

Hansel and Gretel

By Engelbert Humperdinck



OPÉRA
LYRA OTTAWA

Study Guide Series

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Adapted from Nashville Opera's 2005 OperaNET (Nashville Educational Tour) Study Guide
Original version written by Kelly Claus, Education Director
Original design by Cara Schneider, Art Director

Hansel and Gretel

By Engelbert Humperdinck

Think how exciting it was the first time you experienced an opera. The magical experience of the music the voices and the story can be one to stay with you forever.

This workbook will allow for your students in grades 4,5 and 6 to learn more about the opera, Hansel and Gretel, by Engelbert Humperdinck so that they will have an even better experience during the production.

The opera, *Hansel and Gretel* is based on the classic Grimm Brothers fairy tale and was adapted by the 19th century composer Engelbert Humperdinck (not the well-known pop-artist). With its wonderful melodies and unforgettable songs, the operatic version of this world famous fairy tale will rekindle that feeling of pure joy when the children triumph over the evil witch.

Opera Lyra Ottawa believes in the importance of nourishing and cultivating young people's appreciation of music and the fine arts. So much can be learned about the world and about ourselves from our experiences with music, art and theatre.

The value of the Arts:

The arts provide an excellent experience for its audience, often leaving very vivid memories that sometimes have a long lasting impact. As a first exercise with your students, ask them to answer the questions in the box below to explore their experience with the arts to this day.

Describe a meaningful, special Arts experience you have had: (Music, Theatre, Art Museum, Concert, Ballet or Dance...)

When did this take place?

Who was with you?

Describe how you felt about the experience.

Opera Lyra Ottawa

Young Artists Training Programme Presents:

Hansel and Gretel

By Engelbert Humperdinck

Music by Engelbert Humperdinck
Libretto by Adelheid Wette after the fairytale by The Brothers Grimm
World Premiere: Weimar, Hoftheater, December 23, 1893
U.S. Premiere: New York, Daly's Theater, October 8, 1895 (in English)

The Cast

HANSEL, mezzo soprano	Kathleen Promane, Kasia Sadej
GRETEL, soprano	Elizabeth Gault
MOTHER, soprano	Kim Little
FATHER, baritone	Jean-Sebastien Kennedy
SANDMAN, soprano	Misty Banyard
DEW FAIRY, soprano	Misty Banyard
WITCH, mezzo soprano	Brenda Whaley
Music Director/Accompanist	Judith Ginsburg
Stage Director/Designer	Susan Blyth-Schofield
Production Manager	Ron Ward
Stage Manager	Judi Pearl
Costumes	Malabar Costumes

Opera Lyra Ottawa would like to thank Nashville Opera



Production Sponsor

Music and the Arts

Activities

Listen and Learn (Music)
All About Opera
On Stage (Theatre)
Get Moving! (Dance)
Let's See It! (Visual Art)

Supporting Materials

Musical Terms List
CD Track List
Libretto Excerpts
Score Excerpts
What Is Opera, Anyway?
Article: Operatic Voices
Checklist for Opera Singers
Why is Hansel Played by a Girl?
Audience Etiquette
Article: A Short History of Opera
Taking the Stage (Theatre): A Scene from Hansel and Gretel
Article: Meet the Composer - Engelbert Humperdinck
Article: How *Hansel and Gretel* Came to Be

Listen and Learn (Music)

Activities

- Teach students the meanings of different musical terms. Using the Study Guide CD, identify and/or demonstrate concepts such as *aria*, *beat*, *duet*, *legato*, *recitative*, *tempo*, *timbre*, *cadence* and *vibrato*.
- Find the form. Music is built in phrases, much like sentences that we speak. Listen to any song, and decide where commas and periods would go if the melody was written down like a sentence. Figure out how many phrases or "sentences" are in the song. Do they sound like questions (open cadence)? Or answers (closed cadence)? Do any of the phrases sound like they start with the same musical idea? Label each phrase with a letter: A, B, C, and so on. If one sounds like another, label the two with the same letter. Once all the phrases are labelled, the form of the song is spelled out: ABA, AABB, ABABA, etc.
- Play a popular song that the students will recognize. Discuss how changing certain elements of the music (tempo, instrumentation, vocal timbre, text) would alter the overall effect of the song.
- Write an original song. Within small groups, give each student a specific role in the composition/performance process: composer (melody), librettist, instrumentalist, vocalist, etc. Have students create their own instruments using simple objects that are available to them. The group should aim to perform a song that gives each member a different identity. Experiment with different timbres and tempi, and see how changes affect the song.

- Using material from a regular classroom subject, have students re-write lyrics for music they've learned from *Hansel and Gretel*. Use the new song to study for a test, and then discuss how the music helped them to memorize information.
- Listen to "The Children's Prayer" from *Hansel and Gretel*. Have students read the words (see the "Libretto Excerpts" page) along with the music. How does the music match the words? What is the musical climax of the song? How does the composer accomplish that? With the addition of certain instruments? With heightened pitches or dynamic levels?
- A folksong is a popular song that is familiar to the people of the country it is from, such as "Yankee Doodle" or "I've been working on the railroad." Tracks 2 and 4 on the CD illustrate Humperdinck's use of folk-like songs in *Hansel and Gretel*. Talk about folksongs and why a composer might choose to incorporate them into a children's opera. Listen to the CD and have students pick out songs that sound like they could be a folk song.
- Rhythm and Pulse: Have the students clap the beat or pulse of the "Hansel and Gretel Dance" (Track 4) and then the rhythm of the melodic line. Discuss the difference between the two.
- Meter: While listening to the "Hansel and Gretel Dance" (Track 4), count along with the song: 1-2-3, 1-2-3, 1-2-3. If it "fits," then the song is in *triple meter*. If it doesn't fit, try counting 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4... If this works, the song is in *duple meter*. Try it also with the "Children's Prayer" (Track 8). Sometimes a meter is compound, meaning that you can count the fast pulse in 1-2-3 increments, and the slow pulse in 1-2-3-4 increments. This can also be done with the "Father's Song" (Track 6 - 0:37 to 2:33).

All About Opera

Activities

- Ask students what they know about opera. Listen to excerpts from the CD. Have students list the differences between operatic music and other types of music (instruments, voices, dynamics, intensity, vocal timbre, etc).
- Ask students what they think opera singers look like. Go to <http://www.operastuff.com/people.html>, and click on sopranos. (Sopranos are usually the leading ladies in opera and are often thought to be hefty women with long yellow braids and a helmet). Look at pictures of a few sopranos and get students' reactions to what opera stars really look like.
- Read the article entitled "Operatic Voices." Listen to the CD and pick out which characters have which voice-type. Traditionally, Hansel is played by a mezzo-soprano. See the article entitled "Why Is Hansel Played by a Girl?" for background on this. Ask students how using a female voice-type for Hansel would be effective.
- Brainstorm with students. What would be a good topic for an opera? Think about movies, books, fairy tales, historical events, and/or every day situations. What kind of music would accompany different topics?
- Read and discuss the "Short History of Opera" article. Listen to samples of opera from the different periods: Baroque, Classical, Romantic and 20th Century. (Recordings can be checked out from most public libraries). How has the sound of opera changed over the years? Ask students what they think opera is going to sound like 100 years from now. Will different forms of media, like T.V. and film, be incorporated into performances? Will singers change the way they sing? Will new instruments be developed?

On Stage

Activities

- Put on a play! Go through the production process from start to finish. Hold auditions, post a cast list, create costumes, build a set, rehearse lines, stage the action, and perform! Use the script included in this study guide, or create your own.
- Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* is told in "third person." This gives the audience an overall view of the events in the story, instead of a single character's perspective. Divide students into groups, and have them write their own *Hansel and Gretel* play in "first person," taking on the perspective of one of the characters from the story (or a group of characters: Hansel and Gretel, Mother and Father). Allow students to perform their plays for one another. List the differences between each version, and discuss how a situation can seem different when looked at from someone else's perspective.
- Read the enclosed biography of Engelbert Humperdinck and the essay "How Hansel and Gretel Came to Be." Using important events and people from Humperdinck's life, have students write a play that illustrates his experiences.

Get Moving (Dance)

Activities

- Like most children, Hansel and Gretel love to play and dance. Ask students to imagine how German children might have danced 100 years ago. Assist them in making up original choreography based on the words and the music of Hansel and Gretel's "Dance" (Track 4).
- Talk about different styles of dance. If possible, watch videos of dancing from various cultures and American musical genres (ballet, hip hop, tap, etc). What styles would be appropriate for Hansel and Gretel's dance music?

Let's See It (Visual Art)

Activities

- Opera isn't just music. It incorporates all the arts, especially visual art. Have students list all the elements of an opera or play that are visual (i.e. set, costumes, props, makeup). Discuss how these things can be considered art.
- Have students design their own backdrop, scenery or costumes for a *Hansel and Gretel* production. Draw pictures, build miniature models, or design a bulletin board.
- Create posters or programs for the upcoming production of *Hansel and Gretel* that might represent the look of the show.

Musical/Opera Terms

Pronunciation for Italian words is included.

A CAPPELLA [ah kuh-pél-luh]

Singing without instrumental accompaniment.

ARIA [áh-ree-uh]

An extended vocal solo, usually a showpiece for the singer.

BEAT

The underlying PULSE of a song. What you would clap along with at a concert.

BLOCKING

Where the singers stand and move during a SCENE. Singers are given their BLOCKING by the DIRECTOR and have to memorize it along with their music.

BRAVO!

Audience members shout this Italian word after an exciting aria, scene, act, or performance. It is pronounced “brah-voh” and means “well done.” A female performer would be accorded a “brava,” and a group of performers (duets and ensembles) would receive a “bravi.”



CADENCE [káy-dens]

A closing statement at the end of a musical phrase. An OPEN CADENCE sounds like a resting point or a thought that is incomplete. A CLOSED CADENCE sounds like a stopping point or the end of a song/section.

CADENZA [kuh-dén-zuh]

A fast, fancy-sounding passage sung by a soloist, usually in an aria.

CHORUS

A group of singers who sing and act together; also a piece of music sung by such a group of singers.

