

Motus O Dance Theatre  
**Presents**

# Petrouchka



**Study Guide**

**Teacher Resources\*Discussion Topics\*Classroom Activities**

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# Petrouchka

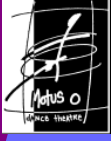
## About MOTUS O

It is strange to think how an American gymnast, an Australian sheep shearer and a Canadian figure skater could have their paths meet and eventually become Co-Artistic Directors of a dance theatre company in Canada. Yet, as it turns out, that diversity has become the essence of MOTUS O. The Artistic Directors of MOTUS O, Cynthia Croker, James Croker and Jack Langenhuizen, have all been trained in several artistic disciplines with decades of performing experience. Since their formation in 1990, MOTUS O has created several full-length productions for both family and adult audiences. The troupe continues to tour nationally and internationally bringing with them their innovative and highly visual works to both small and large communities alike.

## About the Composer, Igor Stravinsky

**IGOR STRAVINSKY- (1882-1971):**  
Russian composer who wrote the music for the Diaghilev ballets: "The Firebird" 1910, "Petrouchka" 1911, and "The Rite of Spring", 1913. These compositions were controversial at the time because of their complex harmonies and rhythms.  
( See Teacher's Resource section for more information)

Igor Stravinsky's musical score of "Petrouchka" can be obtained on CD from libraries or music stores.



# Petrouchka

## Synopsis of Story

In this magical world, created by Igor Stravinsky, there lives a Wizard and his three marionettes - the handsome but cruel Strongman, the beautiful Ballerina and the unlikely hero Petrouchka. Petrouchka is in love with the Ballerina but his clumsy attempts to impress her takes him on an outrageous adventure that unfolds with no end of calamity. Join Petrouchka as he outwits the bullying Strongman, tames a bear, dances with a feather, juggles bowling balls, goes fishing and avoids the anger of the Wizard and then in a spectacular finale saves the Ballerina's life. Petrouchka may be small and awkward but his enthusiasm for life enchants us all. Performed to the original score by Igor Stravinsky, Petrouchka is the story of a little clown with a big heart.

## Meet the Characters

**PETROUCHKA**- Shy, easily embarrassed, sweet, compassionate, sad, awkward, physically weak, insecure

**THE STRONGMAN**- Self-centered, over confident, aggressive, easily angered, physically strong and agile, arrogant, handsome

**THE BALLERINA**- Delicate, coy, vain, self-centered, pretty, graceful, agile

**WIZARD**- Confident, very powerful, creative, brilliant, controlling

## Themes Explored in the Story

- Love and friendship
- Standing up for what is right
- Facing a Bully
- Power of Friendship to Overcome Obstacles



# Petrouchka

## Pre-show Discussion

### Teacher Talk

Preparing students for the show helps them be more focused and open to the experience. The following are two options for introducing the performance. You may choose the one that best suits the interests



Talk  
About

### Primary

#### Option #1: The Story

- Ask the children if they know any stories with wizards ( have the students provide examples of wizards they know (i.e. Gandolf from "Lord of the Rings", Dumbledore from Harry Potter, Mickey Mouse from Disney who played the Magician Apprentice, etc.)
- Have the children retell or act out some parts of these stories that demonstrate the wizard's power.
- Tell the children that they are going to see a dance presentation that tells the story of a wizard who brings some marionettes (puppets with strings) to life.
- Ask them if they have ever been in a situation where they are playing with a friend and a third person tries to join in. How do they feel? Do they know how to include the third person? What if the third person tries to interfere with the game? How do they resolve conflicts with their friends?
- Introduce the characters and give a brief synopsis, without giving away the ending.

