

Source: Houston Ballet:

[https://www.houstonballet.org/globalassets/ece/forms/cinderella\\_studyguide\\_0223.pdf](https://www.houstonballet.org/globalassets/ece/forms/cinderella_studyguide_0223.pdf)

# *Cinderella*

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students can describe how ballets tell stories without words;
- Compare & contrast the differences between various Cinderella stories;
- Increase cultural awareness by broadening students' cultural conception of "the Cinderella story;"
- Learn basic foot and arm positions in ballet;
- Create a new "Cinderella story" and set it to a stage design and costuming;
- Describe at least one dance from Cinderella in words or pictures;
- Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior.

# ATTENDING A BALLET PERFORMANCE

GOING TO SEE *CINDERELLA* IS THE SAME AS GOING TO A MOVIE:

- The lights dim before the performance begins and the theater stays dark during the ballet.
- Audience members are expected to stay quietly in their seats during the performance.
- Audience members may NOT take any pictures or video during the performance. This is distracting to the dancers and other audience members, AND *Cinderella* is copyrighted artistic material.
- All cell phones and other electronic devices should be powered OFF as soon as you enter the theater.



GOING TO SEE *CINDERELLA* IS DIFFERENT THAN GOING TO A MOVIE:

- Ballet is performed live. The dancers can see and react to the audience!
- Audience members can show the dancers when they appreciate their performance! If something is funny, you can laugh! If the dancers are doing a great job, then you can clap!
- At the end of the show, the dancers all bow. This is called a curtain call. If you really loved the show, you can give the dancers a standing ovation to show that you appreciate their hard work!
- School clothes are appropriate, but some people like to dress up for ballet performances. Just make sure you are comfortable.

## ENJOY THE SHOW!

# THE STORY OF CINDERELLA

When Cinderella's cruel stepsisters bar her from attending the prince's ball, a mysterious fairy godmother appears to transform her from pauper to princess. But there's a catch: the spell will expire when the clock strikes midnight.

Ballets are like books, except that instead of having chapters, they have Acts and Scenes. Acts divide the story into smaller parts and Scenes show you where the story is taking place.

Questions for your live ballet experience:

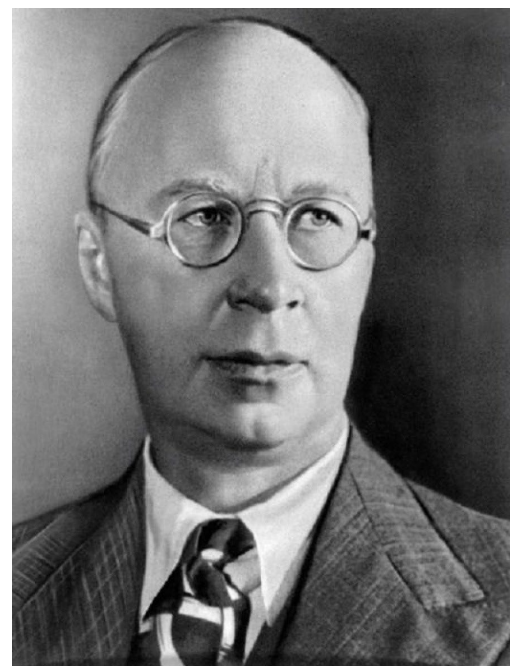
1. How many acts and scenes did you see today?
2. Were there any new or unfamiliar characters in the ballet (compared to the Cinderella story you know)?
3. You did not see the entire ballet; why do you think these acts and scenes were selected for you?
4. In what ways did the music support and enhance the storytelling?

# THE CREATORS OF *CINDERELLA*: COMPOSER

A composer is the person who makes up the music that the dancers move to in the performance. *Cinderella* was composed by Sergei Prokofiev. Companies all over the world use the same music today for their own productions of this classic ballet.

Sergei Prokofiev (23 April 1891 – 5 March 1953) was a Russian and Soviet composer, pianist and conductor. As the creator of acknowledged masterpieces across numerous musical genres, he is regarded as one of the major composers of the 20th century.

Prokofiev's first ballet was commissioned by Serge Diaghilev's for his Ballets Russes. Prokofiev composed four works for the Ballets Russes, the most famous of which is *Prodigal Son*, with choreography by George Balanchine. Prokofiev's other well-known ballets include *Romeo & Juliet* and *Cinderella*.