CHORUSMASTER

The leader of the chorus.

COLORATURA [color-uh-tóo-ruh]

A highly decorative style of singing with many flourishes, trills, and CADENZAS, usually for the soprano voice.

COMPOSER

One who creates musical works.

COMPRIMARIO [kahn-prih-máh-ree-oh]

A secondary role in an opera, usually the maid, servant, messenger or confidante on one of the leading characters. Often provides comic relief.

CONDUCTOR

The leader of a musical ensemble responsible for controlling such matters as speed, volume, balance and togetherness through the use of silent gestures.

COSTUME

The outfit worn by each actor to reflect the time and place of an opera, as well as the personality of each character.

CRITIC

One who describes and analyzes artistic works and performances, also judging their merits and faults.

DOWNSTAGE

The position on a stage nearest to the audience. Because the "raked stage" prevalent in early opera houses was slanted, the closer a singer came to the audience, the lower the stage was to the ground.

DUET

A musical piece for two voices or two instruments.

ENSEMBLE

The delicate equality of singing together in tonality and emotional contact. Also, a piece for three or more singers.

FINALE [fih-náh-lee]

The ending of a large piece of music such as an opera.

GRAND OPERA

The most elaborate and formal presentation of opera, signified by grandeur and size in cast, orchestra and sets.

LEITMOTIV [light-moh-teef]

A melodic theme used throughout an opera to identify a character or idea (love, hate, jealousy, etc). German Romantic opera composer Richard Wagner developed this concept in the late 19th century.

LEGATO [le-gáh-toh]

A smooth manner of playing or singing with no perceptible breaks between notes.

LIBRETTIST [lih-brét-tist]

Author of an opera's text or the LIBRETTO.

LIBRETTO [lih-brét-toe]

The text of an opera (Italian word for little book).

METER

The grouping of beats in a piece of music into groups of 2 (duple meter) or 3 (triple meter). Meter is sometimes irregular or mixed between groups of 2 and 3.

OPERA

A drama expressed through music, in which the text of a drama is set to orchestral music and sung instead of spoken.

OPERA BUFFA

A comic opera with elements of farce.

OPERA SERIA [opera sáir-ee-ah]

A dramatic opera, usually dealing with serious or historical subject matter.

OVERTURE

An instrumental introduction to an opera that often makes use of thematic material from the body of work.

PIT (or ORCHESTRA PIT)

A large space below the stage, where the orchestra and conductor are during a performance.

PRIMA DONNA

A “leading lady” in an opera.

PROPS

Objects, other than costumes or scenery, used as part of dramatic or operatic productions (short for properties).

PULSE

The underlying BEAT of a song. What you would clap along with at a concert.

QUARTET

A musical piece for four voices or four instruments.

RECITATIVE [reh-sih-tah-téev]

A style of singing designed to be similar to natural speech.

RHYTHM

The pattern of beats created by the notes in a musical line.

SCENE

The time and location where the action takes place; also a section of an act in a dramatic or operatic production.

SCORE

The written music used by the CONDUCTOR during a performance. Includes all the vocal and instrumental parts.

SET

The scenery on the stage, built to represent a particular location (short for setting).

STAGE LEFT/RIGHT

The division of the stage from the singer’s point of view. For example: A singer moves to his/her left, which is the audience’s right.



SUPER

A non-singing, non-speaking actor in an opera (short for supernumerary).

TECHNICAL

The stage management, lighting, scene-building, and other mechanical aspects of a theatrical production.

TEMPO

The speed at which a piece of music is performed.

THEME

A central melody in a piece of music. In opera, a theme may be associated with a particular character, setting, object, or emotion. This kind of theme is also called a LEITMOTIV.

TIMBRE [tám-burr] like amber

Tone quality or tone colour of a voice or instrument that distinguishes it from others with the same pitch and volume.

UPSTAGE

The position on stage farthest from the audience. (see DOWNSTAGE for further explanation)

VIBRATO [vih-bráh-toh]

Italian for vibration. Slight and rapid fluctuations in pitch. The quality that produces warmth in the human voice.

The Music of Hansel and Gretel

Included with your study guide is a CD containing the following selections of music from Hansel and Gretel.

CD Track List

1. Introduction
2. Opening Folksong Duet
3. Spoken Interlude
4. Hansel and Gretel's Dance
5. Spoken Interlude
6. The Father's Song
7. Spoken Interlude
8. The Children's Prayer
9. Spoken Interlude
10. The Spell
11. Spoken Interlude
12. Final Scene

Introduction and spoken interludes recorded by John Hoomes, General Artistic Director of Nashville Opera.

Teachers should note that the Opera Lyra Ottawa production will be performed with piano accompaniment.

Libretto Excerpts

Teachers, please note that the English translation used on the included recording is different than the one we will use in our performance. The following are excerpts from our translation. (These words can easily be sung along with the melodies on the CD!)

Track 2: Opening Folksong Duet

Gretel: Susy, little Susy, and what is the news?
The geese are running barefoot because they've no shoes!
The cobbler has leather and plenty to spare,
Why can't he make the poor goose a new...
Hansel: then they'll have to go barefoot!
Gretel: ...pair?
Hansel: Goosey goosey gander, just what's to be done?
Who'll give me milk and sugar, for bread I have none?
I'll go back to bed and I'll lie there all day,
Nothing here to eat so there's nothing to...
Gretel: Then we'll have to go hungry!
Hansel: ...pay!

Track 4: Hansel and Gretel Dance

Gretel: Brother dance a step or two
Both my hands I offer you,
Right foot first, Left foot then,
Round about and back again!
Hansel: I would dance, but don't know how,
When to turn or when to bow,
Show me what I ought to do
So that I may dance like you.
Gretel: With your foot you tap, tap, tap.
With your and you clap, clap, clap.
Right foot first, Left foot then,
Round about and back again!
Hansel: (repeat)

Track 6: Father's Song

Father: The broomstick, the broomstick,
Why what is it for, why what is it for?
They ride on it...
They ride on it, the Witches!
Deep within the wood
Where the witches dwell,
There's one in league
With the powers of hell.
At midnight hour, when nobody knows,
Away to the witches' dance she goes.
Up the chimney so high
On a broomstick they fly,
Over hill and vale, over dell and dale
Through the midnight air

They gallop full tear



On a broomstick, on a broomstick,
Hop hop hop hop the witches!

Track 8: The Children's Prayer

H&G: When at night I go to sleep,
Fourteen angels watch do keep,
Two my head are guarding,
Two my feet are guiding,
Two are on my right hand,
Two are on my left hand,
Two who warmly cover,
Two who o'er me hover,
Two to whom tis given
To guide my steps to Heaven.

Track 10: The Spell (beginning at 0:28)

Witch: Hocus pocus, witches' charm!
You are captured with my arm!
Back or forward do not try,
You are in the evil eye!
Head on shoulders fixed awry!
Hocus pocus, now comes jocus:
Children, watch the magic head,
Eyes are staring, dull as lead!
Now you angel, off to bed!
Hocus pocus, onus jocus,
Malus locus, bocus pocus!
Bonus jocus...
Malus locus!
Hocus...pocus...
Bonus jocus...
Malus locus...
Hocus...pocus!

Track 13: Final Scene (Beginning at 0:36)

Father: Children, here's a lesson taught!
How the witch herself was caught,
Unaware, In the snare
Laid for you with cunning rare
All: We can see the lesson taught...
Father: Evil cannot be ignored.
Virtue is its own reward.
When past bearing is our grief,
God the Lord will surely send relief!
Yes, when past bearing...
All: When past bearing is our grief,
God the Lord will send relief!

What Is OPERA, Anyway?

1

Opera is storytelling!

Take a really interesting group of characters. Add an exciting plot with adventure, danger, and maybe even a love story. Use a setting that is unusual, perhaps even far away in time and place.

2

Opera is drama!

Next, take that story and act it out on a stage. Turn the conversations into dialogue for actors. Put the actors into costumes; give them make-up. Add scenery that takes people into a different world. Emphasize the conflicts and act out the struggles so that everyone can see them and feel them. Have heroes and villains – and maybe even dragons or monsters.

3

Opera is good music!

Then, write music for your play. Use singing in place of all the spoken parts. When the characters are talking, use simple melody for their speech. When the characters are thinking out loud or presenting a little story, give them a song that is longer and gives them a chance to shine. When they are excited, you may have them sing higher and louder. Use an orchestra (just like the movies) to emphasize the mood of each part: fast for the exciting action part, soft for the love scene, heavy drum beats for the approach of the monsters. Have the orchestra play its music through most of the drama and even a few minutes before it starts (Overture or Prelude).

4

Opera is a spectacular event!

Finally, take your musical drama, where everything (including even “hello” and “goodbye”) is sung, and add dancing and parades and lightning and thunder and a wind storm and lots of conflict and emotion

and...

...You’ve got an OPERA !

ARTICLE: Operatic Voices

Every culture in the world makes music. Often we can recognize the origin of a song based on the musical elements that are featured within it. For example, Eastern cultures like China and Japan base their compositions on the pentatonic scale (which is roughly represented by the black keys on the piano). Indian musicians (from India) use instruments like the sitar and the tabla, which have very distinct sounds.

In the same way, each culture has developed its own style of singing. What most people think of as operatic or classical singing developed in Europe. This style flourished during the seventeenth century as opera became a popular form of entertainment, and operatic music increased in complexity. The most recognizable characteristics of a classically trained voice are:

- an extensive range (the ability to sing both high and low)
- varying degrees of volume (loud and soft)
- resonance in the chest and sinus cavities (produces a “full” or “round” sound)
- an ability to fill a large space or project without amplification.

Singing in Europe and America is now generally divided into two categories: classical and popular. The main differences between these styles are resonance, timbre and volume. Essentially all singers in the “pop” field depend upon microphones to be heard in a large performance space. This enables the singers to deliver their message in either a loud, dramatic style, or in an intimate, conversational style, with little physical effort.