#### Option #2: The Dance

- Ask the children if they take dance lessons. What kind? (Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Ethnic)
- Do they know any dances that tell a story? (Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Indian Classical Dance, First Nations Dance.)
- Ask how dance can tell a story. Have them demonstrate how to express various emotions with their bodies. (E.g. stamp a foot, use hands to say "go away", "come here" etc.)
- Tell the children that they are going to see a Dance/Drama, in which the story will be told through dance, aided by costumes, set, music and props. ( give definitions of each of these)
- Introduce the characters and give a brief summary of the story, without giving away the ending



Talk  
About



# Petrouchka

## Junior/Intermediate

### Option #1:

#### The Issues of Friendship, Rivalry, Sharing, and Conflict Resolution

- Ask the students to explain the term "rival" and "rivalry". Where have they encountered this (with siblings, friends, boyfriend/girlfriend etc.)
- Ask how they feel when it seems their friendships are threatened by a third person. How do they handle these feelings.
- Talk about jealousy and how it makes people behave.
- Talk about power and what kinds of power people can have over others. (personal power, positional power, brute force)
- Introduce Petrouchka as a story of three characters who are struggling with the issues of friendship, rivalry, power relationships, and conflict resolution.
- Introduce the characters and give a synopsis of the story, without giving away the ending.



Talk  
About

### Option #2: The Dance

- Ask the children if they take dance lessons. What kind? (Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Ethnic)
- Do they know any dances that tell a story? (Nutcracker, Swan Lake, Indian Classical Dance, First Nations Dance.)
- Explain how dance can tell part of the story, express an emotion, or create a specific mood or atmosphere. (ask for some examples)
- Tell the students that they are going to see a Folktale that has been adapted to dance. Ask them what artists might have worked on the show. (Choreographer, designers, playwright, directors, dancers, etc.)
- Make a chart of these roles, to be added to after the performance.
- Give a brief synopsis of the story, without giving away the ending.



Talk  
About



# Petrouchka

## Teacher Talk

Giving the students specific things to watch and listen for encourages active watching and listening. It also provides a starting place for follow-up.

## What to Watch and Listen for During the Performance

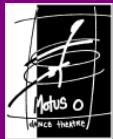


### Primary

- How the dancers tell the story without words
- How the characters solve their problems  
When the music is happy, sad, scary etc. to match the feelings of the characters

### Junior/Intermediate

- The movement characteristic of the dancers before and after they come to life
- How each of the characters deals with conflict and if it is appropriate.
- How the music helps to create the mood, tell the story and match the characters actions.



# Petrouchka

## Post-Performance Discussion and Activities

### Exploring Dance

#### Primary

##### WIZARD

###### Discussion:

Review the discussion about wizard from the pre-show activities

##### MARIONNETTE

###### Discussion:

First explain what a marionette is.

- A puppet with head, arms and legs attached to strings
- Made out of wood

Secondly, give examples of marionettes - Pinocchio, Delilah the Unicorn, Pierrot and Harlequin, etc.

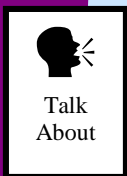
Thirdly, discuss the characteristics of a marionette including such characteristics as:

- Non-intelligent
- Blank expressions
- Non-human
- Robotic

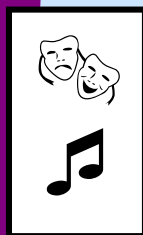
###### Activity: Individual Work

Explore through movement the characteristics of a wizard.

- How would the wizard characteristics affect the way you would walk around a room? How would your facial expressions change?
- Using music of Petrouchka (if available) or other music appropriate for this character have the students move around the room exploring the movement and body language of a wizard. Students may use pencils or rulers as their magic wands.



Talk  
About



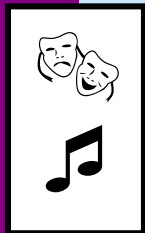


# Petrouchka

## Post-Performance Discussion and Activities

### **Activity:**

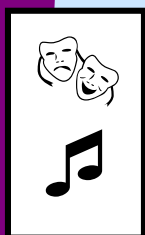
Explore through movement the characteristics of a marionette.



- How would the marionette characteristics affect the way you would walk around a room?
- Using the music of Petrouchka or appropriate marionette music, have the students pretend that their legs and arms are attached to strings and are being moved by someone else. Since they are non-human and have no personality how does that affect their facial expressions? Notice the limitation of movement without bones only joints.

