



San Francisco Opera's Donizetti's *DON PASQUALE*

Curriculum Connections California Content Standards Kindergarten through Grade 12

LANGUAGE ARTS

WORD ANALYSIS, FLUENCY, AND VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Vocabulary

- Name origins: What do all of the names mean and how do they relate to the character? Sofronia (Greek meaning: "sensible, prudent"), Malatesta, Ernesto, Norina, Don Pasquale.
Are there characters in other stories who have names starting with "mal-"
What is the meaning of the prefix? Are they typically bad characters? How would you describe Doctor Malatesta?
- Idioms: Top of the world; bright as a button, wed in haste, other popular expressions
- Vocabulary Lists: Ex. *Don Pasquale*, Opera glossary, Music and Composition terms.

Phonics and Phonemic Awareness:

Letter Recognition: Name the letters in a word. Ex. **door** = **d-o-o-r**.

Letter/Sound Association: Name the letters and the beginning and ending sound in a word. Ex. **doctor** > beginning sound "**d**" = /**d**/ > ending sound "**r**" = /**r**/

Match and list words with the same beginning or ending sounds. Ex. **moon** and **maid** have the same beginning letter "**m**" and sound /**m**/; but **moon** and **maid** end with different letters and ending sounds. **love** and **lose** also end differently.

Syllables: Count the syllables in a word. Patter singing of Malatesta and Don Pasquale.

Match and list words with the same number of syllables. Clap out syllables as beats.

Ex.: wife (wife) 1 syllable marry (mar-ry) 2 syllables notary (not-a-ry) 3 syllables

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. **bell** = 3.

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

Use of alliteration, particularly with Malatesta and Don Pasquale's patter song.

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

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

Concepts of Print: Sentence structure, punctuation, directionality.

READING COMPREHENSION

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

Explore the different ways of narrating a story.

Creative writing: Interpret the story and create a new version. Put your own twist on the characters.

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

Read: Source material for *Don Pasquale*, *Don Pasquale* libretto, letter from Donizetti, biographies, etc.

LITERARY RESPONSE AND ANALYSIS

Elements of a Story: Character, plot, setting, conflict. Map out story arc.

Characters:

- Archetypes/Stock characters/Commedia dell arte: Hero, heroine, trickster, grumpy old man, the “confirmed bachelor”
- What are characters’ defining traits?
- Character Development: Do you see character development seen within the story arc? Are there moments of vulnerability when the disguises drop and characters reveal their true intentions and motives?
- Character Actions and Motives: Are any of these characters moral? Admirable? Classically flawed?
How did Pasquale get his wealth?
Why isn’t Ernesto in on the plot from the beginning?
What was in this for Malatesta?
Old man marrying a young women – How often do we see an old woman marrying a young man in media? What is each person gaining from this arrangement?
Why was Pasquale so quick to accept the outcome of this plot and bless the marriage in the end?
What is the moral of this story? What do you think it is? What is a better moral of this story? How would you end it differently?
- Themes: Jealousy, greed, trickery, disguise, love and lust, wealth, morality
- Romance, love vs. desire, sincerity vs. bravado, love triumphs over all challenges
- What is a man? What kind of men do Ernesto and Don Pasquale and Malatesta represent?
- Genres: Opera buffo, romantic comedy, sitcom.
- Is *Don Pasquale* a straight comedy, or is it a romance? Talk about Donizetti’s ability to mix drama and comedy.

Sequence of Events: Cause and effect: Don Pasquale’s will not allow Ernesto marry Norina.

Vocabulary: Reading for understanding using the subtitles on the video and related educator documents.

Point of View: Identify first, second and third person speeches. Define fourth wall (asides).

Place: The setting of an opera can be changed (example: Rome > New York City)

Alliteration: Recognize the similarities of sounds and rhythmic patterns. Ex. Don Pasquale and Malatesta’s patter.