Opera singers, however, depend solely on the ability to project their voices naturally; for this reason, they train intensely for many years, taking voice lessons and practicing every day to strengthen their vocal cords. In

order to make the large sound needed to fill an opera house without using a microphone, it is necessary that the singer use all the natural resonance of the upper chest cavity, as well as the sinus cavities in the face. These natural spaces serve as little amplifying “echo” chambers.

The singer must breathe in a specific manner, making use of the whole torso area (lungs, ribs, diaphragm and viscera). As they breathe in, each part of this network does its job: the lungs fill up, which forces the ribs to expand and the diaphragm (a flat muscle below the lungs) moves down. As the diaphragm descends, the viscera (stomach, intestines and other organs) are forced down and out. Singers describe this feeling as “fatness in the low stomach” or “filling an innertube” around their waist.

Expelling the air, or singing, is essentially a slow and controlled movement of those muscles. If all of the air escapes from the lungs quickly, the tone of the voice will sound breathy and will lack intensity. Successful opera singers must be able to isolate the diaphragm and ribs, controlling the rate at which they return to their original positions. This allows for a consistent stream of air that travels from the lungs, through the larynx (also called the “voice box”); the larynx houses the vocal cords, which vibrate against one another as air passes through.

Proper breathing is essential for producing a clear vocal tone with an even vibrato (the Italian word meaning “to vibrate”). Vibrato can be described as a “wobble” in the voice or technically, a consistent variation in the pitch of a tone. While many pop singers try to remove this element of singing for the sake of style, vibrato in an opera singer’s voice is a must – it increases the warmth and resonance of the tone, and also allows for accurate tuning.

Voice types based on range

Soprano: The highest female voice, with a range similar to a violin. In opera, the soprano is most often the heroine, since a high bright voice traditionally suggests femininity and virtue. The normal range of a soprano is two octaves up from middle C, sometimes with extra top notes.



Mezzo Soprano: Also called a mezzo, the middle female voice similar to an oboe in range. The mezzo sound is often darker and warmer than the soprano. In opera, composers generally use the mezzo voice to portray older women such as mothers, villainesses, seductive heroines, and sometimes even young boys (like Hansel). This is a special operatic convention, called trouser roles. The mezzo's normal range is from the "A" below middle C to the "A" two octaves above it.

Contralto: The lowest female voice. A true contralto is a very rare voice type, similar in range to a clarinet. It is usually used for an older female or special character parts such as witches and old gypsies. Its range is two octaves from F below middle C to the top line of the treble clef.

Tenor: Usually the highest male voice in opera. It is similar to a trumpet in range, tone, color, and acoustical ring. The tenor is usually the hero or the love interest in an opera. His voice ranges from the C below middle C to the C above.

Baritone: The middle male voice, close to a French horn in range and tone color. In comic opera, the baritone is often the ring-leader of the comedy, but in tragic opera, he is usually the villain. The range is from the G that is an octave and a half below middle C to G above.

Bass: The lowest male voice, it is similar to a trombone or bassoon in range and color. Low voices usually suggest age and wisdom in serious opera. In comic opera they are generally used for old characters who are foolish or laughable. The range is roughly two octaves down from the F above middle C.

Voice types based on size and quality

Voices are also categorized according to size and quality. There are small, medium, medium-large and large voices in opera. The quality of a voice can be defined using the following terms:

Coloratura: Great vocal agility and high range, able to sing complicated vocal ornamentation.

Dramatic: The heaviest voice, capable of sustained declamation and a great deal of power, even over the largest operatic orchestra of about 80 instruments.

Falsetto: The upper part of a voice in which the vocal chords do not vibrate fully, more often used in reference to male voices. Falsetto is frequently used by male characters when they are imitating females, but it is not only used for comic effects. Some tenors have been able to integrate the falsetto into the rest of their voice, which makes for beautiful soft singing.

Helden-: A German prefix meaning heroic, applied to a large voice capable of performing the most demanding roles, usually used in reference to roles written by Richard Wagner.

Lyric: Average-sized voice, specializes in singing long phrases with a very beautiful tone.

Lyric-Spinto: Spinto literally means pushed, but understood as somewhat heavier than a true lyric.

Soubrette: A soprano or mezzo of very light vocal weight and comparatively small range, generally cast as a young girl with a happy disposition.

A Checklist for Opera Singers

A good opera singer must have...

✓ **Volume**

Opera singers are trained to be heard in large theaters, such as Southam Hall at the National Arts Center, without using microphones. Singers train for years to be able to sing loudly enough to be heard over other soloists, a chorus and a large orchestra of about 70 instruments. How loudly can an opera singer sing? When a jet takes off, the sound reaches 110 – 120 decibels, the human threshold level of pain. A powerful opera singer, singing very close to another person's ear, could reach up to 110 decibels.

✓ **Stamina**

Opera requires the ability to sing for two to three hours or even longer. Opera singers rarely perform on consecutive evenings because they are so physically exhausted by the performances. Opera Lyra Ottawa plans its schedule so that the artists can rest for a day or two between performances.

✓ **Range**

Operatic music, as written, requires singers to have a large range – to be able to sing very low notes as well as extremely high notes.

✓ **Acting ability**

Opera singers don't just stand on stage and sing; they must be able to act, as well. Just like actors in a play, the singers must make the audience believe in their characters. For example, the Witch in Hansel and Gretel would not be effective if the singer could not act well.

✓ **The right look**

Just like in a movie, it is important for an opera singer to look the part of the character he or she is portraying. For example, even though the singers who perform the roles of Gretel or Hansel will probably be about 25 years old, they should look very young so we can believe that they are children.

✓ **Familiarity with different languages**

Since opera was developed in Europe, most operas are written in languages other than English. A singer must be familiar with the pronunciation of foreign languages as well as the meaning of each word that they sing. It is not unusual for an American singer to perform in Italian, French, German, or even Russian.

Why is Hansel Played by a Girl?

In Opera, young boy characters are often played by females instead of males. This is because young boys typically have high-pitched voices that are similar in range to a mezzo-soprano's. If a man were to sing the role of Hansel, it would not be very believable. This might sound strange, but is quite common in the world of opera. A male character played by a woman is called "a pants role."

Other pants roles include:

Cherubino *Le Nozze di Figaro* (W. A. Mozart)
Orlofsky *Die Fledermaus* (J. Strauss)
Oktavian *Der Rosenkavalier* (R. Strauss)
Smeton *Anna Bolena* (G. Donizetti)
Siebel *Faust* (Gounod)
Stefano *Romeo and Juliet* (Gounod)

Audience Etiquette

Believe it or not, the audience is probably the most important participant in any live production! One of the most exciting aspects of attending a live performance is the interactive relationship between the audience and the performers. When the audience is at its best, the performers will put on the best show possible. It's a good idea to prepare your students for their role in our production of *Hansel and Gretel* by covering these two basic guidelines:

Respect: Opera is not like TV; the singers on the stage can see you too. Be respectful of all the hard work that has gone into the performance. Don't get up, talk to your neighbour, or otherwise call attention to yourself.

Respond: It's ok to applaud and laugh. In Italy they say "Bravo!" to show that they are enjoying a performance.

Things you probably shouldn't do during a live performance:

- ❖ GET UP AND WALK AROUND.
- ❖ TALK, WHISPER, OR YELL.

Things that are OK to do during a live performance:

- ❖ LAUGH if something is funny.
- ❖ APPLAUD at the end of a song, after a scene, or at the very end of the opera.
- ❖ SHOUT "BRAVO!" when the performers take their bows.

ARTICLE: A Short History of Opera

Opera is more than just large women singing loudly; it is the complete collaboration of music, drama, and the fine arts. Opera has been around for more than 400 years, and can be broken down into the following musical periods:

1450-1600 Renaissance Period
1600-1725 Baroque Period
1725-1850 Classical Period
1850-1900 Romantic Period
1900-today 20th Century or Modern

Renaissance Period

During the Renaissance, a group of Florentine men called the Camerata became interested in Greek antiquity. They were particularly influenced by the association of music and drama in Greek tragedies. In trying to recreate these Greek plays, they came up with a new style of singing called *stile rappresentativo*, which is now what modern opera goers call recitative (see musical terms page). The music from this time followed three basic principles.

- The text had to be understood, and the accompaniment had to be very simple so it did not distract from the words.
- The words had to be sung with correct and natural declamation, as if they were spoken, and had to avoid the rhythms of songs.
- The melody had to interpret the feeling of the text.

With these principles in place, the first opera was written. Scholars agree that the first opera was entitled *Dafne* and written by Jacopo Peri in 1598. Although *Dafne* became famous throughout Europe, all but a few pages were lost. The oldest opera that's still musically intact is *Euridice*, collaboratively written by Camerata members Rinuccini, Peri and Caccini in

1600. Like Greek tragedies, the chorus was onstage throughout, commenting on and explaining the action. In the following years, opera became very popular, requested by the wealthy as entertainment for their celebrations.

The most important opera composer of this period was Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643), who wrote *Orfeo* in 1607. *Orfeo* was the first opera written with distinct separation of the aria (a song within an opera) and recitative (speech-like sections in between arias). This paved the way stylistically for many future composers.

In 1637, Venice changed opera forever by building the first opera house Teatro San Cassiano. Before that, opera was a spectacle for the wealthy to enjoy. Now it became open to the general public.

Baroque Period

During the musical era which is now called the Baroque Period (1600-1725), opera was performed all over Europe. Many countries, like Germany, were enjoying Italian operas while other countries, like France, began to experiment with their own variations of opera. By the 18th century, the model of opera seria was firmly established.

The plots usually centred around mythology. The chorus was saved for the end of the opera where it added to the festivities of the inevitable happy ending, and the solo singer became glorified. The popularity of the singers was so prominent, in fact, that it was not unusual for them to change the music of an opera as they pleased. Singers would often insert their favorite arias into a show, whether it fit into the storyline or not.

The standard aria during this time was composed in a strict A-B-A form called da

capo, literally meaning “from the head.” The first “A” section is sung in a straight forward manner, exactly as written; it is followed by a short “B” section that has a different melody, contrasting tempo, and is written in a different key. The aria ends with a restatement of the “A” section (same melody, same words), but this time the singer adds ornamentations at appropriate places throughout the vocal line. A famous example of this is “Vaduro pupile” from Julio Cesare by G.F. Handel.

