



San Francisco Opera's

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Getty's *Usher House* and Debussy's *La Chute de la Maison Usher*

Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

SOCIAL STUDIES

PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Self-Identity & Cultural Identity.

Family (Immediate & Extended), Friends & Community.

Time: Past, Present, Future.

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

Draw your own family tree. Compare with the family in *The Fall of The House of Usher*.

CIVICS

Social Hierarchy: Class, Status. Ex. royalty, servants. How is class indicated by the music, the costumes and other elements in *Lucia di Lammermoor*?

Types of Government: Democracy.

What is the class structure in *The House of Usher*? Upper social class or aristocracy? Where do you think the family in *The House of Usher* falls, and how did that change with the madness of the house? Do most haunted houses come from aristocratic families?

Political events during Debussy's time. What was the political climate in America during the time of the story?

Labor / Economics: What jobs and occupations were available to men and women?

What do average workers in different positions earn?

GEOGRAPHY

The House of Usher setting: The time period and place of the opera vs. the play.

Mapping America during time period of opera.

Where is Boston, Massachusetts on the map?

It is said that *The Fall of The House of Usher* was inspired by a real house, located on Lewis Wharf in Boston. Find the location on Google Maps.

Location of Debussy and Poe's birth. Where else did they live?

HISTORY

Research the Camerata, a group that was founded during the Renaissance and created opera.

Explore the life of Debussy. How many operas did he write?

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

How was Debussy influenced by American Literature? How did Poe influence American Literature?

How many years apart did Debussy and Getty compose their operas?

Research the life of Gordon Getty and the Getty family

Who is the most important character in *Usher House*? Roderick or Edgar Allan Poe? Explain your choice.

Research development of *The Fall of The House of Usher*. How do new operas get made today?

Research reception of *The Fall of The House of Usher*, the book and the operas.

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

Research the history of opera and opera patrons. Is opera really an elite art form?

ACTIVITIES

Map settings in which play and opera take place.

Create timelines of events in opera.

Create an organizational chart of the characters in *The Fall of The House of Usher*.

Create a backstory for *The Fall of The House of Usher*.