



We're so glad to share this fun musical story with you and your students! This guide is to help you make the most of your opera experience and connect the story back to your classroom.

Explore the story, the music, and the activities by clicking on the boxes below.

Before your experience

After your experience

Worksheets & Standards

Before your experience

Introduction to main themes of the story

Students may respond to the questions however best suits: via conversation, written response, video submission, etc.

Grades K-2

- Has anyone ever said you couldn't do something you wanted to do? How did it make you feel?
- What is an underdog? Have you ever been an underdog?

Grades 3-5

- Have you ever thought someone couldn't do something and then they did it? What did or didn't make you think they could do it?
- What do you do to feel prepared for a big event, contest, or test? Do you think everyone else prepares the same way? Why or why not?

Summarizing Activity: Create Your Own Comic Strip

Our *Activate with the Arts* approach enhances student engagement and learning through arts-based skills. *Activate with the Arts* activities are not additions to the lessons, but alternate strategies for teaching the lessons.

Objective: Students work with a text that summarizes the plot of the opera to prepare them for enjoying the live or video production of the musical story. Depending on their reading level, *Activate with the Arts* additions are suggested below.

Emerging readers: Students listen to the audio reading of the summary. Students use available toys or drawings as “puppets” to represent each of the characters in a video-recorded or acted out response. ([Audio reading available here](#))

Readers: Students listen to audio and read the captions for the storyboard then draw stick figures in a 5-box comic strip to represent the captions. (Worksheet on pg. 8) ([Audio here](#))

Confident readers: Students read the text independently, match the correct captions to 5 boxes, and draw stick figures to represent each caption. (Worksheet on pg. 9)

Challenge: Students read the text independently, write their own captions to summarize each box, and draw stick figures to represent each caption. (Worksheet on pg. 10)

Summary available on the next page.

A printable summary for your students is available on page 7.

Explore the story

Listen to the summary [here](#)

Characters

Tortoise A slow and steady animal who believes in herself (soprano, or the highest female voice)

Hare A very fast animal who thinks very highly of himself (baritone, or middle male voice)

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 that wins every race he runs with the track team. 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.

COMIC BOX 1: Tortoise wants to join Hare’s track team so they agree to race.

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.

COMIC BOX 2: Tortoise prepares for the race, but Hare stays up all night 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.

COMIC BOX 3: Hare is late to the race, but he still offers Tortoise 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.

COMIC BOX 4: Tortoise eats her healthy lunch while Hare stops for a nap.

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 path 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.

COMIC BOX 5: Hare takes the low road and Tortoise uses her compass and map to take the high road to win the race.

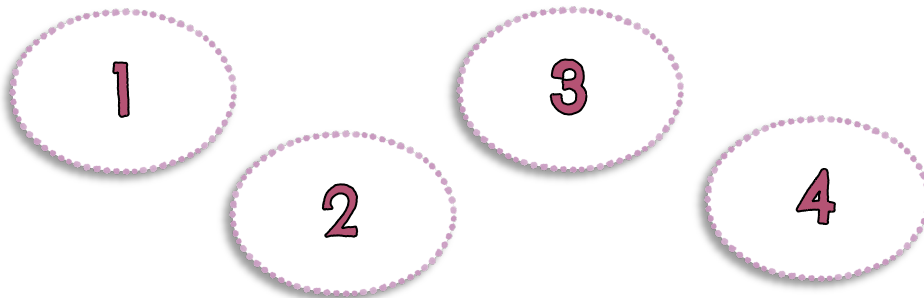
Explore The Music

Listening Activity: Activate with the Arts - MOVE!

Teachers share excerpts of the music with students to familiarize them with the music they will hear. This activity is fun and highly engaging for students and will help them to understand how music helps tell the story.

1. Share with students: *Music tells the story in opera as much as the lyrics or dialogue. We will listen to a few short pieces of music from the musical story to see what we can learn about the story.*
2. While listening to each excerpt, encourage students to move to the music.
Note: these are excerpts from the source music, The Barber of Seville, so the music will be in Italian. Students should listen and move based on the way the music makes them feel, rather than the words.

Click each number to hear an excerpt from the music!



After each excerpt, ask students:

- Why did you choose to move the way you did?
- What kind of feelings did the music make you feel?
- Which character do you think the music represents?
- What part of the story do you think the music represents? (Which location or animals?)

A worksheet for this activity is available on page 11.

