



GLASS SLIPPERS NOT INCLUDED EDUCATOR GUIDE



Charline & Red McCombs
ARTS EDUCATION FUND
The Tobin Center

Educator Guide

Created by: Dr. Kimberly Stephenson

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Title: *Glass Slippers Not Included*

Date / Time: October 14, 2026 | noon

Target Grade Levels / Subjects: K-5, MS HS Choir, Theatre, General Music

Run Time: approximately one hour

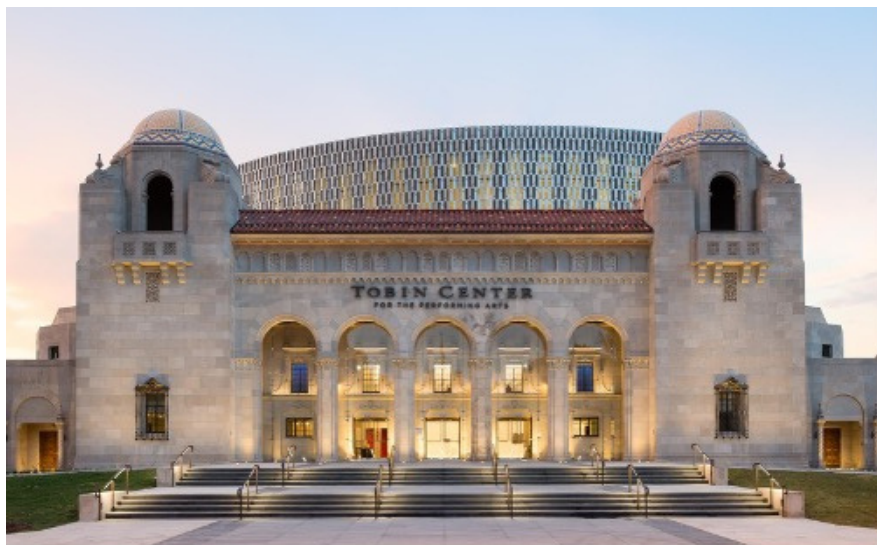
Location:

Tobin Center for the Performing Arts

100 Auditorium Circle

San Antonio, TX 78205

www.tobincenter.org



Welcome to the Show!



Welcome, Educators and Students!

We are delighted to welcome you to the performing arts center for OPERA San Antonio's

Glass Slippers Not Included: A Playful Peek Inside Rossini's *Cinderella*! You may think you know the story of *Cinderella*...but where's the glass slipper? What happened to the fairy godmother? And why is everyone singing?!

Today, you'll discover that familiar stories can be told in wonderfully different ways. Rossini's *Cinderella* is filled with beautiful music, big personalities, hilarious moments, and a few surprising twists. Even better, you won't just experience pieces of the story—you'll get a peek behind the curtain to discover how singers, musicians, directors, designers, and many others work together to turn a story into an opera.

As you watch, listen for how music helps tell the story. Notice how performers use their voices, faces, and bodies to create characters. Think about the choices the artists make and how those choices might be different from the *Cinderella* story you already know. And most importantly, give yourself permission to laugh, wonder, listen, and enjoy something new.

Educators, thank you for giving your students the opportunity to experience live performance. A visit to the theatre can open a door to new art forms, new ideas, and new ways of seeing a story they thought they already knew.

We are so happy you are here.

Welcome to the theatre. Welcome to opera. And remember: no slipper, no godmother, no problem!

Sincerely:

Dr. Kimberly Stephenson
Vice President of Education
Tobin Center for the Performing Arts



What is Opera

Imagine telling a story using music, acting, costumes, scenery, movement, and some of the most powerful voices you've ever heard. That's opera!

Opera is a type of theatre in which music plays a major role in telling the story. Opera singers are actors, but instead of speaking all their lines, they sing much of the story. An orchestra provides the music, while scenery, costumes, lighting, and movement help create the world onstage.

Opera can be dramatic, romantic, mysterious, adventurous—and very, very funny. There are heroes and villains, mistaken identities, ridiculous misunderstandings, impossible situations, and characters making spectacularly bad decisions. In other words, opera has been entertaining audiences with great stories for hundreds of years!

A Little Opera History

Opera began in Italy around the year 1600, when artists experimented with combining theatre, poetry, and music into a new kind of performance. The idea caught on! Opera spread throughout Europe, and composers began creating works in Italian, French, German, English, and other languages.

Over the centuries, opera continued to change. Some composers wrote enormous, dramatic works with huge casts and orchestras. Others created lighthearted comedies filled with fast-moving plots and larger-than-life characters.

The opera connected to today's performance, Gioachino Rossini's *La Cenerentola Cinderella*, was first performed in 1817. That means audiences have been laughing at, listening to, and enjoying Rossini's version of this familiar story for more than 200 years!

Wait...They Sing WITHOUT Microphones?

Often, yes!

Opera singers train for years to develop voices that can be heard throughout a theatre, sometimes without electronic amplification, even while an orchestra is playing. They learn to control their breathing, produce a powerful sound, pronounce words clearly, and communicate emotion through both singing and acting.

Opera voices are generally grouped by how high or low a singer can comfortably sing. You may hear terms such as soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, and bass. Different vocal types are often used for different kinds of characters. And opera singing isn't just about being loud. Listen for how singers change the volume, speed, pitch, rhythm, and quality of their voices to reveal what their characters are thinking and feeling.

The Music Helps Tell the Story

In opera, the music isn't simply playing in the background. The music is part of the storytelling. A composer can use music to tell you something before a character ever explains it. Music might make you realize that danger is coming, two characters are falling in love, someone is hiding something, or a supposedly serious situation is actually meant to be funny.

Sometimes a character sings a longer solo called an aria. Think of an aria as a chance to hear what is happening inside the character. Time seems to slow down while the character shares an emotion, thought, hope, or decision through music. At other times, several characters may sing at once. Each may be singing different words or expressing completely different ideas. It can sound complicated, but that's part of the fun! The composer allows us to hear several characters' perspectives at the same time, something ordinary spoken theatre can't quite do in the same way.

