



San Francisco Opera's Wagner's *DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG*

Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

LANGUAGE ARTS

WORD ANALYSIS, FLUENCY, AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Phonics and Phonemic Awareness:

Letter Recognition: Name the letters in a word. Ex. **Meistersinger = M-e-i-s-t-e-r-s-i-n-g-e-r.**

Letter/Sound Association: Name the letters and the beginning and ending sound in a word. **E-v-a**

Match and list words with the same beginning or ending sounds. Ex. **Friedrich** and **Heinrich** have the same ending sound /rich/; but begin with different letters and sounds **Fried** and **Hein**.

Syllables: Count the syllables in a word. Ex.: El-sa

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, topoprano, kopoprano.**

Phoneme Counting: How many sounds in a word? Ex. **bell = 3**

Phoneme Segmentation: Which sounds do you hear in a word? Ex. **bell = b/e/l/.**

Reading Skills: Build skills using the subtitles on the video and related educator documents.

Examine vocabulary in source material texts: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* libretto.

Opera vocabulary: soprano, mezzo-soprano, bass, prelude, dramaturg.

Metaphors: birds, shoes, songs, the nightwatchman, etc.

Make a list of words that evoke the myths of knights, whether through meaning or sound. Are there languages that reflect the speech of the knights (i.e. courtly language)?

Find words in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* that are unfamiliar and find definitions and roots.

Find analogies in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Concepts of Print: Sentence structure, punctuation, directionality.

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

Vocabulary Lists: Ex. *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Opera glossary, Music and Composition terms such as leitmotif.

READING COMPREHENSION

Story Development (What's the beginning, middle and end?): Character desires and motivation; Cause and effect: What made this happen?

Creative writing: Interpret the story and create a new version. Create your own characters that are missing from the opera (family at home?)

The sequencing of events, climax, and resolution.

Examine poetry inspired by the real Hans Sachs of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Read version of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* legend; watch DVD of opera. Compare.

Examine how themes of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* compare to themes from Shakespeare, particularly *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Falstaff*.

Reflect on your viewing of the opera by sharing your questions about it with the other students.

Read: Opera source material: Source material for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, libretto, letters from Wagner, biographies, etc.

Read sections of the libretto. Write a brief synopsis based on the libretto.

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

Types of text: Poetry, fairy tale, song text, libretto, script for media arts, biography, etc.

CREATIVE WRITING

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

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

Creative writing: Interpret the story and create a new version. Create your own characters or change the opera's time period and setting. Ex. Hans Sachs = an aging rock star on tour.

Could you transform this story to another environment? Where would it make most sense?

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

Analysis and Interpretation: Expository writing, critiques/reviews.

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

Write dialogue for two of the characters in the opera. Each character only says one line, but uses different inflections each time he/she says it.

Write a different ending for the opera.

Write or draw a deleted scene for the opera; a scene we hear about, but don't see.

Keep journals from the point of view of the characters during the events of the opera.

Write parrot poems from the point of view of the characters. Parrot poems are conversational poems in which partners write each line in turn.

Write a "me" poem for each of the characters: begin the poem with "I am" and list the characteristics of each person in separate phrases.

Rewrite a scene from the opera, switching the genders of the characters. How does the scene change? Rewrite a scene, changing the ethnicities. How does it change?

Rewrite libretto using today as a setting. Use contemporary characters: who would be Eva today? Walther? Hans Sachs?

What happens to Walther and Eva after the opera ends? Write a sequel for the opera.

Students respond to a letter from Eva or Walther asking them for advice.

Write a passage expressing several characters' inner thoughts at the same time.

Writing exercise in which feelings are expressed like those in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* arias.

Create a storyboard of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* as a soap opera.

Examine how other writers have been influenced by *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

What's the value and harm in competition and learning?

What is a song? What are the forms of a song?

Besides a singing competition what else is this opera about?

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.

What is a prelude?

Use of chorus in opera. Compare to a Greek Chorus, commenting on action. Play segments of the opera; ask students to journal after watching the segments.