Singers during the Baroque period were not as well-rounded as the singers of today. While their voices were impressive technically, they placed little emphasis on acting. Often, they would simply stand in one spot and sing their aria. Perhaps the reason for this was that audiences were not concerned with the action on stage. In fact, they were too busy socializing to actually watch the show. It wasn't until the 19th century that the house lights were turned down and talking was frowned upon. Composers accepted this as inevitable, and accordingly wrote their operas with lots of repetition. A ten-minute aria from this period might have only eight lines of text!

Classical Period

The 18th century marked the beginning of the Classical Period in musical history. The American and French revolutions spread the idea of Democracy and emphasized the strength of the common man. These ideas lead to big changes in opera. The rigidity of the opera seria model and da capo form were losing popularity since they limited the dramatic capabilities that exist in music. Increasingly less emphasis was placed on the singer, and the spotlight moved toward the drama. The story lines also became more accessible. Comic operas, or opera buffa as they were called in Italy, became very popular, and appealed to the general public.

The most important figure in the Classical period of opera is Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Mozart wrote many successful

operas in both opera seria and opera buffa formats. His buffa operas were the true hits

"After silence, that which comes
nearest to expressing the
inexpressible is music."
-Aldous Huxley

of the eighteenth century. Mozart was among the first to make a living as a freelance composer. Past composers were employed as resident artists in a church or in someone's household. This means that they were obligated to write whatever music their employer demanded. Although Mozart still had to rely on wealthy patrons to support his lifestyle, he had more artistic control of his music than others had and was often able to write operas on whatever topic he chose. Many of his librettos reflect the new ideas that were circulating throughout Europe at the time. In his opera buffa *Le Nozze di Figaro*, a young maid named Susanna outsmarts her employer the Count. This opera was written in 1786 - only three years before the French Revolution.

Romantic Period

In the 19th century's Romantic Period, opera suddenly fell into categories defined by the nationality of the composer. Every major country in Europe made its own unique contributions to the art form.

Most Italian operas composed during this time fell under the label of bel canto. Bel canto literally means beautiful singing, which is illustrated in the glorious melodies composed by Italian masters Bellini, Rossini and Donizetti (known as the “Bel canto composers”). Both serious and comic operas can be categorized as bel canto, as long as they highlight the voice with beautiful melodies. The bel canto composers paved the way for the most prolific Italian opera composer, Giuseppe Verdi. Verdi broke down the walls between recitative and arias, and tried to achieve a continuity that added to the drama of the piece.

In the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, there was a strong trend toward realism in opera. This was called verismo. The plot of a verismo opera generally centered around common people dealing with familiar situations. These operas usually had themes of love and loss, making them more realistic to the audience. An example of a verismo opera is Puccini's *La Bohème*.

German opera during this time can be broken down into two categories: German romantic opera and Richard Wagner's music dramas. German romantic operas were quite similar to Italian opera but differed in plot material. They drew more upon supernatural and medieval tales and also employed more folk tunes.

In the second half of the 19th century,

"Opera is when a man gets stabbed in the back and instead of bleeding, he sings."
-Ed Garner

Wagner created the concept of Gesamtkunstwerk [guh-zahm-koontz-vairk], which means "total artwork." He believed that opera should be a fusion of stagecraft, visual arts, literature and music. He did almost everything related to production: composed the music, wrote the libretto and designed the costumes and scenery. In Wagner's dramas there were no distinctions between arias and recitative; instead of showcasing the voice, he treated it like any other instrument. He also increased the size of the orchestra, and even developed a new instrument he called the Wagner Tuba, which had a rich, mellow tone. Only very large voices can be heard over his expanded orchestra.

The popularity of French opera was also on the rise in the nineteenth century. In this period, three types of opera were prominent:

- Opera Comique, usually comic, used spoken dialogue instead of recitative.
- Grand Opera became popular in the second part of the nineteenth century when composer Giacomo Meyerbeer came onto the scene. Grand Opera was built around grandiose plots and used a large chorus and elaborate sets.
- Drama Lyrique, a combination of Opera Comique and Grand Opera.

Modern American Opera

Despite the dominance of Italian, French and German opera within today's popular repertoire, not all opera comes from the other side of the globe. American composers have been writing productions based on familiar themes for over a century. In the earliest years of American history, English settlers brought with them the Ballad Opera - a short, comic play with musical numbers interspersed throughout. These songs were basically original text set to popular tunes. During the eighteenth century, many travelling companies were performing these Ballad Operas all over the United States.

Standard European operas by composers like Mozart and Rossini were also gaining popularity in New Orleans, Philadelphia and New York. These productions were shortened versions of the originals, however, and were almost always performed in English. In 1825 the first opera performed entirely in its original language was produced at the Park Theater in New York. Over the next 50 years, many traveling companies took opera all over the country, and in 1883 the Metropolitan Opera Company opened its doors. Today, The Met is recognized internationally for its high-quality productions and daring artistic ventures; several new American operas have been commissioned by The Met in the past century, giving composers exposure and prominence among the European masters.

American composers have made many important contributions to opera. George Gershwin was the first to incorporate jazz into opera with his *Porgy and Bess*. William Grant Still's 1941 *Troubled Island* became the first opera written by an African-American composer to be produced by a major opera house. Composers like Gian-Carlo Menotti and Carlisle Floyd continue to

write popular works that have a distinctly American sound. New operas are often based on American history (John Adams' *Nixon in China*) or American literature (Floyd's *Of Mice and Men*), offering familiar plots for new audiences. These and similar efforts made by composers and companies have made opera the fastest growing art form in the United States.*

*From "Increasing Opera Attendance: The 2002 American Express National Audience Research Project" researched and reported by Decision Partners. Available at www.operaamerica.org.

Popular Operas

Baroque

George F. Handel (1685-1759) *Giulio Cesare*

Classical

Wolfgang A. Mozart (1756-1791): *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte*

Romantic

Italian

Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868): *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848): *Lucia di Lammermoor*

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901): *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*

German

Richard Wagner (1813-1883): *Tristan und Isolde*, *The Ring Cycle*

Richard Strauss (1864-1949): *Salome*

Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921): *Hansel und Gretel*

French

Charles Gounod (1818-1893): *Roméo et Juliette*

Georges Bizet (1838-1875): *Carmen*

Modern

American

Gian-Carlo Menotti (b.1911): *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *The Medium*

Aaron Copland (1900-1990): *The Tenderland*

Carlisle Floyd (b. 1926): *Susannah*, *Of Mice and Men*

Taking the Stage: A Scene from Hansel and Gretel

The Cast

Gretel
Hansel
Mother
Father
Witch (can be a boy or a girl)

The Situation

Hansel and Gretel have been captured by the witch. Hansel is in a cage, but has come up with a plan that could save them from being eaten.

Witch: Mmmm. The boy smells so nice...It's a shame he's so skinny... I can barely wait until he's fattened up. Hmm. Maybe I'll just have to have an appetizer of "young girl" to satisfy my cravings.
(She laughs) Oh Gretel, Come here!

Hansel: Gretel be careful!!

Gretel: Don't be silly brother. I'm just as smart as you. You'll see my plan, and then we will be free.

Witch: Gretel, my pumpkin, where are you? (Gretel moves timidly toward the witch) Oh there you are my sweet. (whispered to herself) Oh she will taste so sweet. (cackle)
Here little goose have some raisins and some chocolates.

Gretel: Thank you but I don't like raisins or chocolate.

Witch: Well how about some Gingerbread, Hmmm? We can cook some up nice and fresh from my oven. (shows Gretel the oven)

Gretel: (thinking quickly) Oh yes, gingerbread is my favourite...fresh from the oven.

Witch: Be a dear, then, and go check to see if the oven is hot enough.
(leading Gretel to the oven)

Hansel: (loud whisper) Be careful, Gretel!

Gretel: How do I check it?

Witch: Just stand on tiptoe, head bending forward. Then you will be able to see in.

Gretel: I'm such a silly little girl, I still don't understand. What is..."tiptoe?"

Witch: (Frustrated) Here my dear I will show you. (She begins to walk to the oven)



Hansel: (Gretel runs to open Hansel's door) Hurry, Gretel, this will be our only chance to save ourselves.

Witch: Mumbling... (The Witch bends over the oven looking inside. All of a sudden, Hansel and Gretel give her a good push which sends her toppling over into it, upon which they quickly shut the door. The witch shrieks in pain.)

H & G: Hooray!!!

Hansel: Gretel that was smart thinking! You sure tricked that witch!

Gretel: I'm just glad we are free! (Selected children begin to appear frozen)
Look - more children! But they're frozen.

Hansel: They must be under the Witch's spell. I'll take her magic wand and free them.

Gretel: Do you remember the spell she used on us?

Hansel: I think so...Let's try it: "Hocus Pocus Elderbush. Rigid Body loosen...whoosh!"
(The children unfreeze and begin celebrating)

Father: (yelling off-stage) Mother, I think I see them!

H & G: Father? (Father runs on stage)

Father: Hansel! Gretel! (they all hug) I thought you were gone for good!

Mother: My dear children will you forgive me? I never intended for you to get lost in the woods.

Hansel: It's okay, Mother. We were just fine. (winking at Gretel)

Father: Now children we must be very careful. They say there are witches out here.

H & G: Witches? Not in these woods! (smiling at each other)

Mother: I'm so glad you both are safe and sound. Come children let's go home. I'll bake you your favorite: some nice gingerbread, fresh from the oven!

Gretel: Oh no - not gingerbread!

ARTICLE: Meet the Composer - Engelbert Humperdinck

Born September 1, 1854

Died September 27, 1921

Hansel and Gretel composer, Engelbert Humperdinck, was born in Siegburg, a small town in the Rhine Provinces of what is now Germany. He was interested in music at an early age, and began studying piano at the age of seven. At fourteen, he heard his first opera. This experience affected him so greatly that he began to compose simple sing-spiels.* He attended The Cologne Conservatory, where he studied for four years. His diligence paid off, and he won many important competitions across Germany. The esteemed Mozart Prize took Humperdinck to Munich to study for two additional years.