It Takes a LOT of People to Make an Opera

The singers may be the people you see most clearly, but an opera is created by a huge team of artists and professionals. A composer creates the music, while a librettist writes the words, or libretto. A conductor leads the musicians and singers during the performance. The director helps shape the storytelling and performances. Then there are costume, scenic, lighting, hair and makeup, and other designers who create what you see. Musicians perform the orchestral score. Stage managers and technicians make sure hundreds of details happen at exactly the right moment. Opera is a giant exercise in artistic collaboration. No single person creates the whole thing.

Cinderella...But Not Quite the One You Know

You probably already know a version of Cinderella: a mistreated young woman, a magical transformation, a fancy ball, and, of course, a lost glass slipper.

Rossini's version has some surprises. His Cinderella is called Angelina, and you won't find a fairy godmother waving a magic wand. There's no pumpkin carriage, and that famous glass slipper isn't part of Rossini's story either!

What you will find is a story about kindness, choices, forgiveness, family, and recognizing someone's true worth. You'll also encounter mistaken identities, outrageous characters, clever tricks, and Rossini's energetic, playful music. As you experience *Glass Slippers Not Included*, pay attention to both what feels familiar and what surprises you.

How Do I Watch an Opera?

Here's the best part: there isn't a test. You don't have to understand every word or know anything about classical music to experience an opera. Let yourself notice things. Watch the performers. What can you understand just from their faces, voices, and movements? Listen to the orchestra and singers. What does the music make you expect or feel? Look at the design. What do the costumes, scenery, props, and lighting tell you about the characters and their world?

Notice your reactions. Something might make you laugh. A voice might surprise you. A piece of music might give you chills. You might even decide that a particular part of opera isn't for you, and that's okay, too. Experiencing art is also about discovering your own tastes and ideas. Most importantly, be curious.

Opera has survived for more than 400 years because artists keep finding new ways to tell these stories and audiences keep finding something in them worth hearing. Today, you get to be part of that audience.

**So forget the glass slipper. Forget the fairy godmother.
The music is about to tell the story.**





OPERA San Antonio (OSA) is San Antonio's professional opera company and the resident opera company of the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts. Founded in 2010, OSA brings singers, musicians, directors, designers, technicians, and other artists together to create professional opera productions for the San Antonio community. Its mission includes both producing opera of exceptional artistic quality and making the art form relevant, inspiring, and accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds.

More Than What Happens on the Stage

While OSA presents full-scale opera productions at the Tobin Center, its work reaches far beyond the mainstage. Education and community engagement are an important part of what the company does. Through free and accessible programs, OSA introduces children, families, students, educators, and community members to opera and the many artists who bring it to life.

For students, programs include OPERA in Schools, which brings professional artists directly into K-12 classrooms for interactive, TEKS-aligned experiences combining live performance, storytelling, history, and musical concepts. Student Matinees give young audiences the chance to experience opera during the school day, while *Behind the Scenes* invites students to experience final dress rehearsals and learn more about how a professional production comes together.

OSA also reaches families through programs such as *Explore Opera for Kids!*, bringing professional artists and opera scenes into San Antonio Public Libraries. Other programs provide training opportunities for emerging artists, performances in the community, opera appreciation experiences for adults, and partnerships with organizations throughout San Antonio.

Opera Is a Team Effort!

One of the exciting things about OPERA San Antonio is that opera brings many different art forms and skills together. Singers and musicians are only part of the team. Directors, conductors, costume and scenic designers, lighting professionals, stage managers, technicians, educators, and many others work together to transform music and a story into a live theatrical experience.

Through performances like *Glass Slippers Not Included*, OPERA San Antonio invites students to see that opera isn't simply an art form from long ago. It is a living, collaborative form of storytelling being created by artists right here in San Antonio today.

Setting the Stage: Designing *Cinderella*

Before an opera singer sings a single note,
the set can already begin telling the story.

A scenic, or set, designer creates the physical world we see onstage. The designer thinks about where the story takes place, but also about the characters, mood, movement, color, shape, and even how the audience should feel when looking at the stage.

For this production of Rossini's *Cinderella* (*La Cenerentola*), scenic designer Steven C. Kemp created a world that is colorful, playful, theatrical, and just a little larger than life. His design contrasts the humble home of Cinderella's family with the much grander world of the Prince's palace. The set uses bold colors, patterns, architectural shapes, and oversized floral elements to create a world that feels more like a beautifully imagined storybook than an ordinary, realistic room.

That choice fits Rossini's opera particularly well. This *Cinderella* is filled with comedy, mistaken identities, exaggerated characters, and music that can move incredibly quickly. The scenery helps establish that playful world visually.

Look Closely! When you see the set, don't just ask, "Where are we?" Ask what the designer is telling you.

- **COLOR:** Which colors immediately catch your eye? How do they affect the mood?
- **SHAPE:** Look for symmetry, repeated shapes, patterns, doors, windows, flowers, and architectural details. Where does your eye go first?
- **CONTRAST:** How does Cinderella's world look different from the Prince's world? What might those differences tell us about the characters?
- **SCALE:** Are some objects or details larger or more dramatic than you would expect in real life? Why might a designer make that choice?
- **MOVEMENT:** An opera set also has to work! Singers need places to enter, exit, hide, gather, and move while telling the story. Watch for the ways the scenery changes or reveals new spaces as the action unfolds.

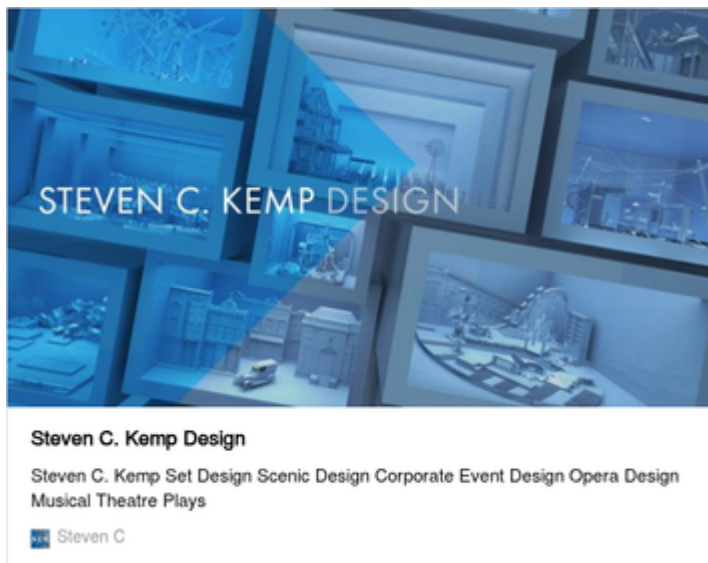
Did You Know?

