the most well-known. It premiered in Moscow in 1869 to great success. He revived it in 1871 for the more sophisticated audience of St. Petersburg. Petipa had spent 3 years in Spain, so he was familiar with the Spanish dance style and culture. He incorporated this into Don Quixote, which greatly appealed to his Russain audience that read Cervantes' book with curiosity.

A man named Alexander Gorskey set out to revise the ballet in 1900 and 1902. Petipa was so displeased with the changes he saw that he supposedly yelled "Will someone tell that young man that I am not dead yet!" Despite Petipa's displeasure, many of changes still remain in the ballet today.

For so long, the ballet was exclusively shown in Russia. The Russian dancer Anna Pavlova did dance a much shorter version of the ballet in the West, which was premiered in London in 1924. But it was only around forty years later that the first full-length 20th-century performances took place. In 1966, the Bolshoi Ballet danced Don Quixote in New York. Four years earlier, the ballet was performed for the first time in over a century by a Western company — The British Ballet Rambert — in a version staged by Vitold Borkovski, from Poland. The ballet has only gained momentum and popularity since then, delighting every audience that sees it.

Fernanda Oliveira and Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson

Marius Petipa

Choreographer

Widely considered to be the "Father of Classical Ballet," Marius Petipa is perhaps the most influential Ballet Master and choreographer of classical ballets of all time. His works remain influential today, cited as inspiration to dancers and choreographers such as George Balanchine.

Born in 1818 into a family of artists, Petipa was destined to perform. He began his ballet training under his father at the age of seven. Reluctant at first, he grew to enjoy performing, and displayed natural talent. At age twenty, Marius was appointed Premier Danseur for Ballet de Nantes in France, while his younger brother, Lucien, held the same position at what is now known as the Paris Opera Ballet.

After achieving critical success by choreographing *The Pharaoh's Daughter*, Petipa became Ballet Master of the Imperial Ballet Theatre in St. Petersburg. He reigned over the Imperial Ballet Theatre during its Golden Age, working with Imperial Theatre Director Ivan Vsevolzhsky to produce spectacularly lavish ballets.

Petipa was forced from his position by changing times and a new director, but he continued to work until his death at age 92.

What is a Choreographer?

A person who creates the sequence and movements for a dance performance.

Morgan Buchanan, Nicolas Pelletier and Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson

Composer

Ludwig Minkus, born in 1826 in Vienna, started playing the violin at just four years-old and was declared a musical prodigy by the time he was eight. He spent a great portion of his life working as a conductor and violinist in some of the most renowned theaters in the world, mostly in Russia.

In 1857, Minkus composed his first recorded work for a ballet. It was for a private performance in the prestigious Yusupov palace. After this success, he began working with Saint Leon, a ballet master that used Minkus's compositions to create many full length ballets that delighted all audiences. Through Saint Leon's work with the Saint Petersburg Imperial Ballet, Minkus's work came to the attention of Marius Petipa.

Maruis Petipa was creating *Don Quixote* for Moscow Imperial Bolshoi Theater's 1869/70 season, and chose Minkus as the composer. Petipa's fresh choreography combined with Minkus's fiery competitions turned out to be a great match. Don Quixote premiered with incredible success and praise, instantly becoming a classic.

Minkus was soon after declared the Ballet Composer of the Saint Petersburg Imperial Theaters. This started a great collaboration between Petipa and Minkus as they created together some of ballet's most timeless pieces. In 1886, Minkus retired from his role in the Saint Petersburg Imperial Theaters with a farewell benefit performance in his honor. He wrote only a few other compositions in his home of Vienna before he died at the age of 91 in 1917.

Ludwig Minkus

What is a Composer?

A person who writes music, especially as a job.

General Activities

LISTEN AND LEARN: Listen to music. Close your eyes, if you need to. Now, answer the following questions: If this piece of music were a shape, what shape would it be? A color? An animal? A season? A place? Why? Is it fast, slow, or varied? What is the mood of the piece, or what emotions do you feel when you listen to it? Think of three more adjectives that you believe describe the music. Compare your answers with other students' answers. Are any of your answers the same? Why do you think you came up with similar or different answers?