While studying in Munich in 1878, Humperdinck heard Richard Wagner's four-opera series, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, ("The Ring Cycle") for the very first time. He was so impressed by this new work that he immediately joined the ranks of other German composers that had fallen under Wagner's spell. He arranged to meet him in 1880. The meeting was a success and Wagner invited Humperdinck to his theatre in Bayreuth to help him mount a new opera. Wagner applauded Humperdinck's talent as a composer and encouraged him to continue writing.



Photo from: *What We Hear in Music*, Anne S. Faulkner, Victor Talking Machine Co., 1913.

In 1887 Humperdinck took a job teaching at the Cologne Conservatory. He taught and composed for the remainder of his life. His most famous opera was his version of *Hansel and Gretel*, which he composed in 1892. He wrote other fairy-tale operas after *Hansel and Gretel's* success but none of these enjoyed the same popularity. In 1910, Humperdinck was awarded an honorary doctorate from The University of Berlin. He taught until his death in 1921.

* A sing-spiel (zing-shpeel) is a comic German drama with spoken dialogue.

ARTICLE: How Hansel and Gretel Came to Be

The transformation of the famous Grimm Brothers' fairy-tale into Engelbert Humperdinck's best-loved opera.

Beginnings

Engelbert Humperdinck might be surprised to find that his Marchenspiel [mar-shen-sheep], or fairy-tale opera *Hansel and Gretel*, has become one of the most performed operas of the 20th century. When he began writing it, his intention was simply to entertain his two young nieces. Humperdinck's sister, Adelheid Wette, approached him in 1890 to write music for a play she had written for her daughters (Isolde and Gudrun) to perform at their home. Collaborations between the Humperdinck siblings began when they were children, as Engelbert eagerly set to music the delightful verses penned by Adelheid. Humperdinck called the project a nursery-festival play and was pleased at the warm reception it was given by family and close friends. Among them was fellow composer-critic Hugo Wolf, who urged him to expand the little Singspiel into a full-length opera.

A Work in Progress

Work began immediately, but the expansion eventually became somewhat of a "family headache." Finally, two years later, *Hansel and Gretel* was ready for the opera house. The 1893 premiere at Weimar was a disaster. Influenza debilitated many members of the orchestra; the soprano scheduled to sing Hansel sprained her ankle; Gretel took over as Hansel and only an inexperienced Gretel could be found. Finally, the copyist took so long with the parts that the brilliant Overture never arrived for opening night. However, two weeks later *Hansel and Gretel* was produced in Munich under the direction of the renowned conductor Hermann Levi. Suddenly Humperdinck was a celebrity, as managers and maestros clamoured to have *Hansel and Gretel* on their stages. Although

Humperdinck and Adelheid Wette wrote their Marchenspiel with children in mind as both performers and audience members, the immediate popularity of *Hansel and Gretel* among musicians, composers and critics legitimized it as proper operatic fare. Of course much of the attraction lies in the tale itself, but Humperdinck's charming folk tunes and richly colourful orchestration are the foundation that made this piece an instant classic.

The speed with which *Hansel and Gretel* was taken into the repertoire of international opera houses is a tribute to the skill of its composer. Indeed, the score reflects Wagner's influence, but the spirit is Humperdinck's own. *Hansel and Gretel*'s warm simplicity does not arrogantly boast of the music's inner complexities. The rich orchestration, descriptive harmonies and subtle texture serve as an exquisite backdrop against which Humperdinck displays original folk material.

The Story

Frau Wette based her libretto on a story from the Grimm Brothers' collection, Nursery and Household Tales. The first of many editions was published in Berlin in 1812. These fairytales had a peculiar mixture of the realistic and the fantastic. Because of the unconcealed supernatural elements within the story, Viennese authorities banned the collection from publication. In Germany, however, it became a bestseller. Even today, it is one of the world's most translated and published books.

Perhaps these fantastic elements are what draw audiences back to the story of *Hansel and Gretel* generation after generation. The realism of the heroes' characters (they are, after all poor, average children) pinned

against the larger-than-life enchantment of the Witch, seems to have a universal appeal. Emerging from her gumdrop-encrusted cottage, this wolf-in-sheep's-clothing is miraculously overcome by the underdogs as they exercise a little creative thinking and common sense. It is a story of triumph over the impossible, which is appealing and inspiring at any age.

Even with this happy ending, there are definitely some disturbing components to the Grimm Brothers' original story. For example, the children's wicked stepmother convinces her husband to abandon his starving children in the forest. Later, Gretel is forced to fetch and heat a large pot of water in which to boil her brother.

Frau Wette, with her later-19th century bourgeois sensibilities, felt obliged to tone down some of the more shocking events of the original story. She traded the Grimms' wicked stepmother for a real mother who absent-mindedly sends her children into the forest to collect berries for dinner. In the original story, the children kill the Witch (who just might be their evil stepmother), find a chest full of riches and live happily ever with their father. Wette's version concludes with a different sort of vindication.

As in the original, the children use their wits to outsmart the evil witch, but ultimately it is their faith in God that saves them from being eaten. In fact, this religious notion serves as the story's backdrop from the very beginning. When Hansel complains that he is hungry and tired of living, Gretel reminds him to put his hope in God's protection. Later, in the woods, the children say a prayer before they fall asleep. Finally, their Father's mantra (which pops up several times throughout the opera) sinks in, and the entire cast – Mother included – sings a hymn of thanks to the Lord: "When past bearing is our grief God the Lord will send relief."

Happy Ending for Hansel and Gretel

Whatever changes were made by Frau Wette, they have not changed the effectiveness and charm of the story. Coupled with Humperdinck's music, the opera quickly became an international favorite. In 1923, *Hansel and Gretel* became the first opera broadcast from start-to-finish by BBC Radio. On Christmas Day of 1931, *Hansel and Gretel* became the Metropolitan Opera's first Saturday matinee broadcast. Since its first performance, *Hansel and Gretel* has been translated into more than a dozen languages and performed all over the world.

Language Arts

Activities

It's Story Time (Reading, Writing and Literature)

Supporting Materials

Synopsis of Hansel and Gretel

Test Yourself

Article: The Brothers Grimm

Hansel and Gretel (Grimm Brothers' version)

Activities:

It's Storytime: Language Arts

Activities Involving Literature

- ❖ Find out some of the other stories by the Brothers Grimm. (Rapunzel, Cinderella, Snow White). Discuss the impact of these story-collectors on children's literature, movies, etc.
- ❖ Read the Brothers Grimm version of Hansel and Gretel, and the synopsis for Humperdinck's opera. Discuss the differences between the two versions.
- ❖ Character discussion: Which characters are fully developed? Which are not? Are there major changes that effect the characters' growth in the story? What are each of the characters' strengths and weaknesses? How do the characters differ from each other – physically and emotionally? What makes a witch a witch?
- ❖ Remove, add or change one of the characters from the story. (What if the Witch were actually a Fairy Godmother?) How would this change the plot?
- ❖ Fairy tales were often written to teach a lesson to young children. What is the lesson that Humperdinck wanted to teach? Is it different than the Grimm Brothers' lesson? Do the Grimm Brothers have a lesson?
- ❖ Read at least one other version of Hansel and Gretel with your class. (Refer to the list in the Resources Pages). Ask the students to compare the features of the stories they just identified: Is the villain always a witch? How do the children escape the witch? What role does magic play in saving the children? Or does their brainpower allow them to outsmart the witch?

Activities Involving Writing

- ❖ Read the synopsis for the opera Hansel and Gretel. Write a new ending for the story.
- ❖ Write a modern-day version of Hansel and Gretel. What would be different? Would the children have cell phones? What kind of food would the Witch's house be made out of?
- ❖ Tell the story from one of the character's point of view. What would you be thinking throughout the story?
- ❖ Revisit the characters. Imagine that 5 years have passed. What are Hansel and Gretel doing now? How has their experience with the Witch changed their views on life, family, strangers? Ask students to write an autobiography as if they are one of the characters.

Synopsis of the Opera Hansel and Gretel

Hansel and Gretel, the children of a poor broom-maker and his wife, are spending the day at home, alone. They are usually very good children who pass the time by singing, dancing, doing their chores and playing in the woods that surround their house.

On this particular day, Gretel is knitting stockings while Hansel makes brooms. Gretel begins to sing her favourite folk song “Susie, Little Susie” to pass the time, but is interrupted by Hansel. He starts to become upset because he is hungry and there is no food in the house.

Gretel warns Hansel not to mope and tries to make him feel better about not having any food; she even gets him to dance and sing with her so that he will be happier. Their mother suddenly comes home and is upset to find them playing instead of doing their chores. She needs to rest and asks them to go into the forest to pick some strawberries for dinner. She instructs them not to come back until their baskets are full.

Hansel and Gretel’s father returns home soon after his children have left for the woods. He is in a great mood because he has sold many brooms that day and has bought the family tons of food to eat with the money he earned. He asks his wife where the children are and she tells him that they are in the woods picking strawberries. He is frightened by this news because he knows that the woods are haunted by an evil witch after dark, and the sun is beginning to set. They decide to go out into the woods and look for their children.

Meanwhile, the children are playing happily in the woods. Hansel and Gretel have filled their baskets with strawberries and decide to return home. It is beginning to get dark and they have a difficult time finding the path. They quickly become frightened by the spooky noises of the forest. Hansel suggests that that they might have better luck finding their way home when the sun comes up the next morning. The children are lulled to sleep by the Sandman and say their nighttime prayer before falling into a deep slumber.

The next morning, awakened by the Dew Fairy, they find a beautiful cottage made of candy and cake! Starving, they run over to the house and begin to eat it. All of a sudden, a witch named Rosina Daintymouth appears and grabs Hansel. The children try to escape from the Witch, but she puts a magic spell on them. The evil Witch locks up poor Hansel, planning to fatten him up so she can eat him. She sends Gretel into the house to cook him some food. She checks on Hansel, who is pretending to be asleep.

