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# Study Guide For Teachers

Thirty-minute lecture-demo program for audiences K to 6.

## About the Program

The mission of the Voloshky Ukrainian Dance Ensemble is to strive for excellence in the presentation of Ukrainian dance. To Voloshky, Ukrainian dance is a living, breathing, evolving art form – an art form that portrays the past and present culture of the Ukrainian people. By combining the highest level of dance technique and stage presentation with the unique character of Ukrainian dance, Voloshky creates an exciting blend of art and energy. The resulting style is bold and powerful, clearly native to Ukrainian dance, yet classical enough to be appreciated and enjoyed by all.

## Learning Goals

1. Students will learn how dancers need to work together to create a dance that tells a story.
2. Students will learn how dancers can tell a story without words, using only movements.
3. Students will learn aspects of Ukrainian characteristics that both differ and coincide with other cultures.
4. Students will learn some Ukrainian words

## Background Information For Students

### Ukrainian Dance

Ukrainian folk dance is a truly unique art form which relates the history, life and work of the Ukrainian people, their past and present.

Ukrainian folk dancing developed dramatically from ancient times when it was once considered a ritual means of communicating with the divine forces of nature. Christianity provided an opportunity for further adaptations based on Christian rituals and festivals of the church calendar. Varied historical periods lend folk dancing heroic and patriotic themes capturing the dynamic ever changing life occurrences.

Dancers, through their movements and gestures, also portray events that occur in everyday life. Through dexterity and intricacies a people's way of life, a trade or occupation can be portrayed and displayed most delicately.

Although based on traditional folk culture, Ukrainian dance varies by region in choreographic method, content, dynamics, costumes and musical accompaniment.

For Choreographic studies, it has been widely accepted that Ukraine contains nine stylistic regions (see map). This said, each of these regions could be easily split into many other more specific characteristics.

## Before The Program

1. Locate Ukraine on the globe and compare its size with the United States and other countries.
2. Discuss how far away Ukraine is from the school.
3. Locate Kyiv, the capital city of Ukraine. Locate other main cities: Lviv, Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk.
4. Ukrainian dance influences and is influenced by the many countries that border Ukraine. Find and list these countries. Ask if any students are from these countries and discuss what they know about their culture, traditions and dance styles
5. Ballet and modern dance are a direct descendant of traditional folk dance. Hip-Hop, Break Dancing and Classical Ballet are very similar to the technical steps that Voloshky dancers perform. Ask if students could show some of these movements.



## After The Program

1. Have students write or draw in response to the show(ie costumes and stories)
2. Have students try some of the dance steps.
3. Count to music and explain that all dancers count while dancing so that everyone can be dancing the correct steps together.
4. Discuss other artforms of Ukraine (ie Music, Musical Instruments, Easter Eggs called "Pysanky", Embroidery)
5. Discuss history of Ukraine and current events.
6. Dance Styles change from country to county but also within one county. Discuss the different characteristics of the dances in the program. Compare how language accents and dialects in the U.S. change regionally and how this makes a country more interesting.

## Vocabulary Words

Dobryi Deyn): Goodmorning

Dopobachenia: Goodbye

Voloshky: Cornflower

Sharavary: Mens baggy pants

Vinok: Women's floral headdress

## Repertoire of Dances in This Performance

Voloshky will perform four dances during the thirty minute program. Below is a description of the work and suggested discussion topics.

### 1- Lopnuv Obrucz

Choreography: Mykola Zhukovin

Music: Victor Guzeyev and Dmitro Tkachenko

This Kievan Hopak means, literally, "the barrel breaks." Once it breaks it spills out all the fun! The dance comes from the central part of Ukraine. It tells the story of a boy and a girl having fun dancing together. They dance fast and slow. The boy shows off many tricky steps and the girl shows how fast she can turn.

#### Discuss:

*The dance also shows patterns from nature. Can you find the pattern that shows a flower opening and a bee coming in to get polin?*

### 2- The Puppets

Choreography: Pavel Virsky

Music: Roman Cahute

A variation on the theme "All's fair in love and war," the dance is performed in the puppet tradition prevalent throughout Ukraine centuries ago. A rich landowner's son attempts to get rid of his rival for a woman's affections by delivering an order sending him off to war. The woman spurns his advances, her cossack lover returns, and together they give him the boot.





### Discuss:

*The Puppet dance comes from the northern Polisia region of Ukraine. The rich puppet is not a very nice person. Even though he has more money the girl puppet likes her best friend. What happened to the rich puppet when he got caught fooling the others?*



### 3- The Gossips

Choreography: Leonid Jacobson, restaged by Vassilii Mountian

Music: Vladimir & Nikolai Radu

A spider web of relationships are revealed through the swirling interactions of five gossiping girls.

