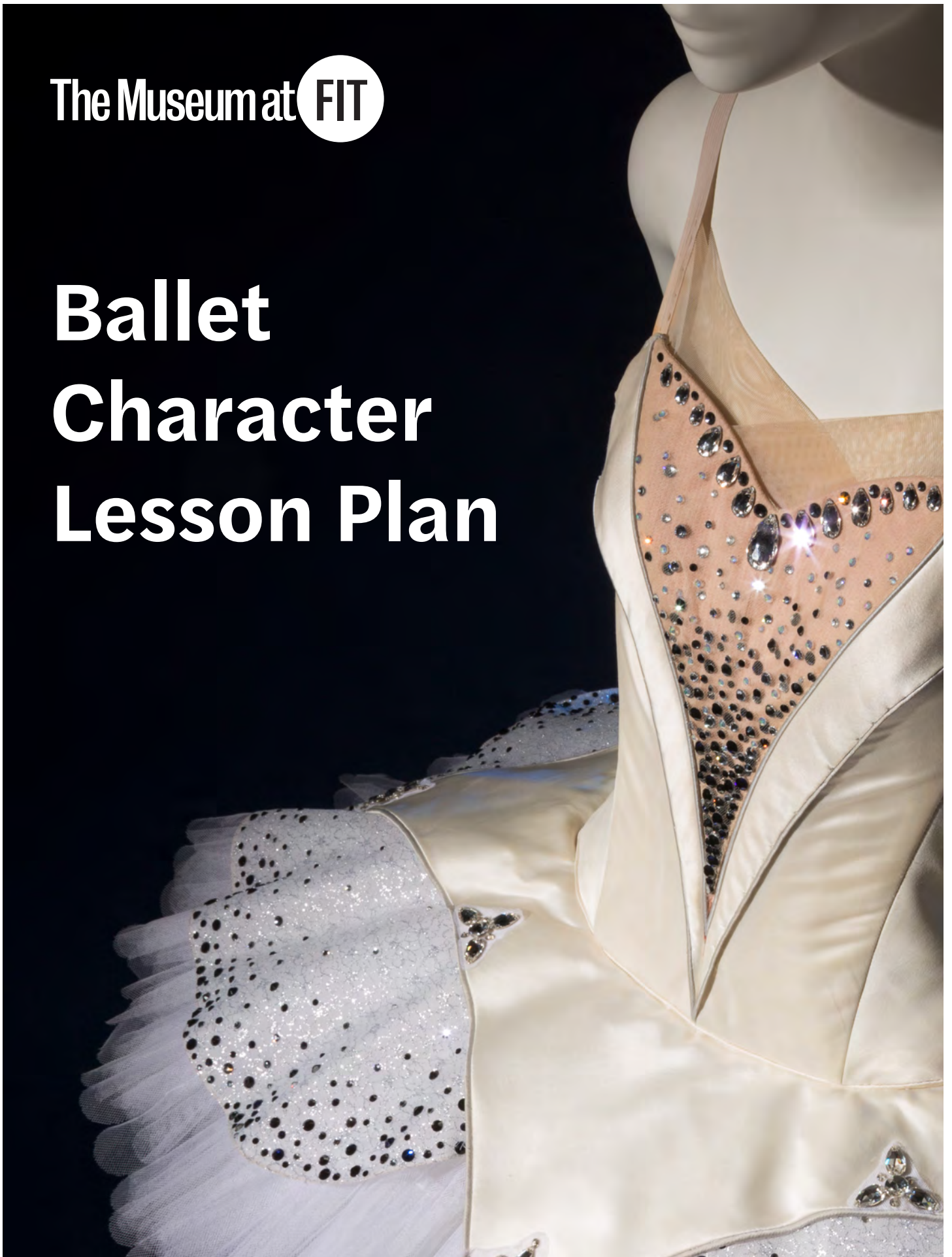


The Museum at **FIT**

Ballet Character Lesson Plan



Designed in conjunction with The Museum at FIT exhibition *Ballerina: Fashion's Modern Muse*.
(<https://exhibitions.fitnyc.edu/ballerina/>)

Learning Objectives:

Children will:

1. *Consider how ballet costumes and related accessories help to create a character and tell a story*
2. *Develop ideas for their own ballet character and costume*

Time: Approximately 1 hour

Materials Needed:

- Parent/Teacher Materials
 - speaker
 - ballet video links
 - music playlist (see below)
 - ipad/computer/phone
- Worksheet Materials
 - character worksheet
 - croquis worksheet
 - markers, crayons, colored pencils
- Craft Materials
 - paper plates, cut in half for mask (adults can cut out holes for eyes if desired)
 - elastic cord or string
 - glue or tape
 - markers, crayons, colored pencils
 - embellishments
 - gems, adhesive rhinestones
 - stickers (stars, dots, etc.)
 - feathers
 - adhesive foam shapes

Introduction: (10 min.)