Sergei Prokofiev

Золушка отправляется на бал VI Cinderella goes to the Ball 125

A page of a musical score for the ballet 'Cinderella'. The page is numbered 125 in the top right corner. The title at the top is 'Золушка отправляется на бал VI Cinderella goes to the Ball'. The score is for four instruments: Violin I (V. ni I), Violin II (V. ni II), Viola (V. le), and Cello (V. c.). The music is written in 2/4 time and features a melodic line in the violins and a rhythmic accompaniment in the lower strings. Dynamics include mezzo-forte (mf), piano (p), and crescendo (cresc.).

# CINDERELLA AROUND THE WORLD :

EVERY REGION OF THE WORLD HAS  
THEIR OWN VERSION OF CINDERELLA.

## MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS: AN AFRICAN TALE

By John Steptoe

This version is about a father, Mufaro, and his two beautiful daughters, Nyasha & Manyara. Nyasha has a kind and considerate heart while her sister is selfish and bad-tempered. The African King in the story has decided to take a wife and he invites the most beautiful and worthy daughters in the land to appear before him. Both of Mufaro's daughters wish to be Queen. Who will the King choose?



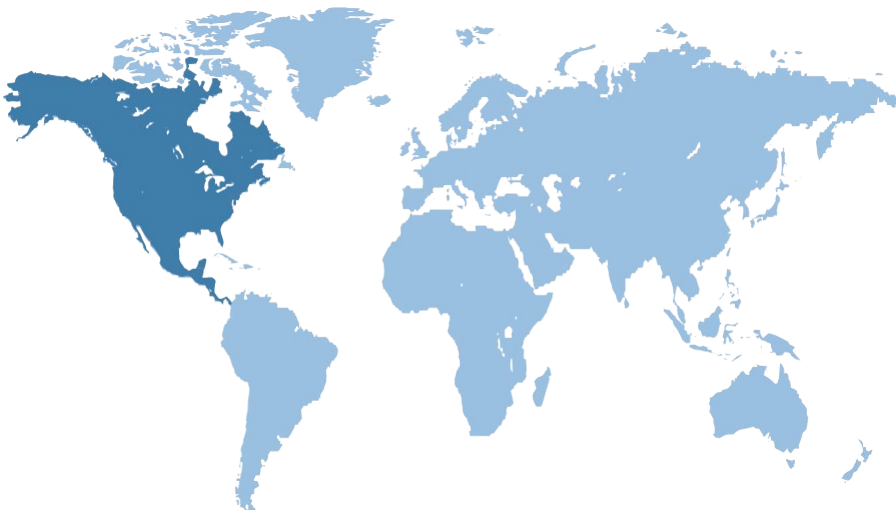
## CINDERELLA: AN ISLAMIC TALE

By Fawzia Gilani

Zahra is a sweet, gentle and pious young girl from the Middle East. She has suffered the tragedy of losing both of her biological parents and now is at the mercy of her cruel stepmother and stepsisters. Despite her mistreatment, Zahra maintains her faith and through intervention from her grandmother, eventually finds love and compassion.



# CINDERELLA AROUND THE WORLD :



## THE HIDDEN ONE, A NATIVE AMERICAN LEGEND (Told by Aaron Shepard)

This tale illustrates the importance of having a pure and true heart. Little Scarface is a Native American girl who is constantly tortured by her older sister. In their village, lives the Hidden One; a wealthy, handsome, and great hunter. Only the young woman who can see the Hidden One will become his bride. Many women have claimed to see the Hidden One but in the end, only one proved herself true.

## ADELITA: A MEXICAN CINDERELLA STORY (By Tomie dePaola)

In this Mexican Cinderella story, Adelita begins her life as a happy and loved young girl. Yet, with the passing of her father, Adelita is belittled by her jealous stepmother and is reduced to being a mere kitchen-maid. Learn how an old family friend helps Adelita reconnect with a childhood friend and find love and happiness again.



# CINDERELLA AROUND THE WORLD :



## YEH-SHEN: A CINDERELLA STORY FROM CHINA (By Ai-Ling Louie)

Sweet Yeh Shen lives in a cave in rural China with her mean stepmother and stepsister. Yeh Shen's only friend is a magical golden fish who not only helps her with her chores but also helps Yeh Shen find her happily ever after. Find out how having a kind heart and a good friend can lead to a lifetime of happiness.

# COM P A R E & C O N T R A S T

Think about the version of *Cinderella* you know best. How is that version different from Interlochen Arts Academy's ballet version? How are the two stories the same?