### Discuss:

*This dance comes from the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine. Gossiping is not a very nice thing to do. Two girls were having fun gossiping in the beginning of the dance. What happened to them in the end?*







#### 4- Hopak

Choreography: Mykola Zhukovin

Music: Victor Guzeyev and Dmitro Tkachenko

Voloshky's version of the most exciting of folk dances.

#### Discuss:

*Boys and girls like to show off their best dancing. What is the difference between how the boys dance and how the girls dance?*



#### Some general characteristics of costume in Ukraine

Certain components of Ukrainian folk dress are universal: shirts, skirts, and sleeveless jacket or vest.

Both men's and women's shirts were sewn from homespun and home-woven linen or hempen cloth, polotno. Folk-shirts were long-sleeved, and generally quite lengthy, falling to the ankles or mid-calf. In most regions of Ukraine, men's shirts are worn over the trousers. Both men's and women's shirts have their opening down the center front. The opening edges of the women's shirts are minimally decorated with embroidery, while the men's shirts are more heavily embroidered along both openings, forming a unified design when the shirt is closed. Skirts are of a wrap-around style and consist of panels. Aprons are worn over the skirt.

Generally, female costumes show greater variety and more elaborate ornamentation than male costumes. Unmarried women all over Ukraine wore their hair in one or two braids everyday. For work, young women covered their head with a kerchief. When not working, and on special occasions, maidens tied their hair back with a ribbon and inserted flowers into the ribbon on both sides of the head. Or they might cover their head with a wreath of fresh or artificial flowers with multicolored ribbons attached to the back.

During the marriage ceremony, a covering was placed on a woman's head. From then on she always kept her head covered. A typical headcovering was the ochipok of the Dnipro Region, a turban-like wrap that covered the whole head. For special occasions, a married woman would wear a namitka, a long cloth that was draped and tied around the head to resemble a wimple.



# Ukraine

(y'krm, ykrm') (KEY) , Ukr. Ukraina, republic (1995 est. pop. 51,867,000), 232,046 sq mi (601,000 sq km), E Europe. It borders on Poland in the northwest; on Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova in the southwest; on the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov in the south; on Russia in the east and northeast; and on Belarus in the north. Kiev is the capital and largest city.

## Land and People

Drained by the Dnieper, the Dniester, the Buh, and the Donets rivers, Ukraine consists largely of fertile steppes, extending from the Carpathians and the Volhynian-Podolian uplands in the west to the Donets Ridge in the southeast. The Dnieper divides the republic into right-bank and left-bank Ukraine. In the north and northwest of the country is the wooded area of the Pripyat Marshes, with gray podzol soil and numerous swamps; wooded steppes extend across central Ukraine; and a fertile, treeless, grassy, black-earth (chernozem) steppe covers the south. The continental climate of the republic is greatly modified by proximity to the Black Sea. Administratively, Ukraine is divided into 24 oblasts, two municipalities with oblast status (Kiev and Sevastopol), and one autonomous republic (Crimea).

Ukrainians make up slightly less than three fourths of the population; Russians constitute around 22%, Jews around 1%, and there are Polish, Belarussian, Moldovan, and Hungarian minorities. More than half the population is urban. The majority of those practicing a religious faith belong to a branch of Orthodox Christianity—either the Ukrainian (formerly Russian) Orthodox Church, which is subordinate to the Russian patriarch, or a rival independent Orthodox Church that is headed by a Ukrainian patriarch and has attracted many Ukrainian nationalists. Separate from both is the smaller West Ukrainian Catholic Church (also known as the Uniate or Greek Catholic Church), which in 1596 established unity with Roman Catholicism but was forced by the Soviet government in 1946 to sever its ties with Rome; these ties were reestablished in 1991, and the church experienced a revival. The republic's many educational and cultural institutions include seven universities.

## Economy

Ukraine's steppe is one of the chief wheat-producing regions of Europe, and the area was long known as the "breadbasket of the Soviet Union." Other major crops include corn, rye, barley, potatoes, sugar beets, sunflowers, and flax.

Ukraine possesses numerous raw materials and power resources, and its central and E regions form one of the world's densest industrial concentrations. The heavy metallurgical, machine-building, and chemical industries are based on the iron mines of Kryvyi Rih, the manganese ores of Nikopol, and the coking coal and anthracite of the Donets Basin. The Dniprohes dam powers a hydroelectric station and has made the Dnieper navigable for nearly its entire length. The region also produces aluminum, zinc, mercury, titanium, nickel, oil, natural gas, and bauxite.