### **Partner Work:**

Have the students get a partner and take turns being the marionette and the Wizard. This time they need to work as a team. The marionette can only move when the wizard does, etc.



- Have the partners switch roles so that they each get a chance to do each role with the music.
- Now have them act out bringing the marionettes to life. They demonstrate how the movements change. (The wizard continues to direct with the wand, but the characters can move about more freely.)





# Petrouchka

**Junior/Intermediate: exploring movement with characterization and music using the specific characters from "Petrouchka"**



Talk  
About

## **Discussion:**

Discuss the characteristics of the marionettes from the show "Petrouchka".

**PETROUCHKA**- Shy, easily embarrassed, sweet, compassionate, sad, awkward, physically weak, insecure

**THE STRONGMAN**- Self-centered, over confident, aggressive, easily angered, physically strong and agile, arrogant, handsome

**THE BALLERINA**- Delicate, coy, vain, self-centered, pretty, graceful, agile

## **Activity: Individual Work:**



- Have the students pick one character and begin to explore movement depicting this character.
- Make sure that they use many different levels (high, middle, low) as they explore the different gestures and dynamics of movement for their character. If there is time they can do all four characters.

## **Partner/Group Work:**

### **CHARACTER INTERACTION**

#### **Discussion:**

- Who was your favourite character and why?
- How did the movement communicate the nature of the characters?
- Did you feel compassion for any of the characters?
- Did the music of Stravinsky enhance the characters in the story?
- How did the props and costumes help tell the story?



Talk  
About



# Petrouchka

**Junior/Intermediate: exploring movement with characterization and music using the specific characters from "Petrouchka"**

## BUILD YOUR OWN SCENARIO

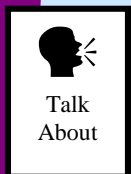
Have the students divide up into groups of three. One person plays Petrouchka one the Ballerina and the third person is the Strongman.



- Have the Petrouchka character choreograph an entrance.
- The Ballerina then enters and begins to interact with Petrouchka. She gives him an imaginary feather and leaves.
- The Strongman enters and tries to get the feather from Petrouchka. A chase begins and the students decide how their conflict will conclude. It can be done to music or silence. It should also be performed without words.

## Discussion:

- Have students discuss why they chose what they did to conclude their conflict in the 'build your own scenario'. Was their conclusion an appropriate choice? Is so, why? If not, why?
- As a general question, ask if it was it easier developing characters before or after they had seen the production "Petrouchka"? Why?



Talk  
About



# Petrouchka

## Language Arts and Visual Arts

### Primary

- Draw a picture of your favorite part of the story, and write a caption and thought balloons to tell that part of the story. Combine your drawings with others to make a Big Book for the Library Corner.
- Make a puppet (rod, hand, paper bag) of one of the characters. Join with a group and decide on a part of the story to retell in a puppet show.
- Complete the vocabulary match ( see Student Pages)



### Junior/Intermediate

- Interviews In Role: As a reporter or detective, interview another student ( in role as one of the characters) to find out what happened to Petrouchka. Present your interview, in role to the rest of the class. Note the differences in the accounts of each character.
- Writing-In-Role: As one of the characters, write a journal entry about the events of the day. Especially, include feelings about what happened to Petrouchka.
- Write a review of the play, including your thoughts and feelings about story, the dancing, the themes explored in the play.
- Create a poster to advertise Petrouchka. Be sure to think about colour, central image, and descriptive words, to make audiences come to the theatre.

## Music

### Primary

- Play some excerpts from the music from Petrouchka, and have the children move to it, expressing how it makes them feel.
- Have the children draw or paint as they listen to the music]
- Have the children close their eyes and listen to excerpts from the music, and then tell a partner or the class what story pictures they imaged as they listened.



### Junior Intermediate

- Discuss how the music of Stravinsky helped to express the feelings of the characters as well as the action of the story (it would be helpful to have a recording of the music, available at libraries and record stores.)
- Have the students listen to an excerpt from the CD, and then share, with a partner, the images they imagined
- Choose an instrument to represent each character and explain why your choice.
- In groups, decide on a piece of music ( other than Stravinsky's) that could be the theme song for each of the characters ( could be a classic, a pop song etc.)



