

TOSCA

Lesson: Staging Scenes from Tosca *Written by Olga Bezrukova for L.A. Opera*

Duration: 2 lessons/ 50 minutes each

Grade Levels: 9-12

Subjects: Literature, English, Theater

California State Board of Education Language Arts Content Standards

- Grade 9/10; 1.0 Word analysis, fluency, and systematic vocabulary development: Students apply their knowledge of word origins both to determine the meaning of new words encountered in reading materials and to use those words accurately.
- Grade 9/10; 2.0 Reading Comprehension (focus on informational materials): Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They analyze the organizational patterns, arguments, and positions advanced.
- Grade 9/10; 2.3 Generate relevant questions about readings that can be researched.
- Grade 9/10; 3.3 Analyze interactions between main and subordinate characters in literary text (e.g. internal and external conflicts, motivations, relationships, and influences) and how they affect the plot
- Grade 9/10; 3.4 Determine a character's traits by what they say about themselves in narration, dialogue, dramatic monologue, soliloquy.

California State Board of Education: Theater Grades Nine Through Twelve-Proficient

- 2.0 Creating, performing, and participating in theatre.
- 2.1 Make acting choices, using script analysis, character research, reflection, and revision through the rehearsal process.

Goals and Objectives:

1. Introduce students to an opera.
2. Introduce students to what goes into putting on a performance.
3. Introduce students to jobs available in the theater/opera.
4. Introduce students to the story of "Tosca."
5. Allow students to work in a group to explore how each job relates to a performance.
6. Allow students to rehearse and perform in front of their peers.

Lesson Plan:

Classroom Teacher Prep/Materials:

1. Copies of libretto (one is available electronically on Opera Guide Website: <http://www.opera-guide.ch/libretto.php?id=286&uilang=de&lang=en>)
2. Copies of Worksheet B.

Lesson Plan Description/Procedure:

1. The class will be divided into three groups: GROUP A, GROUP B, GROUP C.
2. Each group will be given a different libretto scene from Tosca:
 - a. Group 1 will be given Act 1.
 - b. Group 2 will be given Act 2.
 - c. Group 3 will be given Act 3.
3. Students will read and discuss the libretto in these groups.

4. Ask the students to highlight verbs and circle words that they feel are important to the story.
5. Handout Worksheet B, **ASSIGN EMOTIONS TO A VERB**
6. Ask the students to fill out Worksheet B. For each verb, briefly describe the scene, the gesture of the character, and the expression of the character.
7. As a group, students will use their completed worksheets to decide how to stage/perform each act.
8. As a group, the students will pick jobs for each member of the group. Jobs to include: director, assistant director, stage manager, performers, prompter... (The jobs could also be drawn out of a hat)
9. Have students start rehearsing their scenes in preparation for performing them in front of the class.

Day 2

Classroom Teacher Prep/Materials:

1. Copies of Worksheet C: Evaluation

Lesson Plan Description/Procedure:

1. Hand out Worksheet C while students are getting ready to perform.
2. The groups will perform in order: Act 1, Act 2, Act 3.
3. The students in the audience will fill out Worksheet C while they watch each scene.
4. There will be a class discussion about the experience each group had.
5. Discussion will include jobs in each group.

Assessment(s):

1. Students will be able to read and discuss the libretto of "Tosca."
2. Students will finish Worksheet A as a group.
3. Students will be able to see correlation of verbs, emotions and actions of each character as well as how these elements pertain to the drama/performance.
4. Students will be able to choose a job in opera and see how it pertains to the performance.
5. Students will be able to fill out Worksheet B.
6. Students will be able to discuss their observations and thoughts in a discussion.

Additional Ideas:

This lesson plan can be done with middle school. For grade 7 and 8, each worksheet should be condensed. Additionally, each act should be shortened.

This lesson plan can be done before a class field trip going to a production of "Tosca"

The performances could be video-recorded and presented to the school.

GROUP# _____

Worksheet A: ASSIGN EMOTION TO A VERB

SCENE	Verb or Action Metaphor	EMOTION	GESTURE/EXPRESSION
<i>Describe the scene</i>	<i>...leave</i>	<i>sad</i>	<i>Head down, walking center stage.</i>

