

student activity 1

The Nutcracker

Ballet dancers spend years training for their careers. They dedicate their lives to a demanding physical practice. The pleasure they find in dancing makes the effort and challenge worth it.

Is there anything in your life that demands a lot of work and gives you a lot of pleasure? If so, what? Write a paragraph about what you do and why you do it.

If you cannot think of anything in your own life to write about, do you see someone else working hard to do something they enjoy? If you do not want to write about yourself, write a paragraph about a family member or a friend's hard but enjoyable work.



student activity 2

The Nutcracker

Looking out from Russia in the 1890s

When librettist and choreographer Marius Petipa created *The Nutcracker* with his collaborators in St. Petersburg, they used their world as inspiration. They created short dances based on other places and peoples. How did they see the world? Let's look at a map, and see what we can deduce.

On the back of this page is a map of the world in 1833, 59 years before *The Nutcracker* premiered. Notice that the boundaries between countries and the names of places are different than they are now, in 2018.

On the 1833 map, identify and color the following places:

Russia – yellow

Spain – orange

China – red

Middle East – green

Arabia – blue

France – purple

Approximate where St. Petersburg was and draw a star there.

What do the countries have in common? Where are they located in relationship to St. Petersburg, where *The Nutcracker* premiered?

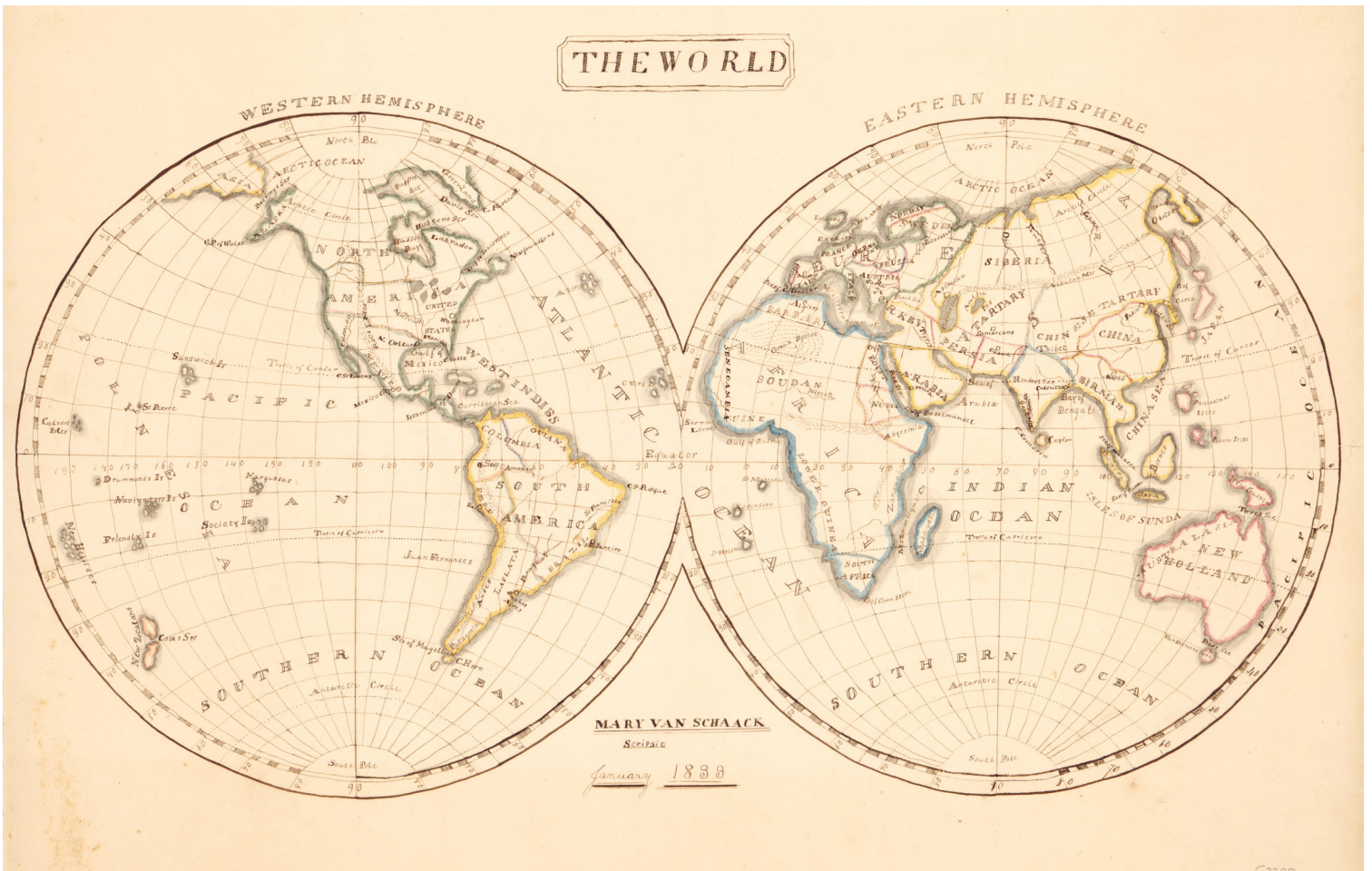
The 19th century witnessed the end of the Industrial Revolution, which changed economic relationships between countries and modes of transportation. Russia, a large producer of grain, started importing more goods than it exported. Trains helped people travel faster than ever before. How might this have affected Petipa and his collaborators' worldview? Note that there is no right answer to this question. It is asking you to think and make educated guesses. Below, brainstorm some possible effects of the new trade relationships and transportation on Petipa and his collaborators.

After you've brainstormed, if you'd like to read more information about Russia in the 19th century, you can visit the Country Studies website, <http://countrystudies.us/russia/6.htm>

Available at: <https://www.loc.gov/item/99463787/>

Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

student activity 2



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