

JUNIOR BADGE ACTIVITIES FOR *THE NUTCRACKER BALLET*

CO-SPONSORED BY BALLET THEATER OF LANCASTER AND DONETSK BALLET OF UKRAINE

(BASED ON ACTIVITIES FOUND IN *JUNIOR GIRL SCOUT BADGE BOOK*)

In looking for badge activities compatible with attending Ballet Theater of Lancaster's performance of *The Nutcracker*, there are two directions in which to go: 1) activities directly related to seeing a live performance of the *Nutcracker Ballet*, or 2) learning about the country Ukraine, home to the Donetsk Ballet and its professional dancers. In this packet, you will find suggestions for both kinds of activities, as well as ways in which to prepare your scouts for seeing the performance. A list of websites appears at the end of the packet to help you with planning activities; where relevant, web addresses are provided along with badge activities.

Caution on Internet browsing: You may wish to try browsing on your own to find sites not listed below. Yahoo provides much better results than Google when you enter either "Nutcracker" or "Ukraine." If you have computer access at your meeting site and you allow your Scouts to go on the web, be sure to monitor their browsing; Googling "Ukraine" brings up several sites advertising women seeking marriage. Yahoo brings up some of these sites also, just not as many. Yahooigans.com is very kid-friendly and informative.

Note on websites included in packet: If you receive this packet via email, please remember that this packet is not a webpage and the web addresses that appear below are just that—they are not links to these sites.

SECTION 1: PREPARATION FOR SEEING THE BALLET PERFORMANCE

When seeing a ballet for the first time, some children are surprised that there is no spoken dialogue to "tell" the story. If you think members of your group may be surprised by this, explain that in ballet, the story is told through music, dance, facial expressions and **pantomime**. If the music sounds happy, then the action on stage is happy (as in the "Party Scene" in Act I. If the music sounds scary, then something threatening is happening, as in the battle between the toy soldiers and mice. Dancers will sometimes use gestures (pantomime) instead of spoken lines. There is a system of gestures, or pantomime, used in ballet to tell part of the story. Watch the gestures of Clara and Fritz when they "ask" Godfather Drosselmeyer "Where are our presents?" (Note to leaders/adults: with only a little imagination, the music played by the stringed instruments in this part sound just like whining children!)

For your convenience, here is a summary of the "story" of the ballet, which appears in the program.

THE NUTCRACKER BALLET

Act I

Guests arrive for a Christmas party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum and their children, Clara and Fritz. Adults watch the children play and dance. Dr. Drosselmeier, godfather to Clara and Fritz, entralls the children with his magical tricks and mechanical dolls that seem almost human. All of the children receive presents. Just when it looks as if Fritz and Clara have no

presents, Godfather Drosselmeyer gives Fritz a hobby horse and Clara a handsome Nutcracker. Clara falls in love with her wonderful present, but jealous Fritz breaks it. Godfather Drosselmeyer repairs the Nutcracker's broken jaw with his handkerchief. The party ends with the traditional "Grandfather Dance," signaling the end of the party.

After everyone has gone, Clara is too excited to sleep. She creeps into the parlor with her Nutcracker. Perhaps she falls asleep, because a group of angels come to bid her goodnight. Then mice emerge from the shadows. Nightmarish things begin to happen: dolls and toy soldiers come to life. Clara's Nutcracker leads the toy soldiers in battle against the fierce Mouse King and his minions. At a critical moment, Clara summons the courage to throw her shoe at the Mouse King's head, and saves the Nutcracker's life. The Nutcracker is transformed into a handsome prince, awakened by the Sugar Plum Fairy. Together, they set off for the Nutcracker's home in the Kingdom of Sweets. They first pass through the Land of Snow, where the Snowflakes dance.

Act II

The Nutcracker Prince and the Sugar Plum Fairy arrive in the magical Kingdom of Sweets. Dolls welcome them with native dances. Beautiful fairies dance the Waltz of the Flowers. The Sugar Plum Fairy and her Nutcracker perform the most beautiful dance of all.