MOVE TO THE MUSIC: Now, divide into groups and create movements that go with your team's answers from the listening activity. Try to incorporate some of everyone's answers. How do the animals move? How would you move in winter that's different from how you move in summer? How would blue move, as opposed to orange? Some movements should be high; others should be low. Some should be fast; others could be slow. Be mindful of using all of your body, not just your feet. Link your movements together into a dance and perform it for the class.

POETRY IN MOTION: After seeing the production, write a poem inspired by the performance. Now, try reversing that process! Get into groups, find a poem that you really like, and create a dance to go along with it! Identify powerful words and themes within the poem, and associate movements with them. Link the movements together to create a dance to perform for your peers. If you were to make an entire production out of your dance, what kind of sets and costumes would be fitting? Draw or make a collage of pictures representing how you would set the scene.

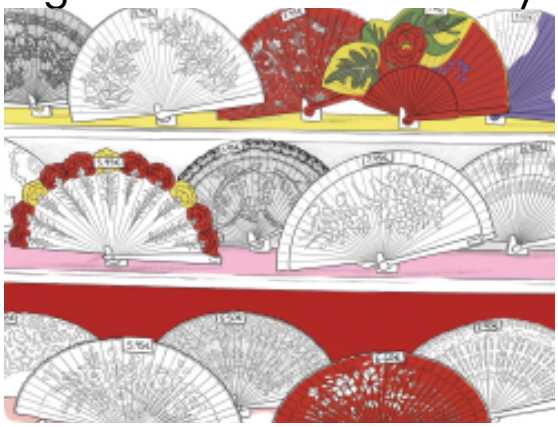
STORYTELLING THROUGH DANCE: Dance is an art form that tells a story through movement. Using a story or text your class is studying, you can recreate scenes from the story using dance. Put the students in small groups and assign different scenes from the story. Instruct the students to reinterpret the story using only movement. Invite the students to be creative in their reinterpretations, allow abstract or literal movement.

Asuka Sasaki, Francisco Estevez and Artists of Colorado Ballet by Mike Watson

Elementary School Activities

Spanish Fans

Fans aren't just a cool way to beat the heat! Sophisticated fans have become a symbol of Spain due to their iconic use by Flamenco dancers and their popularity as an accessory through the centuries. You can see our dancers use them throughout the show. Here is your chance to make your own!



You will need:

- 3 pieces of paper
- Glue
- String, yarn, or a pipe cleaner
- Any decorations you want!

Instructions:

1. Color and decorate your paper (optional)
2. Accordion fold all pieces of paper
3. Glue the folded ends of the paper together until you have one long line of connected paper
4. Press the folds of the paper tightly together at one end of the fan and secure with string, yarn or pipe cleaner
5. Spread out opposite end of the paper into your Spanish fan!

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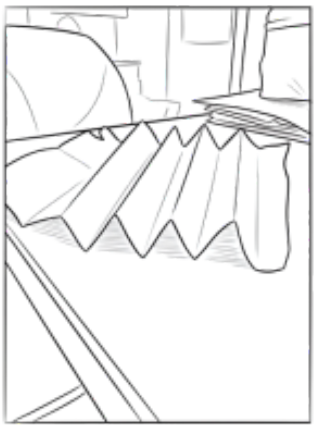

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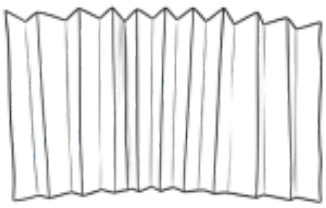

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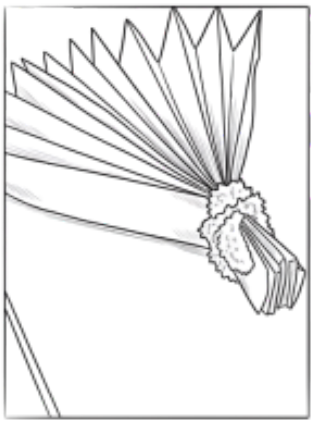

