OperaXpress presents

A GUIDE TO

THE

TORTOISE & THE HARE

Written by Nathan Baer & Steve Witting,
Story Adaptation by Yoko Sietsion
Thank you! for participating in Opera Carolina’s Opera Xpress program. Opera is a wonderful teaching tool that integrates every area of learning and curriculum, from history, language, math, and science, to 21st Century learning skills such as innovation, communication, and collaboration. The materials in this teacher’s guide are designed to help you use the 50-minute opera production as a rich classroom resource, and the activities are aligned with Common Core Standards in order to provide meaningful connections between the production and your classroom goals. Every classroom is different, and we encourage you to adapt and edit the lessons to best fit the specific needs of your classroom.

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**KEY VOCABULARY**

FABLE a short story that teaches a lesson, or moral, and uses animals as characters

MORAL the lesson of the story

ADAPTATION a story that takes the plot, main idea, and main characters of the original story and gives them a slightly new twist

BARITONE a male voice that is low

SOPRANO a female voice that is very high

COLORATURA a female voice that can sing very difficult and fancy melody lines

FINALE the closing scene

DUET two singers

ARIA an opera solo

ENSEMBLE a group of singers
**PRE-PERFORMANCE**

**STORY, THEMES, & ADAPTATIONS, OH MY!**

**TEACHER PREPARATION:**
- Print Tortoise & Hare Summary (optional). Summary Worksheet (optional). Listening Worksheet
- Print or obtain hard copy of The Tortoise and the Hare: here is a link to the Library of Congress online version, but there are many versions available - http://read.gov/aesop/025.html
Teachers may also wish to collaborate with the school librarian to obtain hard copy of Aesop’s Fables.
- Cue up song excerpts for listening activity

**INTRODUCTION TO MAIN THEMES OF THE STORY** (5 min)

a. Discuss the following questions as a whole group OR allow small groups of 3 or 4 to discuss, letting one or two groups share their answers between each set of questions:
   - Do you like sports? What is it about sports that you find fun/interesting/exciting?
   - Have you ever heard of an “underdog” in a sporting event? What does it mean to be an underdog?
   - Are there events other than sports that can have an underdog?
   - Do you know any stories of underdogs winning an event?
   - What kinds of things do you think an underdog has to do to win?

**THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE, THE ORIGINAL** (10 min)

a. Read the following passage to introduce the story of The Tortoise and the Hare to the whole group:

*The Tortoise and the Hare is a famous story from a collection of stories called Aesop’s Fables. A fable is a short story that teaches a lesson, or moral, and uses animals as characters.*

b. Read the original fable, the Tortoise and the Hare, as a whole group.

c. Students should work in small groups of 3 or 4 to write the following:

*There are many lessons to learn from this story. What do you think is the most important lesson in the Tortoise and the Hare? In your own words, write a sentence stating the moral of the story.*

Allow one or two of the small groups to share their answer with the whole group.

**THE TORTOISE & THE HARE, OPERA ADAPTATION** (20-30 min)

a. Read the following passage to the whole group to introduce the opera:

The same story can be told in lots of ways. The Tortoise and the Hare is a famous written story in a collection called Aesop’s Fables. The Opera that we are going to see is an adaptation, or retelling, of this story. An adaptation takes the plot, main idea, and main characters of the original story and gives them a slightly new twist.

b. Read the summary of the opera (on the next page) aloud to the students.

c. Discuss the questions in the green box above the summary on the following page.
**Summary**

**THE TORTOISE & THE HARE**

*Printable student copy available on pg. 9*

*If time allows, teachers may want to use the *Plot and Summary Worksheet* (pg. 9), which includes individual and partner work for students.*

- Allow students to discuss the following questions in small groups of 3 or 4. Reflection questions may be best used for individual journal entries, either in class or as homework.
- Is it important to be prepared for things? Why or why not? What kinds of things is it important to prepare for?
  
  **Reflection:** Do you like to prepare for things like the Tortoise or are you more like the Hare? Describe a time that you did or didn’t prepare for something important.

- What does it mean to have good sportsmanship? What kinds of things show bad sportsmanship? Do you think it is important to have good sportsmanship? Why or why not?
  
  **Reflection:** Describe a time that you experienced or witnessed good or bad sportsmanship.

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**At a clearing in the woods,** there is a line marked “Start” and, if you listen closely, you can hear music in the air. But the music isn’t soft like a bird’s or a cricket’s. No, it’s the proud melody of the Hare, telling us that he is the greatest, fastest, most famous hare. As he finishes his song, a Tortoise approaches and shares that she would like to join the track team. Very quickly, the Hare tells her she can’t join the team because she’s a turtle and a track team is only for fast animals.

