

O|PERA AUSTRALIA

# Education Pack







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*Opera Australia is one of the world's most celebrated opera companies with an ambition to bring an Australian stamp to telling great stories through song, and a commitment to develop and nurture new generations of Australian talent on and off the stage.*

Based in Sydney on Gadigal land, we present over 600 annual performances to more than half a million people, including operas, musicals and concerts in our flagship home venues: Sydney Opera House and Arts Centre Melbourne. We present a national tour that extends from the red centre in the Northern Territory, to the wine regions of Western Australia, to the beach in Coolangatta. Our performances are broadcast in cinemas, on national television and ABC radio.

We are one of the biggest employers in Australia's live performance sector, with an ensemble of Australian artists, and regular appearances by international guest artists. Our company includes opera singers, conductors, musicians and répétiteurs, with 200 people in the areas of scenic construction and painting, lighting, design, direction, wardrobe, wig-making, management and administration. In Sydney, we employ the Opera Australia Orchestra, while Orchestra Victoria is a key performance partner for Melbourne seasons.

Visit us online at [opera.org.au](http://opera.org.au)



# About This Resource

Despite being loved by many around the world and with a rich history dating back hundreds of years, Opera is a genre of music that many students will not have been exposed to and therefore can be one of the less well-known and understood styles of music.

These creative activities have been written as an introduction to Opera, specifically *The Magic Flute*, for primary school students and their teachers, to offer a window into this magical world. It has been designed as a standalone resource, although there is no doubt that it would be greatly enhanced by a viewing of Opera Australia's *The Magic Flute* if the opportunity were to present itself.

In addition to Music, the resource also includes Drama, Visual Arts and Movement/ Dance activities, acknowledging the fact that Operas combine music, drama, movement, design, costumes and scenery to tell a story, helping transport the audience to a different place or time. In this way, the lessons in this resource may be used as part of a larger Performing Arts unit of work.

There are activities suitable for all levels in the Primary school - Foundation to Year 6. They have not been organised under specific Year groupings; rather, there are extension opportunities highlighted throughout as well as suggestions for differentiation. Teachers should feel free to adapt any activities to suit the age, maturity and experience of their class. Audio and video tracks are **hyperlinked** throughout this document for ease of use.

A Scope and Sequence chart from the Victorian Curriculum - The Arts: Music and the NSW Creative Arts (Music) K-6 Syllabus is also included for ease of reference.

We wish you and your students creative joy and merry music-making as you explore the world of opera!





# Victorian Curriculum: The Arts - Music

Strand	F-2	3-4	5-6
<b>Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent and express ideas</b>	<b>ACAMUM080</b> Develop aural skills by exploring and imitating sounds, pitch and rhythm patterns using voice, movement and body percussion	<b>ACAMUM084</b> Develop aural skills by exploring, imitating and recognising elements of music including dynamics, pitch and rhythm patterns	<b>ACAMUM088</b> Explore dynamics and expression, using aural skills to identify and perform rhythm and pitch patterns
<b>Developing understanding of music practices</b>	<b>ACAMUM081</b> Sing and play instruments to improvise, practise a repertoire of chants, songs and rhymes, including songs used by cultural groups in the community	<b>ACAMUM085</b> Practise singing, playing instruments and improvising music, using elements of music including rhythm, pitch, dynamics and form in a range of pieces, including in music from the local community	<b>ACAMUM089</b> Develop technical and expressive skills in singing and playing instruments with understanding of rhythm, pitch and form in a range of pieces, including in music from the community
<b>Sharing artworks through performance, presentation or display</b>	<b>ACAMUM082</b> Create compositions and perform music to communicate ideas to an audience	<b>ACAMUM086</b> Create, perform and record compositions by selecting and organising sounds, silence, tempo and volume	<b>ACAMUM090</b> Rehearse and perform music including music they have composed by improvising, sourcing and arranging ideas and making decisions to engage an audience
<b>Responding to and interpreting artworks</b>	<b>ACAMUR083</b> Respond to music and consider where and why people make music, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<b>ACAMUR087</b> Identify intended purposes and meanings as they listen to music using the elements of music to make comparisons, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<b>ACAMUR091</b> Explain how the elements of music communicate meaning by comparing music from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music