Genre: Comedy versus Tragedy/Seria - Identify the comic/serious parts of the opera

Chart out the elements of the plot.

Read a synopsis of Act I; how would you complete this story?

How do authors draw on works by others? How does Wagner use the work of the real life Hans Sachs?

Themes: Examine the themes of the opera:

Love and Honor. Self-pride

The Love of Art. Does the Art stand apart from the artist?

Class structure, Nationalism

Bullying vs. Social Support

Female agency/independence/marriage

Aging and Human Frailty – A Fall from Grace

What is Mastery? How do you define mastery? What skills are the meistersingers attempting to master? What are other stories that revolve around mastery?

Perfection of Performance/Fear of Failure – How does fear of failure effect students/learners? How does it affect performance?

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 Walther and Beckmesser as different types of men, and Eva and Magdalene as different types of women.

What archetypal characters can you find in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*?

What are Hans Sachs motives?

What is Beckmesser trying to achieve by winning the competition?

What are the motives of the other master singers?

How is Eva controlled? Who is she controlled by? Explore the nuances of the characters in the opera. How do the characters go about getting what they want in the opera?

Examine the relationships in the opera, i.e. between Walther, David, Beckmesser, Hans Sachs and the other Meistersingers. How do they interact? How do they feel about each other?

Analyze how an author develops and contrasts the point of view of different narrators or characters in a text.

Pick your favorite character in the opera and describe him/her. Write a letter from his/her point of view to another character.

Character Development: Analyze the characters in the opera. What motivates their actions? What are their main traits? Do they change over the course of the opera? Do the characters grow beyond their expected roles?

Symbolism/metaphors: What might the singing competition be a metaphor/symbol of?

Who were the ones singing in the competition? Why is it exclusive?

Explore the symbolism of Nature throughout the opera – What do the teachers represent? Who are do the singers represent in nature?

What were Wagner's connections to nature?

Popular appeal vs. elite

Raw talent vs. refined talent

Why is Beckmesser rejected and not invited back in? What does that mean?

Archetypes: Characters such as the noble Knight, the naïve beauty, and the wise mentor.

Explore Walter and Eva's role – how are they the typical hero and damsel?

Explore each character's archetype.

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.

WRITING STRATEGIES

Analysis and Interpretation:

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg production materials: artist biographies, program and program notes, synopsis, expository writing, critiques/reviews, etc.

What other themes can you identify in the opera?

Why a singing competition and not an art competition?

What is the role of Hans Sachs in the opera?

Why do things revolve around Hans Sachs?

What other sectors of practice might the *Meistersingers* be compared to?

Can you identify the moral issues in the opera?

What does it mean to create a light work during a dark time?

Censorship - Should the life and values of a composer prohibit the sharing of a work of art?

Does an opera company have a responsibility to address the moral compass of the composer?

How much do you really know about an artist and does it matter?

What is the value of the work of art that doesn't reflect the values of your time?

Explore the issue of Nostalgia – how is it represented in the opera? How did it play in the life of Wagner?

Persuasive Writing:

Write a compelling argument to stage/present *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* – or not.

Writing exercise in which feelings are expressed like those in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg's* arias.

Write a passage expressing several characters' inner thoughts at the same time.

Examine how other writers have been influenced by *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

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

Persuasive writing: create posters, advertisements for one of the characters.

Write persuasive letters from Eva to Walther, etc.

Keep journals from the point of view of the characters during the events of the opera. A different character writes every day.

Research different source material for the *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg story*; how do they differ? What do they share in common?

Write dialogue for two of the characters in the opera. Each character only says one line, but uses different inflections each time he/she says it.

Retell the story from different characters' points of view: Eva or Hans Sachs.

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 *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

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

Watch different versions of the opera on DVD and write reviews. Read example reviews first.

Examine *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* as a story about a guild of apprentices and masters. Compare to other heroic journey sagas, e.g. from mythology, current novels or comic books. How has the hero's journey evolved?

