



The Ring

Sample Lesson Plan: Wagner and Women

***Please note that this lesson works best post-show*

Educator should choose which female character to focus on based on the opera(s) the group has attended. See below for the list of female characters in each opera:

- *Das Rheingold*: Fricka, Erda, Freia
- *Die Walküre*: Brunhilde, Sieglinde, Fricka
- *Siegfried*: Brunhilde, Erda
- *Götterdämmerung*: Brunhilde, Guttrune

GRADE LEVELS	6-12
TIMING	1-2 periods
PRIOR KNOWLEDGE	Educator should be somewhat familiar with the female characters of the Ring
AIM OF LESSON	Compare and contrast the actual women in Wagner’s life to the female characters he created in the Ring
OBJECTIVES	To explore the female characters in the Ring by studying Wagner’s relationship with the women in his life
CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS	Language Arts History and Social Studies
MATERIALS	<p>Computer and internet access. Some preliminary resources listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brunhilde in the “Ring”: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brynildr#Wagner's %22Ring%22 cycle) • First wife Minna Planer: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minna_Planer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Themes: turbulence, infidelity, frustration • Mistress Mathilde Wesendonck: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathilde_Wesendonck) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Themes: infatuation, deep romantic attachment that’s doomed, unrequited love • Second wife Cosima Wagner: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosima_Wagner) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Themes: devotion to Wagner and his works; Wagner’s muse • Wagner’s relationship with his mother: (https://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/richard-wagner-392.php) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Theme: mistrust
NATIONAL STANDARDS/ STATE STANDARDS	<p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.9</u> Compare and contrast a fictional portrayal of a time, place, or character and a historical account of the same period as a means of understanding how authors of fiction use or alter history.</p> <p><u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1</u> Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</p>

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students are given brief introductions/summaries of select female character(s) in the Ring. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Discuss character traits the students have noticed while watching the opera 2. Students will research the women who had a relationship with Wagner. The goal is to identify, if any, connections between these women and the female characters in the Ring. 3. What did the students conclude? In what ways are the women in the Ring and the women in Wagner's life similar, or different?
LEARNING SUPPORTS & ACCOMODATIONS	<p><i>Teacher works with students in a small group to support their learning objectives.</i></p> <p><i>Synopsis of each opera and character descriptions can be provided to each table for reference.</i></p>
EXTENSION	<p>Writing exercise: which women in your life have had the most important impact on your life? If you were to write an opera, how would you portray them? What would be the key characteristics of this character?</p>
ASSESSMENT	<p>What did the students conclude? Were the characters influenced by women in Wagner's life, and how does this connection help understand the story?</p>