A set designer doesn't simply arrive at the theatre and start building. Designs begin with research, ideas, sketches, models, drawings, and conversations with the director and other members of the creative team. Scenic designers also collaborate closely with costume and lighting designers so that everything the audience sees will work together.

Steven C. Kemp has designed sets for opera and theatre around the world, including work for more than 50 opera companies. His *La Cenerentola* design was originally created for Lyric Opera of Kansas City and is being used for OPERA San Antonio's production.

As you watch, consider this:

If you were designing *Cinderella*, what would you want your set to tell the audience before the characters even began to sing?



Kemp, S. C. (2021). Steven C. Kemp [Photograph]. Steven C. Kemp Design.



Steven C. Kemp, scenic designer. Photo courtesy of Steven C. Kemp Design.

About *La Cenerentola*

Cinderella, Cenerentola, and a Story That Keeps Changing

You probably know the story. A kind young woman is treated terribly by her stepfamily. She wants to attend a grand ball, but she can't. Then a fairy godmother appears, waves a magic wand, and suddenly there are beautiful clothes, a pumpkin carriage, and a pair of famous glass slippers. Cinderella meets the prince, runs away at midnight, loses a slipper, and eventually lives happily ever after. Except... That isn't the only Cinderella story.

People have been telling Cinderella-like stories for centuries, and different cultures and storytellers have created their own versions. Three versions you may encounter are the Brothers Grimm fairy tale, Disney's animated *Cinderella*, and Gioachino Rossini's opera *La Cenerentola*. They share the same basic idea, but the details can be VERY different.

The Brothers Grimm: *Aschenputtel*

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm published their version of the story, *Aschenputtel*, in the 19th century. This Cinderella has a wicked stepmother and two stepsisters, but there is no cheerful fairy godmother. Instead, Cinderella receives help from a tree growing at her mother's grave and magical birds.

And those famous glass slippers? Not here! In the Grimm story, *Cinderella* wears beautiful slippers made of gold. When the prince searches for their mysterious owner, the stepsisters go to some rather gruesome lengths to try to make the shoe fit. The story becomes even darker at the end, when birds punish the stepsisters for their cruelty. Fairy tales weren't always intended to be the gentle bedtime stories we sometimes imagine today!

Disney: Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo!

Walt Disney's animated *Cinderella* premiered in 1950 and helped make one particular version of the story familiar to generations of children.



Disney's movie actually shares many important elements with an earlier Cinderella story written by Charles Perrault in 1697 (*Cendrillon*). Perrault's version includes the wicked stepmother, fairy godmother, magical pumpkin carriage and, yes, glass slippers. Disney adds its own memorable characters and details, including Cinderella's animal friends, songs, and plenty of comic adventures.

Magic drives much of the action in the Disney version. Cinderella is transformed so she can attend the ball, but the magic comes with a warning: at midnight, everything will change back. That ticking clock creates one of the most famous scenes in the story: Cinderella racing away from the palace and accidentally leaving her glass slipper behind.

Rossini: La Cenerentola

Now things get interesting. Italian composer Gioachino Rossini and librettist Jacopo Ferretti created *La Cenerentola*, which premiered in Rome in 1817. Its full title, *La Cenerentola, ossia La bontà in trionfo*, means approximately "Cinderella, or Goodness Triumphant." You'll recognize the basic Cinderella story but Rossini's version removes most of the magic.

This Cinderella's real name is Angelina. There is no wicked stepmother. Instead, Angelina lives with her ridiculous and selfish stepfather, Don Magnifico, and his daughters, Clorinda and Tisbe. There is no fairy godmother. A wise man named Alidoro, who serves as the prince's tutor, recognizes Angelina's kindness and helps her. There is no pumpkin carriage created by magic. There is no midnight spell. And there is NO GLASS SLIPPER!

Instead, Angelina gives Prince Ramiro one of a matching pair of bracelets and tells him that if he truly cares for her, he must find her. That's an important difference. Angelina doesn't accidentally leave something behind so that the prince can identify her. She chooses to give him the clue!

And the Prince Has a Trick of His Own

Rossini adds another twist that you won't find in the familiar Disney story. Prince Ramiro wants to know who might love him for who he really is, rather than because he is a prince. So he and his servant Dandini switch identities. Dandini pretends to be the prince while the real prince pretends to be his servant. Naturally, Angelina's status-obsessed family behaves very differently toward the "prince" than toward the "servant." Angelina, however, falls for the man she believes is the servant.

Oops.

Now we have disguises, mistaken identities, misunderstandings, and characters who aren't quite who everyone thinks they are... perfect ingredients for a comic opera!

Why Change the Story?

Because stories don't have to stay exactly the same. Every storyteller makes choices about what to keep, what to change, and what ideas to emphasize. Rossini and Ferretti transformed *Cinderella* into a fast-moving comic opera filled with disguises, misunderstandings, exaggerated personalities, and opportunities for spectacular singing. But they also put special emphasis on character.

Angelina's life doesn't change because a magic wand makes her beautiful. Prince Ramiro becomes interested in her while disguised as someone without wealth or status. Alidoro notices her because she shows kindness when others do not. And when Angelina finally has power over the family members who mistreated her, she chooses forgiveness rather than revenge.

That's why the opera's complete title matters:

Cinderella, or Goodness Triumphant

As you watch, *Glass Slippers Not Included* keep an eye out for the pieces of Cinderella you recognize and the ones Rossini completely turns upside down.

No slipper. No godmother. No problem.

Three Cinderellas, Three Different Stories

Grimm	Disney	Rossini
Cinderella / Aschenputtel	Cinderella	Angelina/Cenerentola
Wicked Stepmother	Wicked Stepmother	Wicked stepfather
Magical tree and birds	Fairy Godmother	Alidoro
Gold Slipper	Glass Slipper	Matching bracelets
Magic	LOTS of magic	Almost no magic
Aschenputtel loses slipper	Cinderella loses slipper	Angelina leaves bracelets behind
Prince searches for slipper's owner	Prince searches for slipper's owner	Angelina challenges Ramiro to find her
Darker consequences	Romantic fairy-tale ending	Forgiveness and goodness triumph

Meet the Composer: Gioachino Rossini



Gioachino Rossini (1792–1868) was an Italian composer famous for writing music that is energetic, colorful, dramatic, and often very funny. Born in Pesaro, Italy, into a musical family, Rossini showed talent at an early age and began composing operas while still a teenager. By his twenties, he was one of the most celebrated opera composers in Europe.

