Do “The King’s Dance”

with Jennie Ford

A QUICK GUIDE
Here is a story called “The King’s Dance,” which introduces us to Ballet.

STORY SUMMARY
Ballet came to the French court in the 1600s. Louis XIV was only five years old when he became king. He loved dance and appeared in productions. His most famous role was as “The Sun King” in the, Ballet de la Nuit (1653). The men at court studied ballet.

Review the video and Jennie’s telling of the story. What about the story most impressed, or surprised you?

1. Begin with your arms rounded below your waist (Bras Bas) and perform the five arm positions.

2. Practice doing the arm and feet positions together, adding a plié.

NEW WORDS

Ballet
A classical dance form, established at the Italian Court in the 1500s. Brought to the French Court in the 1600s, King Louis XIV hired ballet masters to develop it with formalized steps and gestures.

Five Basic Arm Positions
1st - Both arms rounded just above waist.
2nd - Both arms open, slightly curved at chest level.
3rd - One arm stays in 2nd position; one rounds to the front, as in 1st; switch sides.
4th - One arm stays in front in 1st position and the other lifts above the head; switch sides.
5th - Both arms curve above head.

Port de Bras
French term meaning “positions of the arms.”

Bras Bas
French term meaning “low arms.”

Five Basic Feet Positions
Jennie introduces three:
1st position - Heels touch; toes turn outward.
2nd position - Both feet step apart, toes turned outward.
3rd position - Both feet turned outward; the heel of the front foot touches the middle of the instep or arch of the back foot.

Plie
A bending of the knees; then straightening them.

MATERIALS
None; music optional.

THINK ABOUT IT
What did you know about ballet before this lesson? What do you know now?

DIG DEEPER
Check out the Los Angeles Baroque Orchestra Artsource Unit, Lesson #3, ballet. www.musiccenter.org/education/Teacher-Resources/Artsource-Curriculum/Available-ArtSource-Units/Los-Angeles-Baroque-Orchestra/

TRY THIS CHALLENGE
Teach the five arm positions of ballet to your family and friends.