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

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

Act out main events of the story, in tableaux or longer scenes. Improvise. Give small groups different scenes, and then act out in succession.

Write dialogue for two of the characters in the opera. Each character only says one line, but uses different inflections each time he/she says it.

Reflection: What did you see, think, hear and feel? Ex. Verbal & written responses to *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Persuasive language: How does David try to explain the rules of songwriting to Walther?

Write two speeches about the same thing; write one to be delivered to a friend, and one to be delivered to a person of authority. How does your language differ?

Conduct a debate between two characters in the opera.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Richard Wagner (composer & librettist): biographies, timelines of work.

ACTIVITIES

Create a character sketch.

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

Create Reader's Theater of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Interview characters in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; write a news story based on the interviews.

Write a Dear Abby letter from one of the characters in the opera, and Abby's response.

Using a letter from one character to another in the opera; edit the letter down to a tweet or Facebook post.

Story writing: Adapt existing source material; create story/characters.

Libretto writing: Adapt *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (existing source material) or create a new story/characters.

Create a news report about *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* using HyperStudio.

Write a blog post from the point of view of one character.

Write a prequel for the opera about Beckmesser's or Magdalena's lives.

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

Read and report on feature articles from the opera program for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Create a board game for the opera, similar to Chutes and Ladders reflecting the characters' ups and downs.

Create your own singing competition, a la *American Idol*. How will you determine who will be The Meistersinger?



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MATHEMATICS

ATTRIBUTES

Comparisons in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

Sorting and Classifying: What belongs, what does not belong, 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 *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* to scale.

Weight: Physical, Metaphorical, Balance.

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.

What units of measure were used during the time of the opera?

What is a tick system? What is it based on? Where do you see it in the opera? How would they judge a competition? What would the rubric be? How would you evaluate someone on a competition? Rating system?

Measure distances between places mentioned in the opera. Use map scales to convert inches to miles.

Research Wagner's salary for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. How did it compare to other salaries of the day?

What currency was used during Wagner's day? How much was it worth compared to today's money?

Estimate how many people are in large ensemble scenes.

What units of measure were used during the Wagner's time?

Create timeline for Wagner's life, what's happening in other places at the same time.

Estimate how many people are in large ensemble scenes. Taking into account all the people on stage, how much would such a scene cost?

Count the number of people who need to be paid when putting on an opera; use cast and company listings in the program to calculate.

Create a budget for a production of the opera. Students are responsible for accomplishing production and staying within budget.

GEOMETRY

As found Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg's character, 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.

Build a scale model of a set for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. What materials and what quantities would you need to build the set?

Build a scale model of a stage for the singing competition that could accommodate all of the Meistersingers. Take proportions into account.

Create analogies between polygons and different ensembles in the opera (i.e. a trio is a triangle, a quintet is a pentagon).

What kinds of geometry would have been required to build a boat? Volume of boat, displacement, etc.?

NUMBER SENSE

Formulas & calculations: Addition, subtraction, multiplication, division.

More, less, or same as.

Concept of zero (absences, disappearances. Ex. rests/silence in music.

Ordering & sequencing.

Recognizing and creating numerical patterns. Ex. beats, ABA pattern in music.

Survey taking: tallying and graphing.

Predictions.

STATISTICS

What are the statistics for singers entering and competing for the title of Meistersinger?

ACTIVITIES

Create your own singing competition and come up with your own evaluating rubric.

Research remonetizing formula; how do economists determine how much money was worth then vs. now?

Build a scale model of a set for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Specify your materials and estimate the quantities and costs of the materials that you will use to build your model.

Design and play a board game based on the opera.

Create costume patterns for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Use yourself as a size model and design the patterns to fit you.



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SCIENCE

The principals of science used in Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg.

THE FIVE SENSES:

Sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell. What senses do you use while watching opera?

Try closing your eyes and listening to other students speak or sing. Do you recognize them? Do you recognize them when they're singing at the same time as other students?

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.

Examine the science of men and women and psychological and physical differences.

