

TOLEDO OPERA ON WHEELS



**Audience
Guide**

**John Davies' retelling of
the classic fairytale using
the music of Wolfgang
Amadeus Mozart**

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Overview

In John Davies's adaptation, *The Three Little Pigs*, siblings, Don Giovanni, Cherubino, and Despina, plan how they will build their new homes. While Don Giovanni and Cherobino decide on straw and sticks, Despina decides to research "huff-proof, puff-proof" building methods at the local library. In the meantime, the hungry wolf, Wolfgang Bigbad, blows down the homes of Despina's brother and sister. Will Despina's analysis of construction materials save their "bacon"? Is knowledge more powerful than a wolf's appetite? Find out the answers to these questions in this delightful retelling of the classic folk tale based on the scenes and music from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's operas.

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What is Opera?

Before the performance, ask your students for their ideas about what an opera is. Write **WHAT IS OPERA** on the board and list the students' answers. After your students see the performance, ask the same question to see if their answers change.

The word **opera** is the plural form of the Latin word **opus** (which translates quite literally as **work**). Today we use the word **opera** to refer to a theatrically based musical art form in which the drama is sung (without microphones!), rather than spoken, and is accompanied by a full symphony orchestra.

Opera was born out of the belief that drama can be better expressed by music and text than by text alone. One of the unique things about opera is how it combines so many different art forms (music, drama, and visual arts) to create an artistic spectacle. Of course, the use of many art forms means that there are many people involved in the creation and production of an opera. These may include:

Composer: Writes the music

Librettist: Chooses a story, writes or adapts the words

Conductor: Leads the musicians and singers

Director: Blocks or stages the entire production

Principal Singers: Have the leading and supporting roles

Chorus: Sings as a group

Supernumeraries: Act but do not sing

Repetiteur: Accompanies singers during rehearsal, plays the orchestral score on piano

Costume Designer: Designs the costumes for each character

Wardrobe/Costume Staff: Fit, clean, & repair costumes; help singers put on costumes

Wig Staff: Make and fit wigs to the principal singers, chorus, and supernumeraries

Make-up Staff: Apply make-up for principal singers, assist chorus with make-up

Set Designer: Designs the scenery for each scene

Lighting Designer: Designs lighting effects

Prop Builders: Build/buy all the set pieces that are not structural

Stage Manager: "Calls the show" -- cues scenery changes, lighting, and singers so that everything happens at the right time

Stagehands: Move scenery; run lighting & sound cues

Front of House Staff: Work in the performance venue: seating patrons.

Artistic Director: Chooses which shows to produce and which artists to hire

Administrative Staff: Find funding; sell tickets; hire artists; take care of the business side of opera

Audience: Enjoys and appreciates opera from a seat in the hall!

Critic: Writes a critique of performance for newspaper, radio, or TV

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Characters and Synopsis

Characters

Despina, a little girl pig who loves the library - mezzo soprano

Cherubino, Despina's older brother - soprano

Don Giovanni, Despina's younger brother - tenor

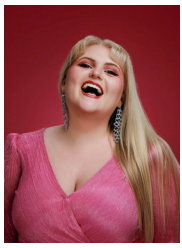
Wolfgang Bigbad, The Big Bad Wolf, himself - baritone

Synopsis

The Three Little Pigs is a one-act opera adapted by John Davies from the traditional fairy tale featuring music by Wolfgang Amadeus. Mozart. The story begins with three little pigs at their mother's house. Despina, a little girl pig who loves going to the library, is reading a book. Her brothers, Cherubino and Don Giovanni, have not yet learned how useful the library can be. But they are about to find out, for Wolfgang Bigbad, the Big Bad Wolf, is on his way. Despina explains that it is time for them to build their own houses, and immediately her two brothers begin to argue about the choice of building materials. Cherubino claims that straw is the best; however, Don Giovanni is sure that sticks would be better. They turn to Despina to settle the argument, and she tells them that she is going to the library to check out books that will teach her about building houses. The boys laugh as if it is the most ridiculous idea they have ever heard! Despite Cherubino and Don Giovanni's doubts, they follow Despina as she makes her way through the woods to the library, where Wolfgang Bigbad himself is pacing back and forth in front of the building. He hasn't eaten all day and would love to get his paws on a small pig, or better yet, two or three! When he sees the three little pigs, he "hides" himself by pretending to be a statue to surprise them. Despina goes directly into the library while the boys play outside. Soon they realize that the "statue" is really Wolfgang Bigbad! Cherubino sees that Don Giovanni is terrified and makes him approach the "statue" to invite him to dinner. The "statue" (Wolfgang) nods his head to accept the invitation. Meanwhile, Despina has found all the books she needs, and the three pigs prepare to build their houses. Don Giovanni has built his house of sticks, which Wolfgang blows down. Cherubino has gone ahead with his plans to build a straw house, but it proves to be even less "huff-proof, puff-proof" than his brother's because Wolfgang blows it down, too! Now that both boys' flimsy homes are gone, they run to the safety of Despina's house, which she has made of bricks. Wolfgang, now very, very hungry, cannot blow it down! He tries every trick he can think of to get into Despina's sturdy home, but it is no use! In the end, after their scary, hair-raising encounter with Wolfgang, Cherubino and Don Giovanni both wholeheartedly agree that Despina's idea of going to the library and reading books is a smart thing to do after all.