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

WRITING

Creative Writing

Plot – Talk about instances where you have been involve in an plot like this

- What would the sequel look like? What do you think happens next after the abrupt ending? What would be the prequel? Why is Pasquale so grumpy? How did Norina get her wealth?
- Writing letters between characters. Choose a moment in the story to write a letter about. Norina drops a letter – what happens when letters/text messages/emails get into the wrong hands? What could have gone wrong?
- Create a diary for a character.
- Create backstories for characters.
- Write character CV's.
- Write about story from point of view of a household servant.
- Create a social media profile for each of these characters and how would they interact with each other?
- Where do we find lists? Grocery lists, list poems. Create a list of Norina's demands for Don Pasquale.

Persuasive writing

- How does Malatesta convince everyone to go through with his plot and convince Don Pasquale to marry "his sister" Sofronia?
- Write a letter from Ernesto to Norina, persuading her to elope.
- Letter writing, copywriting, advertising, fundraising, press release for the opera.

Analysis and Interpretation:

- Expository writing, critiques/reviews.
- Poetry, fairy tale, song text, libretto, script for media arts, biography, program article, synopsis, etc.

WRITTEN AND ORAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS

Spelling: Spell the names of the characters in *Don Pasquale*.

Metaphors, symbolism. Doors and chairs, ladder, moon. The inward and outward facing set.

LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Explore the rhythm of speech. Try to speak quickly and still be understood. (ex. Don Pasquale and Malatesta's enunciation in their patter duet.)

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

Deliver a persuasive speech for Ernesto.

Reflection: What did you see, think, hear and feel? (ex. Verbal & written responses to *Don Pasquale*.)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gaetano Donizetti, Composer, Librettist: Biography, timeline of works.

When and where was the opera first performed? (1843 at Theater Italien in Paris)

Who wrote the libretto? (Giovanni Ruffini as well as the composer) What was it based on? (a libretto by Angelo Anelli for Stefano Pavesi's opera *Ser Marcantonio* written in 1810)

What was the controversy about the writing of the libretto? (Ruffani refused to let his name be put on it as Donizetti had changed it so much.) Was this a form of plagiarism? What is plagiarism and what are the consequences?

Was the opera successful? It was an immediate success. It remains one of the most popular of Donizetti's operas. It is frequently performed.

Where is the opera set? (Rome) When? Early 19th century

ACTIVITIES

Create a character sketch. Introduce character to classmates.

Write characters' CV's, backstories.

Libretto writing: Adapt *Don Pasquale* or create a new story/characters.

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

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

Write a character's diary; fake Facebook page, fake Twitters.

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

Read and report on Feature Articles.

DON PASQUALE OVERVIEW with QUESTIONS

Characters:

Don Pasquale is a classically flawed character. He is an elderly bachelor (almost 70), wealthy stubborn and vain. He does not want to let Ernesto marry the woman he loves because she is poor. If he marries Norina, DP won't let him inherit his fortune. DP has money and social status.

Dr. Malatesta: Don Pasquale's physician, who is the mastermind of the whole joke. He gets DP to think a young woman would marry him.

Ernesto is Don Pasquale's nephew. Malatesta is helping him get what he wants. Ernesto has social status but no money.

Norina is also Sofronia, when she "marries" DP. She also has social status but no money.

Act I

Overture begins Act I. What is an overture? What is the purpose? How does this overture make you feel? (excitement, anticipation)

Scene I opens in a room in Don Pasquale's house. Don Pasquale is impatient to see his bride. He sings of all the qualities his wife will have (pretty as an angel, innocent, ingenious, kind) **Does such a woman exist? Does Don Pasquale really believe she does? What does this opening scene tell you about his character?**

Don Pasquale sings "I feel as if I were twenty again, I'll have half dozen children!" **Does love make you feel young again?**

"I have a fever!" **Does love make you sick?**

Don Pasquale: I promise you a beautiful woman and I'll give you my estate. He offers Ernesto the bride he offered him a month ago but Ernesto says he can't, he loves Norina.

Ernesto: "She's poor but respectable."