Adult will introduce the following:

- 1) What is ballet?
 - a. Ballet is a style of dance that tells a story in movement and pantomime.

- 2) Watch the ballet performances in the links below:
 - a. George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*: [Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy](#) (3:15)
 - b. *The Sleeping Beauty*: [White Cat and Puss-in-Boots pas de deux](#) (2:20)
 - c. *Swan Lake*: [Dance of the Dying Swan](#) (3:29)

- 3) Compare and contrast the differences between the music and movements in the ballets. Ask children how each ballet made them feel? (happy, sad, excited)

- 4) What did you notice about the costumes (e.g., Sugarplum fairy vs. swan)? Did they help you understand what kind of character you were watching? How and why?

Movement Activity: (10–12 min.)

- 1) Stretching warm up for children: (2 min.)
 - a. *“Stretch your arms up, down, out to the sides. Reach out as wide as you can, make your body take up as much space as possible. Make your body as small as you can, scrunch your face, wrap your arms around yourself.”*

- 2) Emotion movement activity: (5–10 min.)
 - a. Adults will play different kinds of music from the YouTube links below, and children will move their bodies in response to the music
 - [Coleman Hawkins - Boff Boff \(Mop Mop\)](#)
 - [Duke Ellington - Solitude](#)
 - [Claude Debussy - Clair de Lune, for Piano \(Suite Bergamasque No. 3\), L. 75/3](#)
 - [Hector Berlioz - Grande Messe des Morts \(Requiem\) H. 75 \(Op. 5\)](#)

Reflection: (5–8 min.)

- 1) Adult will ask children to compare and contrast the music and types of movement:
 - a. *How were the songs we heard different?*
 - b. *How did you move differently during each song?*
 - c. *How did the music make you feel? Did you show any emotions during your movement?*
- 2) Ask children to consider what type of ballet character they would create.
 - a. *Who is your character? How will this character move? (Students can demonstrate movements for their ballet character.)*

Transition:

- 1) Adult will explain that ballet dancers use both movement and costume to help tell a story.
 - a. *“Now that we have thought about what type of ballet character we would want to create and how our character might move, let’s think about what type of costume this character would wear.”*

Activity: Croqui and Character worksheets (15 min.)

- 1) Adult will distribute character worksheet and croqui worksheet.
- 2) Adult will review questions on the character worksheet first and record answers with children.
- 3) Adult will distribute croqui worksheet and ask children to draw out their costume, based on answers from the character worksheet.
 - a. A croqui is a quick sketch, often created on figure, and used for designing clothing and costumes.

Reflection:

Adult will ask children to share out their design and talk about the character they created (this can be as a turn and talk, or individual sharing depending on group size).

- Share about character.

Transition to Craft:

- 1) Adult will explain:

“Now we are going to create masks for your ballet character, based on the drawing you made. Think about what details you might include and materials you might use to create your character. You should consider color choice and materials, while imagining what your character might look like. You will create a mask that you can wear that will share more details about your character.”

2) Adult will distribute craft materials (markers, glue/tape, gems, stickers, feathers, etc.).

Craft: (15 min.)

1. Children will:
 - a. Use markers to add color to the mask.
 - i. *What color is your character? Will you show texture?*
 - b. Add embellishments to their mask.
 - i. *You can add sticky back jewels or stickers by peeling and pasting. You can add feathers using tape.*

2. Adults will attach string to paper plate masks by poking holes at sides, running string/elastic/ribbon through holes, and tying in place with a knot.

Performance: (5 min.)

Adult will ask children to wear mask and encourage children to demonstrate how their character will move/dance.

- Can you tell a story through your movement?
- Adult can play music of their choice and allow children to explore character movement in their masks.

ADD-ONS:

Children can build on their character's "costume" by creating a costume with found objects in the home or classroom.

