



San Francisco Opera's Puccini's *THE GIRL OF THE GOLDEN WEST*

Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

LANGUAGE ARTS

WORD ANALYSIS, FLUENCY, AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Name Origins:

***La Fanciulla del West* (The Girl of the Golden West)** (la fan-CHOO-la del West)

Minnie (MIN-ee) — Diminutive of *Wilhelmina*. Dutch and German feminine form of *Wilhelm* or *Williahelm*, which was composed from *wil* "will, desire" and *helm* "helmet, protection."

Johnson (JAHN-suhn)— English and Scottish: surname from the personal name *John*, from the Hebrew personal name *Johanan*, meaning "may Jehovah favor (this child)"

Ramerez (rah-MIH-res) Spanish (Ramírez): surname from the personal name *Ramiro*, composed of the Germanic elements *ragin* 'counsel' + *mari, meri* 'fame'.

Rance (raens)— English: surname from the personal name *Rand*, a topographic name for someone who lived on the margin of a settlement or on the bank of a river (from Old English *rand* 'rim', used in a topographical sense).

Sonora — City in California, founded by Mexican miners during the Gold Rush. From the state of *Sonora, Mexico*.

Monterey — City on the coast of central Calif.: former capital (until 1846) of California. From *Puerto de Monterrey*, literally "port of Monterrey," after the viceroy of New Spain (1602)

Sacramento — The capital of California — Sacramento, California — from an Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese word meaning *sacrament*. From *sacrare* "to make sacred, consecrate"

The use of names in *The Golden Girl of the West*. Ex. Handsome, Happy, Wowkle, Billy Jackrabbit

What were common names of the time?

Top 5 names of the 1850 (from the Census of 1850):

Male: John, William, James, George, Charles.

Female: Mary, Elizabeth, Sarah, Ann, Martha.

What are some examples of American Indian Names?

- See names on photo collage of "Americanized" Native American's from the Smithsonian Institute Archives

Definitions:

(a.k.a): abbreviation for “also known as”

Alias (adverb): otherwise called : otherwise known as <Dick Johnson alias Ramerrez>

Gold Rush: (noun) Date: 1876

- 1 : a rush to newly discovered goldfields in pursuit of riches
- 2 : the headlong pursuit of sudden wealth in a new or lucrative field

Mine: (adjective) from the Middle English *min*, meaning “my”

(noun) Middle English *mine* "a pit or tunnel for digging out coal, gold, or diamonds," from early French *mine* (same meaning)

- 1 : a pit or tunnel from which minerals (as coal, gold, or diamonds) are taken
- 2 : a deposit of ore
- 3 : an underground passage dug beneath an enemy position
- 4 : an explosive device placed in the ground or water and set to explode when disturbed
- 5 : a rich source <a mine of information>

(verb)

- 1 : to dig or form mines under a place
- 2 : to obtain from a mine <mine coal>
- 3 : to lay military mines in or under <mine a harbor>
- 4 : to work in a mine

prospect: (verb) Date: 1841

- : to explore an area especially for mineral deposits
- : to inspect (a region) for mineral deposits

vigilante: a member of a group of volunteers who decide on their own to stop crime and to punish criminals

want/wanted: (verb/adverb)

- 1 : to be without : *lack* <this coat is wanting a button>
- 2 : to feel or have the need of : *require* <our house wants painting>
- 3 : to desire, wish, or long for something <wanted a chance to play>
- 4 : *ought* <you want to be very careful>
- 5 : to seek in order to arrest <was wanted for murder>

Phonics and Phonemic Awareness:

Letter Recognition: Name the letters in a word. Ex. **sing** = **s-i-n-g**.

Letter/Sound Association: Name the letters and the beginning and ending sound in a word. **F**-aus-**t**

Match and list words with the same beginning or ending sounds. Ex. **Rance** and **Ramerrez** have the same beginning letter “**r**” and sound /r/; but **Rance** and **Ramerrez** end with different letters and ending sounds.

Syllables: Count the syllables in a word. Ex.: Gol-den

Match and list words with the same number of syllables. Clap out syllables as beats. Ex.: 1 syllable 2 syllables 3 syllables **bass** = **bass** **tenor** = **ten-or** **soprano** = **so-pra-no**

Phoneme Substitution: Play with the beginning sounds to make silly words. What would a “boprano” sound like? (Also substitute middle and ending sounds.) Ex. **soprano**, **boprano**, **toprano**, **koprano**.