Lined writing area with horizontal blue lines and a vertical line on the left.



# LOOK MA, NO WORDS!

## STORYTELLING IN DANCE

Dancers have to make you understand their stories and believe their characters without using words. How do they do that? Four important things work together to make that possible.

### 1) DANCING

The choreographer makes up the steps in ballet. He or she chooses steps that help tell who a character is and how she is feeling.

How do you move when you are happy? Sad? Excited?



### 2) DRAMA

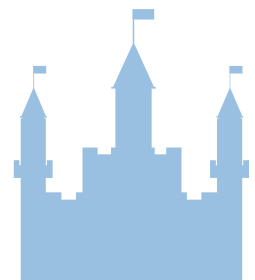
Dancers have to act while they dance. The expressions on their faces are a very important part of helping the audience understand how they are feeling and how they relate to the other dancers on stage.

What does your face look like when you are happy? Sad? Excited?



### 3) DÉCOR

Sets and costumes tell us where and when a dance takes place. Some dances are set in Europe on the 1600s, others might be set in the wild, wild west. What the dancers wear, what their background looks like, and what they might carry in their hands (called props) help give the audience more clues about a dance.



### 4) MUSIC

The composer is the person who writes the music. Sometimes music is written especially with a dance in mind (like Cinderella), and other times the choreographer is inspired by a piece of music that has already been written.

What kind of music inspires you to dance?



# STORYTELLING WITHOUT WORDS

## CLASS ACTIVITIES

TRY SOME OF THESE ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR STUDENTS!

### 1) EXPRESSIVE DANCE

Using the Mood Cards in Appendix A, take turns drawing a card and demonstrating that feeling to classmates.

- Start with one student at a time demonstrating facial expressions.
- Progress on to a single student doing a single movement or action (called gestures)
- Then try poses with multiple bodies that demonstrate a feeling
- Finally work toward small group movement phrases that convey this emotion.

When 1 group is performing, the others are observing, interpreting what they see and practicing good audience skills.

### 2) YOU WRITE AND DESIGN IT!

Write your own “Cinderella story” using the Appendix B. Then, using the set design template in Appendix C, draw a setting for your ballet or story to take place. Be sure to leave room for the dancers or actors to move around.

Using the costume design template in Appendix D, design a costume for a ballet or story character. Make sure it’s an outfit that your character can really move in. (EXTENSION: what kind of fabric would you use for this costume?)

### 3) LET THE MUSIC MOVE YOU!

Make a playlist or use CDs with a wide variety of instrumental music. (Lyrics sometimes make dancers feel they have to interpret them).

- Play the freeze dance (when the music is on, you dance; when the music stops, you freeze).
- Work in small groups to create a dance to one of the selections. Groups take turns performing their choreography for each other. Audience members can think or write critically about what they think the dancers were trying to express to the music.

# BALLET BASICS: POSITIONS OF THE FEET

Ballet dancers use 5 positions of the feet when they dance. Their legs are turned out, meaning their toes point to the side instead of the front. Men and women use the same positions.



(1) FIRST  
POSITION



(2) SECOND  
POSITION



(3) THIRD  
POSITION



(4) FOURTH  
POSITION



(5) FIFTH  
POSITION

TRY MAKING ALL 5 POSITIONS. WHICH  
ONE IS HARDEST FOR YOU TO DO?

# BALLET BASICS: ARM POSITIONS



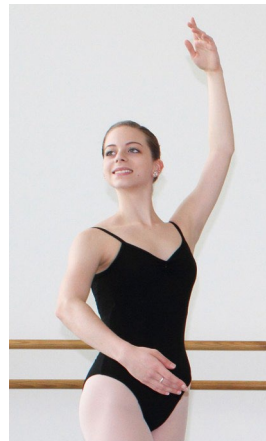
(1) FIRST  
POSITION



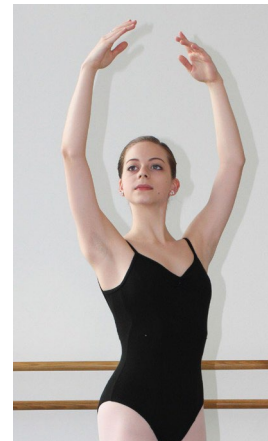
(2) SECOND  
POSITION



(3) THIRD  
POSITION



(4) FOURTH  
POSITION



(5) FIFTH  
POSITION

TRY MAKING ALL 5 POSITIONS. CAN  
YOU KEEP YOUR BACK STRAIGHT  
WHILE YOU DO THEM?