Now, the Witch is very old and can’t hear or see very well; so when she asks to feel Hansel’s finger, he cleverly holds out a chicken bone to trick her. She is astounded at how skinny the boy is and soon turns her attention to his sister. She calls for Gretel and asks her to check on some gingerbread she is cooking in the oven, but the girl (who is just as clever as her brother) pretends not to understand what she is supposed to do. Exasperated, the Witch puts her own head into the oven to demonstrate. While her head is in the oven, Hansel escapes from his cage and the two children push the evil Witch into the oven! The children rejoice, having conquered their enemy and survived their ordeal. Suddenly their Mother and Father appear and are overjoyed to find their children alive. They sing a prayer of thanks and celebration and finally return home.

Test Yourself!

After reading the synopsis of *Hansel and Gretel*, fill in each of the blanks below with the correct word from the list at the bottom. Each word is used only once.

One day, while Hansel and Gretel are supposed to be doing their chores, they begin _____ to take their minds off of how hungry they are. Their _____ comes home and is very angry that the children aren't working. She sends them into the forest to pick _____ for dinner.

Pretty soon, their _____ comes home. When he finds out where the children are, he tells his wife that an evil _____ lives in the woods. They quickly leave to find the children.

Meanwhile, Hansel and Gretel have found that they are lost in the woods. They decide to _____ until morning. Before falling asleep, they say their nighttime _____.

When they wake up, they are surprised to find a beautiful _____ made out of _____ and cake! They run to it and immediately start _____ everything they see.

All of the sudden, an ugly Witch comes out of the house and grabs hold of Hansel! She locks him up in a cage and forces Gretel to go inside and _____ him some food. She wants him to get nice and _____ so that she can eat him up.

The children are too clever for the witch, though: when she asks Gretel to check the _____, the girl pretends she doesn't know how. While the Witch is demonstrating, Hansel escapes from his cage and helps his sister to push the Witch in. They quickly slam the _____ shut, and the Witch is turned into a big _____ cookie!

Cottage
Eating
Cook
Sleep

Candy
Gingerbread
Plump
Oven

Prayer
Door
Mother
Strawberries

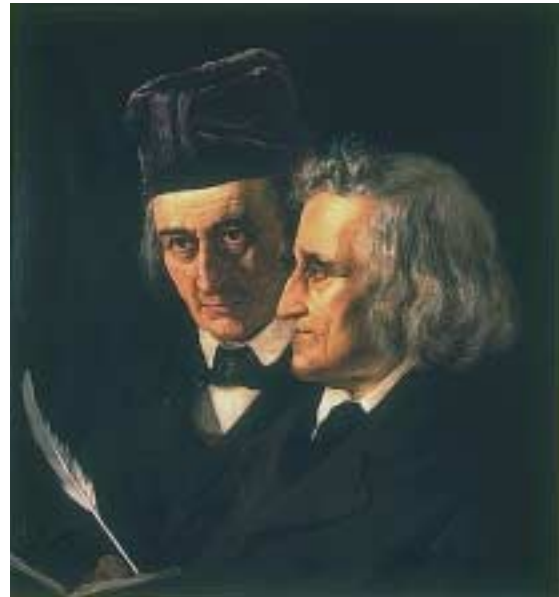
Father
Witch
Dancing

ARTICLE: The Brothers Grimm

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were born in Steinau [shteye-nah] (now part of Germany) in 1785 and 1786, respectively. Their father was a city magistrate, which gave them financial stability and a place to live until his death in 1796. At that point they were thrown out of their government house and moved to Kassel [káh-suhl]. Both planned to follow in their father's footsteps, and entered school preparing to be lawyers. The brothers were both very bright and graduated at the top of their class.

In 1808, their mother died, leaving them to provide for their four younger siblings. Wilhelm was sick with asthma and unable to work, but Jacob took a job as a librarian. In this position, Jacob was exposed to many German folk tales. He developed an interest in the stories and hoped to collect more of them.

In 1810, Jacob and his brother were asked to help a friend collect folk tales for a book he was compiling. They were excited to help, but the friend abandoned the project soon after they began working on it. The brothers decided to complete the book themselves, and in 1812 they published their first volume of *Kinder und Hausmärchen* [kíhn-der oont hóuse-mahr-shen], or *Children's and Household Tales*. This first edition contained only 86 tales; by the sixth edition, 210 stories had been collected. The brothers never thought of these stories as entertainment for children. They viewed themselves instead as patriots, preserving German traditions in a time when French influence dominated their culture. The brothers did not realize that the



book appealed to children until 1825 when they published a smaller edition illustrated by their other brother. The final children's edition, published in 1857, was quite different from the original.

Wilhelm made the stories more acceptable for children, taking out cruel mothers and replacing them with evil step-mothers. He also emphasized gender roles and moral lessons so that children would gain a greater understanding of their place in the world through reading the stories.

Today, children all over the world are familiar with many of the Grimms' stories. Favourites like *Cinderella* and *Snow White* have been made into movies, plays and operas. Other famous Grimm stories include *Rapunzel*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, and *The Bremen Town Musicians*.

The Original Hansel and Gretel

by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

Next to a great forest, there lived a poor woodcutter with his wife and his two children. The boy's name was Hansel, and the girl's name was Gretel. He had but little to eat, and once, when a great famine came to the land, he could no longer provide even their daily bread.

One evening as he was lying in bed worrying about his problems, he sighed and said to his wife, "What is to become of us? How can we feed our children when we have nothing for ourselves?"

"Man, do you know what?" answered the woman. "Early tomorrow morning we will take the two children out into the thickest part of the woods, make a fire for them, and give each of them a little piece of bread, then leave them by themselves and go off to our work. They will not find their way back home, and we will be rid of them."

"No, woman," said the man. "I will not do that. How could I bring myself to abandon my own children alone in the woods? Wild animals would soon come and tear them to pieces."

"Oh, you fool," she said, "then all four of us will starve. All you can do is to plane the boards for our coffins." And she gave him no peace until he agreed. "But I do feel sorry for the poor children," said the man.

The two children had not been able to fall asleep because of their hunger, and they heard what the stepmother had said to the father. Gretel cried bitter tears and said to Hansel, "It is over with us!" "Be quiet, Gretel," said Hansel, "and don't worry. I know what to do."

And as soon as the adults had fallen asleep, he got up, pulled on his jacket, opened the lower door, and crept outside. The moon was shining brightly, and the white pebbles in front of the house were glistening like silver coins. Hansel bent over and filled his jacket pockets with them, as many as would fit. Then he went back into the house and said, "Don't worry, Gretel. Sleep well. God will not forsake us." Then he went back to bed.

At daybreak, even before sunrise, the woman came and woke the two children. "Get up, you lazybones. We are going into the woods to fetch wood." Then she gave each one a little piece of bread, saying, "Here is something for midday. Don't eat it any sooner, for you'll not get any more."

Gretel put the bread under her apron, because Hansel's pockets were full of stones. Then all together they set forth into the woods. After they had walked a little way, Hansel began stopping again and again and looking back toward the house.



The father said, "Hansel, why are you stopping and looking back? Pay attention now, and don't forget your legs." "Oh, father," said Hansel, "I am looking at my white cat that is sitting on the roof and wants to say good-bye to me."

The woman said, "You fool, that isn't your cat. That's the morning sun shining on the chimney." However, Hansel had not been looking at his cat but instead had been dropping the shiny pebbles from his pocket onto the path.

When they arrived in the middle of the woods, the father said, "You children gather some wood, and I will make a fire so you won't freeze." Hansel and Gretel gathered together some twigs, a pile as high as a small mountain. The twigs were set afire, and when the flames were burning well, the woman said, "Lie down by the fire and rest. We will go into the woods to cut wood. When we are finished, we will come back and get you."

Hansel and Gretel sat by the fire. When midday came each one ate his little piece of bread. Because they could hear the blows of an ax, they thought that the father was nearby. However, it was not an ax. It was a branch that he had tied to a dead tree and that the wind was beating back and forth. After they had sat there a long time, their eyes grew weary and closed, and they fell sound sleep.

When they finally awoke, it was dark at night. Gretel began to cry and said, "How will we get out of the woods?" Hansel comforted her, "Wait a little until the moon comes up, and then we'll find the way." After the full moon had come up, Hansel took his little sister by the hand. They followed the pebbles that glistened there like newly minted coins, showing them the way. They walked throughout the entire night, and as morning was breaking, they arrived at the father's house.

They knocked on the door, and when the woman opened it and saw that it was Hansel and Gretel, she said, "You wicked children, why did you sleep so long in the woods? We thought that you did not want to come back." But the father was overjoyed when he saw his children once more, for he had not wanted to leave them alone.

Not long afterward, there was once again great need everywhere, and one evening the children heard the mother say to the father, "We have again eaten up everything. We have only a half loaf of bread, and then the song will be over. We must get rid of the children. We will take them deeper into the woods, so they will not find their way out. Otherwise there will be no help for us."

The man was very disheartened, and he thought, "It would be better to share the last bit with the children." But the woman would not listen to him, scolded him, and criticized him. He who says A must also say B, and because he had given in the first time, he had to do so the second time as well.

The children were still awake and had overheard the conversation. When the adults were asleep, Hansel got up again and wanted to gather pebbles as he had done before, but the woman had locked the door, and Hansel could not get out. But he comforted his little sister and said, "Don't cry, Gretel. Sleep well. God will help us."

Early the next morning the woman came and got the children from their beds. They received their little pieces of bread, even less than the last time. On the way to the woods, Hansel crumbled his piece in his pocket, then often stood still, and threw crumbs onto the ground.

“Hansel, why are you always stopping and looking around?” said his father. “Keep walking straight ahead.” “I can see my pigeon sitting on the roof. It wants to say good-bye to me.” “Fool,” said the woman, ‘that isn’t your pigeon. That’s the morning sun shining on the chimney.” But little by little Hansel dropped all the crumbs onto the path. The woman took them deeper into the woods than they had ever been in their whole lifetime.

Once again a large fire was made, and the mother said, “Sit here, children. If you get tired you can sleep a little. We are going into the woods to cut wood. We will come and get you in the evening when we are finished.” When it was midday Gretel shared her bread with Hansel, who had scattered his piece along the path. Then they fell asleep, and evening passed, but no one came to get the poor children.