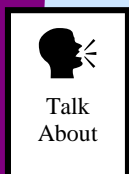
# Petrouchka

## Character Education

### Bullying in Petrouchka

In the story of Petrouchka all the marionettes come to life by the power of the wizard. At a certain point both the Strongman and Petrouchka fall in love with the ballerina. The Strongman begins to bully Petrouchka to intimidate him so that he will get what he wants. The Ballerina, although vain and mainly concerned of herself, tries to protect Petrouchka from the Strongman.

- Have the students discuss some scenarios in their own lives where they felt bullied. What are some of the ways you could avoid this? What are the attributes of a bully and a target?
- Talk about why Bullies bully?
  - They do not know any positive ways to relate to people.
  - They are angry about something, but take it out on someone else.
  - Some bullies lack self-confidence so they make others feel badly by bullying them in order to feel better themselves. Other bullies are quite confident and have a sense of entitlement, which makes them think they have power over others.
  - Brainstorm with the students the physical characteristics of the bully and the target. Consider Facial Expression, body movement, and behaviors.



Talk  
About

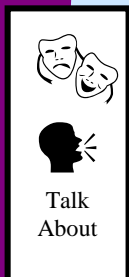


# Petrouchka

## Activities

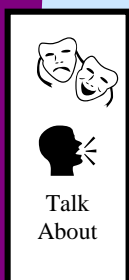
### Primary

- Whole Group: Experience powerful and powerless
  - Students move around the room, expressing various emotions suggested by the teacher.
  - One group moves, while the others observe how the emotion affects body language, facial expression, energy of movement.
  - Teacher then asks them to move as if they are powerful, powerless, being bullied, hiding from a bully etc.
  - Talk about the body language and their feelings during this exercise.
- In pairs: Design an anti-bullying poster, which tells why it is undesirable, how to prevent it, or what to do if they are bullied. Make the poster and display it for the class or school.



### Junior/Intermediate

- Create a tableau with three people. One person plays Petrouchka, one student plays the Ballerina and the third person plays the Strongman. Note: Girls can play Petrouchka or the Strongman and boys can play the Ballerina.
- Have them come up with a frozen shape depicting a conflict or the relationship of the three characters and then demonstrate their tableau to the rest of the class.
- While the tableau participants hold the pose, the others discuss the relationships among the characters. Who has the power? Why? How could the other character regain power? Ask the actors to change the tableau to reflect the new power relationships.
- Talk about the role of the third character in the tableaux. What role did that character play? What role could that character play? (ally, silent bystander, peacemaker etc.)





# Petrouchka

## Teacher Resources

### Books

Pepler, D.J., and Craig, W.M. A School-based anti-bullying program. Heinemann Books, 1998.

Garrity, Jens, Porter, and Sager Bully-Proofing Your School: A Comprehensive Approach for Elementary Schools. available from Amazon.ca

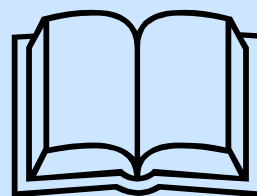
### Websites

[www.prevnet.ca](http://www.prevnet.ca) Website of PREVNet, an organization dedicated to helping educator, parents and children prevent and deal with bullying.

[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_issues/chat/chat185.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_issues/chat/chat185.shtml) Includes resources, background information and lesson plans for anti-bullying.

<http://www.connectforkids.org/node/614> Comprehensive bibliography and media resources for teaching kids to handle bullying.

<http://www.safeatschool.ca> This website and the training components that complement it are a joint project of the Ontario Teacher's Federation and Le Centre ontarien de prévention des agressions. It is a multi-faceted bullying prevention project designed to benefit teachers and their fellow school staff members, along with parents, school communities, and, most of all, students. Through this project we hope to help bring about systemic change for teachers, students, and the education system overall.