Ukraine's main industrial centers are Kharkiv, Dniprostpetrovsk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhya, Makiyivka, Mariupol, and Luhansk. Odessa is the principal Ukrainian port on the Black Sea. The W Ukraine, although mainly agricultural, has significant petroleum centers at Drohobych and Boryslav, natural gas at Dashava, coal industries at Novovolynsk, and rich salt deposits. Lviv is the cultural center and the main industrial city in W Ukraine. Zhytomyr and Vinnytsya are the main agricultural centers. The republic's leading industrial products include machinery, steel, rolled metals, tractors, cement and other building materials, mineral fertilizers, chemicals, and consumer goods. Food processing, notably the refining of sugar, is also a major industry. In spite of its many resources, Ukraine must import large quantities of natural gas and oil. The main trading partners are Russia, Turkmenistan, Belarus, and China.

## Government

Ukraine is governed under the constitution of 1996. The head of state is a popularly elected president who serves a five-year term.

### Bibliography

See R. Szporluk, *Ukraine: A Short History* (1979); O. Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History* (1988); I. L. Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History* (1988); J. A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (3d ed. 1989).



# Developing a Ukrainian Perspective

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The adage that history is written by the winners is well-understood by those with roots in Ukraine. Without a Ukrainian state, Ukrainian history was handed down as a footnote, considered no more than a provincial expression of dominant powers. By an extension of a stunted, simplistic logic, without a Ukrainian state, there was no Ukrainian identity. There ceased to be, for most of the world, not only a country with its own history, but a separate and distinct people who shared a unique language and a rich cultural heritage. With the possible exception of the batik Easter eggs, nearly every aspect of Ukrainian history and culture had been attributed to other groups. The mislabeling of things Ukrainian was carried to its logical absurdity in library card catalogs, encyclopedias, and history books. For example, college-level history of civilization textbooks discussed the Kyivan-Rus legacy without once using the word "Ukrainian."

Ukraina means borderland. As a frontierland bridging the East and West, Ukraine was vulnerable to invaders from all sides. Among the early peoples who roamed across the steppes and navigated the Dnipro and Black Sea were Scythians, Greeks, Goths, Huns, and Khazars. After the establishment of the modern state, Ukraine was threatened by the ambitions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Ottoman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Tatar Khanate, and Muscovy. For centuries various parts were under the Russian Empire, Poland, or Austria. The many foreign powers that occupied and ruled Ukraine sometimes enriched the country, but also brought exploitation and devastation.

As a nation that for most of its history was not in charge of its own destiny, Ukraine has over and over again been trapped between two bad choices, forced to choose the lesser of two evils. Ironically, fate has thrust upon Ukraine the opportunity to emerge from the shadows and stand as a free and independent member of the family of nations.

## SOME BASIC FACTS

With 233,100 square miles (603,700 sq. km.), Ukraine is the largest country completely in Europe. In size it's slightly bigger than France but smaller than the state of Texas. To the north is Belarus; Russia is to the northeast and east; Moldova and Romania and Hungary are to the south and southwest; Slovakia and Poland border on the west and northwest. The southern border is on the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. Ukraine is a relatively modern country with a highly educated population that is two-thirds urbanized. Even so, traditional family values still prevail, including a strong work ethic.

Its population of 50 million is Europe's fifth largest, after Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and France. Ethnically, 73 percent of the population identifies themselves as Ukrainian and 22 percent as Russian, with Ukrainians predominating in the western and central oblasts, and the Russian population in the south and east. Sizable minorities are Jews, Belarusians, Moldovans, Poles, Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Romanians, and Tatars. Not surprisingly, the non-Ukrainian population tends to be concentrated around the borders.

The country consists primarily of fertile steppeland with a forest-steppe area across the north and low-lying mountains along the western border. The Dnipro River flows down through the center separating the country into east and west regions and has played an active role in the country's development from prehistoric through modern times. Ukraine's rich soil and moderate climate make it ideally suited to agriculture. Its huge coal reserves and deposits of iron and manganese ore have led to heavy industrial development, especially in the eastern part.

## HEROES, POETS, AND PATRIOTS

In forging a new national identity, Ukraine is looking to its past and turning to its most durable symbols as a rallying point for patriotism. There's something appealing about a nation whose greatest hero is a poet and painter. Taras Hryhorovych Shevchenko, was born on March 9, 1814 into a serf family in Moryntsi, a village that today is in the Cherkasy region. Orphaned as a teen, Shevchenko accompanied his master on his travels, serving as a houseboy. In St. Petersburg his talents as a painter attracted attention, and in 1838 a Russian painter helped him buy his freedom.

