

THE ELIXIR OF LOVE

The Elixir of Love

GAETANO DONIZETTI

Students Will

- Read "The Story of the Opera"
- Discuss and answer questions on the appropriate portion(s) of the **Writing Prompt Activity Worksheet**

Copies for Each Student

- "The Story of the Opera"
- **Activity Worksheet:** "Writing Prompt"
- Elements of a Story Information Sheet
- **Activity Worksheet:** "Story Web"

Getting Ready

Decide which section(s) of the worksheet you wish your group to complete. Gather pens, pencils and additional writing paper as needed for your group.

Introduction

Have your students read "The Story of the Opera" and review the Elements of a Story Information Sheet. As a class, identify each element in the story of the opera.

Guided/Independent Practice

Depending on your grade level, the ability of your students, and time constraints, feel free to use the writing prompt and story web as best benefits your class. The activity can be used as creative writing practice, or it can be taken all the way through the writing process.

Evaluation

Have students share their stories individually or in groups and provide feedback on their use of literary elements.

For Further Study

Students may want to do additional research on Gaetano Donizetti, *The Elixir of Love*, or related topics online or in their school library. The students may also read about additional performance and production information by visiting www.dallasopera.org/2627-season. Their findings can be shared with the class at the beginning of a later lesson.

Additional Material: Librettist Bio - "Our Librettist, Felice Romani"

TEKS: Language Arts

Grades 6-8 (110.22.B.15.A) (110.23.B.11.A) (110.24.B.11.A)

Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful. The student is expected to compose literary texts such as personal narratives, fiction, and poetry using genre characteristics and craft.

Grades 9-12 (110.C.36.10.A) (110.C.37.10.A) (110.C.38.10.A) (110.C.39.10.A)

Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts--genres. The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful. The student is expected to compose literary texts such as fiction and poetry using genre characteristics and craft.

Correlates

Music, Drama

Gardner's Intelligences

Verbal-Linguistic, Musical, Interpersonal

Bloom's Taxonomy

Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Evaluation, Synthesis

Bibliography

Elixir of Love Libretto

Warrack, John and West, Ewan, The Oxford Dictionary of Opera, Oxford University Press, 1992.

Holden, Amanda, The New Penguin Opera Guide, Penguin Books, 2001.

THE STORY OF THE OPERA

The villagers are coming in from a long, hot day. They enjoy hearing Adina read from the story of *Tristan and Isolde* and the magic love potion. Nemorino watches from a distance, yearning for even a word from Adina. He approaches her afterwards and professes his love. She shoos him away with brisk (and beautiful) words about the need for fickleness.

The army is in town. Sergeant Belcore enters, intent on storming the heart of Adina, the most beautiful and successful girl in town. She seems impressed. Nemorino is full of disgust and despair.

A cart pulls up carrying the Great Dr. Dulcamara, bearing pills and potions for every kind of ailment. He is most proud of his cure-all elixir. Nemorino approaches him quietly and asks whether he possesses the love potion of Queen Isolde. Absolutely, Dulcamara assures him. He will have damsels fawning over him. But he must wait a day for it to work. (Dulcamara has never heard of Isolde, the potion is a cheap Bordeaux, and the time would allow the Doctor to leave town.) He downs the flask and immediately feels robust enough to ignore Adina the next time he sees her. To get even, she consents to marry Belcore. Nemorino, horrified, begs her to wait another day.

Everyone is assembled for the wedding of Adina and the sergeant. Adina privately murmurs that she's waiting to sign the marriage contract until Nemorino arrives. Nemorino seeks out the doctor to ask for another bottle of the elixir. Dulcamara agrees to wait until he can borrow the money. Belcore strides by, puzzled by Adina's postponement. Nemorino laments that he is penniless. Belcore suggests he join the army and receive the volunteer bonus. Nemorino, jubilant, signs and takes the cash back to Dulcamara for another bottle.

Suddenly the village girls surround Nemorino. He thinks this is the effect of the elixir; he does not yet know that his uncle has died and left him a fortune. Adina has felt responsible for his enlistment, but her guilty feeling turns to jealousy and sadness when she sees him with all the girls. Dulcamara offers her the elixir, but she assures him she can win Nemorino back on her own.

Nemorino was by no means indifferent: During all the confusion he noticed a tear upon Adina's cheek. He is sure she cares for him. Adina approaches Nemorino and shows him that she has bought back his military contract. He feigns indifference, and she finally confesses her love. Belcore struts by, finds them together, and consoles himself by proclaiming that the world is full of women for him. Dulcamara redoubles his boasting: The magical elixir can make poor men into millionaires and can bring true love.

Synopsis by Santa Fe Opera

Date_____

In our story, Nemorino drank an elixir that was supposed to make Adina fall in love with him. Imagine you had a special elixir that could change one thing about your life. Write a story about the potion and describe what happens after you take the elixir.

[illegible]

Elements of a Story

Genre	The type of story or literary work
Author	Person who writes the story/book
Setting	Where and when a story takes place
Main Characters	The important people in a story
Themes	The underlying or stated main idea of a story *Often, the author implies the theme through the narrator's/main character's thoughts and feelings. The theme can also be the message the author is trying to send.
Conflict	The major problem in the story Two categories of conflict: 1. External - happens outside of the character, involves more than 1 person, can be observed 2. Internal - happens inside of the character, involves only 1 person, can only be observed in thoughts and feelings Three types of conflict: 1. Man vs. Nature (External) 2. Man vs. Self (Internals) 3. Man vs. Man (External or Internal)
Climax	One large event that changes the outcome of the entire story
Plot	The sequence of all events in a story

Name _____

Date _____

Story Web

Pre-writing exercise: Use the web below to map out the elements of your story.