It was dark at night when they awoke, and Hansel comforted Gretel and said, “Wait, when the moon comes up I will be able to see the crumbs of bread that I scattered, and they will show us the way back home.” When the moon appeared they got up, but they could not find any crumbs, for the many thousands of birds that fly about in the woods and in the fields had pecked them up. Hansel said to Gretel, “We will find our way,” but they did not find it.

They walked through the entire night and the next day from morning until evening, but they did not find their way out of the woods. They were terribly hungry, for they had eaten only a few small berries that were growing on the ground. And because they were so tired that their legs would no longer carry them, they lay down under a tree and fell asleep. It was already the third morning since they had left the father's house. They started walking again, but managed only to go deeper and deeper into the woods. If help did not come soon, they would perish.

At midday they saw a little snow-white bird sitting on a branch. It sang so beautifully that they stopped to listen. When it was finished it stretched its wings and flew in front of them. They followed it until they came to a little house. The bird sat on the roof, and when they came closer, they saw that the little house was built entirely from bread with a roof made of cake, and the windows were made of clear sugar.

“Let’s help ourselves to a good meal,” said Hansel. “I’ll eat a piece of the roof, and Gretel, you eat from the window. That will be sweet.” Hansel reached up and broke off a little of the roof to see how it tasted, while Gretel stood next to the windowpanes and was nibbling at them. Then a gentle voice called out from inside: “Nibble, nibble, little mouse, Who is nibbling at my house?” The children answered: “The wind, the wind, The heavenly wind.”

They continued to eat, without being distracted. Hansel, who very much liked the taste of the roof, tore down another large piece, and Gretel poked out an entire round windowpane. Suddenly the door opened, and a woman, as old as the hills and leaning on a crutch, came creeping out. Hansel and Gretel were so frightened that they dropped what they were holding in their hands. But the old woman shook her head and said, “Oh, you dear children, who brought you here? Just come in and stay with me. No harm will come to you.”

She took them by the hand and led them into her house. Then she served them a good meal: milk and pancakes with sugar, apples, and nuts. Afterward she made two nice beds for them, decked in white. Hansel and Gretel went to bed, thinking they were in heaven. But the old woman had only pretended to be friendly. She was a wicked witch who was lying in wait there

for children. She had built her house of bread only in order to lure them to her, and if she captured one, she would kill him, cook him, and eat him; and for her that was a day to celebrate.

Witches have red eyes and cannot see very far, but they have a sense of smell like animals, and know when humans are approaching. When Hansel and Gretel came near to her, she laughed wickedly and spoke scornfully, "Now I have them. They will not get away from me again." Early the next morning, before they awoke, she got up, went to their beds, and looked at the two of them lying there so peacefully, with their full red cheeks. "They will be a good mouthful," she mumbled to herself. Then she grabbed Hansel with her withered hand and carried him to a little stall, where she locked him behind a cage door.

Cry as he might, there was no help for him. Then she shook Gretel and cried, "Get up, lazybones! Fetch water and cook something good for your brother. He is locked outside in the stall and is to be fattened up. When he is fat I am going to eat him."

Gretel began to cry, but it was all for nothing. She had to do what the witch demanded. Now Hansel was given the best things to eat every day, but Gretel received nothing but crayfish shells.

Every morning the old woman crept out to the stall and shouted, "Hansel, stick out your finger, so I can feel if you are fat yet." But Hansel stuck out a little bone, and the old woman, who had bad eyes and could not see the bone, thought it was Hansel's finger, and she wondered why he didn't get fat. When four weeks had passed and Hansel was still thin, impatience overcame her, and she would wait no longer. "Hey, Gretel!" she shouted to the girl, "Hurry up and fetch some water. Whether Hansel is fat or thin, tomorrow I am going to slaughter him and boil him."

Oh, how the poor little sister sobbed as she was forced to carry the water, and how the tears streamed down her cheeks! "Dear God, please help us," she cried. "If only the wild animals had devoured us in the woods, then we would have died together." "Save your slobbering," said the old woman. "It doesn't help you at all."

The next morning Gretel had to get up early, hang up the kettle with water, and make a fire. "First we are going to bake," said the old woman. "I have already made a fire in the oven and kneaded the dough." She pushed poor Gretel outside to the oven, from which fiery flames were leaping. "Climb in," said the witch, "and see if it is hot enough to put the bread in yet." And when Gretel was inside, she intended to close the oven, and bake her, and eat her as well.

But Gretel saw what she had in mind, so she said, "I don't know how to do that. How can I get inside?" "Stupid goose," said the old woman. "The opening is big enough. See, I myself could get in." And she crawled up and stuck her head into the oven.

Then Gretel gave her a shove, causing her to fall in. Then she closed the iron door and secured it with a bar. The old woman began to howl frightfully. But Gretel ran away, and the godless witch burned up miserably. Gretel ran straight to Hansel, unlocked his stall, and cried, "Hansel, we are saved. The old witch is dead."

Then Hansel jumped out, like a bird from its cage when someone opens its door. How happy they were! They threw their arms around each other's necks, jumped with joy, and kissed one another. Because they now had nothing to fear, they went into the witch's house. In every corner were chests of pearls and precious stones. "These are better than pebbles," said Hansel, filling his pockets. Gretel said, "I will take some home with me as well," and she filled her apron full.

“But now we must leave,” said Hansel, “and get out of these witch-woods.” After walking a few hours they arrived at a large body of water. “We cannot get across,” said Hansel. “I cannot see a walkway or a bridge.” “There are no boats here,” answered Gretel, “but there is a white duck swimming. If I ask it, it will help us across.” Then she called out: “Duckling, duckling, here stand Gretel and Hansel with neither a walkway nor a bridge. Please take us onto your white back.”

The duckling came up to them, and Hansel climbed onto it, then asked his little sister to sit down next to him. “No,” answered Gretel. “That would be too heavy for the duckling. It should take us across one at a time.” That is what the good animal did, and when they were safely on the other side, and had walked on a little while, the woods grew more and more familiar to them, and finally they saw the father's house in the distance. They began to run, rushed inside, and threw their arms around the father's neck.

The man had not had even one happy hour since he had left the children in the woods. However, the woman had died. Gretel shook out her apron, scattering pearls and precious stones around the room, and Hansel added to them by throwing one handful after the other from his pockets. Now all their cares were at an end, and they lived happily together.

My tale is done,
A mouse has run.
And whoever catches it can make for himself from it a large, large fur cap.

Source: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Hänsel und Gretel, Kinder und Hausmärchen* (Children's and Household Tales -- Grimms' Fairy Tales), 7th ed. (Berlin, 1857), no. 15. Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 2000-2002.

It Takes People to Make Opera!

Many people work together to put on an opera.

Who's Backstage?

Stage Director

blocks the action of the show; helps the singers interpret characters; shows actors how to move and gesture; works with designers to create sets and costumes

Music Director/Conductor

instructs singers on singing and musical style; conducts during rehearsals

Repetiteur (Rehearsal Pianist)

plays for all music and staging rehearsals until rehearsals with orchestra begin; the pianist plays a piano reduction of the orchestral score

Stage Manager

supervises singers and technical staff during rehearsals and performances

Lighting Designer

plans or designs the colour, intensity, and frequency of the light onstage

Technical Director

coordinates the lighting, set, costumes, and the crews that handle those things

Costume Designer

plans or designs the costumes and supervises their construction

Wardrobe Master or Mistress

assists with the costumes: how to take care of them and how they are to be worn

Wigs and Make-up Designer

designs and oversees hairstyles, wigs, and make-up

Properties Manager

designs and oversees all moveable objects that are not part of the set or costumes (props)

Production Manager

coordinates between the artistic and business aspects of production; insures that everything happens on time and within budget

Crew or Stagehands

assist in construction, installation, and changes of the set, costumes, lights, and props

Artistic Director

the head of the opera company; makes all the final decisions.

Choreographer

invents dances and movements and teaches them to dancers and/or cast members

Dresser

helps performers put on their costumes properly and change during the performance

Set Designer

plans or designs the sets and scenery; supervises set construction

Who's on Stage?

Principal

a singer who performs a large or primary role in the opera

Actors

performers who have dialogue but do not sing

Cast

all performers, singers, and actors who appear onstage

Chorus

a group of singers who mostly sing together

Comprimario

the small or secondary character roles of opera, from the Italian, meaning "next to the first"

Dancers

performers who dance instead of singing

Supernumeraries or Supers

actors who participate in the action but do not sing or speak

Who's in the Pit?

Conductor

interprets the composer's score and makes sure the singers and the orchestra are together at all times, controlling such matters as speed, volume, balance and togetherness through the use of silent gestures

Orchestra

the musicians who play the musical instruments

Who does what at Opera Lyra Ottawa?

General Director
Elizabeth Howarth

Artistic Director and Principal Conductor
Tyrone Paterson

Technical Director and Production Manager
Ron Ward

Education/Music Manager and Principal Repetiteur
Judith Ginsburg

Box Office Manager
Isabelle Dubois

Director of Marketing and Communications
Karl Balisch

Director of Fund Development and Sponsorship
Laura Evans

Special Events Co-ordinator
Cassandra Silver

Marketing and Development Associate
Tricia Johnson

Volunteer Coordinator
Patricia Blute

Interns
Laura Beks
Nava Lightstone

Just for Fun Activity

Hansel and Gretel Word Search

Find 15 words that are associated with Hansel and Gretel. Hint: Some words are written right to left, some are bottom to top, and some are on a diagonal going any of four different directions.



HANSEL
GRETEL
WITCH
FATHER
MOTHER

FOREST
GINGERBREAD
CANDY
HOCUS POCUS
OVEN

STRAWBERRIES
PRAYER
HUMPERDINCK
WAND
COTTAGE

Opera Composer Word Search

Many, many people have written music for operas. Can you find the names of 16 of the most famous opera composers in the puzzle grid below? Hint: Some words are written right to left, some are bottom to top, and some are on a diagonal going any of four different directions.

