

Engagement Activities for Mozart's The Magic Flute

1. Musical Mood Creation

Ask students to listen to a short excerpt from *The Magic Flute*. Afterward, have them discuss in pairs how the music made them feel and what emotions or images it conjured. Prompt them to identify specific elements in the music that influenced their feelings.

2. Character Connection

Display brief character descriptions of key figures in *The Magic Flute* (e.g., Tamino, Pamina, Papageno). Have students quickly choose one character they relate to most and share within small groups why they chose that character and what attributes resonate with them.

3. Lyric Interpretation

Provide students with a short excerpt of the opera's lyrics (in English translation). Ask them to summarize the main message of the lyrics in one sentence. Then, invite them to share their summaries and discuss how these messages reflect broader themes in the opera.

4. Symbolism Brainstorm

Introduce a few symbols commonly found in *The Magic Flute* (e.g., light vs. darkness, the serpent). In small groups, have students brainstorm what these symbols might represent in the context of the story and how they relate to personal or societal themes.

5. Musical Elements Gallery Walk

Prepare a few stations with different musical elements related to *The Magic Flute* (e.g., major vs. minor keys, tempo changes). Students will rotate through the stations, listening and discussing how each element contributes to the overall mood and storytelling of the opera.

“Would You Rather” Questions

1. Would you rather attend a live performance of *The Magic Flute* or read a detailed analysis of its themes?

Encourage students to justify their choice based on their interest in experiencing the art versus understanding the concepts.

2. Would you rather have the ability to communicate with animals like Papageno or possess the wisdom of Sarastro?

Students should explain how each option impacts their view of power and knowledge in the opera.

3. Would you rather explore the world of *The Magic Flute* as a character or direct a new production of the opera?

Prompt students to consider the creative aspects of storytelling versus the analytical side of production.

Deep Question

What do you think is the significance of the trials that Tamino and Pamina undergo in *The Magic Flute*, and how do they reflect the journey of personal growth?

This question encourages students to analyze character development and the overarching themes of enlightenment and maturity.

Applied Scenario-Based Question

Imagine you are a modern-day composer tasked with creating a new opera that reflects the themes of *The Magic Flute*. What key themes would you choose to explore, and how would you convey them musically?

Students should apply their understanding of the original opera to a contemporary context, fostering creative thinking.

Thought Experiment

If Mozart had the opportunity to rewrite *The Magic Flute* for a different cultural context, what elements do you think he would change, and how might those changes affect the story's message?

This prompt challenges students to think critically about cultural influence and artistic interpretation in storytelling.

Riddles

1. What has keys but can't open any doors, plays music but isn't alive, and tells stories without words? (Answer: A piano)

2. I am a journey through trials, with light guiding my way. In an opera, I find my love at the end of the day. What am I? (Answer: Tamino's quest)

3. I can fly without wings, sing without voice, and my magic spreads across time. What am I? (Answer: Music)