**Elements of music:** rhythm, pitch, dynamics & expression, form & structure, timbre, and texture

## NSW Creative Arts (Music) K-6 Syllabus

Early Stage 1	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
<b>Performing</b>			
<b>MUES1.1</b> Participates in simple speech, singing, playing and moving activities, demonstrating an awareness of musical concepts.	<b>MUS1.1</b> Sings, plays and moves to a range of music, demonstrating an awareness of musical concepts.	<b>MUS2.1</b> Sings, plays and moves to a range of music, demonstrating a basic knowledge of musical concepts.	<b>MUS3.1</b> Sings, plays and moves to a range of music, individually and in groups, demonstrating a knowledge of musical concepts.
<b>Organising Sound</b>			
<b>MUES1.2</b> Creates own rhymes, games, songs and simple compositions	<b>MUS1.2</b> Explores, creates, selects and organises sound in simple structures.	<b>MUS2.2</b> Improvises musical phrases, organises sounds and explains reasons for choices.	<b>MUS3.2</b> Improvises, experiments, selects, combines and orders sound using musical concepts.
	<b>MUS1.3</b> Uses symbol systems to represent sounds.	<b>MUS2.3</b> Uses commonly understood symbols to represent own work.	<b>MUS3.3</b> Notates and discusses own work and the work of others
<b>Listening</b>			
<b>MUES1.4</b> Listens to and responds to music.	<b>MUS1.4</b> Responds to a range of music, expressing likes and dislikes and the reasons for these choices.	<b>MUS2.4</b> Identifies the use of musical concepts and musical symbols in a range of repertoire.	<b>MUS3.4</b> Identifies the use of musical concepts and symbols in a range of musical styles.

**Concepts of music:** duration, pitch, dynamics, structure, tone colour



# Australian Curriculum: The Arts - Music

Foundation – Year 2	Year 3 – 4	Year 5 – 6
Making in Music – Listen, Perform and Compose		
<b>ACAMUM080</b> Develop aural skills by exploring and imitation sounds, pitch and rhythm patterns using voice, movement and body percussion	<b>ACAMUM084</b> Develop aural skills by exploring, imitating and recognising elements of music including dynamics, pitch and rhythm patterns	<b>ACAMUM088</b> Explore dynamics and expression, using aural skills to identify and perform rhythm and pitch patterns
<b>ACAMUM081</b> Sing and play instruments to improvise, practise a repertoire of chants, songs and rhymes, including songs used by cultural groups in the community	<b>ACAMUM085</b> Practise singing, playing instruments and improvising music, using elements of music including rhythm, pitch, dynamics and form in a range of pieces, including in music from the local community	<b>ACAMUM089</b> Develop technical and expressive skills in singing and playing instruments with understanding of rhythm, pitch and form in a range of pieces, including in music from the community
<b>ACAMUM082</b> Create compositions and perform music to communicate ideas to an audience	<b>ACAMUM086</b> Create, perform and record compositions by selecting and organising sounds, silence, tempo and volume	<b>ACAMUM090</b> Rehearse and perform music including music they have composed by improvising, sourcing and arranging ideas and making decisions to engage an audience
Responding in Music		
<b>ACAMUM083</b> Respond to music and consider where and why people make music, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<b>ACAMUM087</b> Identify intended purposes and meanings and they listen to music using the elements of music to make comparisons, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	<b>ACAMUM091</b> Explain how the elements of music communicate meaning by comparing music from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander music

**Elements of music:** rhythm, pitch, dynamics & expression, form & structure, timbre, and texture





# Activity 1: What is Opera?

Ask students what they already know about opera. *What do they think it is?* Create a table or mind map as a class showing what they already know or think they know about opera and what they learn about opera in this activity. This could be an ongoing task which students add to after each subsequent lesson. Discuss the following:

**Opera** (the Italian word for 'work') is a play in musical form. It is a combination of music and drama, telling a story through music and singing with the accompaniment of live instruments (usually an orchestra). Unlike a musical, opera singers do not use microphones to amplify their voices.

Since it began, in Italy in 1597, there have been many different versions of what goes into an opera, but the main elements are:

- singers use their voices (can be both speaking and singing) to tell a story
- drama (the actions) and the music work together to tell the story
- it is usually presented on a stage with the characters in costume

Operas combine music, drama, movement, design, costumes and scenery to tell a story, helping transport the audience to a different place or time.