Rossini wrote nearly 40 operas, including *The Barber of Seville* and "*La Cenerentola*" (*Cinderella*). His music is especially known for its catchy melodies, rapid-fire singing, and the "Rossini crescendo," a technique in which a musical phrase repeats while gradually becoming louder, faster, and more exciting. The effect can build tremendous energy... and is especially fun in his comic operas! Rossini composed "*La Cenerentola*" (*Cinderella*) when he was only 24 years old, reportedly completing much of the opera in just a few weeks. It premiered in Rome in 1817 and remains one of his most frequently performed works.

Although Rossini lived until age 76, he largely stopped writing operas while still in his thirties. His operas, however, never stopped entertaining audiences. More than 200 years later, Rossini's combination of humor, musical excitement, memorable characters, and dazzling vocal writing continues to bring stories to life on opera stages around the world.

Meet the Voices of Opera

Just as instruments come in different sizes and ranges, human voices do, too! Classical singers are often grouped by how high or low they sing and by the unique color and quality of their voices. Composers use these different voices to help create characters and tell stories.

Soprano

The highest female voice, often bright, soaring, and powerful. Sopranos frequently play leading characters and heroines.

Characters you may know:

Glinda in *Wicked*, Christine in *The Phantom of the Opera*, and Ariel in *The Little Mermaid*.

Mezzo-Soprano

A middle-range female voice, often warmer and richer than a soprano. “Mezzo-sopranos” can play everything from mothers and villains to young male characters, called “trouser roles.”

Characters you may know:

Elphaba in *Wicked*, Ursula in *The Little Mermaid*, and Anita in *West Side Story*.

Alto / Contralto

The lowest female voice. True contralto voices are actually fairly rare in opera and are known for their deep, rich sound. In choirs, you are much more likely to hear this range called alto.

Characters you may know:

Mama Morton in *Chicago* and the Wardrobe in *Beauty and the Beast*.

Tenor

The highest common male voice. Tenors frequently play young heroes, romantic leads, and adventurous characters. Their high notes can create some of opera’s biggest musical moments.

Characters you may know:

Tony in *West Side Story*, Jack in *Into the Woods*, and Marius in *Les Miserable*.

Meet the Voices of Opera

Baritone

A middle-range male voice and one of the most common male voice types. Baritones often play fathers, leaders, villains, comic characters, and sometimes romantic leads.

Characters you may know: Gaston in *Beauty and the Beast*, the Beast in *Beauty and the Beast*, and Sweeney Todd in *Sweeney Todd*.

Bass

The lowest male voice, with a deep, resonant sound. Bass singers often portray kings, fathers, wise characters, villains, or larger-than-life comic characters.

Characters you may know: Hades in *Hadestown*, Caiaphas in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd*.

Listen for it!

As you hear the singers in *Glass Slippers Not Included*, notice the differences between their voices. Is a voice high or low? Light or rich? Quick and playful or strong and commanding? How does the sound of the voice help you understand the character?



Did You Know? Opera Edition

- Opera is more than 400 years old! The first operas were created in Italy around the year 1600.
- Opera means “work” in Italian. That makes sense because opera combines the work of singers, musicians, actors, designers, technicians, directors, and many other artists.
- Opera singers often perform without microphones. Their voices are specially trained to project through a theatre and over an orchestra.
- Opera singers are athletes! Singing requires incredible breath control, coordination, posture, stamina, and muscle control. Professional singers train their voices much like athletes train their bodies.
- Opera isn’t always serious. Some operas are tragedies, but others are filled with jokes, disguises, mistaken identities, ridiculous characters, and plenty of comedy. Rossini was especially famous for making audiences laugh!
- You probably already know some opera music. Famous opera melodies have appeared in cartoons, movies, commercials, sporting events, and television shows, sometimes without audiences realizing they’re hearing opera.
- Opera can be performed in almost any language. Italian, German, French, English, Russian, Czech, Spanish, and many others have all been used to tell operatic stories.
- It’s okay if you don’t understand every word. Many opera companies use supertitles, translations projected above or near the stage, so audiences can follow along.
- An aria is a musical close-up. An aria is a solo in which a character often gets to express an important thought or emotion. It’s a little like getting to hear what is happening inside the character’s mind.
- Several people can sing different things at the SAME TIME. Opera composers can create duets, trios, quartets, and even larger ensembles in which characters sing different words and emotions simultaneously and, somehow, the music fits together and makes sense!
- The orchestra helps tell the story, too. Changes in tempo, volume, rhythm, melody, and instrumentation can tell us that something is funny, frightening, romantic, exciting, or sad before a character says, or sings, a word.
- Costumes have to work differently for opera singers. Designers must think about how singers breathe and move as well as how a costume looks. A spectacular costume isn’t very useful if the performer can’t take the enormous breath needed for the next phrase!
- Some singers play characters of another gender. In a “trouser role,” a female singer, usually a mezzo-soprano, portrays a young male character. It’s a tradition that has been part of opera for centuries.
- The conductor has to watch the stage AND the orchestra. Opera conductors coordinate musicians in the orchestra pit with singers onstage, even when performers can’t easily see one another.
- The applause has its own vocabulary. You might hear someone shout “Bravo!” after an especially exciting performance. It’s a traditional way of saying, Well done!

Vocabulary

Aria — A song performed by one singer, often giving a character a chance to express an important thought or emotion.

Bravo! — A traditional word audience members may call out to show appreciation for a great performance.

Composer — The person who writes the music for an opera. Gioachino Rossini is the composer of *La Cenerentola*.

Conductor — The person who leads the orchestra and singers, helping everyone stay together musically.

Duet — A piece of music performed by two singers.

Ensemble — A musical number performed by several singers together. Sometimes characters sing different words and ideas at the same time!

Libretto — The written words, dialogue, and lyrics of an opera. Think of it as the opera's script.

