



## San Francisco Opera's Wagner's *DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG* Curriculum Connections

California Content Standards  
Kindergarten through Grade 12

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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-16<sup>th</sup> 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?