Shevchenko trained at the St. Petersburg Academy of Art where he had many contacts with Ukrainian and Russian artists and writers. His first collection of Ukrainian poems, *Kobzar* ("The Bard"), was published in 1840 and hailed as



work of genius by Ukrainian and Russian critics alike. Drawing upon Ukrainian history and folklore, Shevchenko wrote in the Romantic style prevalent during his day. Soon his poems evolved from nostalgia for Kozak life to an indictment of rulers who abuse their power and then to sympathy for oppressed people everywhere.

As a painter, Shevchenko was skilled in portraiture, landscape, and architectural monuments, but his most noteworthy paintings are the scenes of country life and historical events that are sympathetic to Ukraine and critical of its oppressors. For example, Shevchenko's tragic story of Kateryna, the Ukrainian girl who was seduced, impregnated, and abandoned by a Russian soldier, expressed both in ballad and later in a painting, are allegorical references to the fate of Ukraine under the Russian tsars who introduced serfdom.

Shevchenko's reputation as a leading Ukrainian poet and artist was already established when he came to Kyiv in 1846. There he joined the first modern Ukrainian organization with a political ideology, the Brotherhood of Sts. Cyril and Methodius. In 1847 brotherhood members were arrested. Shevchenko was the most severely punished when the authorities discovered his unpublished collection of poetry satirizing the oppression of Ukraine by Russia. He was sentenced to ten years military service in a labor battalion in Siberia. Although Tsar Nicholas I himself stipulated, "under the strictest supervision, forbidden to write and sketch," Shevchenko managed during part of his term to write and paint clandestinely. After his release, Shevchenko was a broken man. He was not allowed to live in Ukraine, but permitted to visit. That led to his re-arrest and banishment to St. Petersburg where he remained under police surveillance until his death in 1861. His gravesite, the monument, and the museum in Kaniv (in Cherkasy oblast) are a popular tourist destination.

Even without his poetry, Shevchenko would be renowned for his art alone. His existing artwork numbers 835 paintings and engravings, with several hundred lost. His writings have a greater significance, however, not only for their literary merit but for the role they played in the development of the Ukrainian language. Shevchenko blended several Ukrainian dialects with elements of Church Slavonic, thus expanding the range, flexibility and resources of the Ukrainian language.

Elevating the Ukrainian language to a literary prose was equivalent to a literary declaration of Ukrainian independence, according to Orest Subtelny in his book, *Ukraine: a History*. Shevchenko showed that Ukrainians didn't need to depend on the Russian language as a means of higher discourse because their own language was equally rich and expressive.

As a critic of tsarist autocracy and a champion of the universal struggle for justice, Shevchenko was exalted in the Soviet Union. His works were circulated and his memory honored in every republic. Even in Moscow there's a monument to him. But to Ukrainians, Shevchenko has a special meaning. To them, Shevchenko represents the right to be Ukrainian. Ukrainians understood that when Shevchenko referred to Muscovy, he wasn't referring to a particular government, but to the Russian nation subjugating the Ukrainian nation. Ukrainians even knew which words in the official publications of Shevchenko's works the authorities had changed in order to conceal the nationalistic intention.

Following independence, many more monuments were erected in Shevchenko's honor in Ukraine, often replacing statues of Lenin that were torn down. The depiction of Shevchenko as an old man is stereotypical, as he died when he was only 47, and made his impact when he was much younger.

Two Kozak hetmans are important in Ukrainian history. Both were great leaders and statesmen and fought to free Ukraine from foreign domination. Bohdan Khmelnytsky (1595-1657) headed the national uprising in 1648 that liberated a large part of Ukrainian territory from Poland. Khmelnytsky was recognized at home and abroad as the leader of a sovereign state. Under continual threat from Poland, a few years later he entered a pact with Muscovy. Ukrainians consider this a fatal turning point in their history. Moscow began its subjugation of Ukraine, turning an agreement of military and political union into an act of incorporation of Ukraine into Russia.

Today Ukraine looks to Ivan Mazepa (1639-1709) as a more appropriate hero. Mazepa wanted to unite all Ukrainian territories into a unitary state modeled after existing European states with features of the traditional Kozak structure. At first Mazepa was allied with Tsar Peter I against foreign powers, but when he realized Russia intended to abolish the Kozak order and end Ukrainian autonomy, he sided with Charles XII of Sweden against Peter. After a disastrous defeat at the Battle of Poltava in 1709, Kyiv lost much autonomy and Kozak rule came to an end.