Our determined Tortoise doesn’t take kindly to being told she can’t join the team just because she is a slow turtle, so she challenges the Hare to a race! If she wins, she gets a spot on the team. The Hare isn’t even worried about his competition and the race is on first thing the next morning.

Later that night, the Tortoise and the Hare are getting ready for bed. The Tortoise is prepared for the race, with her bag packed with snacks, a map, and a compass, and she’s headed to bed for a good night’s sleep. Meanwhile, the Hare thinks about how he has nothing to worry about since he’s racing a turtle, so he has a snack and starts playing video games.

Before they know it, the morning is here and the Hare, who stayed up all night playing games, has overslept! When he finally arrives at the Start Line, he finds the Tortoise there waiting for him. She sees how unprepared he is and offers to postpone the race to another day but the Hare is so sure of himself he even offers her a head start.

The Tortoise takes off and when the Hare finally joins the race, he realizes how sleepy he is. He dozes off while the Tortoise takes the lead. When he finally wakes up, he begins racing, only to catch up to the Tortoise taking a lunch break. With no lunch for himself, the Hare turns away the Tortoise’s offer to share her healthy lunch and then starts to doze off again! She wakes him, and offers to postpone the race until he is feeling better, but he refuses and the race continues, putting the Tortoise in second place. Feeling a little doubtful about her ability to win, the Tortoise knows she must continue the race anyway.

With a good lead on the Tortoise, the Hare comes to a split in the road. He can take the high road or the low road. Without a map and compass like the Tortoise, he is left to guess which way he should go and uses a very scientific method…eeny, meeny, miny, mo...

As the Hare races on, the Tortoise uses her tools to figure out the best patch and begins down the High road. The Hare speeds to a clearing and nears the finish line, so sure he has beaten the Tortoise there. Just about to celebrate that she is nowhere in sight, the Hare sees the Tortoise about to cross the finish line. As he dives for the finish, the Tortoise just beats him over the line. The Tortoise congratulates the Hare on making it to the finish, whether he won or lost, and celebrates by declaring they will make wonderful teammates.
A. **Distribute** the *Listening Worksheet* and review the instructions with the students:

*Music tells the story in opera as much as the lyrics or dialogue. Circle your answers as you listen to each of the following songs. Then answer the questions that follow.*

B. **Play** the following excerpts of the major pieces from the opera to illustrate the ways the music tells something about the characters or events. Teachers should share the notes about each song with the students as they play each song. Give students 30-45 seconds after each excerpt to answer the questions on their worksheet. Teachers may wish to let students share their answers with a partner.

1. **William Tell Overture** – note: this is one of Rossini’s most famous pieces. Ask if any students have heard this piece before, and if so, where they heard it. (Link: [http://bit.ly/WTellOverture](http://bit.ly/WTellOverture))

2. **Largo al Factotum** (Baritone) – note: This is a famous *aria*, or opera solo. This solo is for a *baritone* singer. A baritone is a male singer with a low voice. A *bass* voice is the lowest, deepest voice. (Link: [http://bit.ly/LargoAria](http://bit.ly/LargoAria))

3. **Una voce poco fa** (Soprano) – note: This piece is an *aria*, or opera solo, written for a *soprano* singer. A soprano is a female singer with a very high voice. It is a special kind of soprano part called a *coloratura*, which means that it has very difficult and fancy melody lines. Listen to the way the soprano in this recording sings a lot of notes really quickly. (Link: [http://bit.ly/UnaVoceAria](http://bit.ly/UnaVoceAria))

4. **Di si felice inestro** (ensemble) – note: This piece is for an *ensemble*, or a group of singers. This is the *finale* of the opera, meaning it is from the closing scene. Rossini was known for his grand finales. (Link: [http://bit.ly/FeliceAria](http://bit.ly/FeliceAria))

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**Composer: Gioachino Rossini**

**FEB. 29, 1792 – NOV. 13, 1868**

Rossini was born on Leap Day in the small town of Pesaro, Italy. Like many famous composers, he was born to musicians; his father was a French horn player and his mother an opera singer. When he was 15, Rossini went to music school where he learned to compose music. He composed his first successful piece of music at the age of 18 and his most famous opera, *The Barber of Seville*, was composed when he was only 24 years old!

Rossini wrote his operas very quickly. He wrote 40 operas in less than 20 years! At the age of 37, he wrote his last opera, *William Tell*. During his life, Rossini also wrote music for church, instruments, and voice.