The Creators

Composer:
Gioachino Rossini
(1792-1868)



Italian composer Gioachino Rossini wrote the original music *The Tortoise & The Hare* is set to: an opera called *The Barber of Seville*. Rossini started composing (writing music) when he was 12 years old! During his life, he wrote 39 operas, and many pieces of music for small orchestra groups, piano, church, and more.

Lyrics & Story:
**Nathan Baer, Steve Witting,
& Yoko Moriya-Stetson**

The story your students will experience has been adapted from Rossini's original work by three talented people who live right here in the U.S.: Nathan Baer, Steve Witting, and Yoko Moriya-Stetson. While Nathan is an opera singer (bass), Steve is an actor, director, and dramaturg and Yoko has a background in 3D art. These three worked together to help Rossini's music - and character traits of *The Barber of Seville's* original characters- help tell this classic Aesop fable in a fresh and fun new way.



Just Before Your Performance

Review the following information before your performance of *The Tortoise and The Hare* to help students have a successful experience.

Relay the following information to the students:

Opera is a play that is sung! Opera uses many different art forms to tell stories.

Ask: How could each of these art forms be used to help tell the story in an opera?

Music (*hint: think about when you watch a movie how the music lets you know what's coming - loud, quiet, sad, happy, suspenseful, etc.*)

Lyrics

Dialogue

Costumes (*hint: who do costumes help tell us about?*)

Sets (*hint: what do background images tell us?*)



Review the opera vocabulary:

Opera	a play that is sung
Soprano	a high female voice
Mezzo soprano	a female voice in the middle range
Baritone	a low male voice
Tenor	a high male voice
Aria	an opera solo
Solo	a song sung alone
Duet	two singers

Ask the following questions:

Which voice types (soprano, mezzo soprano, tenor, baritone) do you think will play each character? Why?

What are the differences between an opera vs. a play? Watching a performance with other people (live) vs. on your screen?

How can you enjoy seeing *The Tortoise and The Hare* with your class? (*What might distract you or your classmates and how can you avoid it?*)

After Your Performance

ACTIVITY 1: REFLECT

(Responses can be oral, written, video, or another creative way!)

1. What did you learn about opera that you didn't know before?
2. Why did the Tortoise and the Hare race? Why do you think Hare lost the race? Why do you think Tortoise won the race?
3. If you were the Hare, how would you prepare for the race?

ACTIVITY 2: RESPOND

(Group discussion or individual response)

1. If you didn't have time before your performance, revisit the Explore the Music lesson on page 4 and/or explore the next option.
2. Mapping out Success: have students work together or individually to create a map to success. This activity can be completed in 3 ways.
 1. Have students draw their own map, including a start line and a finish line, that shows the steps the Hare could have taken to be successful in the race.
 2. Have students draw their own map, including a start line and a finish line, that shows how they can be successful in the race or another big event coming up (such as a test, event, or reaching a big goal).

ACTIVITY 3: CREATE - Aesop Remix! Create Your Own Fable

(Individual or Group work)

1. Explore with students that *The Tortoise & The Hare* is a famous fable and that fables are stories that use animals to tell the story and help us learn a specific lesson.
2. Review the lesson(s) learned in *The Tortoise & The Hare*.
3. In groups or individually, have students create their own fable!
 - A. Student should decide what the lesson of the story will be.
 - B. Students can use the same characters or go with new ones, but the characters must be animals.
 - C. Students should decide how their character will teach us their lesson and what traits the characters will have.
 - D. Students will either write, act, or draw (think comic book style) their new fable.

The Tortoise & The Hare Summary

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 that wins every race he runs with the track team. 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.

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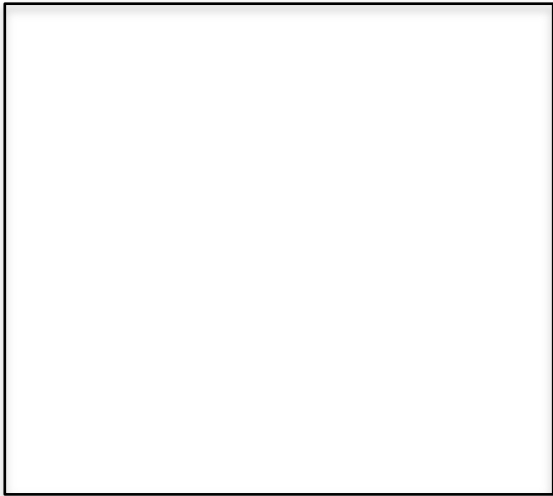
Before they know it, the morning is here and the Hare, who stayed up all night playing games, has overslept! When he finally arrives at the Start Line, he finds the Tortoise there waiting for him. She sees how unprepared he is and offers to postpone the race to another day but the Hare is so sure of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