The composer creates a **score** of music to tell the performers and conductor how the music should sound. It contains all of the information about what the orchestra or musicians play, what the singers sing and say, and how the words (**libretto**) and music fit together. **Libretto** literally means 'little book' in Italian and is the text sung in an opera. When characters in the opera perform a song solo (by themselves) it is called an **aria**.

*The Magic Flute* is in the form of a **Singspiel** (literal translation 'sing-play'), which means that it includes both singing and spoken dialogue.

Have students watch [this video from Opera Australia](#) as an introduction to opera. You may also like to explore [this beginners guide to opera](#) with your students.

## Quiz Time!

- Have students answer the short quiz about opera on the following page by matching the questions with their correct answer.
- Print the following questions and answers out, cut them up and hand them out so that each student receives one card.
- Students should move around the room to find someone who has the matching question or answer to their card. When they have found their match they sit down with their partner.
- Each pair reads out their question and answer to the class before exiting the lesson.







cut along lines

What are the *three* main elements of opera?

**The story is sung.**  
**Drama and music work together to tell the story.**  
**It's presented on stage with costumes.**

What is *opera*?

**A play where the story is sung with the accompaniment of instruments.**

What is the *name* for the text of the story?

**Libretto**

What is the *name* for the music created for the opera?

**Score**

What is a *Singspiel*?

**An opera which includes both singing and speaking**

What is an *aria*?

**A solo song**



# Glossary of Terms

## *Accompaniment*

The group of operas, plays, dances, etc., that a company or a performer knows or is prepared to perform.

## *Aria*

A solo song.

## *Ensemble*

A group of musicians. In opera, ensemble can refer to any music written for two or more voices.

## *Libretto*

The text of the opera.

## *Lyricist/ Librettist*

A writer who transforms prose into something suitable for a song setting. This writer has the skills of a poet to structure the text into verses.

## *Music Elements/ Concepts*

As per VIC and NSW  
Music Syllabus:

- Pitch
- Rhythm (Duration NSW)
- Form & Structure
- Dynamics & Expression
- Timbre (Tone colour NSW)
- Texture (not in NSW)





# Opera

A drama set to music, sung with instrumental accompaniment. The musical numbers may be separated by recitative or spoken dialogue.

# Ostinato

A repeated musical phrase or rhythmic pattern.

# Phrase

A short section of a musical composition, either vocal or instrumental, which forms a discrete unit of melody.

# Refrain

The chorus of a song; the part that recurs at the end of each verse in a song.

# Repertoire

The group of operas, plays, dances, etc., that a company or a performer knows or is prepared to perform.

# Tempo

The speed of a piece of music.



# Activity 2: Every Opera has a *Story*

As we now know, Opera is an art form that tells a story through music and singing. Operas might be based on stories from books, myths and legends, or historical people and events.

**The Magic Flute** was composed by **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** and is one of his most famous works due to its unique story and score, evoking an enchanted world of magic and wonder.

*The Magic Flute* is set in an enchanted, magical land. The narrative follows the adventures of Prince Tamino and the bird-catcher Papageno as they embark on a quest to save Princess Pamina. To aid them in their quest, they are given musical instruments with magical powers which they use to overcome the challenges and obstacles that test their journey.

Watch [this short introductory video](#) by Ben Mingay, the singer who plays Papageno.

Take some time to familiarise students with the story and main characters of **The Magic Flute**.

In the table below, the main characters' names and descriptions have been mixed up. Have students match up the main characters with the correct description in the below table by colouring, numbering or drawing a line between the two columns:

## Match the *name* to the *character*!

*Match by colouring, numbering or drawing a line between the two columns:*

Name	Character
Tamino (Tah-MEE-no)	The evil and powerful ruler of the night, moon and stars
Pamina (Pah-MEE-nah)	A young prince who is in love
Papageno (Pah-pah-GAY-no)	Daughter of the Queen of the Night
Queen of the Night	The wise ruler of the Sun
Sarastro (Zah-RAS-tro)	The Queen's birdcatcher





There are many different iterations of the story of *The Magic Flute* that can be shared with students - short, long, written, illustrated, animated and Readers Theatre. A few selections are shared below.