Phoneme Counting: How many sounds in a word? Ex. **sing** = **4**

Phoneme Segmentation: Which sounds do you hear in a word? Ex. **sing = s/i/n/g.**

Reading Skills: Build skills using related educator documents.

Concepts of Print: Sentence structure, punctuation, directionality.

Parts of speech: Noun, verb, adjective, adverb, prepositions.

Vocabulary Lists: Ex. *The Golden Girl of the West*, Opera glossary, Music and Composition terms

Reading Comprehension:

Story Development: Character desires and motivation; Cause and effect: What made this happen?

The sequencing of events, climax, and resolution.

Read:

Opera source material: Puccini's 1910 opera was based on David Belasco's 1905 play, *The Girl of the Golden West*, which in turn was based on real life people and events.

Additional stories relevant to this production: *By the Great Horned Spoon* by Sid Fleishman, *Chang's Paper Pony* by Eleanor Coerr, *Tales from Gold Mountain* by Paul Yee, *Gold Fever!: Tales from the California Gold Rush* by Rosalyn Schanzer, *Seeds of Hope: The Gold Rush Diary of Susanna Fairchild, California Territory 1849* by Kristiana Gregory, *Digger: The Tragic Fate of the California Indians from the Missions to the Gold Rush* by Jerry Stanley, *The Luck of Roaring Camp* by Bret Harte.

Creative writing:

Reinterpret the story by creating a new version using your own characters, time period and setting.

Explore different genres of writing: poetry, song text, libretto, script for media arts, biography, autobiography, short story, historical novel, etc.

Explore literary devices such as the use of point of view, internal/external conflict, repetition of phrases and foreshadowing.

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Analysis and Interpretation: Expository writing, critiques/reviews.

Persuasive Writing: Letter writing, copywriting: advertising, fundraising, press release.

Write about what you would do in Ramerrez's place, or in Minnie's place.

Write about what would happen to the characters if the story continued.

Set the story in a different time and place. Update the dialogue.

LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS

Elements of a Story:

Character, plot, setting, conflict.

Vocabulary:

Reading for understanding using the subtitles on videos and related educator documents.

Genres:

Fantasy vs. Reality, non-fiction, novel, play.

Themes:

Redemption, and the redemptive power of love

Jealousy/Trust/Betrayal

Unrequited love, mutual love

Forgiveness

Changing destiny, fate

Character Actions and Motives: How do characters' actions move story along? What are characters' real motives? Contrasts of character traits drive story forward. Contrast characters of Minnie and her servant as different types of women.

Symbolism/metaphors:

Gold as metaphor for trust; storm in Act II as metaphor for heightened emotions.

The use of the word "mine" as a double-entendre.

Archetypes: Aggressive sheriff, innocent yet tough woman, supportive band of brothers led by sympathetic Sonora, bad boy turned good.

Character Development: Growth & depth beyond expected roles of good and evil. Ex. Ramerrez is redeemed; Minnie stands up for herself; the men learn to forgive.

Alliteration: Recognize the similarities of sounds and rhythmic patterns in the libretto.

Figurative Language: Simile, Metaphor, Hyperbole, Personification, Allegory:

Language style and music reflects emotion of characters, and instrumental sounds or musical phrases can be used symbolize character.

Rance has short, clipped music with short lines.

Ramerrez' music is much more lyrical.

WRITING STRATEGIES**Analysis and Interpretation:**

The Girl of the Golden West production materials: artist biographies, program and program notes, synopsis, expository writing, critiques/reviews, etc.

Persuasive Writing:

Letter writing (Boys writing to parents to persuade them they're ok, or to ask for money; Ramerrez writing to boys for forgiveness; Minnie writing to boys to pardon Ramerrez; Rance writing to Minnie to convince her to marry him)

Copywriting: advertising, fundraising, press release.

Scenes, letters, diary or blog pages can be written from a particular character's point of view; make sure to take relationships between characters into account. Diary pages could focus on how characters convince themselves to do something (Minnie decides to hide Ramerrez)—internal debate.

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Debates between characters. Deliver persuasive speeches, identify tactics used.

Write a monologue with two scenes based on the alternate points of view held by a single character.