Resident Artists 2026-2027

Jenna Grissom, soprano



Described as a “stage animal,” soprano Jenna Grissom began her career at Opera Memphis at the early age of 11. She recently received her Graduate Performance Diploma at Peabody Conservatory under acclaimed soprano Elizabeth Futral and earned her preceding degrees at Louisiana State University. Ms. Grissom received honors from Pittsburgh Festival Opera, the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Classical Singer, and Opera America. At the Sewanee Summer Music Festival, she was the winner of the Jacqueline Avenet Concerto Competition and recently won the Encouragement Award from The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition in the Tennessee and New Orleans Districts. Ms. Grissom made her Carnegie Hall debut in April of 2022 singing the works of renowned composer Mikeila McQueston. Some of her recent engagements include Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*) and Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) with Peabody Opera, as well as Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) and Alice Ford (*Falstaff*) with The Turner-Fischer Center for Opera. She was also the Sandman (*Hansel and Gretel*) with Opéra Louisiane, Micaëla (*Carmen*) with Music on Site Incorporated, and several performances with Opera Baltimore as well as Ohio Light Opera.

Caroline Friend, mezzo soprano



Caroline Friend is an American mezzo-soprano passionate about performing and producing opera for the modern audience. Known for her “good-natured charm” (Cleveland Classical), her stage roles include Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Mercédès (*Carmen*), Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Presendia (*Dark Sisters*), Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Mère Marie (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), and the Spirit in the Opera Film *Dido & Aeneas* in collaboration with Red Point Digital. Ms. Friend performed the role of Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) in the 2024 La Musica Lirica Festival in Italy and at the Estates Theatre in Prague Summer Nights Young Artist Festival 2023. Under the tutelage of acclaimed soprano Dina Kuznetsova, she completed her master’s and bachelor’s degrees in vocal performance at the Cleveland Institute of Music with a minor in music theory. While completing her studies, Ms. Friend often performed in CIM Opera Theatre’s mainstage operas, opera scene programs, and collaborative recitals. An avid recitalist, Ms. Friend won the Diamond Prize and Best Debussy Performance Award in the 2026 Debussy International Music Competition. She is a recipient of the 2025 Boris Goldovsky Prize in Opera for the most outstanding operatic performance and the 2024 Ernest Bloch Artistic Distinction Scholarship. She won 1st Prize of the 2024 American International Music Competition in Group I for Voice and 2nd Prize for the 2023 ACPC Marcella Kochaska Sembrich Vocal Competition, granting a full scholarship to perform Cherubino in 2024.

Jeremy Do, tenor



Tenor Jeremy Do is thrilled to be joining Toledo Opera as a Resident Artist for the 2026/2027 Season where he will be making his mainstage debut as The Messenger (*Aida*). Last year, Mr. Do was a Resident Artist at Shreveport Opera where he made his company debut as Parpignol (*La Bohème*). Mr. Do also covered Rodolfo for this production, and later in the spring, he covered Don Ottavio in Shreveport’s production of *Don Giovanni*. Do recently graduated with a performer’s diploma and master’s in music from the Indiana University Jacobs school of music. At Jacobs, he performed the roles of Peter Quint (*The Turn of the Screw*), Anthony (*Sweeney Todd*), Tybalt (*Roméo et Juliette*), and Peter Van Daan in the world premiere of Shulamit Ran’s *Anne Frank*. He was also featured as the tenor soloist in the Jacobs Oratorio Chorus and Concert Orchestra’s performance of Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*. Mr. Do has also worked as a Vocal Fellow with Spoleto Festival USA where he performed as the tenor soloist in Handel’s *Dixit Dominus* and in the chorus of Spoleto’s production of Samuel Barber’s *Vanessa*.