# Petrouchka

## Student Page 1 (Junior)

*Complete these sentences with a word from the list. Some words may be used twice.*

strings                      music                      bully                      marionettes  
characters                      puppet                      dance                      wizard

1. Petrouchka is a story about three \_\_\_\_\_ who come to life.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ are the Strongman, the Ballerina, and Petrouchka
3. The Strongman is a \_\_\_\_\_ who targets Petrouchka
4. The story is told through \_\_\_\_\_ instead of words.
5. The puppets are called \_\_\_\_\_ because they have \_\_\_\_\_ attached to their head, arms and legs.
6. The \_\_\_\_\_ brings the puppets to life, so they can move without their \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ helps to create the mood of the play. Some times it is loud and scary, and sometimes it is quiet and gentle.



# Petrouchka

## Student Page 2

### Shape Poem (Primary/Junior)

*Create a shape poem about one of the characters in the story*

Example: cinquain  
Line one: one word title (2 syllables)  
Line two: two adjectives (4 syllables)  
Line three: an action phrase (6)  
Line four: expressing a feeling (8)  
Line five: a synonym of title (2)

On Strings  
Silly, playful  
Attached to strings that move  
I feel happy when I see them  
Puppets

*Use the graphic organizer for your first draft, then create a good copy and illustrate it.*

Line one: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Line 2: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Line 3: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Line 4: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Line 5: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_





# Petrouchka

**Student Page 3**

A Character Sketch

*Draw an outline of one of the characters.  
Inside the outline, print words or phrases that represent the character*



