1. Background to founding of Ballets Russes by Serge Diaghilev
    a.  Dancers in the Imperial Ballet chafed under the rigidity of the company's style and repertoire.
    b.  Company dancer and choreographer Michel Fokine (1889 – 1942) questioned standard conventions and techniques of ballet. He put his views into a list of principles in 1904. Summary:
        i. For each ballet create a movement vocabulary corresponding to the subject, its period and location.
        ii. Use dancing and gesture to express the dramatic action and not as a mere entertainment.
        iii. Use mime conventions only where required by the style of the ballet; otherwise replace gestures of the hands by expression of the whole body.
        iv. Use the corps, not as ornament, but to help tell the story with movement and acting.
        v. Engage and recognize the contributions of music, design, costumes, and libretto on a par with dancing.
    c.  There was renewed interest and pride in Russian folk art and desire to use Russian rather than European themes, designers, and composers. Diaghilev intended to present to Europe the virtues in Slavic wildness as opposed to Western decadence. Before the appearance of Ballets Russes, he had brought to Paris Russian art, music, and opera.
    d.  Isadora Duncan performed in St. Petersburg in 1904 (again in 1907), fascinating both dancers and lay members of audience with her barefoot and free-form dancing.
2. *Petrushka*, Michel Fokine, 1911, music Igor Stravinsky, set and costumes Alexandre Benois
    a.  Movement vocabulary designed to fit the roles: even though using ballet steps, puppets dance not as humans, but using speed, brittle execution, angles of heads and arms, and blank faces to convey their puppet natures.
    b.  Primacy of expressiveness: even with a limited movement vocabulary and hands that are just blocks, Petrushka conveys human feelings of longing, anger, and helplessness.
    c.  Contributions of the corps de ballet: the crowd moves about gesturing and responding to the puppet show and the puppet manager.
    d.  Music, set design, costuming, and story are significant partners with dancing in the overall spectacle of the ballet.
3.  *Afternoon of a Faun*, Vaslav Nijinsky, 1911, music Claude Debussy, set and costumes Leon Bakst
    a.  New movement vocabulary: e.g., for the faun's closed hand with thumb up, walking with high lifting of knee, abrupt changes of direction
    b.  Presentation of stage action to create two-dimensional effect referencing the art of antiquity and corresponding to the subject of mythological characters: movement restricted to narrow path right to left on stage, dancers viewed primarily in profile.
4. *Rite of Spring*, Vaslav Nijinsky, 1913, music Igor Stravinsky, set design Leon Bakst, costumes design Nicholas Roerich
    a.  A ballet that some scholars believe paved the way for all the modern dance developments of 20th C.
    b.  Both the music and the dancing drew passionate and divided responses.
    c.  New movement vocabulary to convey the primitive and fierce nature of the society depicted and to thoroughly separate it from the norms of society and dance in 1913: e.g., legs turned in, vigorous bending over at the waist from men and women, women moving on the balls of their feet, men stamping and pounding the floor
5. *Parade*, Leonide Massine, 1917, music Erik Satie, set and costumes Pablo Picasso.
    a.  Light entertainment, but still observes many of Fokine's principles.
    b.  Each circus act has its own movement vocabulary.
    c.  The set and costume designs easily draw the viewer's focus as much as the dancing.