Librettist — The person who writes the libretto. Jacopo Ferretti wrote the libretto for *La Cenerentola*.

Opera — A form of theatre that combines music, singing, acting, storytelling, design, and often dance or movement.

Opera House — A theatre designed for presenting opera and other musical performances.

Orchestra — The group of instrumental musicians who perform the music that accompanies the singers.

Orchestra Pit — The lowered area, usually in front of the stage, where the orchestra performs during an opera.

Overture — Instrumental music played at the beginning of an opera, before the story begins. It can introduce the mood and musical ideas audiences will hear later.

Recitative — A style of singing that follows the rhythms of speech and helps move the story and conversation forward.

Score — The written music for an opera, containing the musical parts needed for the performance.

Supertitles — Translations or captions displayed above or near the stage to help the audience follow what the singers are saying.

Trouser Role — A male character traditionally performed by a female singer, usually a mezzo-soprano.

Vocal Range — The span from the lowest to the highest notes a person can comfortably sing. Vocal ranges help classify singers as soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass, and other voice types.

Rossini Crescendo — A technique Rossini was famous for using in which a musical idea repeats while the music grows in volume and excitement, often with more instruments or voices joining in.

Bel Canto — Italian for “beautiful singing.” A style of opera that emphasizes beautiful tone, smooth singing, flexibility, and vocal skill. Rossini was one of the great composers of bel canto opera.

Meet the Characters of *La Cenerentola*

Angelina (Cenerentola) — Mezzo-Soprano

Our Cinderella! Angelina is kind, patient, and generous despite being treated poorly by her family. Unlike many familiar Cinderellas, she doesn't need a fairy godmother to change her fate.

Don Ramiro — Tenor

The Prince. Ramiro disguises himself as his own servant so he can discover who people really are when they don't know they're speaking to royalty. He quickly notices Angelina's kindness and falls in love with her.

Dandini — Baritone

Prince Ramiro's valet, or servant. Dandini gets the very fun job of pretending to be the Prince! His disguise creates plenty of confusion and comedy, especially when Cinderella's stepsisters compete for his attention.

Don Magnifico — Bass

Angelina's selfish, foolish, and very dramatic stepfather. Don Magnifico is determined to improve the family's fortune by marrying one of his daughters to the Prince.

Clorinda — Soprano

One of Angelina's stepsisters. Clorinda is vain, demanding, and convinced that she would make an excellent princess.

Tisbe — Mezzo-Soprano

Angelina's other stepsister. Like Clorinda, Tisbe is much more interested in wealth, status, and winning the Prince than in showing kindness to others.

Alidoro — Bass

Prince Ramiro's wise tutor and advisor. There is no fairy godmother in Rossini's opera, so Alidoro helps move the story along instead. He recognizes Angelina's goodness and helps make sure she has the opportunity to attend the Prince's celebration.

Anatomy of an Opera Wig

A stage wig is much more than fake hair! Professional wigs are carefully built, fitted, styled, and maintained so they look convincing under bright stage lights and stay secure while a performer sings, acts, and moves.

Wig Cap / Foundation — The lightweight base of the wig. It is shaped to fit the performer's head and provides the structure to which the hair is attached.

Lace Front — A very fine, nearly invisible mesh along the forehead. Individual hairs can be tied into the lace to create a natural-looking hairline.

Ventilated Hair — Professional wigmakers often attach individual hairs or small groups of hairs to the foundation by hand. This process is called ventilating.

Hair — Stage wigs may be made from human hair, synthetic fibers, or a combination of materials. The choice depends on the style, production, budget, and demands of the performance.

Hairline & Part — These areas receive special attention because audiences expect hair to appear naturally connected to the performer's head.

Pins, Combs & Anchors — Hidden inside the wig, these help keep everything securely in place—even during energetic scenes!

Styling — Curling, braiding, sculpting, padding, and other techniques can transform a wig into almost any hairstyle or historical period.

Did You Know?

A professional theatrical wig may contain thousands of individually tied hairs and take many hours to create. Wigs don't just change a performer's hairstyle—they help designers communicate a character's age, personality, social status, time period, and even sense of humor before the character sings a single note!



Pre-Show Discussion Questions

- When you think of Cinderella, what images, characters, music, or moments come to mind?
- What do you expect to see, hear, or learn during a behind-the-scenes look at an opera?
- Where have you encountered Cinderella before, such as in books, movies, television, ballet, theatre, opera, or popular culture?
- Have you ever seen an opera or learned how one is created? What do you think might happen before an opera ever reaches the stage?
- What questions do you have about opera singers, costumes, scenery, lighting, props, music, or the people who work behind the scenes?
- Which parts of creating an opera do you think require artistic creativity? Which require technical skills? Where might the two overlap?
- Opera brings together many different art forms and jobs. How do you think singers, musicians, designers, technicians, directors, and other artists work together to create one production?
- How might your own ideas about Cinderella influence what you expect the artists and designers to create for the stage?
- TEKS – ELAR 6-8: 110.22(b)(1)(A-D); English II: 110.37(b)(1)(A-D), 110.37(b)(5)(A-C);
- English IV: 110.39(b)(1)(A-D), 110.39(b)(5)(A-C)

Post-Show Discussion Questions

- After experiencing this behind-the-scenes look at Cinderella, what did you learn that made you think or wonder?
- What did you see or hear that you expected? What surprised you about how an opera is created?
- Choose one element, such as singing, music, costume, scenery, lighting, props, or staging. What did you learn about how that element contributes to the finished production?
- What artistic choice did you find especially interesting? What do you think the artist or production team wanted that choice to communicate?
- What did you notice about the collaboration required to create an opera? Which jobs or responsibilities were more important than you expected?
- How did hearing operatic singing alongside learning about the production process change the way you experienced the music?
- Now that you have looked behind the scenes, what new questions do you have about opera, its artists, its technicians, or the process of bringing a story to the stage?
- If you were part of the creative team for Cinderella, what is one artistic or technical choice you would make, and why?
- Has this experience changed the way you might watch a live performance in the future? What will you notice now that you might not have noticed before?