Curriculum Connections (NYS Learning Standards)

K.AL.3. Approaches tasks and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences

Indicators:

- a. Uses materials/props in novel ways to represent ideas, characters, and objects
- b. Describes or represents the difference between fantasy and reality
- c. Seeks additional clarity to further understanding

K.AC.6. Demonstrates their ability to represent ideas using a variety of methods

Indicators:

- d. Reviews and reflects on their own representations
- e. Writes and/or draws to communicate meaning with peers and adults during play

Child's name: _____

BALLET CHARACTER WORKSHEET

My ballet character's name is:

My ballet character lives in:

One thing my ballet character likes is:

How does your character move? *circle the words that apply*

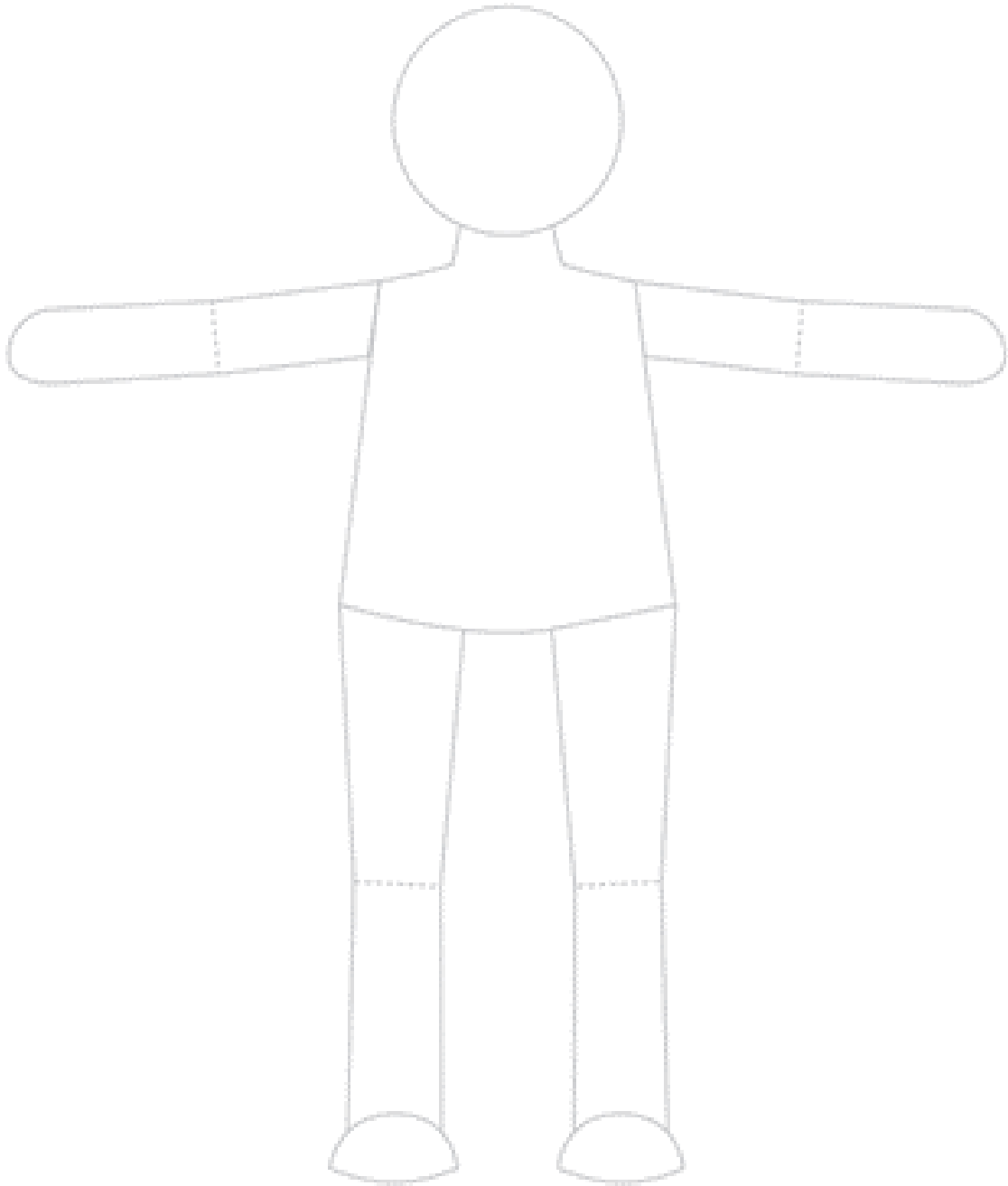
My ballet character moves: *Slowly* *Fast*

My ballet character likes to: *Jump* *twirl* *spin* *stomp* *crawl* *wiggle*

My ballet character makes: *big movements* *little movements*

Write more about your character here:

CROQUI WORKSHEET



1. On your croqui, draw/design a costume for your ballet character.
2. Add any accessories you might need to let us know who your character is!
(mask, wings, hat, hair, something in their hand)