

## *The Nutcracker*

### Arts and Humanities Activity Ideas

1. In our story the Rat King curses the Nephew because he stepped on her. Write a description of a nightmare in which the Rat King curses you. What did you do to “deserve” the curse? What is the curse? What do you do about it?
2. Create a user profile for a character from the story on Instagram that includes a photograph (a drawing), username and favorite quote. List at least two accounts they might follow and that would follow them. Post a picture (draw a picture) that the character would post. Write a description for the post, create hashtags and write a comment or two that other characters from the story might leave on the post. Justify your choices based on the story.
3. Nutcrackers in the 19th century were carved into lots of shapes and characters; the mouth always had a handle that you moved up and down to crack nuts. When we first see the Nutcracker in the ballet, it’s a wooden toy shaped like a soldier / prince. What would your nutcracker character be and why? Design your own nutcracker, complete with clothing / costume. Don’t forget the handle for the mouth!
4. Using evidence from the text and ballet to support your word and language choices, write a formal thank you note from one of the following character’s perspective: Marie thanking her father for her scarf; the Nutcracker thanking Marie for her help in defeating the Rat King; party guest thanking the Stahlbaums for their Christmas Eve party.
5. The original *Nutcracker* ballet was set in 19th century Russia; PBT’s version is set in early 20th century Pittsburgh. How would the ballet change if it were set in another time period or place? Some suggestions to explore would be an early civilization from ancient history, medieval Europe, or the pioneer days of the United States. How would the costumes and sets differ? Using your knowledge of that time period, find what celebrations and dances would likely have been included.
6. PBT’s *The Nutcracker* is set in Pittsburgh. If you were creating a ballet or a movie, what Pittsburgh elements would you include to give it authenticity, and why? How would you incorporate them into the production? Or choose another town!
7. Write a different ending to the story!