You can always hear a story in Rossini’s music and it is always interesting to listen to, sounding almost cartoon-like. But what do you expect from a man who said “Give me a laundry list and I’ll set it to music,” and “Every kind of music is good, except the boring kind.”
1. ABOUT THE OPERA (10 min)
   a. Relay the following information to the students: *Opera is a drama (play), that is sung! Opera uses many different art forms to tell stories.*
   b. Discuss the following question as a whole group:
      How could each of these art forms be used to help tell the story in an opera?
   c. Distribute the About the Opera worksheet to students and read the following directions:
      *Fill in the boxes below to answer the following question: What are the differences between, a. an opera vs. a play; b. watching a live performance vs. a performance on tv?*
      *Teachers may allow students to work on this worksheet individually or with a partner.*

2. PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS DISCUSSION (5 min)
   a. Discuss the following questions as a whole group:
      • What does being a respectful audience member *look* like?
      • What does being a respectful audience member *sound* like?
      • What does being a respectful audience member *feel* like?
      • How will we know we are being respectful?

3. WHAT TO LISTEN FOR/LOOK FOR IN THE PERFORMANCE (5 min)
   a. Review the following terms from the previous lesson:
      • Aria
      • Duet
      • Baritone
      • Soprano
      • Finale
   b. When you arrive to the performance, be sure to listen to the greeting so that you learn how to participate during the performance!
1. REFLECTIONS ON THE PERFORMANCE

Distribute Writing Reflection Worksheet (pg. 13) and read the following directions to students:

1. In the Opera Xpress performance of The Tortoise & the Hare, the Tortoise shows many positive character traits. Pick one of the character traits below (Responsibility, Courage, Hope, Perseverance, Diligence, Persistence) to write about and answer the following question: How did the Tortoise demonstrate the character trait you chose? Use at least one specific example from the play.

2. What did you learn about opera that you didn’t know before?

2. MATH: MAPS, SCALE & MILES PER HOUR

In the OperaXpress adaptation of The Tortoise and the Hare, the Tortoise uses her map to choose between the high road and the low road.

1. Students create a map showing a high road and a low road. Students may draw this map or create it on the computer, depending on the grade level and resources of the classroom.

2. Students decide on a scale for their drawing (ex. ½ in=1mi) and calculate the distance of the high road and the low road.

3. A hare runs at approximately 37 mph. A tortoise runs at approximately .2 mph. Students calculate how long it would take each animal to run the high road and the low road on their maps.

See corresponding student worksheet, High Road / Low Road (pg. 14)
3. **Science: Tortoise/Hare Research Project**

Aren’t the Tortoise and the Hare really just a turtle and a rabbit? Find out in this research project!

1. Allow students to work as individuals or in pairs. Students choose either a tortoise or a hare to research.

2. Students should use the Internet to research their animal. Teachers may need to support this activity in different ways depending on the grade level of the students.

3. Students present their findings in an interesting way: visually, in song, a skit, etc.

4. **History & Literature Through Fables**

*Aesop’s fables* originated in ancient Greek times. The famous author, Rudyard Kipling also wrote a collection of fables, *Just So Stories*, published in 1902. These stories have been re-told and adapted throughout the years.

1. Assign students (or student groups) different fables from *Aesop’s Fables* and *Just So Stories*. Depending on the age level and ability of the class, teachers may wish to allow students to explore both literary works and select their own fable.

2. Students (or student groups) do a brief presentation of their chosen fable answering the following questions: Which collection is the story from? Who are the main characters? What is a one-sentence summary of the plot? What is the moral of the story?

3. Students individually write their own fable, including the basic elements of a fable (uses animals as main characters, has a moral) OR write an adaptation of the fable they chose. Students may use a familiar moral or create their own moral.

See corresponding student worksheet, *Write Your Own Fable!* (pg. 15)
The Tortoise & The Hare

At a clearing in the woods, there is a line marked “Start” and, if you listen closely, you can hear music in the air. But the music isn’t soft like a bird’s or a cricket’s. No, it’s the proud melody of the Hare, telling us that he is the greatest, fastest, most famous hare. As he finishes his song, a Tortoise approaches and shares that she would like to join the track team. Very quickly, the Hare tells her she can’t join the team because she’s a turtle and a track team is only for fast animals.

Our determined Tortoise doesn’t take kindly to being told she can’t join the team just because she is a slow turtle, so she challenges the Hare to a race! If she wins, she gets a spot on the team. The Hare isn’t even worried about his competition and the race is on first thing the next morning.

Later that night, the Tortoise and the Hare are getting ready for bed. The Tortoise is prepared for the race, with her bag packed with snacks, a map, and a compass, and she’s headed to bed for a good night’s sleep. Meanwhile, the Hare thinks about how he has nothing to worry about since he’s racing a turtle, so he has a snack and starts playing video games.

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The Tortoise takes off and when the Hare finally joins the race, he realizes how sleepy he is. He dozes off while the Tortoise takes the lead. When he finally wakes up, he begins racing, only to catch up to the Tortoise taking a lunch break. With no lunch for himself, the Hare turns away the Tortoise’s offer to share her healthy lunch and then starts to doze off again! She wakes him, and offers to postpone the race until he is feeling better, but he refuses and the race continues, putting the Tortoise in second place. Feeling a little doubtful about her ability to win, the Tortoise knows she must continue the race anyway.