TEKS – ELAR 6-8:), 110.22(b)(1)(A-F); English II: 110.37(b)(1)(A-D), 110.37(b)(5)(A-C);
English IV: 110.39(b)(1)(A-D), 110.39(b)(5)(A-C)

Writing Connections

- Create your own advertisement for the performance.
- Write a review of the performance.
 - Include a show synopsis in your own words.
 - Include at least three positive comments.
 - Include one or two critiques/suggestions for improvement/something you would have liked to have seen in the performance that was not there.
- Describe a favorite moment.
- Create a poem or story based on the show you just saw.

NOTE: Any of the pre- or post-show discussion questions could be reworded to a writing connection.

TEKS – ELAR:

Skill Area	6th	7th	8th	English II	English IV
Foundational Language Skills	110.22(b)(1)ABC	110.23(b)(1)ABC	110.24(b)(1)ABC	110.37(b)(1)ABC	110.39(b)(1)ABC
Respond to Sources	110.22(b)(6)ABC DE	110.23(b)(6)ABC DE	110.24(b)(6)ABC DE	110.37(b)(5)ABCD EFGHIJ	110.39(b)(5)ABCDE FGHIJ
Literary Elements	110.22(b)(7) ABCD	110.22(b)(7) ABCD	110.22(b)(7)ABCD	110.22(b)(7)ABCD	110.22(b)(7)ABCD
Recognize & Analyze Genre	110.22(b)(8) ACDE	110.23(b)(8) ACDE	110.24(b)(8)ACDE	110.37(b)(7)ACD i-iii, E i-iii, F	110.39(b)(7)CD i-ii, E i-iii, F
Author's Purpose & Craft	110.22(b)(9)ABC	110.23(b)(9)ABC	110.24(b)(9)ABC	110.37(b)(8)ABC DEFG	110.39(b)(8)ABC DEFG
Composition: Writing Process	110.22(b)(10)AB i-iii, CD i-v, E	110.23(b)(10)AB i-iii, CD i-v, E	110.24(b)(10)AB i-iii, CD i-v, E	110.37(b)(9)AB i-ii, CD i-vi, E	110.39(b)(9)AB i-iii, CDE
Generate Questions	110.22(b)(12) ACDE	110.22(b)(12) ACDE	110.22(b)(12) ACDE	110.22(b)(12)ACDE	110.22(b)(12)ACDE

How to Talk About Opera (Or Any Art Form)

You don't have to be an opera expert to have an opinion about what you see and hear! When talking about a performance, try going beyond "I liked it" or "I didn't like it." Describe what you noticed, how it affected you, and what made you think or feel that way.

Talk about the MUSIC

Was the music fast, slow, playful, dramatic, peaceful, or surprising? Did you notice the orchestra changing when the mood of the story changed?

"The music became faster and louder when..."

Talk about the VOICES

Were the voices high or low? Light or rich? Powerful or gentle? How did the singers use their voices to create different characters?

"I could tell the character was feeling ____ because the singer..."

Talk about the ACTING

Opera singers are actors, too! Look at facial expressions, gestures, movement, and interactions between characters.

"Even though I didn't understand every word, I knew ____ because..."

Talk about the DESIGN

Notice the scenery, costumes, wigs, makeup, props, and lighting. Designers make choices about color, shape, texture, size, and style to help tell the story.

"I noticed the designer used ____, which made the scene feel..."

Talk about the STORY

What did you notice about the characters and their choices? What surprised you? Did the story remind you of another story you know?

"This version of *Cinderella* was different because..."

Talk about YOUR EXPERIENCE

There is no requirement that you love everything you see! Thoughtful audience members can appreciate the artists' work while still having their own reactions. ways to begin talking about any work of art.

Try:

“I noticed...”

“I wondered...”

“I was surprised by...”

“My favorite choice was...”

“I didn’t expect...”

“This reminded me of...”

“I would have made a different choice by...”

“I want to know more about...”

Think Like a Music Critic

OBSERVE → DESCRIBE → INTERPRET

Your interpretation can be different from someone else’s. The important part is being able to point to what you saw, heard, or noticed and explain how it shaped your thinking.

Instead of asking only “Was it good?”, try asking:

“What choices did the artists make—and what did those choices make me see, hear, think, or feel?”

Don’t just tell us what you thought. Show us what you noticed.
That’s one of the best ways to begin talking about any work of art.

Music Performance Observation – Think Like a Music Critic

Name: _____

Performance: _____

Quick Tips for Giving Feedback

- Be specific rather than general (e.g., “I liked the way _____” instead of “It was good”).
- Balance praise and suggestions — feedback should feel encouraging.
- Focus on observations, not assumptions (e.g., “I heard...” / “I saw...” instead of “You meant...”).
- Mention both music, acting, costuming, movement, lights, and sets when possible, since all are central to this performance.

1. Positive First Impressions

“One thing that caught my eye or ear was...” or “I liked how you...”

2. This Was My Favorite Part

“My favorite part of your performance was...”

3. Specific Highlights in Movement or Music

“A movement, sound, or moment that stood out to me was...” or “I noticed when you...”

4. Growth Suggestions

“I wonder what it would look or sound like if you...” or “You could make it even stronger by...”

Your Feedback:

5. Overall Reflection

“Your performance made me feel...” or “The story or mood I got from your performance was...”

Your Feedback:

Lesson: Build the Opera!

Focus: Scenic Design, Costumes, Lighting, Wigs & Production Choices

Time: 15–20 minutes

Materials: Paper, pencils, crayons/colored pencils if available

Objective: Students will explore how theatre artists use scenic, costume, lighting, and character-design choices to communicate setting, character, mood, and story in an opera.

1. Start With a Challenge — 2 minutes

- Tell students: An opera begins long before the audience arrives. Before performers can step onto the stage, a team of artists has to decide what the world of the story will look like.
- Imagine your class has been hired as the production team for a brand-new version of *Cinderella*.
- There is only one rule: You may NOT copy a version you've seen before.

2. Choose Your World — 3 minutes

- As a class or in small groups, decide:
- Where and when does YOUR Cinderella take place? It could be: San Antonio today, 100 years in the future, the 1950s, outer space, a modern high school, an imaginary kingdom, anywhere else students invent!
- Then ask: If we change the setting, what else has to change?

3. Join the Production Team — 7–10 minutes

Assign students or small groups one production job.