Then Clara awakens in her own parlor. Godfather Drosselmeyer returns her Nutcracker, now completely repaired. She is grateful and overjoyed that her Nutcracker is like new again.

ETIQUETTE AT THE BALLET

Here are some guidelines for **etiquette** (manners or rules for appropriate behavior) at the ballet.

- 1) When you arrive, ushers will guide you to your seats. If you have to step past people already sitting in your row, say "excuse me" and step quickly past to get to your seat. Don't stop in front of someone already sitting or turn around to talk to someone else in your group. Wait until you are seated to converse with other members of your group.
- 2) Once you are seated, keep trips outside the auditorium to a minimum, even if you are seated at the end of a row. Visit the restroom and water fountain before the performance.
- 3) Sometimes, you think you will not be able to see the stage because of a taller person sitting in front of you. The rows of seats are on an incline that slopes up toward the back, and the view of the stage is generally good. An advantage of the pew-type seating at Lancaster Mennonite High School is that you and members of your party can shift around slightly to improve your view of the stage without actually changing seats. If that doesn't work, see if someone (taller than you) in your party will switch seats with you. No matter what, do not stand up to get a better view-you will block the stage for the people seated behind you.
- 4) Talk quietly with people on either side of you until the performance. Don't shout to someone several seats away. Once the lights go down and the music starts, do not continue talking. A darkened theater and the playing of music is your signal to watch for the start of the performance. It is traditional to play an overture before the start of *The Nutcracker*; it will play for a few minutes before you see dancers. Just listen and see if you recognize any of the "melodies."

5) Audience reaction is important to performers, so laugh at the funny parts. Once a dancer completes an especially pretty or amazing dance, it's fine to clap for them. Applause is encouraging to performers-it lets them know you are enjoying what they are doing on stage.

6) Do not shout any comments whatsoever to performers on stage.

7) During the performance, please remember that you are in a theater with many other people who also want to see the stage and hear the music. Do not talk during the performance. The other people seated around you want to hear the music without the sound of your voice, even whispering (which is louder than you think), in the background.

8) Please turn off all cell phones and beepers during the performance. If you must "stay connected," please set them to vibrate AND if they should go off during the performance, please exit the auditorium and make sure you are in the lobby before answering or making any calls.

9) No pictures are allowed during the performance. Flash photography is dangerous for dancers while they are performing. No video or tape recording devices are allowed to operate during performances.

SECTION 2: BADGE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ATTENDING THE PERFORMANCE

Note: Page numbers refer to activities listed in *Junior Girl Scout Badge Book*.

Use these suggestions to get started on or help finish up badges.

DANCE, pp. 146-47.

#4) Dance Watcher: Attending the performance fulfills this requirement.

#1) Watch Their Moves and **#2) Moods and Moves** : Girls' observations at performance can be used to do the activities listed for these requirements too.

THEATER, pp. 170-71

#2) Character Traits: Have girls select a Nutcracker character to work on this requirement.

#10) See it Live: Seeing the performance fulfills this requirement.

SEW SIMPLE, pp. 168-69

#10) Sew a puppet: Make a puppet representing your favorite Nutcracker character. See section on learning about Ukraine for an alternative activity for this requirement.

BOOKS, pp. 136-37

2) Picture this! Read a book version of the Nutcracker (Vladimir Vagin, *The Nutcracker Ballet*, Scholastic, 1995, is a good one and available from the Lancaster County Library). Also, see next section for other ideas for completing this badge.

MAKING MUSIC, pp. 192-93

#5) **Musical Roots:** the website, <http://www.balletmet.org/balletnotes.html>, managed by the Cleveland Ballet, contains information on Peter Tchaikovsky, composer of the music for *The Nutcracker*.