Don Pasquale: "I'll throw you out. Provide for yourself. I'm getting married!"

Don Pasquale sings "I'm well on in years but well preserved." **What does it mean to be well preserved?**

Ernesto: "sweet and chaste dream of my youth, farewell. I desired riches and luxury only for your sake darling. I renounce your dearest darling. Beautiful aria.

Ernesto: "I am losing the one I adore. Why do I still live?" **What might Ernesto do if he can't marry Norina?**

Who is Don Pasquale's new wife? Sofronia is her name but she is really Norina. **Disguise is used in this opera to further the plot. Discuss the use of disguise as a theatrical device and its importance in opera.**

Scene 2: Norina's house - She is reading a book. What does this tell us? She has social status. Even though she's poor, she can read and she has a book.

She was in on the plot but receives a letter from Ernesto saying that he is going to be thrown out of his house. I'm leaving Rome and Europe soon. Malatesta says he'll make Ernesto part of this plot. **Why is Ernesto left out of the plot? Does this makes the story more interesting?**

To punish his nephew for disobeying his orders, DP is going to get married but it's all a plot against him. **What is a plot? Have you ever devised a plot?**

M: DP knows I have a sister in a convent. **What is a convent? Who lives there?**

Act II

In Don Pasquale's house - Ernesto is bummed. Poor Ernesto! Thrown out by uncle deserted by all. One friend remained and he conspired against me. He thinks he's losing Norina. But if you are happy, your faithful lover will be satisfied. Ernesto wants the best for Norina no matter what. **What do we learn about Ernesto's character here?**

Don Pasquale is nearly 70, marrying a young woman. **Does this ever happen? Is it common for women to marry older men? Do men marry older women? Compare and contrast the reason for the difference.**

Sofronia/Norina refuses to remove her veil. She says at the convent we were always alone. Don Pasquale wants veil removed but she says she wouldn't dare in front of a man. She removes it and Don Pasquale practically has a heart attack. He thinks she is beautiful! **Could someone have a heart attack over a woman's beauty? Hasn't Don Pasquale ever met Norina? How believable is it that he hasn't?**

Malatesta brings his own notary (part of the ruse). **What is a notary? What is his role here in the story?**

How does Norina's character change after the wedding contract is signed?

Don Pasquale sings "Am I dreaming or awake?": Why is he dumfounded? He has been deceived.

What does Norina do? (she doubles servants wages, asks for younger servants, better looking. Wants carriages, horses, better furnishings, a hairdresser tailor, jewelry.

Act III

Scene I in DP's house opens with Norina and all of her new purchases and staff running around

Don Pasquale: looks at the bills... "We'll be in poorhouse!" **Have you ever spent too much money or has someone you know well? What is a budget what is the importance of a budget and sticking to it?**

She is off to the theater on her wedding night! The husband should keep his mouth shut!!! No one takes notice of what the husband says. Go to bed and sleep well. He says you're not going out and she says I am and slaps him.

On the side, Norina shows some remorse. **What is remorse? Have you ever felt remorse?**

He says if she leaves she'll find the door shut when she returns.

She tells him to be nice and remember your age, go to bed. Divorce he says! Never was there a match so bad. **What is divorce? Do people usually divorce so quickly? What are the impacts of divorce on the family?**

The chorus appears and sings what endless coming and going...there's money to burn. **What is the role of the chorus here?**

Scene 2: in the garden

Sofronia is alone in the garden. Ernesto arrives and they hug and sing a beautiful duet.

In comes Malatesta and Don Pasquale. Ernesto covers himself with a cloak and runs to the house. DP says where is your lover? Norina says no one was here.

