

Ballet Class Activities

Ballet 1A, 1B, 2, and 3

Video Playlist: [Romeo and Juliet](#)

Ballet Class Music: [Music for Ballet Class: Romeo and Juliet](#) by Bruno Lawrence Raco

Orchestral Music: [Romeo and Juliet](#)

Capulet Ball

The Capulets hold a ball (in which the Montagues are not invited, of course). As your students do preparation for soutenu or traveling turns, have them imagine they are at a great ball. Also have your students continue with this image as they work on balancés, waltz step, or mazurka step. You can even give them costume party masks (the ones that are held on sticks), to hold as they balancé, waltz, or mazurka. Just make sure the prop isn't too distracting.

Romeo and his Montague friends sneak into the ball, disguised with masks. For fun, let your students travel across the room as if they are sneaking into a ball. Even though they might be crouched down low, they should still be pointing their feet and performing! When your students are done, you can ask them how they acted as if they are sneaking into the ball might have differed in ballet class/on a stage during a performance versus in reality. (For example, they likely wouldn't point their feet and try to stay facing the audience if they were sneaking in real life.) Allow your students to repeat the activity, if desired.

Capulet vs. Montague

The two families in the story are constantly at odds with each other, making Romeo and Juliet's love for each other forbidden. In your centre allegro and petit allegro exercises this month, divide your class into two halves. One side of the room is Capulets. The other is Montagues. For your combinations, have the two sides alternate. Capulets go, then Montagues go. You can also make this a friendly competition. Which group can jump higher?

If your students really enjoy this activity, you can also apply it to grand allegro. Have the Capulets start in one upstage corner and your Montagues start in the other upstage corner. Have one Capulet and one Montague go at a time. Who did the step better, jumped higher, or "won" at some other aspect? Better yet, ask your class what each student did best. For example, maybe your Capulet student pointed their underneath foot when they jumped but the Montague students used their arms better.

Balcony Scene

The balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet is one of the most iconic scenes in ballet. We'll be studying this scene as we cover Romeo and Juliet. The first week, show your students a video clip from the scene.

The following week, tell your students they'll be dancing their own balcony scene through improvisation. Play several minutes of the music for them. Give them a minute or two to think of any ideas. Then play the music for them to improvise their own balcony scene. When they are done, discuss with them what they did. Ask them why they chose the pantomime or ballet steps they chose. How was their choreography different from the original? (It will have to be different as theirs is not a pas de deux!) Also, at this point, they have done ballet improvisations both without watching video first and with watching video first. Do they think that has had any impact on their own choreography each time?

During another week, repeat the listening and improvisation activity. Did the students' choreography change any from the previous week? How might it have developed further after they've had more time to think about the activity?