- [A written synopsis of the story of The Magic Flute](#)
- [The story in a nutshell - written](#)
- [An animated version of the story](#)
- [Link to a picture book of the story with music \(paid\)](#)
- [Readers Theatre version of The Magic Flute \(suitable for Stages 2-3\)](#)

After students have read or been read the story, select one or more items from the following activities for them to explore:

- Students write a summary of the narrative using a provided scaffold such as [this one](#).
- Students draw their favourite part of the story as they imagine it.
- Students in small groups are allocated different parts of the story to illustrate or create a visual representation of. Each of the artworks is then pieced together to illustrate the entire story.
- As the story is read aloud, students create sound effects at given moments using musical instruments and/or found sound objects. Movement can also be incorporated. Allow students time beforehand to experiment with instruments and sounds to represent pivotal moments in the story.
- Students (in small groups or as a whole class depending on the age of your students) create a musical soundscape to tell the story or part of the story.
- Students work as a class or in small groups to role play the story or selected parts of it.
- Students practice a Readers Theatre version of the narrative. This could be done as a whole class activity or in two groups. Here is one [Readers Theatre version of The Magic Flute \(suitable for Stages 2-3\)](#) but you may find another which you prefer.

# Activity 3: Magic Masks

Opera Australia's (OA's) production and costume design for *The Magic Flute* includes the use of puppets and masks to help portray this enchanted land and its characters. The use of puppets and masks are core parts of the NSW K-6 Creative Arts Syllabus: Drama and the making of them can be incorporated into a Visual Arts lesson or unit of work. While this lesson will focus on making masks, the following lesson will utilise them with movement and improvised drama games.

- Show students the images below of some of the masks used in OA's production of *The Magic Flute*.
- After viewing the masks discuss some of the following questions with students:
  - What characters might wear these masks?
  - Do they think the masks represent real or fictional creatures/characters? Why?
  - Where else have they seen masks?
  - Why do they think people wear masks? (e.g. to conceal their identity, as a character in a play, for dress ups and costumes, for fun).
  - Are they 2D or 3-dimensional?
  - What materials and techniques have been used to make the masks?

The following is a description of this drama form from the NSW K-6 Creative Arts Syllabus:

**Mask** is a drama form in which the face is fully or partially covered as a way of representing a character. A full-mask has eye and nose openings. A half-mask covers the top half of the face and does not hide the mouth or nostrils. The half-mask allows its wearer to speak. Masks can be neutral (smooth neutral features in white or earth colours) or can represent distinctive character features. Body movements and gestures are significantly exaggerated by a masked-character to adequately convey meaning to others. Character stereotypes can be manipulated through the interactions of masked-characters. Sometimes all characters in a dramatic work wear masks and at other times there is only one significantly contrasting masked character. Material manipulation to construct masks can be undertaken in Visual Arts.

- Show students [this video](#) of the director and costume designer from *The Magic Flute* discussing the process of creating the masks for the production.
- Afterwards, discuss with students:
  - What did they learn from this video?
  - What was something surprising or interesting?
  - What did they discover about the masks used in the production?
  - What was a tip or suggestion given for creating masks?
  - Is there anything more about the use or creation of masks that they would like to ask or find out about?





# Make your mask

- Students create their own mask. Creating masks from scratch is very rewarding where time is available to do so, otherwise students can use a template as a foundation (links to the right). There are also many templates available online or you could create your own for students to use.

Creating a unique mask can be very low in cost by using recycled materials such as paper, cardboard, magazines and newspapers, ribbon, egg cartons, fabric scraps, beads, leaves, seeds, feathers and other natural items collected from the ground.

If you have time, it can be helpful to create a demonstration piece to show students to give them an idea of how they could use and put different materials together.

You can also use the lesson to teach important art concepts like line, shape, symbols, symmetry, assemblage, design and texture.

Where possible, resist using simple 2D designs, instead allowing students the opportunity to construct 3D masks with different materials, textures and depths.

Masks can be created free-form without any particular end goal in mind, or students might have in mind a particular character or type of character they would like to create a mask for.