Malatesta takes over and pretends to negotiate with Norina/Sofronia. He tells Pasquale that the only way to make her leave will be to allow Ernesto to marry his beloved, whom "Sofronia" apparently despises and won't live with. Pasquale consents, and calls out to the house, from which Ernesto emerges. He instructs Ernesto to send for his would-be bride, but Malatesta reveals that Norina is in fact the woman Pasquale thinks he married, while the real Sofronia remains in a convent. All are reconciled, and the moral of the story – not to marry in old age – is revealed in a playful quartet. **Moral of the story: what is a moral of the story? What other morals could there be here? (Don't stop people from true love) What will happen next in the opera?**



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Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

MATHEMATICS

What kind of expenses are associated with becoming a notary? (California Notaries are required to obtain a \$15,000 Notary Public Bond, Seal and Journal.)

- What is the cost of notary services?
- How much money might one make as a notary?
- Graph the profits for a notary.

How might Ernesto's annual sum from Don Pasquale be calculated with today's economy?

What kind of housekeeping expenses would show up on Sofronia's budget to hire the staff?

Calculate the costs of running a household.

MEASUREMENT:

Don Pasquale's Use of Standard Units of Measurement in Story & Set Design.

Create a timeline of Donizetti's life and operatic works.

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

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. Opera takes place over the course of two days.

GEOMETRY

As found in Don Pasquale's character, costume & set design.

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

Create patterns with elixir bottles.

Shape, perimeter, area of gazebo.

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

NUMBER SENSE

Counting using the production elements and music of Don Pasquale.

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.

How many marriage combinations can you make with the characters presented?

Budget – how do you balance the budget, is Norina breaking the budget?

ACTIVITIES

Timing of patter singing. Have a patter-off.

Time signatures of patter song vs. Ernesto's ballad.

Recite the alphabet with timers

Blocks of music – How would these translate into physical LEGO structures?

Create set plans that measure the angles of the room and map the different placement of the furniture (rotating)

Create a scale model of set. How would you go about creating a topsy-turvy, upside-down set? What challenges might you encounter? What solutions do you propose?



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California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

SCIENCE

The principals of science used in Don Pasquale.

THE FIVE SENSES: Sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.

If we take away sight, what do we get just from aural perception?

If we take away sound, what do we get just from visual perception?

PARTS OF THE BODY: Identification of body parts important to performing.

Ex. Diaphragm, larynx, throat, mouth, etc.

The physicality of singing – How do the parts of the body work together while singing? Breathing and patter songs

LIFE SCIENCE

The science of aging

The neurological benefits of laughter.

Physical responses to love and hate.

THE ELEMENTS

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

PHYSICS

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

Concepts of Gravity, Time & Space.

Define mass, weigh, force and load.

How might one temporarily hang an object from the ceiling?

ACTIVITIES

Study dynamics of sound waves. Do high or low voices project more? Graph sound waves.

Explore the weight and strength of different materials. What kinds of materials are used in set design?



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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.

CIVICS

Social Hierarchy: Class, Status. Ex. General, lieutenant.

Types of Government: Monarchy.

Political events during Donizetti's time.

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

What do average workers in different positions earn?

Relationship of Ernesto and Pasquale – heir/dependent. How does their relationship compare to modern day family dynamics?

Gender roles – Norina's disguise as Sofronia the "shrew" and the perception of the roles that women play. How does the audience respond while knowing that Norina acting versus Don Pasquale's perception about how Sofronia should act? How does their relationship reflect the time period in which this opera is set? What was the status of women in this time period in terms of access to education, reading and writing.

Arranged marriages – Is this an arranged marriage? How did society support men offering women up for marriage without their consent? Does this still happen today?

The relationship between money and social status – Discuss the importance of both during the opera's time period vs. today.

Discuss the benefits of colorblind casting. How might race affect the audience's reaction to a character within a particular situation? Ex. Norina disguising herself as Sofronia to bully Don Pasquale.

Was Don Pasquale truly the head of his household? What does it mean to be the head of a household? Discuss.

What does it mean to be a doctor? Was Doctor Malatesta a medical doctor?

GEOGRAPHY

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

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

Map Rome and Europe in the early 19th century. How has it changed today?