# APPENDIX A

## MOOD CARDS

HAPPY	SAD
AFRAID	EXCITED
BRAVE	SHY
CONFUSED	SURPRISED
BORED	TIRED

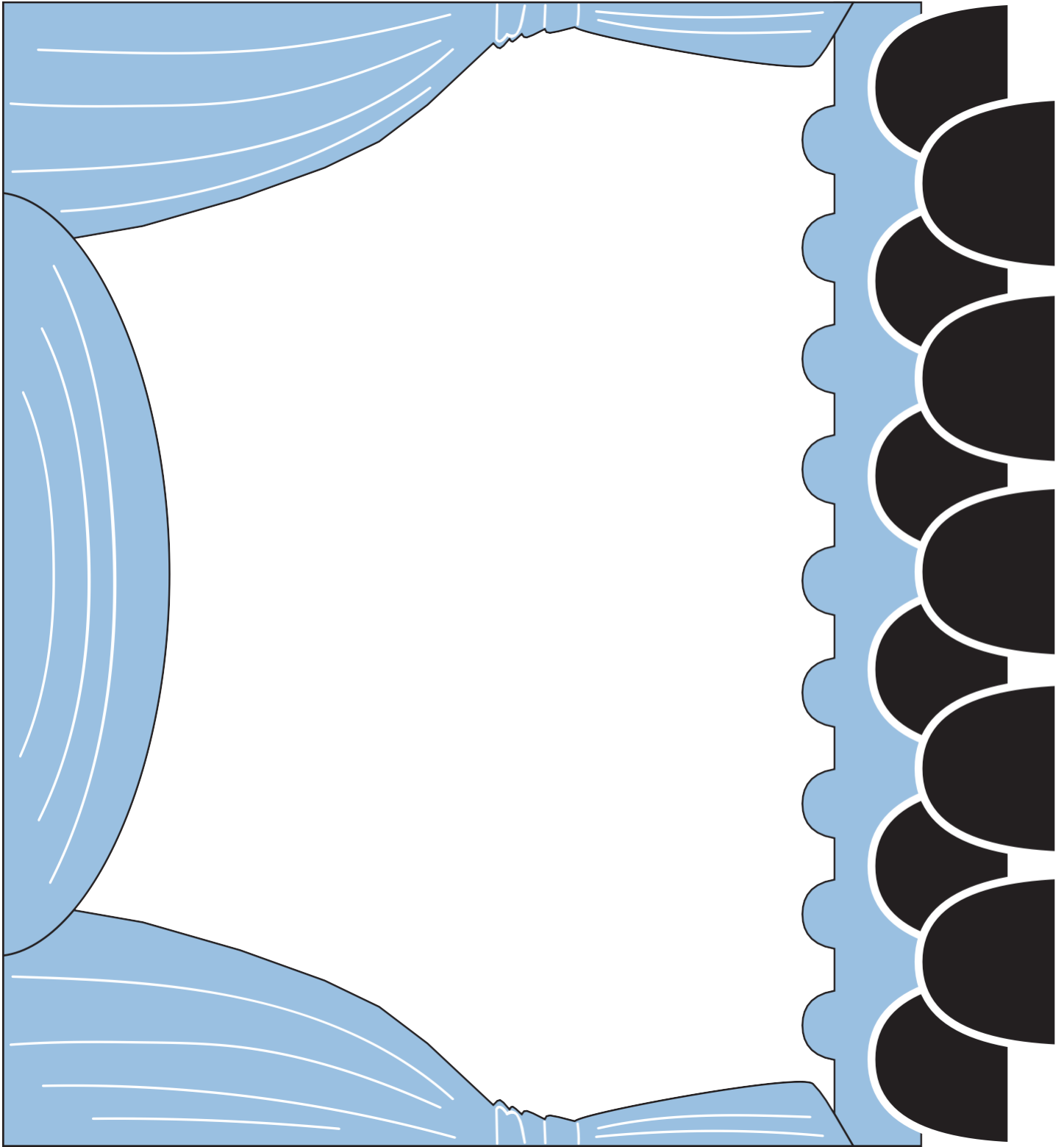


# CREATE YOUR OWN (STORY)

A large area for writing, consisting of 25 horizontal blue lines. A vertical black line is positioned on the left side, creating a margin. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.