Try out the following as a base for masks:

- Pre-cut cardboard mask templates (full face or half face\*) of various shapes and colours (or leave students to add colour as they wish). Templates can be simple such as the ones [here](#). You can also just use a simple rectangle cutout shape (with eye holes) as the starting point with other shapes for students to embellish with as in this example of [Paper Masks](#).
- \* Half face masks can be used with dialogue as they leave the mouth uncovered, whereas full face masks lend themselves more to mime and movement work.
- Folding/creasing the mask down the centre from top to bottom of full face masks will help it to sit on the face better and give a 3D effect.
- Paper plates can be an easy starting point for mask-making
- Egg cartons can make a great ready made 3D base for masks – for ideas see: [Egg Carton faces - Mini Mad Things](#) and [DIY Egg Carton Masks | Handmade by Kelly](#)
- Provide students with materials to create their masks. It can be helpful to create stations at different tables where they can go to collect different items. Some students, particularly young ones, will need help cutting out eye holes - it can be helpful to have these done prior to the activity.
- Some great examples of mixed media mask creation can be found with [these nature masks](#) and these [African inspired ones](#).
- Several great ideas and examples of different kinds of children's masks can be found [here](#).
- A final consideration for masks is how they will be held in front of the face. Opera Australia's masks use a stick/dowel attached to the side or back of the mask which performers use to physically hold the mask in front of their face (to stop it interfering with them singing). You can also attach a piece of elastic to each side of the mask to hold it over the face.



## Extension opportunity

- Performers have used both puppetry and masks for thousands of years. The ancient Greek tragedy and comedy masks were first used 2000 years ago and are still the symbol of drama today. Puppets have been used in performance for at least 2500 years, and some historians claim that they pre-date actors in theatre.
- Spend some time researching and exploring different masks and forms of puppetry from around the world. View a variety and discuss the similarities and differences between them.

# Activity 4: Masked Movement

Watch [this video with Andy Dexterity](#) – the Movement Director from OA's *The Magic Flute*.

- After viewing the video, discuss with students:
  - What do they understand about Andy's role as Movement Director?
  - What is the purpose of using/including movement in a performance?

Brainstorm some ways they use movement every day to communicate things to others (e.g. hugs, high fives, body language to indicate listening etc)

## How to use masks

- Explain to students the **main rules** of mask work:
  - Don't put a mask on or take it off in front of anyone. Always turn your back to everyone first and then put it on or remove it. This way as soon as you start the performance the new character is introduced.
  - Never touch your mask when you are wearing it as it spoils the illusion of the mask. Likewise, try to face your audience with the mask and avoid turning your head to the side.
  - Handle masks with respect and never put them face down or wear them on top of the head like a hat.
  - If wearing a full face mask do not speak. We cannot hear the performer as their mouth is covered.

With students, [watch this Mr Drama Workshops video](#) showing some foundations of putting on a mask and general mask use.

*The Magic Flute* is about the power of the imagination. Improvisation is a great way to actively engage students in the elements of storytelling, creative expression, listening and ensemble work. It is also a wonderful way to foster confidence, communication, and collaboration. To the right are a few improvisation games you can do with your students.

## Improvised characterisation and movement with masks

- Using the masks students created in the previous activity, ask them to consider the personality and movements of their masked character by exploring the following prompts. Feel free to add your own suggestions into the mix!
- Have students put their masks on (following the mask protocol of turning their back to do so) and move around the room using the character prompts below. After they have tried several, have them choose their favourite which best suits their mask. Remind students that their character may or may not be human and there is no right or wrong, just exploration.

**Example prompts:** With your mask on, move around the space using only movement and action (no speaking) to represent -

- A young character with lots of energy
- An old, stiff character who has trouble moving around
- A clumsy, clown-like character who tries different things although they sometimes go wrong
- An strict, uptight, rigid character who likes to follow the rules
- A speed demon who likes to do everything super-fast
- A shy, polite character who is unsure of the audience, but gradually warms up to say hello



- Next, have students consider how their masked character might move. Provide different physical action prompts for students to respond to whilst wearing their mask (see below for some example prompts).
- You might begin by asking students to explore the scenarios by themselves in their own space in the room and then scaffolding some interaction by asking them to explore a scenario with a partner or more freely interacting with others in the room. Try to give these extra instructions using minimal words as students are in the activity so they stay in character, rather than stopping and starting the activity to give further instruction. You could also play some music (instrumental, avoid music with words) in the background for students to use as a further device to work with.