How does the body react in times of stress like those that occur in the opera?

THE ELEMENTS

Fire, Water, Earth, Metal, Air, Wood.

LIFE SCIENCE

How does the body react in times of stress like those that occur in the opera?

PHYSICS

Sound: Voice, Instruments, Acoustics, Amplification, Recording.

Concepts of Gravity, Time & Space.

ACTIVITIES

Research the scientific discoveries of Wagner's time; what would he have known about the world?

What would a scientist be like during Wagner's time? How are they different from scientists today?

Explore the characters' psychological motivations.



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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.

What are examples of modern day singing competitions?

What are examples of competition that students engage with in school?

Rituals in opera. Define the word ritual. What are the rituals in the opera? What are rituals you practice? Why do we have rituals?

How can this story be applied to your own life? What other personal connections can you make?

CIVICS

Social Hierarchy: Class, Status. Ex. The Meistersingers, villagers. How is class indicated by the music, the costumes and other elements in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*?

Political events during Wagner's time.

What are the rules of the Meistersinger competition?

Would Hans Sachs have been a good leader of Nürnberg?

What makes a city great? Do the arts make a city great?

Research how your city is funding the arts.

Imagine a day without art...

Write an artist statement regarding the arts in your city.

What has art taught you?

GEOGRAPHY

The Opera's setting: Where is this place? What is this culture?

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

Where is Nürnberg?

What country or state was Nurnberg in during Wagner's time?

Map places mentioned in the opera.

Draw a map of mid-16th century Nürnberg. Change the proportions so that you have to make it larger or smaller using scale.

Draw a map of Europe or Germany during Wagner's time. Compare it to a current map.

Review the cast list for this production of the opera; where do the singers come from?

Trace Wagner's travels. Draw a map showing the different places where he lived.

Map the locations where *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* has been performed. Use Google Maps.

HISTORY

During what time period is *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* set?

Date when Wagner was born. Time period when Wagner lived. What are the differences and similarities to when Wagner lived in America and now?

What was happening in Germany when the libretto was written? What were the social structures in Germany at the time?

Research development of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. How do new operas get made today?

Research reception of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

What is a guild? How did the guilds operate?

Learn more about the economics of a guild - Planet Money: What A 16th Century Guild Teaches Us About Competition <http://www.npr.org/sections/money/2012/03/27/149484066/the-tuesday-podcast-what-a-16th-century-guild-teaches-us-about-competition>

Was there a guild of master singers? If so, where?

Who were the master singers? Why were only they allowed to sing?

What was the role of women in the time of the Meistersingers? Were women allowed to compete?

Research the role of women in the guilds.

Trace the history of master singers.

What kind of laws were established to protect the rights of workers during the time of the Meistersingers?

Why did a singing competition exist? What does it say about the culture of the city/town?

What were the social/status structure of the town and singing competition?

Were there other places in history that had singing competition?

Research the history of women in music. Research the achievement of nineteen-year-old composer Nadia Boulanger, who was the first to be awarded the Prix de Rome in 1913 for her musical composition *Faust et Hélène*, which incorporated Wagnerian leitmotifs from *Tristan und Isolde*.

Research and create a timeline sharing the history of Nürnberg.

Create a Venn diagram: what was true about the time of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, what is true about our time, and what overlaps?

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

ACTIVITIES

Assign different topics from the time of the opera to small groups, and have the students present to each other: money and trade, social structures, government, military, the arts, etc.

Map settings in which play and opera take place.

How do people win in this opera? What do they think they have gained when they win? What is their own personal concept of winning? Create a board game or card game that would have been typical of the era involving the characters from *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Pick another time period in which to set *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Research and design costumes and sets to reflect trends, society at that time.

Write a letter from one character to another using the writing materials used at the time of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*

Create timelines of events in opera; Wagner's operas.

Create an organizational chart of the character relationships in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Researching the backstory or the story that comes after *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Research the development and reception of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, the play and the opera.

Why would an artist be commissioned to write an opera? How do new operas get made today?