Spelling: Spell the names of the characters in *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Facial cues, expressions, gestures can sometimes amplify message being delivered, or can sometimes run contrary to meaning of words (subtext).

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Oral Speaking: Connection between the written words and oral interpretation (recitative and sung), the phrasing and musicality of speech.

Reflection: What did you see, think, hear and feel? Ex. Verbal & written responses to *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Persuasive language: How does Mimi distract Rance to protect Ramerrez?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Giacomo Puccini (composer): biographies, timelines of work.

David Belasco (playwright): biography, timeline of work.

ACTIVITIES

Libretto writing: Adapt *The Girl of the Golden West* to a different time and place.

Story writing: Adapt existing source material; create story/characters. Or write new endings, deleted scenes.

Choose a moment in the story to expand upon. Create your own libretto and music.

Read Belasco play and compare to translation of opera libretto.

Write a letter from one character to another; choose a moment in the story.

Write an “alternate ending,” in which story continues after Minnie and Ramerrez leave camp.

Create a character sketch.

Make a “Wanted” poster for Ramerrez.

Writing activity about what would make you change from a life of crime.

Write diary pages from point of view of gold miners. Write diary pages from point of view of kids who are left behind by gold miner parents.

Write letters home from miners. Write letters miners wrote to attract brides to camp.

Write newspaper articles for miners’ camp.

Write laws for miners’ camp.

Read and report on program articles and reviews. Write your own review of a performance of *The Girl of the Golden West*. Compare and contrast two different versions of *The Girl of the Golden West* available on DVD.

Watch a Western and write a comparison to the opera.

Design a fake facebook or myspace page for a character (exploring avatars—public vs. private persona). Write fake twitter log for characters over the course of 24 hours.

Create written copy: program, poster design, advertising, biography, etc.



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MATHEMATICS

ATTRIBUTES

Comparisons in The Girl of the Golden West

Sorting and Classifying: What characters belong together, which don't, and why?

MEASUREMENT

Use of Standard Units of Measurement in Story & Set Design.

2D & 3D Dimensions: Area, Perimeter, Volume, Scale, Proportion, Ratio.

- Create a set for *The Girl of the Golden West* to scale.
- Design a menu with recipes (with measurements) for Polka Saloon.

Weight: Physical, Metaphorical, Balance.

- Calculate value of different measurements of gold, then vs. now.
- Why is gold valuable?

Time: Passage of time (real & theatrical time), times of day (morning, afternoon and night; yesterday, today, tomorrow; time of everyday events such as dinner & bed time), estimation, reading time, age of characters.

- Look at maps of Sierra Gold Country and surroundings; measure distances from the different locations mentioned in the opera, like Monterey and Sacramento.
- Trace the routes miners took to Gold Country, by sea and land. Measure how long the journeys would have taken by horse or by boat.
- Measure how long mail would take to get from miners to their homes. How did the postal service work?

GEOMETRY

As found The Girl of the Golden West's costume & set design.

Identification of Shapes, Repetition & Pattern, Rhythm & Symmetry.

Planes (Square, Rectangle, Triangle, Circle) & 3D (Cube, Pyramid, Sphere). Positive & Negative Space, Interior & Exterior Space.

NUMBER SENSE

What type of currency was used during the Gold Rush? What were average wages for miners? How did average miner support himself?

What kinds of skills were valued during the Gold Rush? How much would different professions make? Compared to today?

Calculate how much it cost for miners to reach Gold Country.

How much would mining tools have cost?

Calculate how much the boys needed to collect to send the homesick miner home.

What are rules and probabilities of baccarat game/poker game?

Research ransom amounts and calculate how much Ramerrez's ransom would be in today's dollars.

STATISTICS

Chart mortality rate/lifespan of gold miners.

Research statistics on how many miners actually made a living from mining.

ACTIVITIES

Research the history of Wells Fargo Bank.

Research the history of Levi Strauss & Company.

Write instructions on how to pan for gold, with a focus on measurements.

Research claim sites and calculate average area.

Create rules for your own card game.



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Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

SCIENCE

The principals of science used in Faust.

LIFE SCIENCES

Understand what happened to Ramerrez' body when he gets shot; what would have happened to him if he had been hanged.

Research history and use of tobacco and cigars; effect on the body.

What would miners have used to cure illness? How would they have made medicine?

What happens to your body when you fall in love?