SECTION 3: BADGE ACTIVITIES TO LEARN ABOUT OTHER PEOPLES AND CULTURES BY FINDING OUT ABOUT UKRAINE

Ukraine can be the ideal focus for several Junior badges that emphasis learning about other countries and cultures. Among these badges are **Girl Scouting Around the World, Global Awareness, On My Way, Traveler, World Neighbors, and Globe Trotter**. For information and ideas needed to complete requirements for these badges, be sure to check out <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm>. **This site is a Scout leader's dream**, with links to pages on places to visit in Ukraine, recipes and folk arts, costumes, and the **bandura**, a traditional Ukrainian musical instrument. Most links are to other pages on this site with lots of illustrations and pictures. An amazing and informative site. There are even links to sites providing directions for **pysanky eggs** for leaders wanting to try this. The skills needed are rather advanced, but the idea can be adapted to fit varying skill levels. There are nice illustrations of traditional symbols and their meanings; perhaps girls can try drawing or painting some of the simpler designs, either on paper or on eggs or egg shapes.

GLOBAL AWARENESS, pp. 14-15. There are enough resources and information below to complete **all 6 requirements**.

#1) **Where in the World:** <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm> provides information on specific cities and locales in Ukraine.

#2) **Center of Things and #3) Show Your Colors:** : <http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/reference/index.html>: Yahoo's kid-friendly site with links to information on numerous countries. Type "Ukraine" to find links to pictures of its flag, a map, and other information.

#7) **Walk in Their Shoes:** <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm> is a resource for this requirement. Patricia Kummer's *Ukraine: Enchantment of the World* (Scholastic, 2001) is an excellent resource for information on schooling. Available from the Lancaster County Library (call number j914.77 KUM).

Some Notes on Manners in Ukraine:

Hand and facial gestures in conversation are reserved. It is important to establish eye contact only a few times in conversation; constant eye contact isn't necessary. Smiling at strangers is rare. Pointing with the index finger (at objects as well as people) is considered uncultured, but people do it anyway. When speaking to a superior (child to a teacher or other adult, adult to boss) it is disrespectful to keep your hands in your pockets or to cross your arms across your chest. Chewing gum is also rude. Ukrainian women expect some chivalry from men: they expect men to hold doors, help carry heavy items, and offer their seats on public transportation. When invited to someone's house, Ukrainians bring flowers, but only in odd numbers, to their hosts.

#8) Sisters: Ukraine has been a WAGGGS member since 1992. *Trefoil Around the World*, available in your field office library, is also a good resource.

#9) Write On: After doing above activities, girls should be ready to do this activity. If writing a letter is too much like school, just have girls share their ideas for the letter in a group discussion.

WORLD NEIGHBORS, pp. 28-29. Enough information and resources below to complete **all 6 requirements.**

#1) Global Games: Here is a game played by Ukrainian girls, called “**resynochki**” (res-in-oh-kee) or “rubber bands:”

Two girls stand facing each other, about arm’s length apart. They place a long, thick elastic band (resynochki) around the backs of both ankles. Then other girls take turns jumping over and between the resynochki.

The first girl jumps and lands on both feet inside the bands; then she jumps and lands with one foot inside the bands and one foot outside; third, she reverses the landing: the foot that was between the bands goes outside, and the outside foot goes inside between the bands. Next, the bands are moved higher on the legs of the girls holding them. The same girls tries the jump pattern again. If she succeeds, the bands go higher still; if she misses, another girl gets a turn. The bands can be moved as high as the two girls’ waists!

#2) Love of Language: Many Ukrainians also speak Russian, especially in the eastern part of the country. Lancaster families who host Donetsk dancers are given a sheet of helpful phrases in Russian to help them communicate with the dancers who stay with them.

In Ukraine, titles of respect include:

Mr. = Pan (pahn)
Mrs. = Pani (pahn-ee)
Miss = Panna (pahn-nah)

Ukrainians say “hi” by saying “pryvit” (pree-**veet**)

Russians say “hi” with “zdravstvuyte” (**zdrah**-stvwee-tyeh)

Here are some polite words in Russian:

Please = pojalooysta (poh-**zh**ow-loo-stah)

Thank you = spaseebo (spah-**see**-bah)

You’re welcome = nye za shto (**nyeh** zah shtuh)

Other Russian words and phrases:

Yes = Da (dah)

No = Nyet (nyet)

I don’t understand = Ya nye poneemayoo (yah nyeh po-nee-**mah**-yoo)

Excuse me = prosteetye (prah **stee**-tyuh)