Timothy Krueger, baritone



The Ohio native baritone will be portraying the King (*Aida*) and reprising his role as Dick Deadeye (*HMS Pinafore*) this spring. Mr. Krueger debuted Bartolo and Antonio (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) at the Brancaloneoni International Music Festival in Piobbico, Italy in 2023. He was a studio artist at Madison Opera performing as Sciarrone (*Tosca*) and Ragotski (*Candide*) during the 2023-2024 season. He was an Apprentice Artist at Sarasota Opera in 2024 and 2025, performing in the chorus for *Carmen*, *Luisa Miller*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 2024, as well as *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, and *Stiffelio* in 2025. Additional roles include Tobit in Jonathan Dove’s *Tobias and the Angel*, Il Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*), Giant in the world premiere of Clarice Assad’s *The Selfish Giant*, Father (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Priest (*Semele*), and Bass in Tom Johnson’s *The Four Note Opera*. Mr. Krueger has also worked as a soloist with the Civic Choir in his hometown of Findlay, Ohio, recently singing Schubert’s *Mass in G Major* and as a recurring soloist at Immanuel Lutheran of Findlay, Ohio. He has been the bass soloist in Handel’s *Messiah* for four consecutive years and has also sung in Beethoven’s *Mass in C* and Fauré’s *Requiem*. Mr. Krueger received his bachelor’s in music education from Bowling Green State University and his master’s in voice performance from Roosevelt University. He attended the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria in 2022, and he is currently studying with Kurt Link in Chicago. Mr. Krueger teaches voice, piano, violin, and trumpet lessons in Chicago.

Charles Ligus, pianist



Charles Ligus is a pianist, composer, arranger, and music director originally from Cleveland. He is a graduate of Bowling Green State University, where he received his Bachelor of Music Education with instrumental specialization. Mr. Ligus currently serves as music director and organist at Grace Lutheran Church in Fremont, Ohio where he regularly rehearses and accompanies a community choir for weekly services. In addition to his work in sacred music, he is an active freelance musician throughout the Toledo region, regularly collaborating with vocalists, instrumentalists, and theatre companies. He has served as music director for several local theatre organizations. An accomplished collaborative pianist, Mr. Ligus received first prize in the Undergraduate Division of the 2024 Marjorie Conrad Art Song Competition alongside soprano Laney Mitchell. During his time at Bowling Green, he performed with several major ensembles including the BGSU Men’s Chorus, Collegiate Chorale, and the Falcon Marching Band. He also served as music director for the BGSU Musical Theatre Students’ 2026 Cabaret, a benefit performance supporting the national organization Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. In the summer of 2025, Ligus completed and recorded his first original musical, *Like You*, in collaboration with lyricist and librettist Tyler Milicic through a generous grant from BGSU’s Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship. The album is available on all major streaming platforms. In addition to his theatrical work, he has composed and arranged music for various Cleveland-based projects.

What is a Fairy Tale?

A fairy tale is a short story that belongs to the folklore genre. Such stories typically feature magical elements of enchantments as well as mythical or fanciful beings. In most cultures, there is no clear line separating myth from folk or fairy tale, though fairy tales may be distinguished from other folk narratives such as legends and explicit moral tales, by including supernatural elements of dragons, dwarves, elves, fairies, giants, gnomes, goblins, monsters, talking animals, trolls, witches and wizards.

In less technical contexts, the term is also used to describe a situation blessed with unusual happiness, as in “fairy-tale ending” or “fairy-tale romance”. Colloquially, the term “fairy tale” or “fairy story” can also mean any far-fetched story or tall tale. And, unlike legends and epics, fairy tales usually do not contain more than superficial references to religion and to actual places, people, and events; they take place “once upon a time” rather than in actual times.