- SCENIC DESIGNER - Sketch the stage. What does the audience need to see to understand where the story takes place?
- COSTUME DESIGNER - Design a costume for one character. What do color, shape, fabric, and style tell us about that person?
- WIG & MAKEUP DESIGNER
- Create a look for a character. How can hair and makeup communicate age, personality, wealth, status, or even comedy?
- LIGHTING DESIGNER - Choose how you would light one important moment. Bright or dark? Warm or cool? Where does the light come from? What mood are you creating?

- DIRECTOR - Decide how one important moment should happen onstage. Where are the performers? How do they move? Where should the audience look?
- SOUND DESIGN - Decide what the soundscape will happen onstage. What songs do we need? What will the mood of the songs be? When should we have song, instrumental music, or silence? Will there be any sound effects?

4. Put It Together — 3-5 minutes

- Have groups quickly share their choices.
- Here's the catch: all of the choices have to belong in the same production!
- If the scenic designer created futuristic San Antonio but the costume designer created an 1817 ball gown, is that a problem? Or could it be an intentional artistic choice?
- Ask: How do all of these theatre artists have to work together to tell ONE story?

Before You See *Glass Slippers Not Included*

During the performance, become a behind-the-scenes detective.

Look and listen for evidence of the people who helped create the opera:

- What did the scenic designer decide?
- What did you learn about costumes, wigs, or makeup?
- What choices did the director make?
- How do lighting and scenery change what you notice?
- What surprised you about the number of people or decisions required to create an opera?

Exit Question

Opera is a collaborative art form. Which behind-the-scenes job would YOU want to do, and why?

Beyond the Curtain Call: A “Glass Slippers Not Included” Podcast

Grade Band: 6–8

Time: 30–45 minutes

Art Forms: Media Arts + Theatre/Music

Materials:

Phone, tablet, computer, or other audio-recording device; paper or digital notes

Objective

Students will create a short podcast reviewing and reflecting on the show, using specific evidence from the event to explain how opera combines performance and behind-the-scenes artistry to create a complete theatrical experience.

The Assignment

- You attended *Glass Slippers Not Included* but you did not see a shortened performance of *La Cenerentola*. Instead, you experienced something different: part performance, part demonstration, and part backstage tour. You heard professional operatic singing while also discovering some of the artists, skills, decisions, and teamwork required to build an opera. Now become the arts reporter!
- Create a 2–3 minute podcast episode answering this question:
What did *Glass Slippers Not Included* reveal about opera that an audience might never discover just by watching the finished show?
- Your job isn't simply to say whether you liked the event. A strong reviewer tells listeners what happened, what they noticed, and why it mattered.
- Step 1: Gather Your Evidence.
Before recording, jot down a few memories from the experience.

ONSTAGE:

What did you notice about the singers, voices, music, characters, or storytelling?

BEHIND THE SCENES:

What did you learn about scenery, costumes, wigs, lighting, directing, rehearsing, or another part of creating an opera?

THE SURPRISE:

What is one thing about creating opera that you didn't know—or hadn't thought about—before attending?

THE CONNECTION:

How did seeing both the performance and the process change the way you thought about the finished product?

- Step 2: Build Your Episode

Your podcast should have four quick parts:

1. Hook

Grab your listener's attention.

"You see the singer. You see the costume. You see the finished set. But how many people did it take to put all of that onstage?"

2. Set the Scene

Briefly explain what this performance was.

Remember: This was not a performance of the entire opera. Explain the combination of live operatic performance and behind-the-scenes exploration.

3. Go Backstage

Choose two specific things you learned or observed.

Don't just list them. Explain why each one matters.

Instead of: "We learned about wigs."

Try: "I had never thought about how a wig has to look right for the character AND stay secure while a singer is acting and performing. It made me realize that even something that looks like a small detail requires another artist's expertise."

4. Sign Off

Finish with your biggest takeaway.

Try completing: "After *Glass Slippers Not Included*,
I'll never look at _____ the same way because..."

- Step 3: Record!

You don't need fancy podcasting equipment. Find a quiet place, speak clearly, and let your personality come through.

Before you hit RECORD:

Know what you want to say, but don't worry about memorizing every word.

Use specific examples from the event.

Explain your opinions instead of simply saying "It was cool."

Speak at a comfortable pace.

Let listeners hear your curiosity and enthusiasm!

Podcast Challenge: Paint the Picture

Your listeners weren't there. They can't see the stage, hear the singers, examine the costumes, or watch a designer demonstrate their work. Your words have to help them imagine the experience. Ask yourself: Could someone who didn't attend this performance understand what made this experience different from simply attending an opera? If the answer is yes... You're ready to drop the mic.



Quick Reflection

After recording, listen to your podcast once.

One thing I explained especially well:

One place I could have used more specific evidence:

The most important thing I want my listener to understand about creating opera is:

Extensions

Designer Spotlight

Choose one behind-the-scenes artist—scenic, costume, wig and makeup, lighting, or another designer—and add a 60-second podcast segment explaining how that artist contributes to an opera.

From Two Points of View

Interview a classmate who attended *Glass Slippers Not Included*. Compare what each of you noticed and include both perspectives in a follow-up episode.

Listen Again

Listen to a recording of a selection from *La Cenerentola*. This time, imagine the production choices that would accompany the music. Describe the scenery, costumes, lighting, or movement you would design.

Be the Producer

Imagine you are creating your own behind-the-scenes student event for another opera, musical, or play. Choose three things you would show young audiences and explain why.

Podcast Series

Turn the assignment into a class podcast! Combine several student episodes into The Art Behind the Aria, with different students exploring performance, design, music, and backstage artistry.

LITERATURE CONNECTIONS

The Grimms, Perrault, Disney, and Rossini each chose to change.

The Rough-Face Girl

— Rafe Martin, illustrated by David Shannon

An Algonquin Cinderella story about a young woman whose courage and ability to see beyond appearances set her apart.

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

— John Steptoe

Inspired by African folklore, this beautifully illustrated tale follows two very different sisters and explores kindness, character, and what makes someone truly worthy.

Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China

— Ai-Ling Louie, illustrated by Ed Young

A retelling of an ancient Chinese Cinderella story. An excellent way to discover how similar story patterns appear across cultures.

Cendrillon: A Caribbean Cinderella

— Robert D. San Souci, illustrated by Brian Pinkney

A colorful Caribbean retelling narrated by the godmother herself, filled with Creole language and culture.