Create your own guild. How will you distinguish your guild from another? What are your guild agreements?



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PHYSICAL EDUCATION

MOVEMENT

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

What would dances of the period have looked like?

What level of fitness would be required of a knight?

Practice dancing to music from the opera. What music selections lend themselves to dancing?

PHYSICALITY OF PERFORMING

Endurance & strength, posture, breathing techniques.

Explore the mechanics of singing

TEAM-BUILDING

Research the benefits of choral singing.

Play number games, where students have to gather in groups of two, three, and so on. The object is to get together as quickly as possible. They can also be instructed to create pictures with their bodies, or move in unison.

Construct relays around relationships between characters.

Research the science of singing. What happens to your brain and body while singing?

How does singing lift you up? What are the physical and emotional benefits of singing?



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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.

Dealing with emotions, stress. Ex. Explore from the point of view of each character.

Family issues. Social pressures.

Conflict resolution. Ex. How do the characters resolve their problems with each other? How don't they?

Examine the scenarios in the opera where people have choices; what kinds of decisions do they make and could they have been better?

How do the characters in the opera communicate with each other? Could they have improved their relationships through empathy?

What pressures act on the characters in the opera? How do they respond?

What are the benefits and stressors for participants in a competition?

Research the science of singing. What happens to your brain and body while singing?

How does singing lift you up? What are the physical and emotional benefits of singing?



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CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Assign jobs from the opera to students in the classroom. Who would be Walther? Who would be Hans Sachs? What would be the most coveted jobs? What would be the most important jobs? How are jobs different now from then?

How did people get jobs in Wagner's time? How are jobs different now from then?

What are the jobs of the characters in the opera? What are the skills required for those jobs? Which of these jobs are still found today?

Examine jobs during the time of the opera in Nürnberg (Nüremberg) during the middle of the 16th century.

How would people do work differently in Wagner's time? How would they be limited by available technology? What kinds of skills did they need that they don't need today?

What is a guild? What is a master craftsman? What is an apprentice?

How did the master singers learn how to sing?

Where could you get training in modern day for a singing competition?

What was the career pathway of these master singers?

Research the career of a real life "mastersinger." Did they have a "Hans Sachs" in their life?

Research the careers of opera singers who have played the roles in *Die Meistersinger*.

Assign jobs for the production of the opera to different students; each has to present a concept for their part of the design. Create an evaluation rubric for their job performance, including creativity, presentation skills, budget management.

Jobs at the Opera. Who are the professionals outside the opera who make the opera happen? Police, fire, caterers, etc.

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

Organizational chart of San Francisco Opera.



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VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

MUSIC

STORYTELLING & MUSIC: WHAT IS AN OPERA?

Character and plot development through musical themes. What is the difference between major and minor keys and how do changes between keys help tell the story?

How does orchestral music enhance what characters are singing? How does it act as another character?

Music as another character in the opera. Compare to film scores that foreshadow or illustrate the action. John Williams, composer of well-known film themes such as *Star Wars*, was influenced by Wagner.

Examine the prelude; how does it foreshadow the story that we will soon see?

How does music associated with a particular character enhance their class status?

How does orchestral music communicate a character's state of mind? Set a mood?

How do instruments represent characters? Identify 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.

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.

Composition: Arias, recitative, overture, incidental music. Identify characters who have arias in the opera.

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

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

Research traditional instruments like a harpsichord that would have been used in Wagner's time.

What is a prelude?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

History of San Francisco Opera, the Adler Fellows program.

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

Research other musicians working earlier or at the same time as Wagner; how is he different from everyone else? How does his music fit into the history of music?

How are Wagner's operas similar and different from operas written in earlier times?

Explore music notation and how it's created – rhythm, melodies, 'tick marks', etc.

Research the works of Hans Sachs and the mastersingers of Nuremberg.

Research the works of German lyric poet Walther von der Vogelweide, named by Walter von Stolzing as his teacher in poetry.

ACTIVITIES

Listen to multiple recordings of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and study different interpretations.