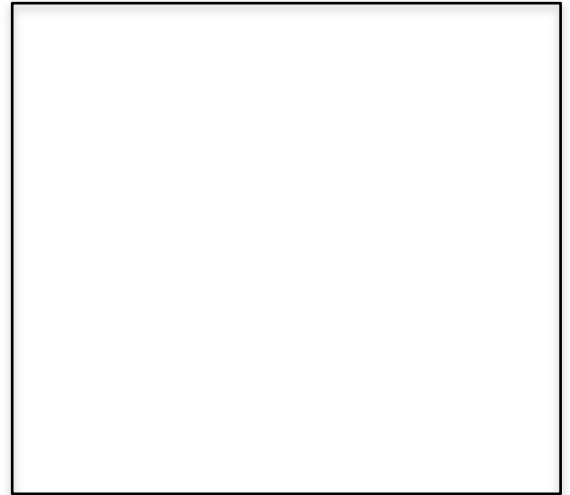
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Create Your Own Comic Strip (Readers)

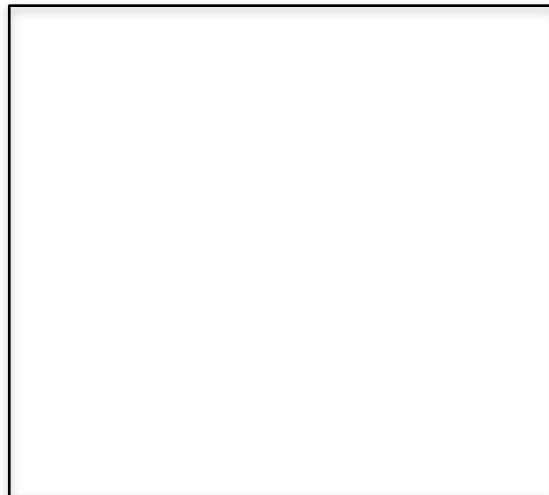
Listen to the audio summary. Retell the story by reading the captions for each box and drawing stick figures to represent the actions in the captions.



Tortoise wants to join Hare's track team so they agree to race.



Tortoise prepares for the race, but Hare stays up all night playing video games.



Hare is late to the race, but he still offers Tortoise a head start.



Tortoise eats her healthy lunch while Hare stops for a nap.



Hare takes the low road and Tortoise uses her compass and map to take the high road to win the race.

Create Your Own Comic Strip (Confident Readers)

Retell the story by reading the captions and labeling them on the blank line in the correct box. Then draw stick figures to represent the actions in the captions.

- A. Tortoise eats her healthy lunch while Hare stops for a nap.
- B. Tortoise wants to join Hare's track team so they agree to race.
- C. Hare takes the low road and Tortoise uses her compass and map to take the high road to win the race.
- D. Hare is late to the race, but he still offers Tortoise a head start.
- E. Tortoise prepares for the race, but Hare stays up all night playing video games.

1. _____

2. _____

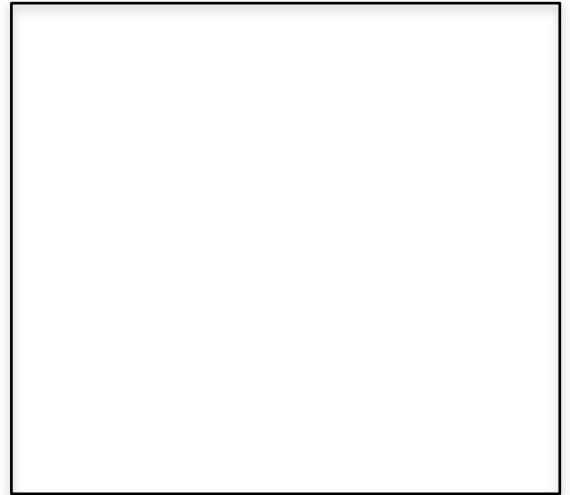
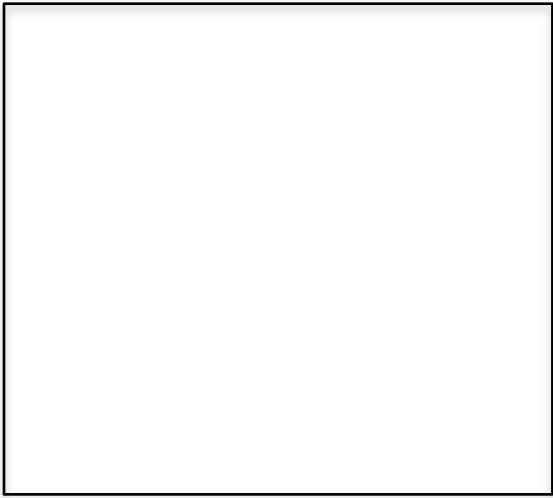
3. _____

