

# THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

music by W.A. MOZART adapted by JOHN DAVIES

## 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 *The Three Little Pigs* 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

### Getting Ready

Decide which section(s) of the lesson you wish your group to complete. Prepare internet access to *The Three Little Pigs* online listening selections at [www.operatales.com](http://www.operatales.com). Gather pens, pencils and additional writing paper as needed for your group.

### Instructional Time

One 45-minute class period

### 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 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 for the class with the teacher asking leading questions to guide the discussion.

## **For Further Study**

The teacher may want to have students research varying versions of the story of *The Three Little Pigs*. Students may want to do additional research on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, his 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**

#### **Kindergarten**

- (3) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. (B)
- (4) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. (A)

#### **Grade 1**

- (6) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. (A)

#### **Grade 2**

- (5) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. (B)
- (6) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. (A)

#### **Grade 3**

- (5) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. (C)
- (6) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. (A)

#### **Grade 4**

- (5) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. (C. D.)
- (6) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. (A. F.)

#### **Grade 5**

- (5) Historical and cultural relevance. The student examines music in relation to history and cultures. (C. D.)
- (6) Critical evaluation and response  
The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performances. (A. F.)

#### **Middle School 1**

- (4) Historical and cultural relevance. The student relates music to history, culture, and the world. (C)
- (5) Critical evaluation and response. The student listens to, responds to, and evaluates music and musical performance in both formal and informal settings. (A. B.)

**Correlates:** Language Arts, Drama

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

**Bloom's Taxonomy:** Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Evaluation, Synthesis

#### **Sources:**

*The Three Little Pigs* Libretto

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

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

## **The Story of the Opera**

*The Three Little Pigs* is a one-act opera adapted by John Davies from the traditional fairy tale featuring music by Wolfgang A. Mozart.

The story begins with three little pigs at their mother's house. Despina, a little girl pig who loves going to the library, is reading a book. Her brothers, Cherubino and Don Giovanni, have not yet learned how useful the library can be. But they are about to find out, for Wolfgang Bigbad, the Big Bad Wolf, is on his way. Despina explains that it is time for them to build their own house, and immediately her two brothers begin to argue about the choice of building materials. Cherubino claims that straw is the best; however, Don Giovanni is sure that sticks would be better. They turn to Despina to settle the argument and she tells them that she is going to the library to check out books that will teach her about building houses. The boys laugh as if it is the most ridiculous idea they have ever heard!

Despite Cherubino and Don Giovanni's doubts, they follow Despina as she makes her way through the woods to the library, where Wolfgang Bigbad himself is pacing back and forth in front of the building. He hasn't eaten all day and would love to get his paws on a small pig, or better yet, two or three! When he sees the three little pigs, he "hides" himself by pretending to be a statue in order to surprise them. Despina goes directly into the library while the boys play outside. Soon they realize that the "statue" is really Wolfgang Bigbad! Cherubino sees that Don Giovanni is terrified, and makes him approach the "statue" to invite him to dinner. The "statue" (Wolfgang) nods his head to accept the invitation.

Meanwhile, Despina has found all of the books she needs, and the three pigs prepare to build their houses. Don Giovanni has built his house of sticks, which Wolfgang blows down. Cherubino has gone ahead with his plans to build a straw house, but it proves to be even less "huff-proof, puff-proof" than his brother's because Wolfgang blows it down, too! Now that both of the boys' flimsy homes are gone, they run to the safety of Despina's house, which she has made of bricks. Wolfgang, now very, very hungry, cannot blow it down! He tries every trick he can think of to get into Despina's sturdy home, but it is no use!

In the end, after their scary, hair-raising encounter with Wolfgang, Cherubino and Don Giovanni both wholeheartedly agree that Despina's idea of going to the library and reading books is a pretty smart thing to do after all.

## **The Characters**

**Despina:** (soprano or mezzo) A little girl pig who loves the library. When her mother tells her and her two brothers it's time for them to move out and get houses of their own, Despina goes to the library to research what type of home would keep her safe from Wolfgang Bigbad. Her brothers tease and make fun of her, as brothers sometimes do, but she does what she knows is the smart thing to do, and ends up saving her brother's bacon.

**Cherubino:** (mezzo or tenor) Despina's older brother. He is a bit of a bully and teases his younger siblings often. He decides on a whim to build his house out of straw, which of course does not stand up to Wolfgang Bigbad's huffs and puffs.

**Don Giovanni:** (bass or baritone) Despina's younger brother. He joins Cherubino in teasing Despina any chance he gets. Also on a whim, he decides to build his house out of sticks. Instead of working diligently to complete the house before the daylight hours are gone, he wastes his time playing with his iPad, and his house is not finished in time to keep him safe from Wolfgang Bigbad.

**Wolfgang Bigbad:** (bass or baritone) The Big Bad Wolf, himself. Wolfgang is especially hungry and grouchy when he meets the three little pigs and is looking for a good meal. He tries to outsmart the pigs several times but ends up falling prey to Despina's well-built chimney instead.

### **Link to Musical Excerpts:**

<http://www.operatales.com/three-little-pigs.shtml>

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

# Activity Worksheet

## Part I

1. In this story, the three little pigs' mother tells them to move out on their own but doesn't offer any help or advice. What did the pigs learn from doing everything themselves?

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2. Cherubino and Giovanni tease Despina (and each other) quite a lot during the opera. Do you have siblings, cousins or friends who tease you? Do you tease them? Why or why not?

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3. It's often considered normal for siblings, close cousins or best friends to tease each other. Do you think this behavior is right or wrong? Why?

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4. Make a pro-con list for teasing between siblings, cousins or best friends. Does it support your belief from question 3?

Pros:

Cons:

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**Part II**

5. Despina figured out a huff-proof puff-proof home design by doing research at her local library. Where is your local library? Write down the address, how far away it is from your house and list the requirements for you to go and check out books or use the computer.

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6. Have you ever gone to your local or school library to look up something you don't know? If so, describe what you were looking for and what you learned. If not, how do you find information you need?

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7. Many people now use the internet to find information instead of visiting a library or reading an entire book on the subject. Make a pro-con list for researching on the internet vs. researching in a library

Pros:

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Cons:

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### **Part III**

Test out your hypothesis: Pick a research question from the list below or choose your own teacher-approved question. Then visit your local or school library and find out as much information as you can about your question from books available to you. Write down what you discover and which books the information came from. Use several books, not just one. Next, research your question online. Write down what you discover and the websites the information came from. Look for several sources, not just one website.

After collecting your research, write a persuasive essay describing your experience. What information was available from books in the library? What information was available on the internet? Did any of the sources conflict or overlap with each other? How so? Which research method was easier to use? Which method do you prefer? How did your topic effect your research? Which do you think has the most reliable information? Back up your opinions with examples, facts and evidence.

Research questions:

- Where does the story of *The Three Little Pigs* originate?
- Who was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart?
- What are the musical traits of the classical period?
- What is the history of the La Scala opera house?
- Why is the piano a unique instrument?
- How does the voice work?
- What operas are playing in DFW this year? Where and when?