What were plants native to Gold Country? What non-indigenous plants are in California now? How did they get here?

What kind of food would miners have found and eaten in Gold Country? How would they preserve it?

THE FIVE SENSES:

Sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.

What are senses involved in experiencing opera?

How do senses develop and decline as you get older?

The loss of what sense would most diminish experience of opera.

PARTS OF THE BODY:

Identification of body parts important to performing. Ex. Diaphragm, larynx, throat, mouth, etc.

Identification of body parts associated with hearing music, how ears work.

Identification of body parts associated with viewing opera, how eyes work.

PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Research science of finding gold and gold mining, how it interacts with geology.

Research mechanics of mining (levers, pulleys); industrial advances miners would have experienced (like bridges, railroads, steamships).

Research history of gunpowder and dynamite.

Research mining: what is mined and how it is mined.

Research effects of mining on the environment/health.

Research properties of gold; compare to other precious metals.

Find gold on the periodic table.

How is fake gold differentiated from real gold?

Research gold in its different purities; what are karats?

Research weather miners would have had to live through in Gold Country.

How did miners waterproof their tents and their clothes?

What are the different sources of light that would have been used in miners' camp?

ACTIVITIES

Research the scientific advances that immigrants brought to Gold Country.

How did the miners use stars for navigation?



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Kindergarten through Grade 12

SOCIAL STUDIES

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Self-Identity.

Family: Immediate & Extended. Caring brother and sister relationship.

Roles of family members in your life and the choices you make.

Time: Past, Present, Future.

Place: Neighborhood, City, State, Continent, World, Universe.

CIVICS

Social Hierarchy: Class, Status. Ex. Sheriff, immigrants.

Types of Government: frontier justice.

Social structure of mining camps.

Political events during Puccini's time.

Labor / Economics: What jobs and occupations were available to men and women in Gold Country? What did average workers in different positions earn? What did women earn compared to men? What were jobs done only by men that are done by women now? What was role of immigrants in labor force?

Role of bar as community meeting place.

GEOGRAPHY

Location of Puccini's birth. Where else did he live?

The Girl of the Golden West's setting: The time period and place of the original opera vs. current production.

Mapping Gold Country during time period of opera.

Map San Francisco then and now.

Map Mexico during time of Gold Rush. Measure the distance from Ramerrez's home in Mexico to Gold Country.

Measure distances from San Francisco to Gold Country; measure distances from homelands of miners to Gold Country.

Create a map that a miner would have been used to record locations of gold veins, other landmarks. Create symbols for landmarks.

Topography of Gold Country.

Study California rivers; where gold was found along rivers. Why is gold found in certain areas?

HISTORY

History & *The Girl of the Golden West*

- Biography of Giacomo Puccini.
- Biography of David Belasco.
- How did the history of California Gold Country influence the creation of *The Girl of the Golden West* and its source material?
- Learn about the time period when Giacomo Puccini lived. What are the differences and similarities to when Puccini lived in Europe and now?

History of California & the Gold Rush:

The California Dream

- Study manifest destiny; myth of the west, the final frontier.
- Research motivation of pioneers; routes they took to the West.
- Research history of property rights and gold claims.
- Research history of innovation in California, from Gold Rush to Silicon Valley.
- Research history of card games. How were games passed on? Compare to games played today.

Gender Roles & Cultural Diversity

- Where did people come from? How did people travel to Gold Rush? Where would they live once they got there? What was mix of cultures/ethnicities like?
- Explore the role of women during this specific time period and throughout history.
- What were roles for women in miners' camps during Gold Rush?
- Origins and evolution of romance and marriage; research marriage during Gold Rush.
- What were American Indian tribes living in Gold Country? What was role of American Indians during Gold Rush? How were they treated?
- Research stereotyping of American Indians in theater.
- Research history of relations between Mexico and California.

Occupations and Trade

- Research historical mining towns in California.
- Research mining technology.
- What kind of tools and supplies would have been available in mining camp?
- What was life like in a mining camp? How do miners' stories in Act I reflect plight of miners?
- What were qualifications for teachers at the time?
- What were schools like in Gold Country? What books would a teacher have used during Gold Rush?
- What was role of missionaries in Gold Country?
- History of fur trade.
- Research development of laws in mining country. What warranted death penalty? What were penalties for different crimes? What is vigilante justice?
- Research history of bandits in the West.
- History of gun/weaponry; history of right to bear arms, gun control.
- Research history of Wells Fargo Bank; role in Gold Rush. Visit Wells Fargo Building in downtown San Francisco.
- Research history of postal service, communication in general.