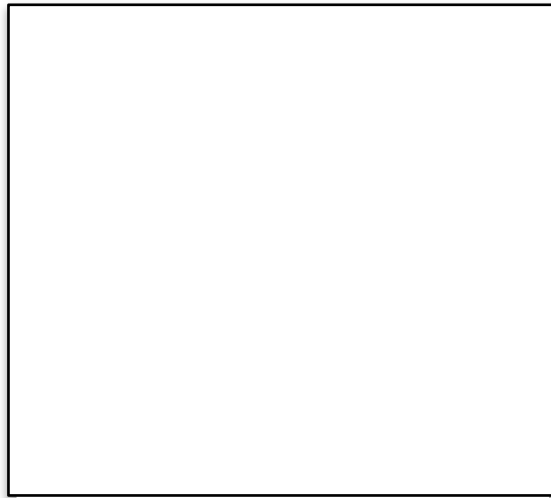
4. _____

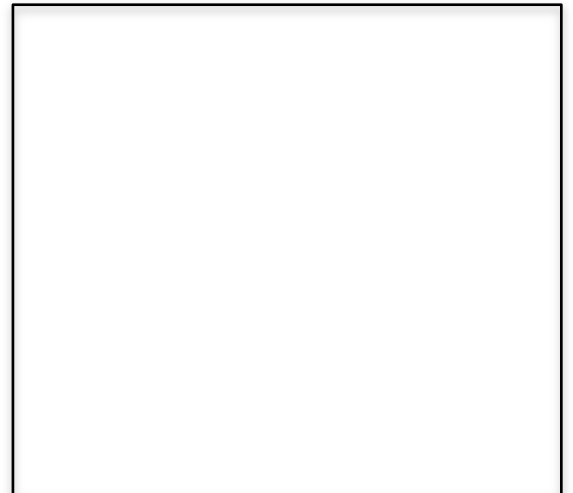
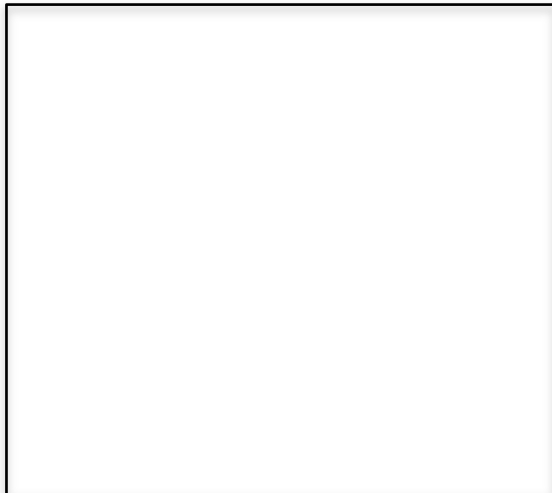
5. _____

Create Your Own Comic Strip (Challenge)

Read the story's summary. Retell the story by writing captions for each box's actions and drawing stick figures to represent the captions.







Listening Worksheet

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

Song #1: This music makes you think that the characters in this scene are probably:

taking a nap

racing

doing homework

Song #2: This music makes you think that the person singing this song is probably:

very shy

sleepy

conceited

Song #3: This music makes you think the character is:

confident

sad

angry

Song #4: This sounds like music for doing something:

boring

competitive

scary

Curriculum Standards

The following anchor standards provide a basis for all of our Learning Guide activities:

CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSA.ELA-LITERACY.W.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences

The activities in this guide connect to the following Standards:

Common Core Anchor Standards

CCR Anchor Standard RL.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCR Anchor Standard W.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCR Anchor Standard W.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCR Anchor Standard SL.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.

CCR Anchor Standard SL.4

Present information, finding, 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.

ISBE SEL Standards

Since NC and SC do not yet have SEL Standards, we have used Illinois State Board of Education's standards.

1A.2a. Name the emotions felt by characters in stories.

1A.1b. Describe how various situations make you feel.

1A.4c. Depict a range of emotions (e.g., draw a picture, participate in a role play)

1B.1e. Describe a time and situation you needed help.

2A.2a. Recognize that others may feel differently from you about the same situation.

2A.3e. Analyze why literary characters felt as they did.