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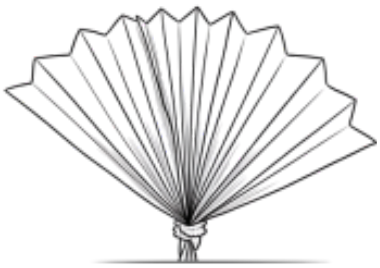
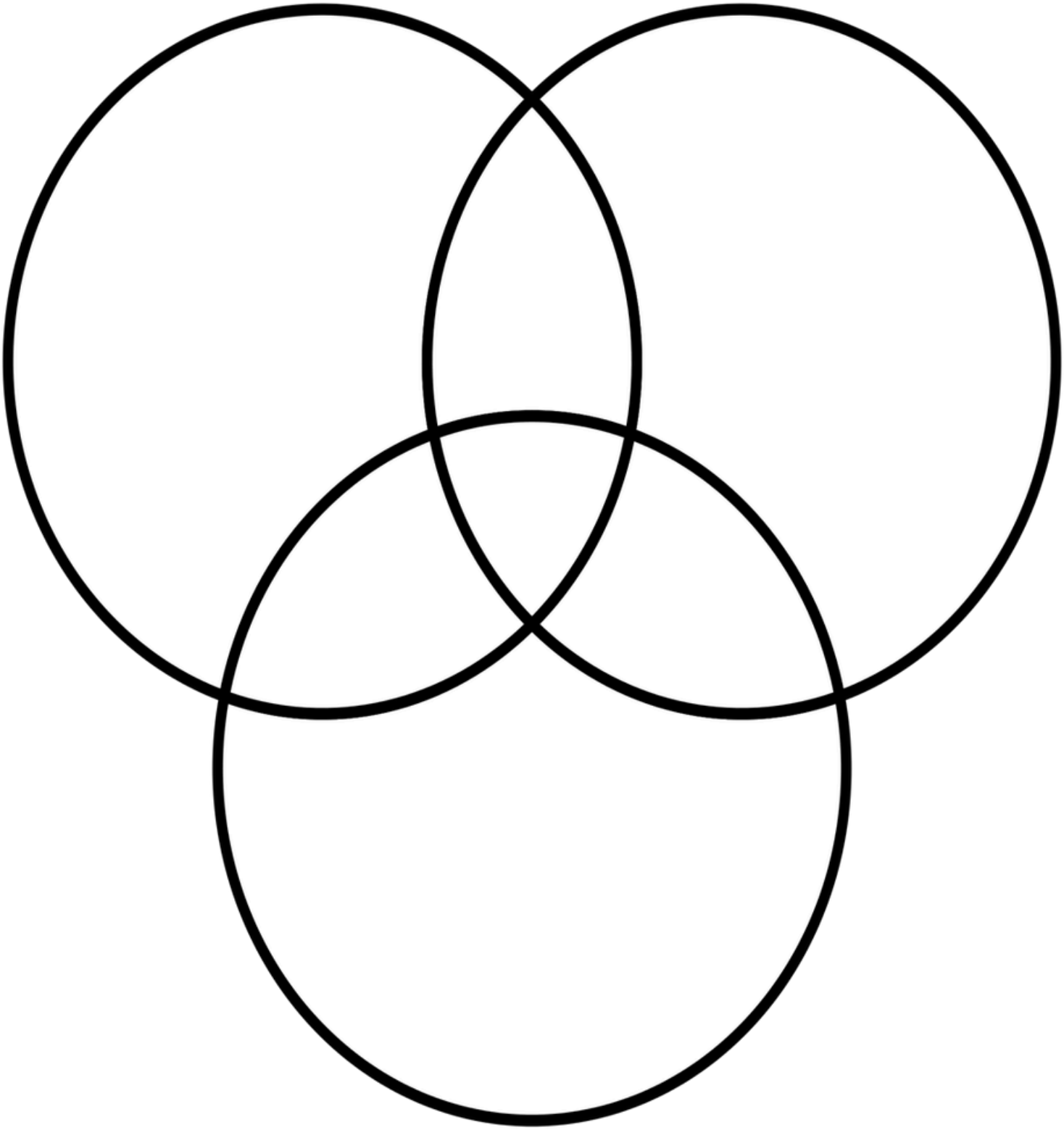


Middle & High School Activities

COMPARE AND CONTRAST: Utilize the Venn diagram as a way to compare and contrast three different media mediums for storytelling. Try comparing the ballet to two other stories – one in literature and one in film.