Learn and memorize songs from *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Write themes, motifs for each character; start by writing themes for things in students' everyday lives.

Choose a piece of music from the opera; write a story for that music. (Show a clip of Disney's *Fantasia* first.)

Compare different productions of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; how do different singers, orchestras and/or conductors make you see the story in a different way?

Play the introductory passages for each character for students before they know the story of the opera; have them respond to each piece of music, then see how it matches up to the story.

Create and perform songs for the characters/events of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* using instruments and voices.

Hold your own Meistersinger Competition. Determine the criteria for judging. Who will get to vote?

Compose your own "Prize Song."

Walther says that his teacher in music were the birds and nature itself. Write a song inspired by bird song.

After seeing the opera, write a critique of the music. Focus on how the music communicates the mood, the characters, etc.

Graph out characters in the opera; while watching a clip of the opera, fill out chart describing look, movement, voice of each character. How does the director tell the story through these details?

*Example: Applying the Visual & Performing Arts (VAPA)
Music Content Standards to Wagner's *DIE MEISTERSINGER*

GRADE 6

Music 4.0 Aesthetic Valuing

Analyze and Critically Assess

4.1 Develop criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of musical performances and compositions, including arrangements and improvisations, and apply the criteria in personal listening and performing.

Derive Meaning

4.2 Explain how various aesthetic qualities convey images, feeling, or emotion.

4.3 Identify aesthetic qualities in a specific musical work.

Connections and Applications

5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Connecting and Applying What Is Learned in Music to Learning in Other Art Forms and Subject Areas and to Careers

Students apply what they learn in music across subject areas. They develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication, and management of time and resources that contribute to lifelong learning and career skills. They also learn about careers in and related to music.

5.1 Describe how knowledge of music connects to learning in other subject areas.

Lesson: Watch parts of a DVD of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and pay close attention to the credits given for singers, conductor, orchestral musicians, designer, director, stage crew, etc. Discuss the many careers that are cross-overs between music and related fields.

GRADE 7

1.6 Describe larger musical forms (e.g. canon, fugue, suite, ballet, opera, oratorio).

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgments About Works of Music

Students critically assess and derive meaning from works of music and the performance of musicians according to the elements of music, aesthetic qualities, and human responses.

Analyze and Critically Assess

4.1 Use criteria to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of musical performances and compositions.

4.2 Apply criteria appropriate for the style or genre of music to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations by oneself and others.

Derive Meaning

4.3 Compare and contrast the differences between one performance of a specific musical work and another performance of the same work.

VISUAL ARTS

How are line, color, shape, and texture used in costumes and sets of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*?

LINE

Use of line qualities: soft or hard, wavy or angular, silly spirals.

COLOR

Symbolism of color; color associated with particular characters.

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

Personal associations with color.

Revealing character traits through the use of color—how do the characters' costumes, including fabrics and colors, reflect their status?

The use of lighting to establish mood and setting.

Symmetry/contrast in character pairings: Walther/Eva, David/Magdalena.

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. How is texture used to convey status?

SPACE

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

LIGHT

The use of lighting to establish mood and setting.

Examine contrast of light and dark; use of lighting.

The use of lighting to establish mood and setting.

How does time of day affect the lighting and the mood on the stage?

How are shadows and shading used in the opera to convey meaning?

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.

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 the time and setting for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. What materials would have been used?

ACTIVITIES

Look at the designs for the sets of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; would you design the sets in the same ways?

Design sets and costumes for a production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* set in a different time and place of your choosing. Make sure the costumes reflect the characters.

Create posters and advertisements for the opera, or for a particular character in the opera.

Create dioramas of the story of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Create portraits of the characters based on portraiture of the period. Research portraiture of the period.

Explore the history of typefaces; design the title in an appropriate typeface.

Create illustrations and storyboards outlining the plot of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Free-association drawing to music. Ex. Maurice Sendak's *Fantasy Sketches*.