Try to keep the no-speaking rule, as without the use of their face or voice students are encouraged to use their whole body to convey expression. Students learn through mask work how much they depend on their faces and voices for expression and communication. While they are wearing the mask, communication is a challenge, and they must use their bodies to communicate through enhanced use of gesture and action.

**Example prompts:** Using your chosen character (e.g. a young person with lots of energy) move around the space using only movement and action (no speaking) to show them -

- Waking up in the morning and getting ready to go out
- Presenting themselves grandly to the audience and asking for applause through mime only
- Engaging in a dance battle (with another masked character) or dance performance
- Walking around the stage space, curiously investigating its surroundings
- Walking on the moon or exploring another planet
- Doing exercises to get fit – sit-ups, push-ups, star jumps etc
- Exploring the jungle, running away from or making friends with other creatures
- It's your first day at a new school. You are walking around the school feeling scared and nervous.
- Any combination of these or your own scenario!

- Watch the following example of mime. Mime (as with mask work) is equally reliant on exaggerated and deliberate use of gesture and movement –
  - **Le Mime Marceau**
- After watching, discuss what students noticed, what worked well, what things could they try out or include more of in their own masked mime and movement?
- Discuss with students the following four concepts to understand and use when improvising in Drama:
  - **Making offers:** A performer or group offers an idea to another performer or group.
  - **Accepting offers:** A performer or group accepts an idea from another performer or group.
  - **Blocking:** A performer or group blocks or stops the given idea from happening.
  - **Yielding:** A performer or group allows the given idea to occur despite adapting parts of it.
- Now watch the following mime video **Mime - ET the Mime - The Car**, asking students to pay attention to the moments when ET makes an offer and when these offers are accepted, yielded to or blocked by the other person.

Discuss the importance of saying 'yes' (metaphorically speaking) when improvising. In improvisation we talk about accepting offers, and that in order to accept an offer you need to say "Yes, and..." rather than no. For example, a student points to a desk and says, "What a cool banana!" Don't respond, "No, it's a car." Instead respond, "Yes! And... that banana would be great in one of my amazing banana cakes!"

## Extension opportunity

- Students work in groups of 4 or 5 to develop simple characterisations based around their made masks, then improvise or create a short drama piece telling a story.
- Make puppets and have students work in groups to create puppet shows.

## Group Game 1: Masked Freeze Frames

- Students work in groups of 4 or 5 to create a series of five freeze frames that tell a story where each of the characters is wearing a mask. For example:
  - a group of characters in masks playing beach volleyball/cricket etc on the beach
  - playing a sporting game when a fight breaks out over whether a point was scored or not
  - playing with a piñata at a birthday party
  - an argument (done in silence). The audience should be able to tell who is winning at any moment, and who finally wins.
  - A tourist given conflicting directions to their destination by two locals. The audience should be able to tell which local is right, and which one the tourist believes.
  - Two, three, or more people arrive one at a time in a crowded cinema, in which there are only a few seats empty. We should see each one look for a seat, locate one, and go to it. We should be able to tell how each feels about taking a seat next to a stranger, and how each feels about the next person sitting by them.
  - Cooking a meal and one person is making a mess faster than the others can clean it up.
- In this exercise the emphasis is on how to convey a story without the use of voice or facial expression, using the masked character and body movement instead. Remind students to practice making and accepting offers made by group members, no matter how whacky they might be.
- Students should rehearse and then perform their freeze frames to the class. They move to the next frame as their number is called. Students should consider the arc of the story they wish to convey through the freeze frames (e.g. setting, sequence of events, complication, resolution)
- After rehearsal, groups perform to the class and receive feedback

## Group Game 2: Space Jump with Masks

In Space Jump, students act out an improvised series of scenes in front of the class. Each of the actors is wearing a mask. At the end of each scene, the actors freeze, a new actor joins and prompts a spontaneous scene change. Once again, remind students of the importance when improvising of making and accepting offers, meaning go with whatever the next student proposes when they enter the scene, even if you don't know exactly what it is! Can be played with or without dialogue, depending on the types of masks being used and dramatic skills to be developed.

