Ballet: a Historical Timeline

Events in Ballet

1661: “Sun King” Louis XIV establishes Académie Royale de Danse in Paris, the first formal ballet school.

1863: Emma Livry’s tragic death from gas light fire prompts fire safety in theaters.

1892: The Nutcracker premieres in St. Petersburg, Russia.

1957: Arthur Mitchell premières a lead role in Balanchine's Agon during the height of segregation, a pivotal moment for inclusion in ballet.

2015: Misty Copeland becomes the first black principal dancer of American Ballet Theater.

Events in World History

1621: The first Thanksgiving occurs between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag tribe, who helped them settle on their colony's land.

1776: The Declaration of Independence is signed.

1817: Gas lights are first used in theaters.

1862: American Civil War begins.

1879: The electric light bulb is invented.

1905: The Russian Revolution begins.

1929: "Black Tuesday" marks the start of the Great Depression.

1934: George Balanchine founds the School of American Ballet, creating an energetic new style of moving.

1939: Hitler invades Poland and World War II begins.

1945: Segregation is abolished.

1959: The Russian Revolution begins.

1974: Mikhail Baryshnikov defects from Russia. His fame brings ballet back into mainstream popular culture.

2008: Barack Obama becomes the USA’s first black President.

Objective: Can you match five ballet events from the top of the page to their relevant world events at the bottom of the page?