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As the Hare races on, the Tortoise uses her tools to figure out the best patch and begins down the High road. The Hare speeds to a clearing and nears the finish line, so sure he has beaten the Tortoise there. Just about to celebrate that she is nowhere in sight, the Hare sees the Tortoise about to cross the finish line. As he dives for the finish, the Tortoise just beats him over the line. The Tortoise congratulates the Hare on making it to the finish, whether he won or lost, and celebrates by declaring they will make wonderful teammates.

Summary

THE TORTOISE & THE HARE

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Worksheet

Plot & Summary

1. On your own, draw pictures to illustrate the plot of the story.

A. The Hare takes the low road, but the Tortoise uses her compass and decides on the high road.

B. The Hare tries to slide through the finish line, but the Tortoise wins the race.

C. The Hare sings a song about being the greatest, fastest, most famous Hare.

D. The Tortoise eats her healthy lunch while the Hare falls asleep.

E. The Tortoise tells the Hare she wants to join the track team.

F. The Tortoise prepares for the race but the Hare stays up all night playing games.

2. With a partner, fill in the blanks to put the events of the story in order.

1. ____  4. ____
2. ____  5. ____
3. ____  6. ____

3. On your own, write one or two sentences to summarize the story.

_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

Plot: the main events of the story

Summarize: tell the story again using fewer words
Music tells the story in opera as much as the lyrics or dialogue. Circle your answers as you listen to each of the following songs. Then answer the questions that follow.

1. William Tell Overture
   What kind of event does this song make you think of?
   NAP    RACE    TEST    POOL PARTY
   What about the song makes you think of this event?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

2. Largo al Factotum (baritone/bass)
   What kind of character do you think sings this song?
   BOASTFUL    SHY    ANGRY    BORING
   What about the music makes you think so?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

3. Una voce poco fa (soprano)
   The woman in this song is probably:
   YELLING AT HER MOM    SCARED OF SOMETHING    IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE
   What about the music makes you think so?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

4. Di si felice inestro (ensemble)
   This song is the finale, or ending, of the opera. Do you think the opera has a:
   HAPPY ENDING    SAD ENDING
   What about the music makes you think so?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
Worksheet

About the Opera

1. Who are some of the important people in the opera other than the singers? (Here are some hints!)

   This group of people play the music: __________________________

   This person conducts them: _________________________________

   These people are a large group of singers that participate and help tell the story:
   ______________________________________________________________

2. Fill in the boxes below to answer the following question:

   What are the differences between
   a. an opera vs. a play
   b. watching a live performance vs. a performance on tv

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPERA</th>
<th>PLAY</th>
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<th>LIVE PERFORMANCE</th>
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In the Opera Xpress performance of *The Tortoise & The Hare*, the Tortoise shows many positive character traits. Pick one of the character traits below to write about and answer the following question:

- Responsibility
- Perseverance
- Diligence
- Courage
- Hope
- Persistence

1. How did the Tortoise demonstrate the character trait you chose? Use at least one specific example from the opera.

   __________________________________________________________
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1. What did you learn about opera that you did not know before?

   __________________________________________________________
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   __________________________________________________________
In the OperaXpress adaptation of The Tortoise and the Hare, the Tortoise uses her map to choose between the high road and the low road. Follow the directions to see how long it would actually take the Tortoise and the Hare to run a race.

**Directions:**

1. Create a map showing a high road and a low road.

2. Decide on a scale for your drawing (ex. ½ in=1mi) and calculate the distance of the high road and the low road.

3. A hare runs at approximately 37 mph. A tortoise runs at approximately .2 mph. How long it would take each animal to run the high road and the low road on your map?
Remember, a fable is a story that teaches a moral, and usually uses animals as characters.

**MY FABLE:**

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**MY MORAL:**

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## CONNECTIONS
### COMMON CORE STANDARDS

### THROUGHOUT ALL LESSONS
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.7**
  Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.4**
  Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.1**
  Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.2**
  Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

### POST-PERFORMANCE
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.6**
  Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.3**
  Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

### PERFORMANCE DAY
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.6**
  Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.3**
  Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

### MATH – MAPS, SCALE, AND MILES PER HOUR
- **CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP1**
  Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- **CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP2**
  Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
- **CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP4**
  Model with mathematics.

### SCIENCE – TORTOISE/TURTLE AND RABBIT/HARE RESEARCH
Students research tortoises and hares and present their findings.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.2**
  Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.7**
  Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.4**
  Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.5**
  Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

### HISTORY/LITERATURE – AESOP’S FABLES AND JUST SO STORIES
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.9**
  Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.3**
  Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- **CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.4**
  Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.