E	B	B	A	A	S	D	X	G	T	Q	I
F	R	Y	E	E	W	A	G	N	R	G	O
S	I	T	O	T	E	Z	I	N	D	E	P
T	T	H	I	E	T	T	E	Q	V	R	O
B	T	R	H	P	Z	S	H	T	P	S	T
Q	E	Q	P	A	S	I	T	O	S	H	R
W	N	L	V	A	U	O	B	U	O	W	A
G	Q	M	M	L	N	S	C	K	E	I	Z
Y	Y	B	Y	E	I	C	S	A	K	N	O
H	I	M	B	P	I	N	S	K	C	J	M
G	O	U	R	N	O	D	I	D	E	V	C
C	Y	I	A	N	G	A	C	S	M	F	J

BEETHOVEN
 BELLINI
 BIZET
 BRITTEN
 DONIZETTI
 GERSHWIN

GOUNOD
 MASCAGNI
 MASSENET
 MENOTTI
 MOZART
 PUCCINI

STRAUSS
 THOMAS
 VERDI
 WAGNER

Happily Ever After the Performance

Activities

Suggest more personal responses by having students write thank-you notes to the singers, draw pictures of what they saw, write reviews of the performance, etc. In addition, we ask each teacher to complete the EVALUATION FOR TEACHERS which will be distributed following the production and return to Opera Lyra Ottawa.

If opera is a completely new art form to your students, this first exposure may have been quite different from what they expected. Discuss how their responses differ from their expectations.

If some students have previous experience with opera, talk about how they felt returning to the art form and how seeing opera for a second (or third) time compared with the first.

Discuss how the main characters in *Hansel and Gretel* change over the course of the action. What do they learn about themselves and each other? What do they learn about friendship and teamwork? What do they learn about making responsible choices?

Pick a well-known opera to study. Over a period of time, read the story of the opera to your students, one "chapter" (or "scene") at a time. When you have read the whole story, play a recording of excerpts (available at your public library or local record store) for students and help them identify the music that goes with different characters and parts of the narrative. Have students act out parts of the stories using the recorded music as a soundtrack.

Secure a videotape of an opera (preferably in English) from your local library. Prepare students by telling them the story. Then play the videotape as a special class activity. Excellent tapes are available for such suitable operas as Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Challenge the students by watching an opera in a foreign language (after they've read the synopsis) and guessing what the characters are saying. Often, the music gives obvious clues, making the action easy to follow.

Divide the students into groups and have them list at least three things that they learned. Have them list questions that they have regarding the performance.

Ask the following review and discussion questions:

When you think of opera, what do you think of first? Why?

Is the subject of this opera relevant to your life? How?

Is it easy to be an opera singer? Why or why not?

How long has opera been around?

How has opera changed?

If you could see into the future, what will opera be like in one hundred years?

How many people are involved in putting together a production?

What sort of careers are involved with opera production?

Reviewing the Performance:

Ask the students to write the story of the opera as a newspaper article—feature story or editorial. Encourage them to find an effective headline. Then ask them to review the design, the singing and the acting.

Have the students select a song from the opera that moved them—made them angry, happy, or sad. Ask them to describe what it was that struck them. Discuss the impact of other arias in the opera.

Resources for Educators

- Children's Literature
- Recordings and Multi-Media
- Opera Websites for Educators

Children's Literature

- Cross, Milton. *The Complete Stories of the Great Opera*. Doubleday, 1952
- Elliott, Donald. *Lambs' Tales from Great Operas*. Boston: The Harvard Common Press, 1991. ISBN: 0-876-45120-2
- Ganeri, Anita. *The Young Person's Guide to the Opera: [Book and CD set]*. Harcourt, 2001. ISBN: 0-152-16498-7
- Geras, Adele. *The Random House Book of Opera Stories*. New York: Random House, 1997. ISBN: 0-679-99315-0
- Hooper, Caroline R. *Learn to Play Opera Tunes*. Tulsa: EDCP, 1997. ISBN: 0-746-02420-7
- Husain, Shahrukh and Mayhew, James. *The Barefoot Book of Stories from the Opera*. New York: Barefoot Books, 1999. ISBN: 1-90228328-7
- Kobbe, Gustave. *The Complete Opera Book*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1976
- Rosenberg, Jane. *Sing me a Story: The Metropolitan Opera's Book of Opera Stories for Children*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 1996. ISBN: 0-500-27873-3
- Siberell, Anne. *Bravo! Brava! A Night at the Opera: Behind the Scenes with Composers, Cast, and Crew*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0-195-13966-6
- Tatchell, Judy. *Understanding Music*. EDC Publishing, 1990. ISBN: 0746003021
- Law, Karina. *The Truth about Hansel and Gretel*. Picture Window Books, 2004. ISBN: 1404805591 (recommended 2-5th)
- Moerbeek, Kees. *The Diary of Hansel and Gretel*. Simon & Schuster, 2002. ISBN: 0689846029 (recommended for K-3rd)
- Murphy, Louise. *The True Story of Hansel and Gretel: A Novel of War and Survival*. Penguin, 2003. ISBN: 0142003077 (recommended for 6-10th).
- Gruelle, Johnny and Jack Zipes, trans. *The Complete Fairy Tales of the Brothers Grimm All-New Third Edition*. Bantam 2003. ISBN: 0553382160
- Cencetti, Greta. *Wagner*. School Specialty Children's Publishing, 2001. ISBN: 1588454746 (recommended 2-5th)
- Warrack, John Hamilton. *German Opera: From the Beginning to Wagner*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0521235324

Recordings and Multi-Media

- The Children's Group. *The World's Very Best Opera for Kids*. NAXOS. CD: 84341-2. Teachers Guide with CD: 84368-1
- Grolier Electronic Publishing Inc. *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia 1997*. Danbury, CT: Grolier Electronic Publishing Inc., 1996. CD-ROM.
- Harmonic Vision. *Music Ace*. CD-ROM. A series of 24 lessons designed to develop and reinforce fundamental music skills.
- Humperdinck, Hansel und Gretel. RCA, Munich Radio Orchestra (Eichhorn, conductor), 1999.
- Humperdinck, *The Great Recordings of the Century: Hansel und Gretel*. EMI Classics (Karajan, conductor), 1999.
- Humperdinck, Hansel und Gretel. Elektra, (Runnicles, conductor) 1994

Humperdinck, Hansel und Gretel. Decca, (Solti, conductor) 2003
Meriam-Webster Inc. Webster's Family Encyclopedia. Chatsworth, CA: Cambrix Publishing Inc, 1997. CD-ROM.
Microsoft Corp. Encarta 98 Encyclopedia Deluxe Edition. Seattle: Microsoft Corp., 1998. CD-ROM. Provides sound and video clips, plus Internet utilities and search tools.
Subotnick, Morton. Making Music. Voyager CD-ROMS. Children learn the basics of musical composition in a visually and aurally interactive format.
Wagner, Twilight of the Gods: The Essential Wagner Collection. Deutsche Grammophone. (Dorati, Karajan) 1998.
Wagner, Tristan und Isolde. Naxos. (Wagner, conductor) 2000
OperaNET 2005

Opera Websites for Educators

www.operalyra.ca
Opera Lyra Ottawa's Website

www.artsalive.ca
The National Arts Centre resource site for arts education.

www.teachopera.net
Great resource for lesson plans, composer bios and other information on opera.

www.aep-arts.org
Arts Education Partnership Website Support for arts in the classroom

www.operaamerica.org
Opera America Website Find research and COUNTLESS other resources here.

www.operainfo.org
A project of the Metropolitan Opera Guild with synopses, composer bios, photographs, lesson plans, etc.

Thank you

Opera Lyra Ottawa (OLO) sincerely appreciates the time and effort you have invested to attend our performance at the NAC Fourth Stage. We look forward to providing more opportunities such as this to schoolchildren in the National Capital Region. Your feedback will be greatly appreciated so that this outreach program can continue to flourish.

Opera Lyra Ottawa
***Hansel and Gretel* Evaluation**

School Name _____ Teacher/Contact _____

Total number of students viewing production _____ Grade levels _____

Any other special information about your school you would like to share with Opera Lyra Ottawa:

Please take the time to evaluate the following aspects of your participation in the *Hansel and Gretel* production.

Study Guide:

The Study Guide was a tool developed to assist teachers in preparing their students for attending the opera at the NAC.

The Guide was distributed two weeks prior to the production. Was this an appropriate time frame to receive this document? **Yes** **No** If No, what would you recommend as appropriate timing for its distribution. _____

Please rate the usefulness of the information provided in the guide in preparing your students for this production? **Not Useful 1 2 3 4 5 Very Useful**

Did you use the activities? **Yes** **No**

Which of the activities were most useful? _____

What would you recommend to improve the study guide? _____

Do you have available for use in the classroom:

audio CD player **CD-ROM** **DVD-player**

Would you find the Study Guide in CD-ROM format useful? **Yes** **No**

Did you find the CD containing opera excerpts useful? **Yes** **No**

Administration:

What other arts programs will be at your school this year? _____

Would you be interested in working with the Opera Lyra Ottawa on other projects? **Yes** **No**

Did you find the opera staff helpful in planning the event? Yes No

Do you have any suggestions for making the booking process easier? _____

Do you have suggestions for improving the NAC experience? _____

Please comment on the quality of the:

Performers: _____

Venue: _____

Did your students enjoy the experience? Yes No

As a result of this initiative, have your students:

Developed an understanding of basic opera/music terminology? Yes No

Examples: _____

Learned audience etiquette? Yes No

Examples: _____

Expressed an interest in learning more about opera and music? Yes No

Examples: _____

Learned enough about opera to explain it to someone else? Yes No

Examples: _____

Describe how you integrated this performance into your overall curriculum: _____

Do you have any other comments? _____

Would you be interested in receiving additional information on the programs and productions of Opera Lyra Ottawa? Yes No

May we have permission to reproduce your comments in programs and brochures? Yes No

We would greatly appreciate any comments from your students or completed activities to assist in preparing for future shows.

Thank You!

Opera Lyra Ottawa sincerely appreciates the time and effort you have invested to attend this performance and to provide feedback on the experience.

Your comments will help the Opera improve this outreach opportunity for children.