Movement

Don Quixote Tableaux

Students use frozen body shapes to express emotion, tension, and story from Don Quixote.

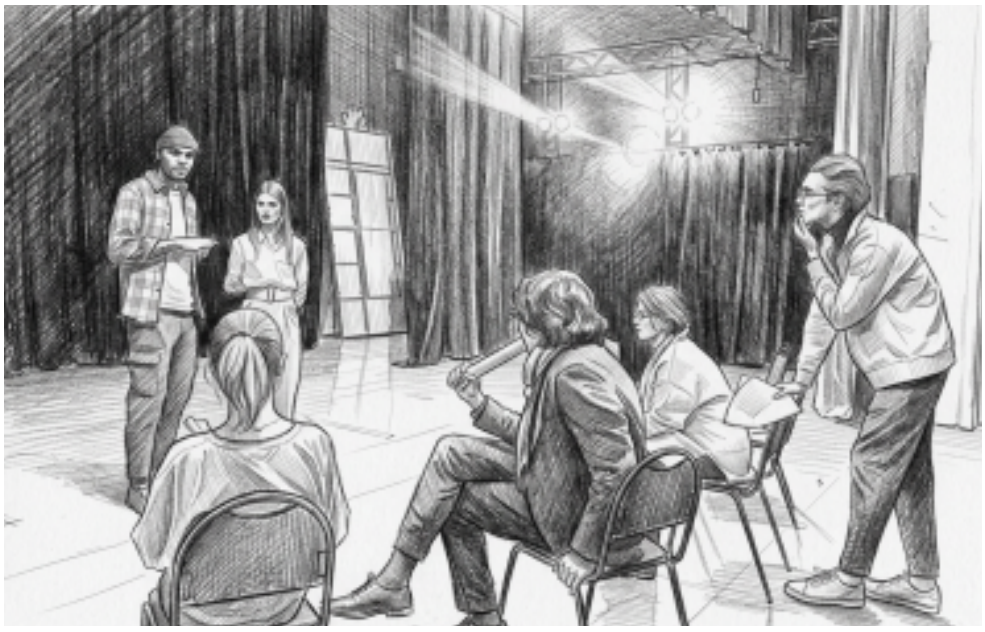
Note: a tableau is a frozen pose or "statue" that tells a story or emotion. Like a moment from a movie paused. No movement, no talking—just expression through body and face.

Don Quixote Tableau Prompts

- Striking a heroic pose before a duel
- Protecting someone important from danger
- Facing an opponent with courage and determination
- Celebrating a great victory with your friends
- Sneaking through the forest to avoid being discovered
- Finding a hidden clue that changes the adventure
- Helping an injured friend continue the journey
- Two characters: one challenging the other to a duel
- Standing proudly after defending your honor
- Saying goodbye before leaving on a dangerous quest

Optional: Guess the Scene!

- Divide students into small groups.
- Each group receives a prompt in secret and creates a tableau.
- The rest of the class guesses which Don Quixote moment or emotion they are portraying.



Writing Prompts

What are the core elements that make it Don Quixote and not just any adventure story? Can you name specific characters, scenes, themes, or movements that made it feel like Don Quixote?

If you were the choreographer, would you keep the story the same? Or would you change something—a scene, a character, the ending, or the setting—to tell the story in a new way or make it more exciting for today's audience?

Surveys

Teacher/Facilitator Survey

CLICK HERE

or scan QR code below

Student/Viewer Survey

CLICK HERE

or scan QR code below