Fairy tales occur both in oral and in literary form. The name “fairy tale” (“*conte de fées*” in French) was first ascribed to them by Madame d’Aulnoy in the late 17th century. Many of today’s fairy tales have evolved from centuries-old stories that have appeared, with variations, in multiple cultures around the world. According to researchers at Durham University such stories may date back thousands of years, some to the Bronze Age. This makes it more extraordinary that fairy tales, and works derived from fairy tales, are still written today.



Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*
1937

The characters and motifs of fairy tales are simple and archetypal: princesses play roles alongside simple village maidens, young sons alongside gallant princes, and fairy godmothers and other magical helpers alongside wicked stepmothers.

Albert Einstein believed in the importance of fairy tales were for children’s intellectual development. He stated: “If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairytales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairytales.”

Fairy tales have been enacted dramatically since the mid-16th century in Europe; records exist of this in the *commedia dell’arte* tradition in Italy, and slightly later in French and English pantomime productions. In the 20th and 21st centuries, film versions of fairy tales are considered one of the most effective ways to convey the stories to the audience. With the use of special effects and animation. The Disney Corporation has had a significant impact on the evolution of the fairy tale. Some of the earliest short silent films from the Disney studio were based on fairy tales, and some were adapted into shorts including a musical comedy version of *The Three Little Pigs!* Disney’s first feature-length film, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, released in 1937, was a ground-breaking film for fairy tales -- exposing a wider audience to this compelling and beautiful genre. This must have made Einstein very happy!

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart 1756 - 1791

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) is arguably the greatest composer the Western World has ever seen. Although he lived to be only 35 years old, Mozart defined and forever changed the world of music. Mozart's many operas, symphonies, masses, concertos, sonatas, etc. have never left the musical canon.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
1756-1791

Mozart was a child prodigy, and throughout most of his childhood, his father, Leopold Mozart, took Mozart around the world to perform for all the great courts of Europe. During this time, it was his keyboard skills that brought the young Mozart acclaim. However, at this young age he was already experimenting with composition. After all, Mozart started composing pieces like *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* at the age of 4, and he wrote his first opera at 9 years old. As Mozart grew up, he became fiercely independent and infamous for doing what he wanted to do, as well as defying his family and patrons.

After leaving his hometown of Salzburg where he was under the patronage of the Cardinal, Mozart settled down in Vienna where he became one of the first freelance composers. At this time, most composers required a court position in order to make ends meet. Mozart, however, defied convention and through his subscription concerts, commissions, teaching jobs, etc., Mozart made a modest living as a musician. Quite the feat! But, life was not easy for the adult Mozart. He was often plagued with debts and was always struggling to achieve the success he wanted. Even though he was independent, he was still subject—like everyone in Austria at this time—to the whims and tastes of Emperor Joseph II. Mozart died in 1791 and was buried in an unmarked grave, which was customary during this period of the Enlightenment. Mozart's best known operas include *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Don Giovanni*—which is the music you will be hearing today!

The Enlightenment 1650 - 1790

Mozart lived during a period called The Enlightenment, an era of European history from about 1650-1790. This was a time when reason began to govern philosophy, society, culture, art, behavior, and governments. The antithesis of restraint and Humanism took precedence over the frivolity and absolute rule of the monarch that was prevalent in the Baroque and Renaissance time periods. The Enlightenment forever changed Western civilization. Due to rational, enlightened thought, many accepted societal norms were challenged and led to the American and French Revolutions—each bringing about very different results. You can hear the Enlightenment in Mozart's music. Notice how each musical phrase is perfectly balanced and the emotion in the music is tempered and subtle (especially compared to the Romantic Era which appeared in music and art around the year 1800). There is incredible clarity in the score. While the music is often complex, it is always understandable and accessible to any listener.

DIVE DEEPER! Learn more about Mozart, The Enlightenment, and Mozart's great opera, *The Magic Flute* by watching this TED ED video, written by opera director, Joshua Borths.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iKd-P4Bcac>

Musical Terms Found in Opera

“Because many of the most influential composers of opera were Italian, we often use Italian words to describe tempo indications, sections within operas, and dynamic expressions. Here are definitions of several musical terms frequently used in operas.”

Allegretto an Italian word that means light, graceful, and moderately fast. It’s not frantic but is more like a skip than a run. Have your students skip around the room in an allegretto fashion.

Allegro an Italian term that means cheerful or lively and is used to indicate a piece should be performed at a relatively fast pace and in a bright and merry manner. Have your students run around the gymnasium with great spirit and big smiles on their faces!