History of Opera

- How Opera began, history of San Francisco Opera, history of the Adler Fellow Program.

ACTIVITIES

Map settings in which play and opera take place.

Create a card game that would have been typical of the era.

Pick another time period in which to set *The Girl of the Golden West*. Research and design costumes and sets to reflect trends, society at that time.

Write a letter from one character to another using tools available at time of Gold Rush.

Create timelines of events in opera; Belasco's plays; Puccini's operas.

Create an organizational chart of the character relationships in *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Create a backstory for *The Girl of the Golden West*.



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Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

What dances could you do to music of different scenes?

What kinds of dances would you use to represent different characters?

How do you move differently when you're young and old?

What physical qualifications do you need to join the army?

How would army organize itself and move as a group?

MOVEMENT

Walking, dancing, jumping, balancing, leaping, lifting, etc. Ex. Move your body in different ways using the example of each character.

Choreograph dances for selected scenes in *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Explore the pastimes, games and activities played in the mid-19th century.

Mimic movements of miners/mining (climbing).

PHYSICALITY OF PERFORMING

Endurance & strength, posture, breathing techniques.

TEAM-BUILDING

Exercises to move together as a group. Building the ensemble.

Partner dancing, changing partners, partnering exercises, mirroring activities.

Explore social dancing and dance etiquette of Gold Rush: waltz, quadrille, polka.

Tug-of-war.

Team-building games in which students act as teams of miners moving "gold piles" from one place to another; rigging tents.



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Curriculum Connections California Content Standards Kindergarten through Grade 12

HEALTH EDUCATION

The unifying ideas of health literacy are as follows:

- Acceptance of personal responsibility for lifelong health
- Respect for and promotion of the health of others
- An understanding of the process of growth and development
- Informed use of health-related information, products, and services

MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH

Taking care of your body. Ex. What do performers have to do to prepare their body for performing?

Gender roles & body image.

Family life or lack thereof during Gold Rush; effect on miners' emotional health.

Effect of "gold fever" on mental health of miners.

Research miners' mortality rate; effect of mining on health.

Research history of job safety regulations.

Research diseases of the time.

Study miners' hygiene.

What did miners eat? How did it affect their health?

Research processes of treating and preserving food, because of lack of refrigeration and clean water.

How would miners have kept warm in cold winters?

Research state of medicine / dentistry during Gold Rush.

Research different medical techniques/medicines brought by different cultures / ethnicities to Gold Country.

Conflict resolution. Ex. Release of Ramerrez at end.

Violence and danger. Ex. Shooting in Act II.



SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA EDUCATION

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Kindergarten through Grade 12

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Jobs at the Opera.

Explore backgrounds and training of people who work at the Opera.

Organizational chart of San Francisco Opera.

Research famous sopranos and tenors who have played the roles of Minnie and Ramerrez.

What were jobs during Gold Rush? What jobs held by different ethnicities/genders?

What Gold Rush jobs are still done today?

What jobs were involved in getting necessary items to mining camp?



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Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

MUSIC

STORYTELLING & MUSIC: WHAT IS AN OPERA?

Character and plot development through musical themes. ("American Indian" music, comedic music in Act I).

Identify themes for different characters.

Instruments representing characters, repetition and variation of themes.

Key plot points: The composer and librettist determine the placement of arias within the libretto to heighten emotion in the story.

What were instruments used in orchestra during Puccini's time?

What instruments could have been found in a mining camp? What kinds of music?

Listen for musical themes and variations; how do variations elicit different responses?

Listen for counterpoint in duets, especially duet between Ramerrez and Minnie in Act I.

How do singing voices approximate human emotion?

Study history of verismo opera. How does Puccini try to use folk music of the West in opera?

Source material for Opera: Novels (Puccini's *La Bohème*, Tan & Wallace's *The Bonesetter's Daughter*); Films (*The Fly*), Real-life events (Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, Adams' *Nixon in China*); Related genres – Musical Theater (*Sweeney Todd*, *Rent*), Rock Opera (*Tommy*), popular song versions of opera.

VOCABULARY

Musical Structure: Solos, duets, trios, choral numbers. Why are different forms used for different scenes?