For a picture of Rome in 1843, read "Rome: as Seen by a New-Yorker in 1843-4," by William Mitchell Gillespie. Published by Wiley and Putnam, 1845. <https://archive.org/details/romeasseenbynewy00gill>

HISTORY

Chronology: Ex. What was life like in 1843?

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

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

Furs in fashion, in relationship to wealth and status, control and power.

Convent – What did it mean to be in a convent during that time?

Explore the history of marriage and arranged marriages, in particular.

ACTIVITIES

Timeline of Donizetti's life.

Trace Donizetti's travels throughout Europe. Compare maps of Europe then and now.

Listen to examples of *bel canto* opera.

Learn how commedia dell'Arte characters, such as those in *Don Pasquale* have evolved through time. Pasquale (Pantalone), Ernesto (Pierrot), Malatesta (Scapino) and Norina (Colombina). Create your own characters based on the archetype.

Create a comic scene using the popular music of today that explores the differences between behavior of men and women, then and now.



San Francisco Opera's Donizetti's *DON PASQUALE*

Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

“Lazzi” are gags or stock routines that can be added into a commedia dell’arte play or performance -- the sneak, silly walks, the slap, the trip – For a variety of Lazzi, see <https://sites.google.com/site/italiancommedia/lazzi>

Physical comedy – where do you see this in more modern media? Ex.: “Maya & Marty” with comedians Martin Short and Maya Rudolph, Tina Fey’s “Liz Lemon” from “30 Rock,” Steve Carell’s “Michael Scott” from “The Office” or Michael Richard’s “Kramer” from Seinfeld.

Face/Mask work

Physical Warm ups.

Drama Toolkit’s “A to Z Drama Games” <http://www.dramatoolkit.co.uk/drama-games/a-to-z>

MOVEMENT

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

Balance exercises.

Choreograph stage fights for appropriate scenes in opera. Explore ways to keep stage fighting safe.

PHYSICALITY OF PERFORMING

Endurance & strength, posture, breathing techniques.

Coordination of motion and singing.

TEAM-BUILDING

Moving as a group, as maids or servants.

Moving as a group like chorus in a production.

Cooperative games.



San Francisco Opera's Donizetti's *DON PASQUALE*

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?

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

Conflict resolution: Relationship between Ernesto (nephew) and Don Pasquale (uncle); Sofronia (Norina in disguise) and Don Pasquale after marriage.

The physical effect of love – How do the characters talk about the impact of love on their outlook? Does love make them feel young? Old? Sick? Happy? How does this relate to what you've felt or seen others feel?

The character's emotions and responses are so powerful that the whole set flips

Gender roles & body image.

Mental and physical toll of aging and loneliness

Normal aging – physical and mental changes in seniors.

Research effect of stress on health - challenging family dynamics, abusive relationships, and financial stress.



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Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards
Kindergarten through Grade 12

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

What were job options for men and women in 1843?

What kind of jobs do the characters have in *Don Pasquale*?

What is hierarchy of people's jobs in *Don Pasquale*?

What is a notary and how does this play a role in this opera? Why would you go to a notary today? How do you become a notary?

Research famous sopranos, tenors and baritones who have played the roles of Norina, Ernesto and Don Pasquale.

Organizational chart of San Francisco Opera.

Learn about the different jobs at the Opera, particularly the prompter.

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

How does the opera support other types of jobs in San Francisco?



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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. Explore how the composer creates different kinds of music for different moments in the story. Patter song vs. Ernesto's ballad.

Musical moods. Legato vs. staccato, adagio vs. allegro.

Instruments representing characters and emotions (bassoon at beginning of Nemorino's aria); 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.

Call and response between singers and instruments.

Definition of overture. How is orchestra set up in pit? What are instruments in an orchestra? Tuning of different instruments.

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.

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

Voice ranges: Soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass-baritone, countertenor, bass. Identify voice parts of different characters.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848): Biography, timeline of works, signature sound.

How many operas did Donizetti write? (73) Which of Donizetti's operas are most performed today?

