



Who Wants to be an OPERA Star?

Put yourselves to the test along with the contestants!



"Who Wants to be an OPERA STAR?" Is an introduction to opera: the art form that combines drama, visual art, dance, orchestral music, and singing. Operas use words, action, and music to tell stories full of conflict and emotion, and they are usually entirely sung.

This program uses the framework of a television game show. The assembly runs as a series of questions and challenges, with four singers in the role of MC and contestants. Studio audience members (the students) will learn about voice types, arias, duets, trios, and quartets. They will also participate in identifying emotions, singing melodies, and clapping rhythms from the world's favorite operas.

The "Opera Star" script was written by PAULA FOWLER, Utah Opera Education Director, and PATRICIA-MARIA WEINMANN, stage director.



Meet Utah Opera Resident Artists 2018-19!



Grace Kahl
Soprano

Hometown:
Queens, NY

Hobby:
Podcasts



Melanie Ashkar
Mezzo-Soprano

Hometown:
Arlington, VA

Hobby:
Board Games



Chris Oglesby
Tenor

Hometown:
Atlanta, GA

Hobby:
Camping



Jesús Murrillo
Baritone

Hometown:
Detroit, MI

Hobby:
Painting



Robert Bosworth
Pianist

Hometown:
Ft Worth, TX

Hobby:
Reading

To learn more about the Resident Artists [visit this link!](#)

Preparing for "Who Wants to be an Opera Star?"

Options if you have ten minutes...

- Use the Introductory PowerPoint presentation on the [USUO Education website](#).
- Brainstorm a list of what students already know about opera. Ask them to pay attention during the assembly to change or add to the list afterward.
- Talk with students about the different kinds of "voices" each of them has:

Whispering voice

Shouting voice

Have students pair up and demonstrate for each other each of those different voices. Ask them to see if their partners can identify which one they are using.

Talking voice

Singing voice

- Practice clapping rhythms. You can clap while you sing a favorite song, or clap to the rhythm you hear on a recording, or even make up short rhythms and see if you can repeat back to each other the exact rhythm. The performers in OPERA STAR will share a rhythm from their music, and ask students to repeat it back for them during the performance.



Voice Types in Opera

Talk about voice types. Most children have high voices and would be called "sopranos." During puberty, one physical change people go through is a change in the vocal cords. Boys' voices usually deepen and some become "**tenors**" who sing higher; others become "**baritones**," who sing in a medium low range; still others become "**basses**," who sing lowest of all.

A woman whose voice is most comfortable in a low range is called an "**alto**," one most at ease in a medium range is a "**mezzo-soprano**," and one who can sing very high is called a "**soprano**." Your voice type depends on the way your particular vocal muscles are put together. Most people know by the time they are in high school which voice category suits them best. Can your students name any contemporary singers who have these voice types?

Core Curriculum Connections: Singing

The Utah Opera Resident Artists are inspirational examples of what students can achieve when they master the [Utah State Core Standards for Music](#). The assembly can aid classroom teachers and arts specialists teach both the music and theatre core.

Theatre

- Did the artists use clear voices when communicating? Did you notice the differences in intensity, pitch, rhythm, and volume?
- Each artist played a character. What did each character want and what prevented them from getting it? Could you write an inner dialogue for one of these characters.
- What did you think of the blocking?
- Explain how this presentation is different from a theatre performance.

Music

- Did the singers know how to start and stop their musical numbers together?
- Did the singers sing with "voices free from strain"?
- Can students recognize and remember times when the singers used musical skills such as different pitches, rhythms, and dynamics (loud or soft)?

Basic Opera Terminology

In the assembly, the Utah Opera Resident Artists will introduce many terms used in opera. Ask students to guess what each term in the list might mean, then listen during the assembly to see if the class was right.

Aria	A solo song in an opera	Melody	A group of notes organized to make up a musical phrase
Baritone	A low male singing voice	Mezzo - Soprano	A middle-range female singing voice
Bravo	Italian for Excellent! Well done! (“brah-vo”)	Opera	“Work” in Italian, short for “opera in music,” or “work in music”
Breath Control	The skill that allows a singer to have long phrases without gasping for air	Properties (props)	Objects that a singer holds or carries that help tell the story
Coloratura	Fancy decorative vocal music. Many fast little notes in complicated musical passages which require a great deal of technical ability	Recitative (recit)	A style of vocal music based on imitating speech, with a minimum of musical structure and accompaniment
Composer	A person who writes music	Rhythm	A pattern of long or short, accented or unaccented notes
Duet	A song for two people to sing together	Set	Large items like walls or furniture that create a sense of place
Harmony	Notes sung by several singers at the same time that makes a pleasing combination	Soprano	A high singing voice in children or women
Libretto	The words the singers sing in an opera; a “librettist” writes the libretto	Tenor	A high male singing voice
Maestro	The conductor of an opera or symphony		

Post-Assembly Activities

Here are several options for post-assembly learning activities.

1. Guide your class in a discussion about the assembly.
 - a. Ask students to describe their favorite scenes from the show, and explain why they liked those scenes the best. [These skills are part of the National Standards for Music Education.]
 - b. Ask students what they learned about opera.
2. If your class brainstormed a list about opera, go back through the list together, checking for accuracy and identifying important elements they hadn't known about before.
3. Ask students to evaluate/give their perceptions of the performers' stage presence and music skills. [These skills are part of the Utah Music Core Standards.]
4. Learn more about opera singers by watching videos about different voice types at this [link](#).
5. Acquire your school's copy of the Magic Flute DVD that was left for your school. Enjoy a fully produced opera and identify everything you learned about opera from the Utah Opera assembly.
6. Invite students to write their answers to any of these questions, or share their response in a letter or card. Send letters to:

Utah Opera
Paula Fowler, Education Director
336 N 400 W
Salt Lake City, UT 84103

Teachers, we would like your feedback. Please fill out our survey online at this [link](#).

Utah Symphony | Utah Opera's Educational programs

Be sure to check out our website at www.usuoeducation.org. Check the listings by age group for all of our outreach programs. You'll find descriptions of *Who Wants to be an OPERA STAR?*, *Opera 101*, *Freeze Frame: The Elixir of Love*, and *Opera Up Close*, as well as the Utah Symphony School Concerts, 5th Grade Abravanel Hall Concerts, and Open Rehearsals. You'll discover information about our teacher development opportunities, original opera teacher workshops, and student internships. You'll learn about special offerings for secondary school students, such as "Opera-unities Night," when students can attend a final dress rehearsal of an opera, and high school clubs. Look for information about the Youth Guild, which entire families may join, as well as our Family Concerts.

If you have any students with special needs, please let them know about the free Utah Symphony | Utah Opera concert on January 22, 2019 at 7 PM in Abravanel Hall. You can find more information at www.usuoeducation.org/specialneeds.

Contact the Utah Opera Education Department:

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