Good-bye = do svedaneeyah (doss vee-**dahn**-yah)

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|------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Numbers 1 – 10 : | 1. Odeen (ah- deen) | 6. Shyest (shest) |
| | 2. Dva (dvah) | 7. Syem (syem) |
| | 3. Tree (tree) | 8. Vosyem (vohs -yem) |
| | 4. Chetirye (chee- teer -yah) | 9. Dyevyat (dyeh -vyet) |
| | 5. Pyaht (pyaht) | 10. Dyesyat (dyeh -syaht) |

Source: Brenda Cox, *Who Talks Funny: A Book About Languages for Kids* (Linnet, 1995).
Lancaster County Library call number: j400 COX.

#3) Traditions: <http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/Around the World/>; Another kid-friendly page with links to various topics listed in the directory; **Myth and Folklore** takes you to sites on Ukrainian holiday traditions, including a discussion on the date of Christmas in Ukraine and how people celebrate this holiday.

#7) There’s No Place Like Home: <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm>, especially the photos and illustrations is your resource for this. Kummer’s *Ukraine: Enchantment of the World* (Scholastic, 2001), pp. 119-20, is an excellent resource for information on housing. Available from the Lancaster County Library (call number j914.77 KUM).

#8) It’s a Small World and #10) Clothing All over the World can be done with links found on <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm>

TRAVELER, pp. 26-27. Enough material for 3 requirements.

#2) Promote a Place, #3) Culturally Curious, and #5) Dream Vacation can all be done by using relevant links on <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm>.

For a folktale, Jan Brett’s *The Mitten* is based on a folktale from Ukraine and stays “in season” after the holidays as a winter tale for reading aloud to younger Scouts or presenting a puppet show. See also the attached tale, “Most-Lovely Nastasia of the Sea.”

GLOBETROTTING, pp. 184-85; three requirements

#1) Picture It: <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm> and Kummer’s *Ukraine: Enchantment of the World* (Scholastic, 2001) are resources for architecture in Ukraine.

#6) Map It Out and #8) Is Anybody There?:
<http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/reference/index.html>: Yahoo’s kid-friendly site with links to information on numerous countries. Type “Ukraine” to find links to maps and other information.

GIRL SCOUTING AROUND THE WORLD, pp. 2-3

#2) WAGGGS on the Web: Ukraine has been a WAGGGS member since 1992. *Trefoil Around the World*, available in your field office library, is also a good resource.

#7) International Expert: In Ukraine, like many other European countries, Girl Scouts are known as “Girl Guides.” Girls ages 7 to 11 are known as “Swallows.” From age 11 to age 16, they are called “guides;” from ages 16 to 20, they are known as “Rangers.” See *Trefoil Around the World*, available in your field office library, for information on Ukrainian Girl Guides’ work

with orphans and children with special needs in their country. Use <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm> for other information.

ON MY WAY, pp. 24-25

#4) International Cooking: The Internet is a rich resource for recipes. A search on Yahoo on “Ukrainian Recipes” brings up lots of sites; unfortunately, many are based in Canada and Europe and use metric measures for ingredients. Also, the emphasis on beets, horseradish, and blood sausages doesn’t hold much appeal for kids. Lots of recipes for sweet yeast breads, which take time to complete. Pyrogies with sweet fillings (substitute other varieties of dried fruit for prunes) may be your best bet for exploring the foods of Ukraine.

<http://www2.windsorca/~hlyanka/ukrecipes.html> provides lots of links; “Georgia’s Recipe Heaven,” and #9 and #17 looked best; you may want to explore some of the other links, depending on your preferences and those of your Scouts.

http://www.ukrainetoday.com/culture/food/food_shtml.: Scroll down to “Ukrainian Heritage Festival Feast” for descriptions of Ukrainian dishes and recipes more kid-friendly than most.

BOOKS, pp. 136-37

#1) It’s a Wide World or #2) Picture This: Jan Brett’s *The Mitten* is based on a folktale from Ukraine and stays “in season” after the holidays as a winter tale for reading aloud to younger Scouts or presenting a puppet show. Visit her website, www.janbrett.com/newsnotes/mitten_newsnotes2.htm for an inside look at how she wrote and illustrated the story.