What "school" of opera does *Don Pasquale* belong to? (*bel canto*) Who were the other composers famous for the *bel canto* approach to writing operas? (Rossini and Bellini)

What does *bel canto* mean, literally? (beautiful singing/song) Describe this technique of singing. (light singing; smooth or legato singing throughout the entire vocal range, from low to high; effortless embellishments (runs, trills) Talk about the use of improvisation or embellishments in the *bel canto* style.

What is *da capo*? How do the endings differ? What is the history of the use? Do all singers excel at inventing embellishments?

What is *opera buffa*? (comic opera) What prominence does *Don Pasquale* have with this genre? (*Don Pasquale* is regarded as being the high point of this tradition and marking its ending)

Don Pasquale uses *parlando* or patter singing. What is it? (Two characters singing/talking at the same time.) They share their thoughts and also it is fun to listen to! What current art form might it remind you of? Hip-hop.

The tradition of *opera buffa* makes reference to characters of the *commedia dell'arte*. What is the *commedia dell'arte*? What characters are represented? Pasquale is the blustery Pantalone, Ernesto as the lovesick Pierrot, Malatesta as the scheming Scapino, and Norina as a wily Columbina. The false Notary echoes a long line of false officials as operatic devices.

Research famous sopranos, tenors, and baritones who have played the roles of Adina, Nemorino and Dulcamara.

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

ACTIVITIES

Listen to multiple recordings of *Don Pasquale* and study different interpretations.

Learn and memorize songs from *Don Pasquale*.

Create and perform songs for the characters/events of *Don Pasquale* using instruments and voices. Study natural vs. amplified sound. Study high vs. low voices. Study head voice vs. chest voice.

Research songs from 1914.

Evolution of patter song.

Explore musical instruments used in this opera; have they changed since Donizetti's time?

What kinds of musical instruments are used in opera today? What are different sounds, volumes of different instruments?

Build simple string instruments with rubber bands and boxes, strings and any space.

Set parts of opera to different styles of music. Ex. Don Pasquale and Malatesta's patter duet as a rap battle.

VISUAL ARTS

How are line, color, shape, and texture used in costumes and sets of *Don Pasquale*?

LINE

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

COLOR

Symbolism of color; color associated with particular characters. How do colors of costumes define characters?

Symmetry/contrast in character pairings. Ex. Norina/Ernesto.

Examine contrast of light and dark; use of lighting.

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

How are character traits revealed through the use of color?

Explore personal associations with color.

The use of lighting to establish mood and setting.

SHAPE

The use of shape in character design.

Positive & Negative Space—the stage is a frame.

How can patterns and repetition of shape be used to create the illusion of perspective?

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.

The use of forced perspective in the set.

Playing with perspective – upside down sets – and how other works of art have explored this idea.

Inside versus outside space. Set rotates with an inside face and outside face

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Director Laurents Pelly states that the production's setting and costume designs were inspired by Italian neo-realist comedies of the 50's. Also see the set for Fred Astaire's dance on the ceiling, "You're All The World To Me" from the musical *Royal Wedding* (1951).

Chantal Thomas – scenic designer

Façades - The house has an inside and an outside – the structure has an exaggerated framework, wallpaper/pattern, repetition of pattern.



ACTIVITIES

Create illustrations and storyboards outlining the plot of *Don Pasquale*.

Design your own production of *Don Pasquale*: dioramas, scale models, backdrops, props, costumes. Set in a box.

Study uniforms, create costumes for characters. Design hats.

Create a tunnel book of set.

Puppetry: Create your own version of *Don Pasquale* using puppets (paper bags, stick puppets, shadow puppets, marionettes, and bunraku).

Masks: Create masks of *Don Pasquale* characters.

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

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

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

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

Explore scale in production design; how do imposing sets make people look small? How do you make something that fits on an opera set? What is the scale of the room in this set?

Create your own rotating set.

Set and costume designers' portfolios.