Composition: Arias, recitative, overture, incidental music.

Musical Instructions: Tempo, legato; pianissimo; crescendo, etc.

Voice ranges: Soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass-baritone, countertenor, bass.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Research the history of San Francisco Opera, the Adler Fellows program.

Research famous sopranos and tenors who have played the roles of Ramerrez and Minnie.

Giacomo Puccini: Biography, timeline of works, signature sound within genres: sonatas, symphonies, masses and requiem, operas.

ACTIVITIES

Listen to multiple recordings of *The Girl of the Golden West* and study different interpretations.

Learn and memorize songs from *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Create and perform songs for the characters/events of *The Girl of the Golden West* using instruments and voices.

Study score of *The Girl of the Golden West*. Does Puccini use any “American” themes in the opera?

What were types of music prevalent in mining camps? What kind of American musical styles would you use today to write this same story?

Research Gold Rush songs; songs about gold; work songs.

Research “American” sound in music (Gershwin, Copland, folk songs, jazz).

What instruments did different culture/ethnicities bring to Gold Country?

Hold a mock hearing representing both parties, Lloyd Weber and the Puccini estate, debating the charges of plagiarism involving *The Girl of the Golden West* and Andrew Lloyd Weber’s “The Music of the Night” from *Phantom of the Opera*.

VISUAL ARTS

How are line, color, shape, and texture used in costumes and sets of *The Girl of the Golden West*?

COLOR

Symbolism of color; color associated with particular characters.

The emotion of color. Ex. red=passionate, blue=calm, yellow=cheerful.

Personal associations with color.

How do you reveal character traits through the use of color?

Examine contrast of light and dark; use of lighting.

The use of lighting to establish mood and setting.

Symmetry/contrast in character pairings. Ex. Ramerrez/Rance.

SHAPE

The use of shape in character design.

Positive & Negative Space—the stage is a frame.

TEXTURE

Texture: Material use in sets and costumes.

Visual Texture: Pattern and repetition in sets and costumes.

SPACE

Set design: From 2D plans to 3D construction.

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Listen to the music and read the libretto prior to viewing the opera. Choose design elements based on the music and text.

Design paper dolls of characters. Dress them for different eras.

Create illustrations and storyboards outlining the plot of *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Design a production: dioramas, scale models, backdrops, props, costumes.

Design character make-up, costume, sets and props for classroom operas.

Study use of lighting in production design.

Study clothing of Gold Rush period. What materials would have been used?

ACTIVITIES

Free-association drawing to music. Ex. Figure drawings by Degas, posters by Toulouse-Lautrec.

Study portraiture, both photographic and painted/drawn. How do portraits communicate the character of the sitter? Create self-portraits and portraits of *The Girl of the Golden West* characters. Make decisions about how person will be portrayed.

Study history of photography; daguerrotypes used to attract pioneers to the West; Magic Lantern.

Study Native American artworks, designs, textiles of Gold Rush Country.

Use Native American designs to create artworks.

Create a quilt of the opera's story.

Study artists of Gold Rush period. What were influences of different cultures? What materials were used for painting?

Create a miner's sketch journal.

Draw a wanted poster for Ramerrez.

Find contemporary paintings/drawings of mining camps.

Create a deck of cards with images of the West/images of the opera.

Draw a treasure map location gold in mining camp.

Design currency for the mining camp.

Design a coin commemorating the Gold Rush. Ex. California Diamond Jubilee half-dollar

RELATED WORKS OF ART

Study the work of visual artists who have designed performing arts productions: Gerald Scarfe, David Hockney, Julie Taymor, Marc Chagall, Maurice Sendak, Oskar Kokoschka, Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, William Kentridge, Gianni Versace, Bill Viola.

Study the art of George Caleb Bingham, Frederic Remington, and paintings from Oakland Museum & the Crocker Art Museum's joint exhibit "The Art of the Gold Rush!"

Enrico Caruso's caricature of the rehearsals for the world premiere of *La fanciulla del West*

THEATRE

STAGING

Stage vocabulary: Upstage, downstage, levels, blocking.

Practice staging a crowd scene.

Create entrances and exits for different characters in opera; what would their music be?

Theater Exercises: Tableaux, pantomime, improvisation, vocal projection.

Stage etiquette & audience behavior.

