

# Bastien and Bastienne

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART



## MUSIC I: The Characters

### Students will

- Read “The Story of the Opera”
- Read the information sheet “The Characters” included with the lesson.
- Listen to audio selections from *Bastien and Bastienne* online.
- Discuss and answer questions on the appropriate portion(s) of the Activity Worksheet.

**Copies for Each Student:** “The Story of the Opera”, “The Characters”, Activity Worksheet

**Copies for the Teacher:** “The Story of the Opera”, “The Characters”, Activity Worksheet, Answer Key

### Getting Ready

Print copies of “The Story of the Opera”, “The Characters”, and the Activity Worksheet for each student.

Decide which section(s) of the worksheet you wish your group to complete.

Print a copy of the Answer Key for the teacher.

Prepare internet access to *Bastien and Bastienne* 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 information sheet “The Characters” or display it on the screen. Read through the information, discussing each character and listening to 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 with the opportunity for questions. If students are working with a partner or in small groups, give them time to discuss their answers before writing them down. Have students share their answers individually, or by groups, and tell why they gave their answers.

### Evaluation

Have students discuss and evaluate the answers of others. The teacher may want to guide the discussion with the samples answers provided. After individual or small group responses have been shared and/or turned in, the class can then formulate comprehensive answers with the teacher asking leading questions to guide the discussion.

### For Further Study

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The teacher may want to have students continue research on *Bastien and Bastienne*. Students may also want to do additional research on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, his life and other works, or other related topics online or in their school library. Their findings can be shared with the class at the beginning of a later lesson.

## TEKS

### Fine Arts: Music

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

117.112. b. 5 B Historical and cultural relevance

The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. The student is expected to: (B) identify music from diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

117.115. b. 5 C Historical and cultural relevance

The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. The student is expected to: (C) identify music from diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

117.118. b. 5 C Historical and cultural relevance

The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. The student is expected to: (C) identify music from diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures.

#### Middle School 1

117.208. c. 4 B Historical and cultural relevance

The student relates music to history, culture, and the world. The student is expected to: (B) describe written and aurally presented music representative of diverse styles, periods, and cultures.

#### Middle School 2

117.209. c. 4 B Historical and cultural relevance

The student relates music to history, culture, and the world. The student is expected to: (B) examine written and aurally presented music representative of diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures.

#### Middle School 3

117.210. c. 4 B Historical and cultural relevance

The student relates music to history, culture, and the world. The student is expected to: (B) compare and contrast written and aurally presented music representative of diverse genres, styles, periods, and cultures.

**Correlates:** Language Arts, Music

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

**Bloom's Taxonomy:** Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create

#### Sources:

*Bastien and Bastienne* Libretto

Warrack, John and West, Ewan, [The Oxford Dictionary of Opera](#), Oxford University Press, 1992.

#### Online Resources:

[www.oxfordmusiconline.com](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com)

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# The Story of the Opera

Bastienne (soprano) has gone out to the meadow to watch over her flock of sheep. She waits for her boyfriend Bastien (tenor) and when she realizes that he has skipped their regular Saturday afternoon appointment, she is forced to admit that the rumors are true - Bastien has found another girlfriend! As she sits alone, feeling sad and mad, she hears music that announces the arrival of the great magician, Colas (bass). He has understood her predicament and offers his help.

Bastienne explains to Colas that people are talking about a new girl who has just arrived in the nearby city. The girl is rich and she fears Bastien has been lured away by her beauty, her fancy jewelry, her gigantic house, and above all, her ability to make a delicious chocolate cake! All Bastienne has to offer him is the charm of the meadows and the companionship of her sheep. Colas begs her not to waste energy being upset. He sends Bastienne away and he promises to use his magic powers to teach Bastien a lesson.

Bastien appears, but he is not happy. He has eaten so much that his stomach hurts! He has realized on his own that the city girl is not good for him and that Bastienne is his true love. Colas, determined to make sure that Bastien will never make this mistake again, tells him that it is too late; Bastienne has found another boyfriend and is no longer available. He makes Bastien swear to always be faithful, and then he recites a complicated “magic spell” ensuring that Bastien will win her back

Bastienne appears and follows Colas’ instructions to pretend to reject Bastien. At the depth of despair, he threatens to run away and “jump into a lake.” Bastienne pretends not to care, but as she sees how truly sorry he is, she relents and forgives him. They realize that the true magic is found in the “words that heal our hearts and help us to forgive.” Colas joins them in a final song as they celebrate their understanding of the real magic, the magic of true love! ~ *Translation and adaptation by Mary Dibbern*

## The Characters

**Bastienne:** (soprano) A young shepherdess; she loves Bastien but is worried he loves another. She turns to Colas for help to win Bastien back.

