

# THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

*Rossini*

## Music Lesson: The Characters

### Students Will

- Read “The Story of the Opera”
- Read “The Characters”
- Watch the online video selections from *The Barber of Seville* included with the lesson
- Discuss and answer questions on the appropriate portion(s) of the **Music Activity Worksheet**

### Copies for Each Student

- “The Story of the Opera”
- “The Characters”
- **Music Activity Worksheet**

### Copy for The Teacher: Music Activity Worksheet

### Getting Ready

Decide which section(s) of the worksheet you wish your group to complete. Prepare internet access for *The Barber of Seville* online listening selections. Gather pens, pencils and additional writing paper as needed for your group.

### Introduction

Have your students read “The Story of the Opera”. Give each student a copy of “The Characters” or display it on screen. Read through the information, discussing each character and viewing the online selections as you go.

### Guided/Independent Practice

Depending on your grade level, the ability of your students, and time constraints, you may choose to have students work as a whole class, in small groups, with a partner, or individually. Read the directions on the **Activity Worksheet**. Have students complete the portion(s) of the **Activity Worksheet** you have chosen. Be sure to leave time for questions and discussion. Have students share their answers individually or by groups and tell why they gave their answers.

### **Evaluation**

Because the answers to worksheet questions will vary, have students discuss and evaluate the answers of others. The teacher may want to guide the discussion. After individual or small group responses have been shared, the class can continue discussing as a large group, with the teacher asking leading questions to guide the discussion.

### **For Further Study**

Students may want to do additional research on Rossini, *The Barber of Seville*, or other related topics online or in their school library.

### **TEKS: Music**

#### **Music, Middle School 1**

(5) Describe aurally the music representing diverse styles, periods, and cultures. A.

#### **Music, Middle School 2**

(5) Identify relationships between content, concepts, and processes of the other fine arts, other subjects and music. D.

#### **Music, Middle School 3**

(5) Relate content, concepts, and processes of fine arts and music subjects. D.

#### **Music, Level I**

(5) Define the relationships between the content, the concepts, and the processes of the other fine arts, other subjects, and those of music. D.

#### **Music, Level II**

(5) Define the relationships between the content, the concepts, and the processes of the other fine arts, other subjects, and those of music. D.

#### **Music, Level III**

(5) Define the relationships between the content, the concepts, and the processes of the other fine arts, other subjects, and those of music. D.

#### **Music, Level IV**

(5) Define the relationships between the content, the concepts, and the processes of the other fine arts and those of music. D.

**TEKS: Language Arts**

**6th Grade**

(12) Analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts, and relationships. F.

**7th Grade**

(12) Analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts and relationships. F.

**8th Grade**

(12) Analyze characters, including their traits, motivations, conflicts and relationships. F.

**English Language Arts and Reading, English I**

(5) Analyze how authors develop complex yet believable characters in works of fiction through a range of literary devices, including character foils. B.

**English Language Arts and Reading, English II**

(5) Analyze differences in the characters' moral dilemmas in works of fiction across different countries or cultures. B.

**English Language Arts and Reading, English III**

(5) Analyze the internal and external development of characters through a range of literary devices. B.

**English Language Arts and Reading, English IV**

(5) Analyze the moral dilemmas and quandaries presented in works of fiction as revealed by the underlying motivations and behaviors of the characters. B.

**Correlates:** Language Arts, Drama

**Gardner's Intelligences-** Verbal-Linguistic, Musical, Interpersonal

**Bloom's Taxonomy**

Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis

**Bibliography**

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

Freeman, John W., Stories of the Great Operas, W. W. Norton & Company, 1984.

Goulding, Phil G., Ticket to the Opera, Fawcett Columbine, 1996.

Lahee, Henry C., Famous Singers of Today and Yesterday, L. C. Page and Company, 1898.

**Online Resources:** [www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)

# The Characters

Rosina - Dr. Bartolo's ward (*mezzo-soprano*)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8Jvr5lg8vE>

Doctor Bartolo - Rosina's guardian (*bass*)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yvpDDBjF4zc>

Count Almaviva - a local nobleman (*tenor*)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1MDkmigaFI>

Figaro - a factotum, the Barber of Seville (*baritone*)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBgqHloTNf8>

Fiorello - a servant to the Count (*bass*)

Don Basilio - a music teacher (*bass*)

Berta - a servant to Dr. Bartolo (*soprano*)

Ambrogio - a servant to Dr. Bartolo (*bass*)

Complete Opera: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enEVv02f6bo>

# The Story of the Opera

## Act I

*Seville.*

Count Almaviva comes in disguise to the house of Doctor Bartolo and serenades Rosina, whom Bartolo keeps confined to the house, beneath her balcony window. Figaro, the barber who knows all the town's secrets and scandals, arrives. He explains to Almaviva that Rosina is Bartolo's ward, not his daughter, and that the doctor intends to marry her. Figaro devises a plan: the count will disguise himself as a drunken soldier with orders to be quartered at Bartolo's house so that he may gain access to the girl. Almaviva is excited and Figaro looks forward to a nice cash pay-off.