Explore the clothing, architecture and furnishings that inspired the opera's production design. (The 50's)

RELATED WORKS OF ART

Commedia dell'arte traditions in costuming.

Surrealism

Neo-Realism

Opera & Visual 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.

Illustrated children's books of *The Magic Flute* and other operas

THEATRE

Commedia characters; opera buffa origins in commedia dell'arte.

History of vaudeville, stock characters.

Stock theater types: boy meets girl; old man.

Compare to similar stories in musical theater (Frank Loesser's *Most Happy Fella*).

What are characters' motivations? How do they grow?

What is audition process for opera? What are criteria involved in getting a role?

How would theater have looked in 1843?

Compare the characters in Shakespearean comedies, such as *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, with *Don Pasquale*.

STAGING

Stage vocabulary: Upstage, downstage, levels, blocking.

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

How does a scene fill the space of stage?

Have fun playing with disguises.

Stage etiquette & audience behavior.

THEATRE JOBS

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

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

ACTIVITIES

Act out characters and emotions in gestures: shyness, snobbery, bravado, persuasion. How can you exaggerate gestures to show emotion? Have other students guess which character you are portraying.

Act out scenes from opera in different settings and times (Don Pasquale lives in a large mansion in Palm Beach).

Students pick characters to portray; determine how they would act out story. Examine how characters play off each other. Partnering.

Create tableaux of different scenes.

Improvise prologues and epilogues to the story.

Choreograph a stage fight.

"Guns and Ships" from Lin-Manuel Miranda's musical *Hamilton* holds the honor of being the fastest song in the fastest-paced musical theater production of all time (6.3 words per second, while the whole show fits 20,000 words into 2.5 hours) – Compare the speed of Lin Miranda's rap to the patter songs written by Donizetti. Try singing the songs at the original speed, as well as at a slower pace, and record what happens.

<http://genius.com/Lin-manuel-miranda-guns-and-ships-lyrics>

DANCE

Dance and Creative Movement in Stage-Blocking.

Learn more about fight choreography.

Examine the history of Italian dance. <http://web-static.nypl.org/exhibitions/italiandance/over.html>

ACTIVITIES

Create character dances.

Create gestures for elements of opera (music, drama).

Match movement with characters.

Create a gesture to embody each character.

Create relationship dances between characters.

Do the whole story in a dance.

Interpret emotions through gesture and dance. Static and in motion. Ex. Joy, bravado.

Interpreting the instruments through dance– improv to music.

Create dances for scenes that need it.

Mirror dancing–partners and symmetry.

Choose a dance style that best represents each character.

Create a chair dance based on movements that can be seen in the opera.

See how movie magic enabled Fred Astaire to dance on the ceiling in the 1951 film, “Royal Wedding.” Director Stanley Donen recreated the effect for Lionel Ritchie’s music video, “Dancing on the Ceiling” in “Astaire Unwound” by Bigfott Studios. http://www.bigfott.com/astaire_unwound.html

MEDIA ARTS

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 role of editors in creating film and DVD. Explore role of film director.

Director and costume designer Laurent Pelly says the opera's setting and costumes reference the "golden age of Italian film comedies of the 1950s and early 60s. Learn more about the Italian Neo-realist films such as Mario Monicelli's *I soliti Ignoti*.

List camera angles; note when camera angles change.

Study the available media and technological advances during Donizetti's time. Books, newspapers, broadsheets, town crier, and the experimental facsimile machine first invented by Alexander Bain in 1843.

Study history of recording.

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 about opera to teach media literacy.

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

Watch films & DVD of *Don Pasquale* and other operas.

ACTIVITIES

Film and Animation: Explore photographic stopmotion techniques. Ex. Use digital media to create 1-minute scenes from *Don Pasquale*.

Storyboard the opera.

Use digital audio to record student readings, musical performances.

Create a 30-second audio spot, a one-minute podcast, or a *Don Pasquale* activities website.

Explore history of opera recordings—some of the earliest recordings.

Create a montage of scenes from the opera to tell the story.