**Bastien:** (tenor) Bastienne’s lover; he is distracted by another lady in town but he really loves Bastienne.

**Colas:** (bass) The village wise man and magician; he helps Bastienne and Bastien get back together.

## Link to Musical Excerpts

Bastienne is distressed because she cannot find Bastien and has heard that he loves someone else.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIVxU-3uRPY>

After returning from the city, Bastien expresses his disbelief when Colas tells him that Bastienne has fallen for another. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNyzUOxlqjA>

Colas casts a “magic spell” that supposedly causes Bastienne to fall back in love with Bastien.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8lrVNFQL4I8>

NOTE: The above excerpts are in German. The Dallas Opera’s production will be performed in English.

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

*Bastien and Bastienne*

**Music I Activity Worksheet**

**Part I**

1. When Bastienne comes to him for help, Colas says a “magic spell” will fix the problem. Do you think Colas really has magic powers? Why or why not?

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2. If Bastienne came to you instead of Colas for advice at the beginning of the opera, what would you tell her? How would your advice change the plot of the opera?

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3. Sometimes it’s hard to tell someone you love how you really feel when you have a problem. Is there anyone in your life you have trouble being honest with? What would you say to them if you could?

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## Part II

4. Mozart wrote this opera in 1768 when he was only twelve years old. How have relationships like the one in the story between Bastien and Bastienne changed since the 1700s? How are they alike?

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5. Do any of the characters remind you of someone in your life? Which character and why?

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6. Do you believe Bastienne and Bastien will stay together? Why or why not?

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### Part III

7. If Bastien was really in love with Bastienne why do you think he was distracted by the lady of the manor?

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8. What do you think is the intended lesson or moral of this story?

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Many operas are treated as concept operas, with stories that can take place in any time or location. The story of *Bastien and Bastienne* was originally set in Europe, hundreds of years ago. Other authors have imagined new settings and time for the story.

9. 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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10. If you were to perform this opera, what location and time period would you like to use? Describe any changes you would make to the characters or the plot.

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ANSWER KEY

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

*Bastien and Bastienne*

Music I Activity Worksheet

Part I

11. When Bastienne comes to him for help, Colas says a “magic spell” to fix the problem. Do you think Colas really has magic powers? Why or why not?

Answers will vary; Example answer: No, I think Colas was pretending to have magic powers to help Bastien feel better.

12. If Bastienne came to you instead of Colas for advice at the beginning of the opera, what would you tell her? How would your advice change the plot of the opera?

Answers will vary; Example answer: I would tell Bastienne to move on and focus on being a good shepherdess. If Bastien wants to be with someone else he isn't worth waiting for.

13. Sometimes it's hard to tell someone you love how you really feel when you have a problem. Is there anyone in your life you have trouble being honest with? What would you say to them if you could?

Answers will vary; Example answer: I have a hard time being honest with my big brother. I would tell him that sometimes when he teases me he thinks it's funny but it really makes me feel bad.

Part II

14. Mozart wrote this opera in 1768 when he was only twelve years old. How have relationships like the one in the story between Bastien and Bastienne changed since the 1700s? How are they alike?

Answers will vary; Example answer: I don't think things have changed that much, people still have these same kinds of problems and misunderstandings in relationships today.

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15. Do any of the characters remind you of someone in your life? Which character and why?

Answers will vary; Example answer: Yes – Colas reminds me of my uncle because people always ask him for help and he gives good advice.

16. Do you believe Bastienne and Bastien will stay together? Why or why not?

Answers will vary; Example answer: Yes, I believe they will stay together. If they went through that much trouble to get back together then they must love each other.

### Part III

17. If Bastien was really in love with Bastienne why do you think he was distracted by the lady of the manor?

Answers will vary; Example answer: Sometimes people get distracted by money or good looks and forget and need to be reminded of what's really important.

18. What do you think is the intended lesson or moral of this story?

Answers will vary; Example answer: Always tell the people you love how you really feel about them so they won't feel the need to change their behavior to get your attention.

Many operas are treated as concept operas, with stories that can take place in any time or location. The story of *Bastien and Bastienne* was originally set in Europe, hundreds of years ago. Other authors have imagined new settings and time for the story.

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

Answers will vary; Example answer: No, this is a simple love story that could be set in many different times or places and still come out the same.

20. If you were to perform this opera, what location and time period would you like to use? Describe any changes you would make to the characters or the plot.

Answers will vary; Example answer: I would set this in the California gold rush. Bastien and Bastienne would be gold miners. Bastien would be distracted by a local restaurant owner and Colas would give everyone the same advice. The plot would stay the same.