Rosina reflects on the voice that has enchanted her and resolves to use her considerable wiles to meet its owner, whom the count leads her to believe is a poor student named Lindoro. Bartolo appears with Rosina's music master, Don Basilio. Basilio warns Bartolo that Count Almaviva, who has made known his admiration for Rosina, has been seen in Seville. Bartolo decides to marry Rosina immediately. Figaro, who has overheard the plot, warns Rosina and promises to deliver a note from her to Lindoro. Bartolo suspects that Rosina has indeed written a letter, but she outwits him at every turn. Angry at her defiance, Bartolo warns her not to trifle with him.

Almaviva arrives, creating a ruckus in his disguise as a drunken soldier, and secretly passes Rosina his own note. Bartolo is infuriated by the stranger's behavior and noisily claims that he has an official exemption from billeting soldiers. Figaro announces that a crowd has gathered in the street, curious about the argument they hear coming from inside the house. The civil guard bursts in to arrest Almaviva but when he secretly reveals his true identity to the captain he is instantly released. Everyone except Figaro is amazed by this turn of events.

## Act II

Bartolo suspects that the "soldier" was a spy planted by Almaviva. The count returns, this time disguised as Don Alonso, a music teacher and student of Don Basilio. He announces he will give Rosina her music lesson in place of Basilio, who, he says, is ill at home. "Don Alonso" tells Bartolo that he is staying at the same inn as Almaviva and has found a letter from Rosina. He offers to tell her that it was given to him by another woman, seemingly to prove that Lindoro is toying with Rosina on Almaviva's behalf. This convinces Bartolo that "Don Alonso" is indeed a student of the scheming Basilio, and he allows him to give Rosina her music lesson. She sings an aria, and, with Bartolo dozing off, Almaviva and Rosina express their love.

**The Story of the Opera cont'd**

Figaro arrives to give Bartolo his shave and manages to snatch the key that opens the doors to Rosina's balcony. Suddenly Basilio shows up looking perfectly healthy. Almaviva, Rosina, and Figaro convince him with a quick bribe that he is sick with scarlet fever and must go home at once. While Bartolo gets his shave, Almaviva plots with Rosina to elope that night. But the doctor overhears them and furiously realizes he has been tricked again. Everyone disperses.

Bartolo summons Basilio, telling him to bring a notary so Bartolo can marry Rosina that very night. Bartolo then shows Rosina her letter to Lindoro, as proof that he is in league with Almaviva. Heartbroken and convinced that she has been deceived, she agrees to marry Bartolo. A thunderstorm rages. Figaro and the count climb a ladder to Rosina's balcony and let themselves in with the key. Rosina appears and confronts Lindoro, who finally reveals his true identity as Almaviva. Basilio shows up with the notary. Bribed and threatened, he agrees to be a witness to the marriage of Rosina and Almaviva. Bartolo arrives with soldiers, but it is too late. Almaviva explains to Bartolo that it is useless to protest and Bartolo accepts that he has been beaten. Figaro, Rosina, and the count celebrate their good fortune.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Music Lesson I: The Characters**  
**Activity Worksheet**

**Part I:**

1. Do you think that Figaro's decision to help Count Almaviva win Rosina is simply because he wants money? Why or why not?

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2. Why do you think Count Almaviva disguises himself while trying to win Rosina?

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3. Which of the characters is more like the people in your life? Why?

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4. Which of the characters are you most like? Why?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Music Lesson I: The Characters**  
**Activity Worksheet**

**Part II**

5. Do you think that Rosina would have really married Doctor Bartolo? Why or why not?

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6. If you were the character Figaro in the opera, what would be your plan to help Count Almaviva win Rosina? Would it differ from Figaro's? Would it be the same? Explain.

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7. Do you think that the happy ending of this story could have been foiled? Why or why not?

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8. Which of the characters do you think is the hero in this story? Who is the real villain of the story? Explain.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Music Lesson I: The Characters**  
**Activity Worksheet**

**Part III**

9. What do you think is the important lesson to be learned from this story and how the characters acted?

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Many operas are treated as **concept operas**, with stories that can take place in any time or location. This opera is set in Seville, Spain during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

10. Would a different time or place in which the story is portrayed change the story in any real way? Why or why not?

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11. If you were to create a production of this opera, what location and time period would you like to use?

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