Bravo! Brava! A Night at the Opera

— Anne Siberell

A kid-friendly introduction to the world of opera and what audiences experience at a performance.

The Barefoot Book of Stories from the Opera

— Shahrukh Husain, illustrated by James Mayhew

Introduces young readers to stories from several famous operas and demonstrates just how wildly different opera stories can be.

Try a Cinderella Comparison

After reading two or more versions, ask students:

What stayed the same? What changed? Why might a storyteller, composer, or director choose to tell the same story differently?

Theatre* Etiquette – Preparing for the Experience

Purpose:

Teaching theatre etiquette helps students understand that audience behavior directly affects a live performance. Unlike movies or TV, live theatre is a shared experience — the audience and the performers influence one another.

“Etiquette” means the expectations for polite or respectful behavior. Another word for etiquette is manners. These expectations often depend on the type of performance and its traditions.

Example:

At a **Gospel concert**, the audience may clap, sing, or move with the music — that’s part of the experience!

At a **Classical Orchestra concert**, the audience usually listens quietly and waits until the conductor lowers their hands before applauding.

When attending a performance at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, the following guidelines help students act respectfully and confidently as audience members.

Before the Show

- Arrive early: Allow time to find seats, use the restroom, and settle in calmly before the lights dim.
- Silence devices: Turn off or silence all phones, watches, and electronics to avoid noise or bright screens during the performance.
- Listen for instructions: Ushers or teachers may share information about seating, timing, or theatre rules.
- Discuss expectations: Remind students that live performances require focus, respect, and quiet observation.

During the Show

- Be attentive and quiet: Whispering, talking, or making noise distracts both the performers and other audience members. Performers can see and hear the audience.
- Stay seated: Unless there’s an emergency, students should remain in their seats. If someone must leave, they should do so quietly with help from an usher.
- Applaud appropriately:
 - Clap when the conductor or key performers enter.
 - Show appreciation after songs, dances, or acts — applause is a way of saying “thank you.”

* Some people in the United States use the spelling **theatre** specifically for live stage performances and **theater** for the buildings where the performances happen.



- Respect the performance: Avoid unwrapping food, chewing gum loudly, or fidgeting. Encourage students to engage visually and emotionally — there’s always something on stage to discover.
- No photography or video: Using cameras or phones can distract others and potentially endanger performers if flashes occur.
- Respond appropriately: Laugh, smile, or react when it fits the scene. Genuine responses show appreciation, but excessive noise or commentary can distract from the performance.

After the Show

- Stay for the curtain call: Performers return to the stage to bow — this is the audience’s time to applaud and thank them.
 - If everyone stands while clapping, it’s called a standing ovation — a sign of exceptional appreciation.
 - Occasionally, performers return for an encore (pronounced “ON-core”) to perform an extra piece.
- Clean up: Dispose of wrappers, bottles, or papers to keep the theatre tidy for the next audience.
- Exit calmly: Walk quietly as you leave. Remind students that even soft talking becomes loud when hundreds of voices echo in the space.

Additional Tips for Students

- Posture matters: Sitting up straight helps others see and shows attentiveness.
- Show respect: Performers dedicate time and effort to their craft. Focused, polite listening demonstrates appreciation for their work.
- Ask for help when needed: Ushers (theatre staff) assist guests with seating, questions, or directions. Encourage students to approach them respectfully if help is needed.
- Be present: Encourage students to enjoy the live energy of the moment — no screens or distractions needed.

Teacher Tips

- Review theatre etiquette as part of your pre-trip classroom preparation. Discuss why these behaviors matter — link them to empathy, discipline, and teamwork.
- Role-play appropriate and inappropriate behaviors before the trip to reinforce expectations.
- Remind students that audience participation (like applause or laughter) is part of the performance energy — the goal is to contribute positively to the shared experience.

Key Takeaway

Middle school students are developing independence and awareness of social norms. Theatre etiquette helps students build self-control, empathy, and respect: essential skills not only for the arts but for life beyond the classroom.



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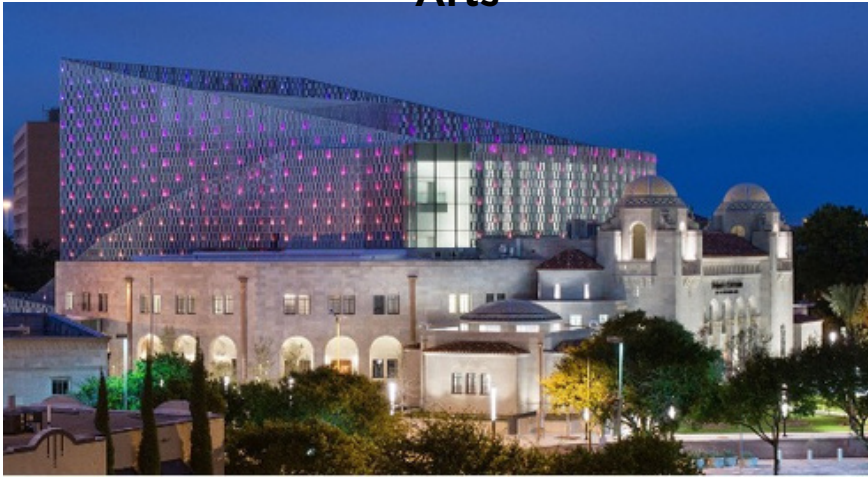
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An Incredibly Powerful Vision

Situated along the banks of the San Antonio River in the city's heart, the historic Municipal Auditorium, with its original facade preserved, has been transformed into a world-class venue. This theatrical icon is once again the pride of the river and a shining beacon of creativity, fine art, and downtown development. There is no better place — anywhere — to see and hear a live performance.

The remarkable flexibility of the 1,738-seat H-E-B Performance Hall, with its distinctive “flat floor” capability, opens the door for performances and events of almost any sort. The acoustics in the Hall can be “tuned” to fit the performance and physical set-up of the hall. The sound insulation throughout The Tobin Center enables simultaneous use of the Performance Hall, the Studio Theater, and the 600-seat River Walk Plaza. Audiences can see and hear performers and hear performers and performances of every description at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, WHERE THE ARTS LIVE.

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