

THE MAGIC FLUTE

Mozart

Language Art: Fact and Opinion

Students Will

- Read for information
- Define fact and opinion
- Read critically to discern facts that support opinions

Copies for Each Student

- “Our Librettist, Emmanuel Schikaneder”
- **Activity Worksheet**

Copies for the Teacher

- **Answer Key**

Getting Ready

Gather pens or pencils and additional writing paper if necessary.

Tell your students “everyone is constantly hearing and reading information that include facts and opinions. It is important to know the difference between the two.” Discuss the definitions of “fact”, “opinion”, and “substantiate” and have your students provide examples of each term as a class. Remind students that people can base their opinions not only on personal feelings, but also on facts, thereby making a deduction or logical conclusion. The facts substantiate their opinions.

- **Fact** – something that can be shown to be true or to have happened
- **Opinion** – someone’s view which is based on personal judgment
- **Substantiate** – prove or support something

Guided/ Independent Practice

Decide which portion(s) of the **Activity Worksheet** you want your students to complete. Depending on your grade level and the ability of your students, you may choose to conduct this lesson as a class, in small groups, individually, or as a partner activity. Have your students read “Our Librettist, Emanuel Schikaneder”, paying close attention to the underlined opinions in the article.

Remind the students to ask for clarification of any unknown words or concepts.

For Practice and Additional Learning

Ask students to explain why the first underlined sentence is an opinion. Then have the students find the facts that possibly support or substantiate this opinion and underline the facts. Have students explain their choices. Discuss and check answers with the students.

To extend this activity, ask students to create examples of substantiated and unsubstantiated opinions about Emmanuel Schikaneder based on the information in the article.

Evaluation

1. Did students read the article?
2. Do students understand the difference between fact and opinion?
3. Did students find facts that could support opinions in the article?

TEKS: Language Arts

6th – 8th grades

- (5) Comprehension Skills: (F) make inferences and use evidence to support understanding
(6) Response skills: (C) use text evidence to support an appropriate response

9th – 12th grades

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- (9) Reading/Comprehension of Informational Text/Expository: (B) differentiate between opinions that are substantiated and unsubstantiated in the text

Gardner’s Intelligence

Verbal-Linguistic

Bloom’s Taxonomy

Knowledge

Comprehension

Analysis

Application

Synthesis

Evaluation

Bibliography

Levine, Robert, and David Foil. MOZART’S OPERAS, The Marriage of Figaro & The Magic Flute. New York, NY: Tess Press, An imprint of Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers Inc.,2007.

Online Resources

“Emanuel Schikaneder”. Wikipedia. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emmanuel_Schikaneder

Our Librettist, Emanuel Schikaneder

Emanuel Schikaneder was considered one of the most talented theater men of his time. He wrote 56 libretti and 45 plays. He also produced and acted in many plays and operas. Today he is remembered as the librettist for Mozart's opera, *The Magic Flute*.

Schikaneder was born in Straubing, Germany on September 1, 1751. His family was very poor. Both parents worked as servants. When his father died, his mother moved to Regensburg where Emanuel received his education at a Jesuit school and trained in the local church to be a singer.

As a young man, Schikaneder began his career in the theater in 1773. The theatrical troupe performed operas, farces, and singspiele. (Singspiel "song-play" is a form of German-language music drama - a kind of opera. It includes spoken dialogue, ensembles, songs, ballads, and arias. Plural: Singspiele). Schikaneder experienced success with this group of actors. He wrote, composed, and performed as the principal singer in his own singspiel, *Die Lyranten*, which became a favorite with audiences.

Schikaneder married the leading actress, Eleonore Arth, on February 9, 1777. They joined a new theatrical troupe in Nuremberg. A year later, Schikaneder took over the troupe as manager at only 27 years old. His success continued as he performed in the productions and managed the troupe.

In the fall of 1780, the Schikaneder troupe performed in Salzburg. Here Schikaneder and his wife met and became friends with Wolfgang Mozart's family. The Mozart family often went to see Schikaneder's troupe perform and even invited Schikaneder to their home on Sundays.

As Schikaneder's career continued, he was invited by Emperor Joseph II to perform in Vienna. The performances attracted large audiences from November 5, 1784 to February 6, 1785. Operas by Mozart and Joseph Haydn and even a successful comedy that poked fun at the aristocracy were performed. When they attempted to stage a second comedy of this sort, Emperor Joseph II canceled the production.

