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Edgar Degas's Ballerinas

Nina Ballerina loved Edgar Degas's painting called "The Blue Dancers" that she saw at the art museum. She was excited to learn that Degas painted many pictures of ballerinas.

Degas was born in Paris, France, in 1834. His family was very interested in music and theater. When Degas was 18, the family made an art studio for him in one room of their house. He first began to copy paintings of artists that he saw in the Louvre, a famous museum. After moving his studio to another location in Paris, he painted portraits and pictures related to history. He also painted lots of acrobats, singers, musicians and ballerinas.

Nina Ballerina showed the music friends another painting by Degas called "The Dance Class." She reminded them that dancers take lessons just like pianists and artists do.

How many ballerinas can you count in Degas's painting, "The Dance Class"?



The Dance Class
Edgar Degas
1834–1917 French
Musée d'Orsay, Paris/SuperStock



Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's

Swan Lake



Tchaikovsky's ballet *Swan Lake* was first performed in Moscow in 1877. It tells the story of Prince Siegfried, who sees a swan on a lake deep in the forest. The swan is really a beautiful girl, Princess Odette. She and her friends have been turned into swans by a magician who cast a spell over them.

The prince vows his love and promises to marry her. The magician tricks Prince Siegfried into breaking his promise.

The spell is broken at last when Siegfried goes back to the lake and asks Odette to forgive him.

Listen to an excerpt of music from *Swan Lake*.

1. Can you hear the oboe, as well as stringed and brass instruments?
2. Listen again and color the picture of Prince Siegfried and Princess Odette by the lake.