FOLK ARTS, pp. 154-55

#7) Folk Arts Around the Globe: pysankyeggs.com provides instructions for this advanced craft; see other “Folk Arts” links on <http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm>.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Note on browsing the web: You may wish to try browsing on your own to find sites not listed below. Yahoo provides much better results than Google when you enter either “Nutcracker” or “Ukraine.” If you have computer access at your meeting site and you allow your Scouts to go on the web, be sure to monitor their browsing; Googling “Ukraine” brings up several sites advertising women seeking marriage. Yahoo brings up some of these sites also, just not as many. Yahooigans.com is very kid-friendly and informative.

Nutcracker and ballet websites:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nutcracker>: nice images of nutcrackers; explanation of function of cracking nuts; links to pages on the ballet of the same name.

<http://www.kids.nutcrackermuseum.com>: from the Leavenworth Nutcracker Museum in Washington state. Lots of nutcracker images, photos of elementary-aged children working on nutcracker art projects, lesson plans on history and manufacturing of nutcrackers. A fun, off-beat kind of site.

<http://www.bostonballet.org/nutcracker/nutcrackerkids/default.aspx>: Nutcracker- (and holiday) related word puzzles, etc. Download pencil and paper activities.

http://www.nationalballet.ca/EducationAndOutreach/pdf/Nutcracker_activity_%20book.pdf: National Ballet of Canada's website with word searches, mazes, and coloring pages. Download instant meeting activities.

http://www.sfballet.org/download/pdf/Nutcracker_Study_Guide.pdf: San Francisco Ballet's informative website.

<http://www.balletmet.org/balletnotes.html>: an extensive website maintained by the Cleveland Ballet; information on the ballet, its music, its creators, and history.

Websites with information on Ukraine (home of Donetsk dancers appearing in Ballet Theater of Lancaster's production):

<http://pages.prodigy.net/l.hodges/ukraine.htm>: This site is a Scout leader's dream, with links to pages on places to visit in Ukraine, recipes and folk arts, costumes, and the **bandura**, a traditional Ukrainian musical instrument. Most links are to other pages on this site with lots of illustrations and pictures. An amazing and informative site authored by Linda Hodges, who has traveled in Ukraine and assembled lots of information on the country and its people. There are even links to sites providing directions for **pysanky eggs** for leaders wanting to try this themselves (much too advanced for Brownies without adaptations.) Nice illustrations of traditional symbols and their meanings.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donetsk>: some information on the city of Donetsk in Ukraine, home of the Donetsk Ballet, appearing with Ballet Theater of Lancaster in *The Nutcracker*. Links to other sites, including one on the Welsh founder of the city, John Hughes.

<http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/reference/index.html>: Yahoo's kid-friendly site with links to information on numerous countries. Enter "Ukraine" to find links to pictures of its flag, a map, and other information.

[http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/Around the World/](http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/Around_the_World/): Another kid-friendly page with links to various topics listed in the directory; **Myth and Folklore** takes you to sites on Ukrainian holiday traditions, including a discussion on the date of Christmas in Ukraine and how people celebrate this holiday.

http://www.janbrett.com/newsnotes/mitten_newsnotes2.htm: the author's website on her well-known book, based on a Ukrainian folktale. Interesting and informative, very kid-friendly.

RECIPES

Note on recipes: A search on Yahoo on “Ukrainian Recipes” brings up lots of sites; unfortunately, many are based in Canada and Europe and use metric measures for ingredients. Also, the emphasis on beets, horseradish, and blood sausages probably doesn’t hold much appeal for kids. Lots of recipes for sweet yeast breads, which take time to complete. Pyrogies with sweet fillings (substitute other varieties of dried fruit for prunes) may be your best bet for exploring the foods of Ukraine with younger Scouts.

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http://www.ukrainetoday.com/culture/food/food_shtml.: Scroll down to “Ukrainian Heritage Festival Feast” for descriptions of Ukrainian dishes and recipes more kid-friendly than most.

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