1. Choose a student to start the game. They are wearing their mask.
2. Quietly tell the starting student a scene to begin acting out (don't let the rest of the class know what it is) e.g. you are a waiter with a broken foot; you are an aerobics instructor; you are making an enormous pot of stew
3. When the teacher calls 'SPACE JUMP' the student freezes.
4. A 2nd masked student then joins, creating a new scene inspired by the frozen position.
5. The 1st student accepts the offer made by the 2nd and both students act out the new scene.
6. When 'SPACE JUMP' is called again, both students must freeze and a 3rd masked student is called to create a new scene based off that freeze frame.
7. Continue calling 'SPACE JUMP' until there are 4 or 5 students involved in the scene.
8. Extension: 'SPACE JUMP REVERSE' - Students exit the stage one by one in the order they entered, recreating the previous scenes in reverse order.

You can play several rounds of this activity. As students' confidence develops encourage them to actively introduce dramatic tension and focus through enhanced use of movement, gesture and action. This game can also be played without masks and with more dialogue or props.

View an [\*\*example without masks from 'Whose line is it anyway?'\*\*](#). While the facilitator does not call Space Jump for each person to enter, the principle is the same. Encourage students to notice how dramatic offers are made and accepted in this improvisation.







# Activity 5: The Art of *Singing*

- Watch [this video of two of the singers](#) from OA's *The Magic Flute* sharing what it's like to sing in an opera, how they got into singing and opera in the first place, how they train their voice for operatic singing and what they love about it. Afterwards, reflect with students on what they discovered or found interesting from watching the clip. How does the operatic singing voice differ from a regular singing voice?
- Have students [listen to Papageno's aria 'I am a very happy man'](#) (see score to the right). Get them to pat the beat (constant underlying pulse) on their knees whilst they listen. Older students might be able to identify that it is in a 2/4 time signature (two crotchet beats to every bar).
- Students learn to sing the aria as sung by Papageno the bird-catcher at the beginning of the opera. Students can learn the song by echoing each phrase in the audio here. You can play this several times, asking students to join in echoing each phrase, until they can sing the entire song.
- Have students gently tap the rhythm of the words on their legs whilst they listen and sing. You can move between asking them to tap the beat (constant underlying pulse) using body percussion and the rhythm (the combination of long and short sounds that make up the melody) to develop a clear understanding of the difference between beat and rhythm.
- Ask students what the mood of the music is and why they think that.
- Emphasise that there is no right or wrong answer here but encourage them to begin to identify and articulate, using known musical vocabulary, what musical characteristics evoke mood in music, e.g. fast moving notes and bouncy rhythms might evoke an upbeat, happy mood.
- Much of the melody moves in steps but there are a few occasions where the melody jumps. See if students can identify the places where the melody has a big jump by showing it with their hands (e.g. moving their hand from low to high such as in bar 4 at the words 'bird catch-er'). While they sing, have students show the movement of the pitch with their hands by drawing the melody in the air with their finger. They could also draw the melody as a line or series of lines using pencil and paper.
- Younger students might like to create actions or movements to perform along with the words of the song. This could be done as a whole class or in pairs or small groups.
- Older students could also learn to play the melody on recorders or other instruments and perform as an instrumental piece or as an accompaniment to the singers.





# I am a very happy man

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. The melody is simple and cheerful, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "I am a ver-ry hap-py man. A bird catch-er is what I am. And young and old through out this land are al ways glad to shake my hand. And birds come fly - ing to my call, I have my ways to catch them all. My life is cheer - ful gay and free for ev'-ry bird be - longs to me".

I am a ver-ry hap-py man. A bird catch-er is what I am. And  
young and old through out this land are al ways glad to shake my hand.  
And birds come fly - ing to my call, I have my ways to catch them all.  
My life is cheer - ful gay and free for ev'-ry bird be -  
longs to me



# Activity 6: Playing in *'the pit'*

- By now you know that opera isn't just about the singers. There is also the set and costume designers, producers, directors and movement instructors as well as all the other musicians in the orchestra! The orchestra play a very important part in an opera and have a special place to sit called 'the pit'. **Watch this video** with two members of OA's orchestra to discover what it's like to play in the pit for an opera, how they came to be in an opera orchestra and what they love about it.
- In this activity students have the opportunity to learn to play an arrangement of a piece from Mozart's opera - Papageno's magic bells tune - 'What tinkles so gaily', as though they were members of the opera orchestra. This is the first time that Papageno plays the magic bells that he has been given to help rescue Pamina.
- Have students listen to **track 4**. Older students could follow along with the music on the next page.
- After listening to the piece, ask students what the mood of the music is. Papageno feels nervous and afraid before he plays the bells. What do they think the sound of the bells does to the way he feels?
- Students learn to play this arrangement of Papageno's magic bells tune, 'What tinkles so gaily'.

