

Ballet for Martha: MAKING APPALACHIAN SPRING

A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Themes: Dance, Collaboration, Community

Book Brief: This book tells the story of three people who worked together to create the ballet *Appalachian Spring*. Take a behind-the-scenes look at how this ballet went from an idea to an American classic.

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TIME TO READ!

Before reading, build background knowledge:

What does your child know about ballet dancing? What kind of dancing is ballet? Where is Appalachia?

While reading, look at the pictures: What do the pictures tell you about the original ballet? Who are

the characters? How are they dressed? Can you imagine how they danced based on the pictures?

After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ How did Martha, Aaron, and Isamu work together?
- ◆ Do you think all three of them were equally important in making the ballet?
- ◆ Do you dance, play or write music, or make art?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

SHAKER LEMON PIE

Aaron Copland was inspired by a Shaker hymn. The Shakers are a religious group who believe in hard work and simplicity.

Ingredients: 2 lemons, 2 cups sugar, 4 eggs, 2 frozen pie crusts, butter

Wash lemons. Slice them, unpeeled, as thinly as possible. In a bowl, mix lemon slices and sugar. Let sit at least 4 hours. Beat eggs. Add to bowl and stir well. Pour into unbaked pie crust and cover with top crust; pinch edges together. Rub butter on top crust and sprinkle with sugar. Bake at 450° for 15 minutes; lower heat to 375° and bake 20 minutes.

STORYBOOK DANCING

Dance is often used to tell a story. Think of a popular fairy tale or children's book. How would you tell that

story through a dance? With a group of friends or family, take turns dancing out different stories. Be sure to keep your stories secret and let the rest of the group try to "read" the dances!

SETTING THE STAGE

The next time you watch a TV show, movie, music video, or live performance, pay attention to the background. What does the *set* look like? Think about why a set is so important. How does it affect the rest of the show?

TECHNOLOGY LINKS

Visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmgaKGSxQVw to watch Martha dance her famous ballet. Explore other kinds of dance at www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/multimedia.aspx (search for "dance").

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OTHER BOOKS BY THESE AUTHORS

Action Jackson (2007)

The Mad Potter: George E. Ohr, Eccentric Genius (2013)

Vincent van Gogh: Portrait of an Artist (2003)



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