Opera Production Team: Director, stage manager, choreographer, designer, diction coach, choreographer, lighting, supernumeraries, etc.

In-House Personnel: Marketing, accounting, ticket takers, ushers etc.

ACTIVITIES

Create vignettes and tableaux of scenes in *The Girl of the Golden West*. Look at contemporary photographs for inspiration.

Research types of theater that might have come to miners' camp.

Research world of theater during time of Gold Rush, both in Gold Country and in the rest of North America.

Research popular stories of theater pieces during this time.

Research history of theater in San Francisco.

Create "deleted scenes" and "alternate endings" for the opera.

Create a show to entertain "boys" in the camp.

Act opera's story through different genres: melodrama, Western, soap opera.

Research source material of *The Girl of the Golden West*: play by David Belasco.

RELATED WORKS OF ART

Paint Your Wagon (1951) The Broadway musical, written by Alan Jay Lerner (lyrics) & Frederick Loewe (music), is set in a California mining camp during the Gold Rush

Stephen Sondheim's musical *Road Show* (2008) tells the story of the adventures of Addison and Wilson Mizner, from the beginning of the 20th century, from the Alaskan Gold Rush to the 1930's Florida real estate boom. The musical was also presented under the names of Gold!, Wise Guys, and Bounce in earlier incarnations.

DANCE

Study dance and creative movement in Stage-Blocking. Ex: Dancing scenes in Act I

Create crowd dances. Study how groups can move together or in contrast in a dance.

Fight Choreography. Ex. Fight in Act II.

ACTIVITIES

Create character dances: mirror dancing—partners and symmetry, with and without touching.

Create dances/movement based on character's emotion; use vocabulary to describe movement. Teach someone to do it.

Interpret emotions through dance. Ex. Joy, fear, sadness.

Interpreting the instruments through dance— improv to music.

Create a dance for scenes that need it. Ex. Act I dance scene.

Choose a dance style that best represents each character.

Explore social dancing and dance etiquette of Gold Rush: polka, quadrille, waltz, square dance, clogging.

Explore American choreographers, such as Agnes de Mille and Martha Graham.

MEDIA ARTS

Explore communication technologies: from smoke signals, pony express, phone, telegraph, and Twitter.

Research how innovations in technology have influenced the development of Opera: Acoustics and Lighting, Audio Recording, Film and Video, the development of Supertitles, Internet.

Learn about technology currently used by SF Opera: technology used in staging, SFO's Media Suite, podcasts, cinemacasts, simulcasts, opera vision, etc.

Explore jobs in the media arts at the Opera.

Learn about experiments in future technology use involving opera, such as the development of Personal Opera @ MIT Media Lab, *Death and the Powers*.

Use television, films, web content to teach media literacy.

Opera & Popular Culture: Cartoons (Bugs Bunny in *What's Opera, Doc?*, *The Rabbit of Seville*); Television (*Sesame Street*); Movies (*Pretty Woman*); Commercials (Nike's 1993 ad *Charles Barkley of Seville*); Event themes (*Nessun Dorma - 1994 World Cup*).

How is opera advertised? Research San Francisco Opera's advertising and media efforts.

RELATED WORKS OF ART

Films & DVD of *The Girl of the Golden West* and other operas, related films

Charlie Chaplin's silent classic, *The Gold Rush* (1925). The Little Tramp goes the Klondike in search of gold and finds it and more.

Girl of the Golden West (1938), a black and white movie starring Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald singing music by Sigmund Romberg and lyrics by Gus Kahn.

The Treasure of the Sierra Madre (1948) Humphrey Bogart, Walter Huston and Tim Holt star in John Huston's 3 time Oscar winning film.

Spaghetti Westerns, such as Sergio Leone's trilogy starring Clint Eastwood, *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964), *For a Few Dollars More* (1965) and *The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly*.

Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (1954)

Paint Your Wagon (1969)

ACTIVITIES

Film and Animation: Explore photographic stopmotion techniques. Ex. Use digital media to create 1-minute scenes from *The Girl of the Golden West*.

Use digital audio to record student readings, musical performances.

Create a 30-second audio spot, a one-minute podcast, and/or a *The Girl of the Golden West* activities website.

Create a public service announcement alerting the public to be on the look out for Ramerrez. Study use of blue screen to put yourselves in different environments like hell.

Create a graphic treatment for the opera's title.