It is most suited to a combination of tuned percussion such as xylophones, metallophones and glockenspiels, though it can be played by any combination of instruments you have available (recorders, boomwhackers etc).

There are words for singers in Parts 1 and 2, but these can be played on instruments as well. Part 4 is well suited to be played on a bass xylophone but can be played on any bass instrument. Have students write in the note names to help them. Part 3 could be played on a glockenspiel. Parts 1 and 2 can be sung or played on xylophones, metallophones or recorders for example.

- The whole class can learn to play each part as you teach them. Afterwards, divide your class into 4 groups (with similar instrument types) and assign one part to each group, e.g. Part 4 to the bass instruments and so on. Practice playing the arrangement as a class, allowing students the opportunity to swap parts (and instruments) if time allows.

## Extension opportunity

- Have students create their own versions of this short piece in small groups. Use any combination of instruments and voices.
- Provide an opportunity for students to perform their arrangement.





# What tinkles so gaily?

1

2

3

4

6

1

2

3

4

What — tink-les so

11

1

2

3

4

gail- y? What — jing-les so clear? La la la la la la la

16

1

la la la la This — mu sic's en - chant-ing to play and to

2

3

4

21

1

hear! La la la la la la la la la la la la la la

2

3

4





# Activity 7: Finale - Lights, Camera, Action!

This final activity provides an opportunity for students to bring together all of their learning about opera (and specifically, *The Magic Flute*) as a multidisciplinary art form - refining and performing each of the elements - narrative with dramatic forms and elements, costumes/set if they wish, masks, movement, singing and playing.

This finale can be a big creative project or a more simple showcase or sharing of what they have learned, but providing students with an opportunity to perform and showcase their creations is motivating and highly valuable for everyone involved.

As a class, craft an artistic and creative journey for an audience through *The Magic Flute*. If time doesn't allow for this, provide students with the opportunity to perform the songs 'I am a very happy man' and 'What tinkles so gaily' to an audience. Meanwhile, masks can perhaps be displayed for viewing by others.

## Narrative:

Consider how the story will be told. Will it be performed as Readers Theatre, as a dramatic performance, with a narrator interspersed with various action/demonstrations or some other way?

## Set, Costumes, Props:

Will you include some kind of set, costumes or props? Can you incorporate some of the masks students created? Costumes can be very simple and symbolic, e.g. a hat to symbolise a particular person, a bird on the shoulder for Papageno etc. Other teachers or parents are often happy to help out creating simple sets, costumes and props.

## Music - Singing and Playing:

This is where students get to showcase their singing and playing prowess practiced in the earlier activities. Students perform Papageno's aria 'I am a very happy man', with or without some instrumental accompaniment. The final chorus in *The Magic Flute*, 'The brave are victorious' is included below as an optional extra students can learn to sing and perform as part of their showcase.

Students can also perform the arrangement of 'What tinkles so gaily' as an instrumental or vocal and instrumental piece. If students created their own versions in small groups, each group could perform their arrangement back-to-back as a single performance piece.

## Movement:

Movement engages and draws the viewers' focus, contributing significantly to conveying story and character, as students experienced in the masked movement activities. Consider how movement and effective use of space can be utilised to create an engaging performance.

'The brave are victorious' is the final chorus in *The Magic Flute* - everyone sings. Students can learn this chorus to include in their final performance if time allows.





## The brave are victorious

7

The brave are vic - to - rious. To - ge - ther they won! Their cour - age and

14

wis - dom shine bright like the sun! The brave are vic - to - rious. To ge - ther they won! Their

22

cour - age and wis - dom shine bright like the sun! Shine bright like the sun!

Shine bright like the sun like the sun! Like the sun!

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