# APPENDIX C

## CREATE YOUR OWN (SET DESIGN)

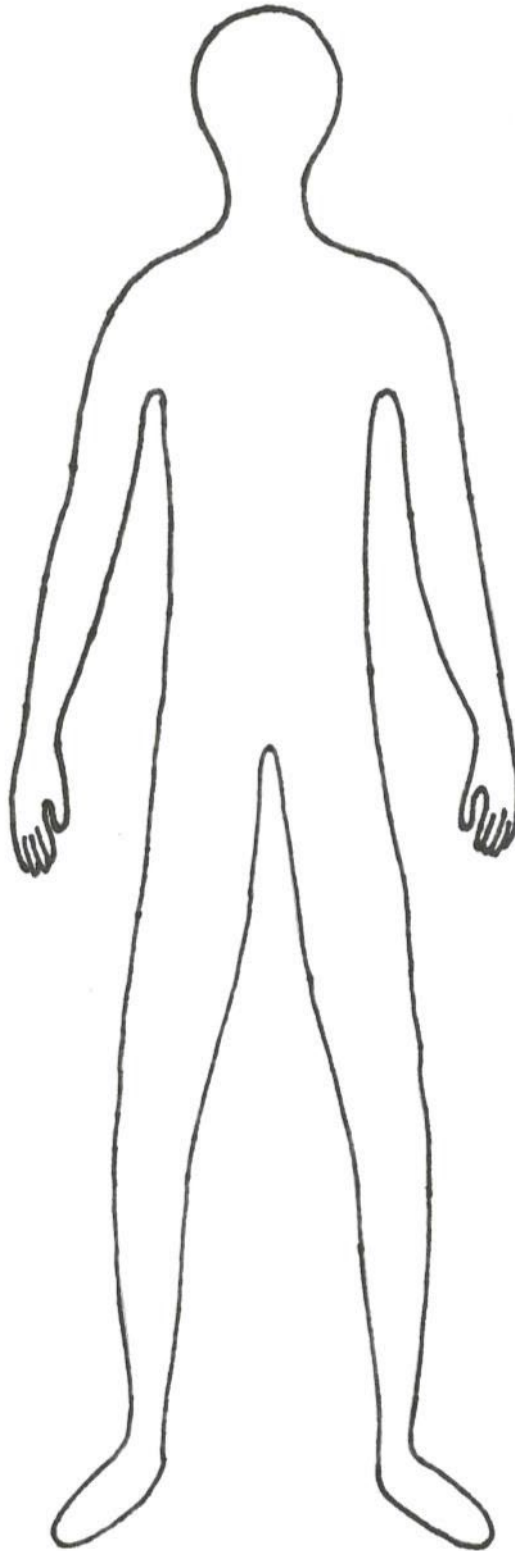


Use this template to design the set for Your Story.



# APPENDIX D

CREATE YOUR OWN (COSTUME DESIGN)



Use this template to design the set for Your Character.

# APPENDIX E:

## GLOSSARY

**ACT:** One of the main divisions of a ballet, play or opera.

**ANTICIPATE:** To expect that something is about to happen

**CHIMNEY SWEEP:** A person whose job is cleaning out the soot from chimneys.

**CHOREOGRAPHER:** the person who makes up the sequences of steps in a ballet.

**CHOREOGRAPHY:** the sequence of steps and movements in dance

**COMMON FOLK:** Someone that is not in the royal family

**COMPOSER:** the person who writes the music for a ballet.

**CONJURES:** To call upon (a spirit or ghost) to appear, by means of a magic ritual.

**COUTURIERS:** A fashion designer who manufactures and sells clothes that have been tailored to a client's specific size

**CURTAIN CALL:** The bow at the end of the performance.

**DESIGNER:** the person who decides how the sets and costumes for a ballet should look.

**DETAINED:** Keep (someone) from going forward; hold back

**FRICTION:** A force that holds back the movement of a sliding object.

**GRASP:** A firm hold or grip

**LEOTARD AND TIGHTS:** Practice clothes worn by ballet dancers.

**POINTE SHOE:** A ballet shoe with a hard tip worn by women that allows them to dance on the tips of their toes.

**RENDERING:** a sketch that gives an idea of what a costume should look like.

**SCENE:** A time or location in a ballet.

**TIARA:** A small crown that a female dancer wears on her head.

**TUNIC:** A long shirt made of heavy material worn by a male dancer in classical ballets.

**TUTU:** The costume worn by female dancers in classical ballets. It can be long or short.

**VAIN:** Having or showing an excessively high opinion of one's appearance, abilities, or worth