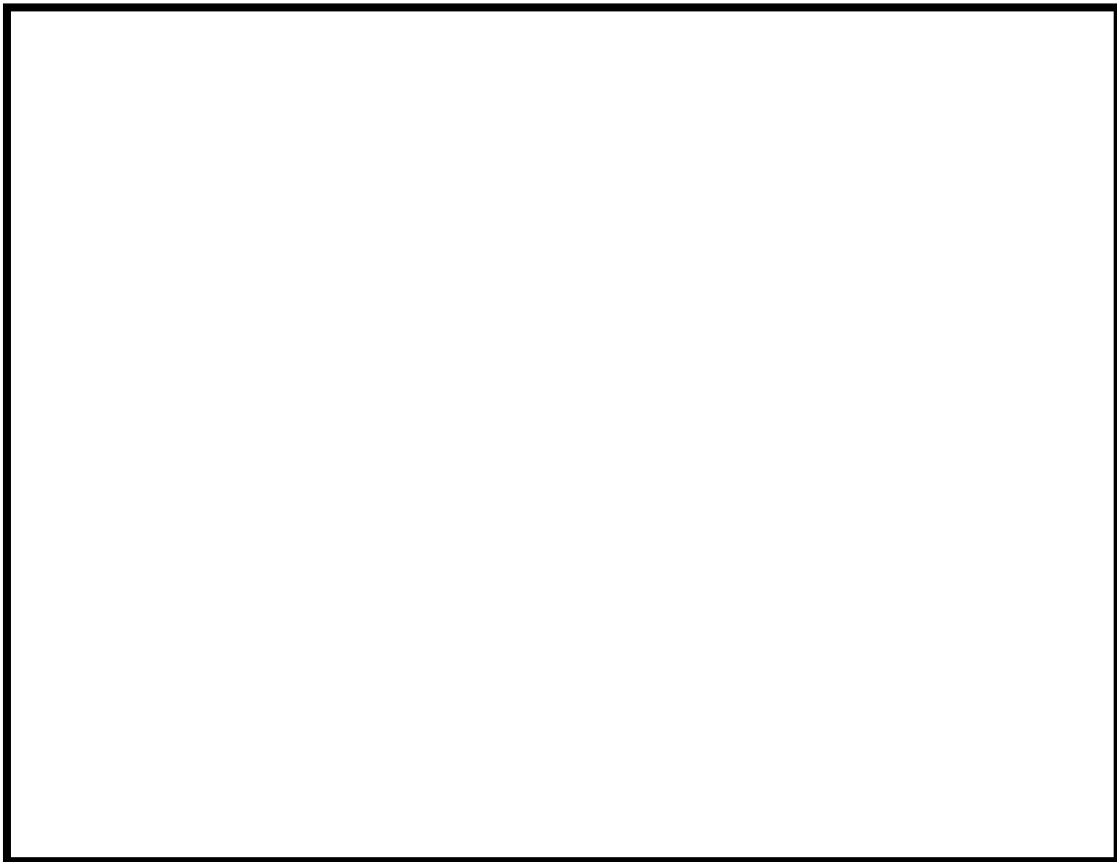
# Petrouchka

## Student Page 4

### A Character Sketch: Primary

*Draw a picture of one of the characters. Cut and paste words from the list that describe the characters.*

*Some characters might have words that are opposites. E.g. both happy*



nice	friend	mean	bully	ballerina
gentle	strong	happy	sad	afraid
kind	funny	magic	puppet	bossy



# Petrouchka

## Student Page 4

### Literary Expressions ( Junior)

*Describe one of the characters or a situation in the story using the following literary devices:*

Alliteration: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Metaphor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Simile: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Alliteration**

The repetition of usually initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllables E.g. beautiful ballerina

#### **Metaphor**

Comparing two things by using one object in place of another to suggest the likeness between them. E.g. The strongman was a raging bull.

#### **Simile**

A figure of speech comparing two things using like or as E.g. The strongmen was **like** a raging bull.



# Petrouchka

## Curriculum Connections

The following are some of the Specific Expectations that are addressed when completing the above activities.



### Drama and Dance

#### Primary

By the end of grade 3 students will

Demonstrate an understanding of a character's point of view through using body movement in role. Recognize and choose appropriate elements of movement for dramatizing their responses to different stimuli or ideas.

Communicate, through movement, their thoughts and feelings about topics studied in other subject areas. (e.g. telling familiar stories through movement).

Solve artistic problems in dance in co-operative work groups. (e.g. discuss the effects of using one dancer or several to convey a message).

#### Junior

By the end of grade 6, students will:

Interpret and perform some types of dances.

Create drama and dance productions in which they make effective use of the principles of harmony, balance, and contrast.

Evaluate drama and dance performances, with reference to their own experiences in daily life.

Solve artistic problems in drama and dance, individually and in groups, and evaluate the solutions



### Visual Arts

#### Primary

By the end of grade 3, students will:

Solve artistic problems in their art works, using at least three of the elements of design specified for this grade (e.g. describe why they placed objects in the foreground, middle ground, or background).

Produce two- and three-dimensional works of art that communicate their thoughts and feelings about specific topics or themes.

#### Junior

By the end of grade 6, the students will:

Produce two- and three-dimensional works of art that communicate a range of thoughts, feelings and ideas for specific purposes or to specific audiences.

Describe, in their plan for a work of art, how they will research their subject matter, select their media, and use the elements of design in solving the artistic problems of the work.



# Petrouchka

## Curriculum Connections



### Language Arts

#### Primary

By the end of grade 3 students will:

Communicate ideas and information for specific purposes and to specific audiences  
write materials that show a growing ability to express their points of view and to reflect on their own experiences.

#### Junior

By the end of grade 6 students will:

Communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to inform, to persuade, to explain) and to specific audiences.  
Use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts, including school work (e.g., to develop and clarify ideas, to express thoughts and opinions).



### Music

#### Primary

Identify the beat, rhythm, melodic contour (or shape), dynamics, and tempo in familiar pieces of music.

Communicate their thoughts and feelings about the music they hear, using language and a variety of art forms and media.

Identify the feelings that are evoked by a particular piece of music.

#### Junior

Create an accompaniment for a story, poem, or drama presentation.

Describe how the various elements of music are used to create mood in two pieces of music in different styles.

Communicate their thoughts and feelings about the music that they hear, using language and a variety of art forms and media.



### Guidance and Character Education

Recognizing and developing talents, recognizing strengths and weaknesses; making transitions to new situations; building positive relationships.

Health: personal and social development ; anti-bullying and anti-racism.