Schikaneder and his wife, Eleonore, separated in 1785. In 1786, he performed in the National Theater from April to February mainly as a singer. Schikaneder was not happy. He was accustomed to performing important, leading roles. He asked the Emperor if he might be allowed to build a new theater. The request was granted, and yet, the theater was not built at this time. Eventually, Schikaneder formed a new troupe and left Vienna to tour the surrounding provinces.

In May 1789, Schikaneder rejoined Eleonore in Vienna to start a new theatrical troupe at the Theater auf der Wieden in Vienna. This company was successful. They produced a number of musical comedies and fairy tale operas. They emphasized stage effects: flying machines, trapdoors, thunder, elaborate lighting and other visual effects including fires and waterfalls.

The Magic Flute

Schikaneder renewed his friendship with Wolfgang Mozart in Vienna where they worked together to produce one of Mozart's most memorable operas. *The Magic Flute* premiered on September 30, 1791. Mozart himself directed from a harpsichord, and Schikaneder played the role of Papageno. *The Magic Flute* was a great success. It sold out to over a hundred performances at the Theater auf der Wieden in the first few months of performance.

When Mozart died suddenly on December 5, 1791, Emanuel Schikaneder was shocked and saddened. He put on a benefit performance of *The Magic Flute* for Mozart's widow who faced a difficult financial situation. In 1798, when Schikaneder's troupe performed a concert of Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, Schikaneder wrote in the program: "Mozart's work is beyond all praise. One feels only too keenly, on hearing this or any other of his music, what the [a]rt has lost in him".

Schikaneder's career was successful at the Theater auf der Wieden. He continued to write works in which he played leading roles. He worked with other composers of the time. Several times a year, Schikaneder devoted the theater to an *Academie* (a classical music concert) and performed symphonies by Mozart and Haydn. Even Ludwig van Beethoven appeared as a piano soloist. The troupe continued to perform six of Mozart's operas.

Although many productions were popular successes, expenses were high. Schikaneder fell into debt and lost the lease to the theater by 1798. Schikaneder managed to acquire a new partner and use his old document from the late Emperor Joseph II to build a new theater. His acting troupe was saved. On June 13, 1801, the Theater an der Wien opened. It was one of the most lavishly equipped and largest theatres of its age.

Sadly, by 1804, Schikaneder's productions did not bring in audiences large enough to cover his expenses. He sold the Theater an der Wien and left Vienna to work in the German provinces. Eight years later, Schikaneder became ill. He died in poverty on September 21, 1812.

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Magic Flute: Fact and Opinion

Instructions: Using the article, provide the facts that help support/ substantiate the underlined opinions about Emanuel Schikaneder's life.

Opinion: Emanuel Schikaneder was considered one of the most talented theater men of his time.

Supporting Facts: _____

Opinion: His family was very poor.

Supporting Facts: _____

Opinion: Schikaneder experienced success with this group of actors.

Supporting Facts: _____

Opinion: Schikaneder was not happy.

Supporting Facts: _____

The Magic Flute

Opinion: This company was successful.

Supporting Facts: _____

Opinion: The Magic Flute was a great success.

Supporting Facts: _____

Opinion: When Mozart died suddenly on December 5, 1791, Emanuel Schikaneder was shocked and saddened.

Supporting Facts: _____

Answer Key

Opinion: Emanuel Schikaneder was considered one of the most talented theater men of his time.

Facts to support: He wrote 56 libretti and 45 plays. He produced and acted in many plays and operas. Today he is remembered as the librettist for Mozart's opera, *The Magic Flute*.

Opinion: His family was very poor.

Facts to support: Both parents worked as servants. When his father died, his mother moved to Regensburg where Emanuel received his education at a Jesuit school and trained in the local church to be a singer.

Opinion: Schikaneder experienced success with this group of actors.

Facts to support: He wrote, composed, and performed as the principal singer in his own singspiel, *Die Lyranten*, which became a favorite with audiences.

Opinion: Schikaneder was not happy.

Facts to support: He was accustomed to performing important, leading roles. He asked the Emperor if he might be allowed to build a new theater.

Opinion: This company was successful.

Facts to support: They produced a number of musical comedies and fairy tale operas.

Opinion: *The Magic Flute* was a great success.

Facts to support: It sold out to over a hundred performances at the Theater auf der Wieden in the first few months of performance.

Opinion: When Mozart died suddenly on December 5, 1791, Emanuel Schikaneder was shocked and saddened.

Facts to support: He put on a benefit performance of *The Magic Flute* for Mozart's widow who faced a difficult financial situation. Later in 1798 when Schikaneder's troupe performed a concert of Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, Schikaneder wrote in the program: "Mozart's work is beyond all praise. One feels only too keenly, on hearing this or any other of his music, what the [a]rt has lost in him".