After seeing the opera, come up with your design for a production of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Pitch it to the class; class votes on whether to give you the money for the production. Budget. Based on social studies lessons for the year (i.e. groups could set opera in different time periods/location).

Costume design:

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

Puppetry: Create your own version of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* using puppets (paper bags, stick puppets, shadow puppets, marionettes, and bunraku).

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

Listen to audio-only examples prior to viewing the opera. Choose design elements based on the music and text.

Draw silhouettes of characters; draw characters in other styles, like anime.

Compare two different filmed versions of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; which visualization is more effective and why?

RELATED WORKS OF ART

Seeing Titian's 'Assumption of the Virgin' (1516-1518) Wagner was inspired... "*the extraordinary loftiness gave me an aesthetic thrill ... so I decided to compose Meistersinger ... in music there is nothing so accomplished.*"

Illustrated children's books of Wagner's operas and other operas.

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.

THEATRE

STAGING

Stage vocabulary: Upstage, downstage, levels, blocking.

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

Examine storyline, character development through theater games (similar to writing exercises in ELA connections).

Explore different tones/feelings in monologues vs. dialogues vs. crowd scenes.

Explore soliloquies in theater, movies, etc.

Explore mad scenes in theater, movies, etc.

How does the opera mark the passage of time? How does the audience know time has passed between acts?

How has *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* been portrayed in other theatrical works?

How would you tell the story of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in a different theatrical style, like slapstick?

How do performers move onstage differently than offstage? How do they have to move so that the audience can translate their movements?

Practice movement required for crowd scenes. How do individuals act like individuals in a crowd scene?

How do the performers act when they're singing their thoughts vs. singing to each other?

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

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

Act out scenes about the themes from the opera: revenge, friendship and loyalty, etc.

Create props required by the opera.

Write a soliloquy for Hans Sachs.

Create movement and gestures to react to particular lines of the libretto.

Create movement to react to particular musical moments.

Create movement and gestures to react to particular lines of the libretto and to particular musical moments.

Practice moving as a large ensemble.

Practice acting a convincing death scene.

DANCE

Dance and Creative Movement in Stage-Blocking. Ex: wedding scene.

Research dances of the period. How do they relate to the dances of today?

How is dance incorporated into the opera, into the music of the opera? How are dances used in operas?

How is age and gender communicated through the way performers move in a dance?

How have modern choreographers used stories such as *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*?

What are the roles of choreographers, dance captains and dancers?

ACTIVITIES

Character Dances: Mirror dancing—partners and symmetry.

Match movement with vocabulary. Ex. glide, slither, leap, tremble.

Interpret emotions through dance. Ex. Joy, fear.

Interpreting the instruments through dance— improv to music.

Work with media arts students to create a ballet with projected backgrounds.

Create dances to your favorite parts of the opera.

Choose a dance style that best represents each character. Ex. Walther and Eva. Choreograph movement in which the characters relate to each other.

Show how characters' movements change when they're in different situations.

MEDIA ARTS

Watch DVD of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and other operas. Watch different productions and compare.

Watch television programs (*American Idol*, *The Voice*) documentaries (Singing the Story: The Lotte Lenya Competition) and movies about singing competitions. (*Pitch Perfect*) What is the appeal of singing competitions?

Learn about projectors and projections, various ways to project light. Create media that can be projected. Explore how images can influence mood.

Explore ways to explore negative space through media.

Create media pieces inspired by *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Research clips of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* found on the Internet.

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.

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.

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

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*).

ACTIVITIES

Film and Animation: Explore photographic stopmotion techniques. Ex. Use digital media to create 1-minute scenes from *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Create video interviews of various characters.

Create podcasts from the points of view of various characters.

Create a poster to advertise a performance of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. What information needs to be included? What typeface would be appropriate?

Create a montage for *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*.

Use digital audio to record student readings, musical performances.

Create a 30-second audio spot, a one-minute podcast, and/or a *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* activities website.

Create a fake blog or Facebook page for one of the characters.

Create YouTube video testimonials for characters in the opera.