Allegro vivace an Italian term for even faster than allegro! If it’s safe, have your students chase each other around the room in a quick and playful manner!

Andante an Italian word that signifies a flowing walking pace or tempo – not too fast or too slow, but just right! Have your students walk around the classroom with flowing hand gestures to show an andante tempo.

Moderato an Italian word used to describe a moderate or medium tempo, usually stately and majestic. Have your students walk around the room as though they are a king, queen, prince, or princess – head held high and shoulders back!

Overture this word, derived from Latin (apertura – to open) is used to describe an extended instrumental introduction to an opera.

Interlude instrumental “filler” between acts or scenes of an opera.

Finale an Italian term to describe the conclusion of a musical or staged work, usually dramatic and climatic!

Colla voce Italian for “with the voice,” usually found in orchestra or piano parts accompanying singers, especially when the collaborators need to aid the singer through a difficult passage.

Accelerando this Italian term is used to describe a sense of excitement and urgency when the performers gradually increase (accelerate!) the tempo or speed of the piece of music.

Aria one of the most important Italian words used in opera! It simply means “song.” An aria is a self-contained piece of music for solo voice with orchestral or piano accompaniment which conveys the emotions and feelings that the character is experiencing.

Italian words used for dynamic contrasts (loud/soft) within an opera:

Piano (p) soft

Mezzo piano (mp) literally, medium soft

Mezzo forte (mf) medium loud

Forte (f) loud

Fortissimo (ff) Really Loud!!!!

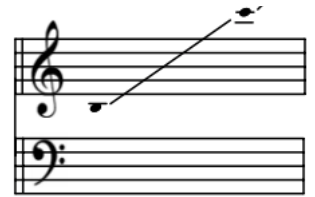
The Operatic Voice

Being an opera singer is hard work! Singers need to be physically strong and have superb technique in order to sustain long phrases (musical thoughts): this means they have excellent control of both the inhalation and exhalation of their breath. Likewise, their voices must maintain a resonance (using the cavities in the face to increase the audibility of the voice, even when singing quietly) in both the head (mouth, sinuses) and chest cavities. All this resonance is necessary to achieve the volume required to be heard above the orchestra that accompanies the singers. Opera singers do not usually use microphones, so they must project their voices throughout a whole theatre using only their muscles and technique! All voices are defined by both the actual voice “type” and the selection of repertoire for which the voice is ideally suited. The range, pitch, and tone of a singer’s voice will determine what kind of role they will play in the opera. Below are a list of the voice types (and ranges) commonly found in operas:

Female Voice Types

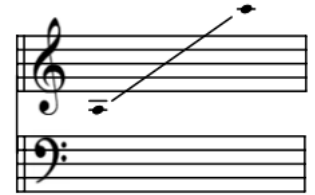
- **Soprano** (“sopra” = “over”)

The highest pitched female voice. Soprano voices vary by sound type: there are coloratura sopranos, who can sing very high notes and rapid passages with ease, dramatic sopranos, whose voices have great power, and lyric sopranos, whose voices have exceptional beauty and can sustain long passages. Composers often (but not always) write the female lead role in an opera for a soprano.



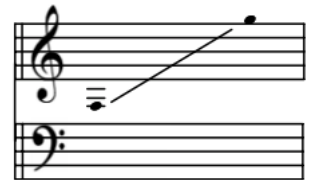
- **Mezzo-Soprano** (“mezzo” = “medium”)

Lower than the soprano and higher than contralto. Usually plays either the character of a young boy (this is called a trouser role) or a complex character with energy and awareness of life, or an evil character. Bizet’s *Carmen* is one of the most famous mezzo roles in opera and is a rare lead role for a mezzo.



- **Contralto** (“contra” = “against” & “alto” = “high”)

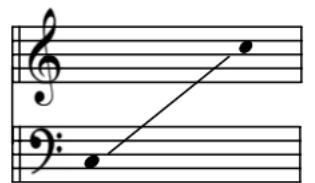
The lowest pitched female voice, these singers have a deep, well rounded sound. Contraltos more rare than sopranos or mezzos, and they are usually given the role of a maid, mother, or grandmother. Olga in Tchaikovsky’s *Eugene Onegin* is one such role.



Male Voice Types

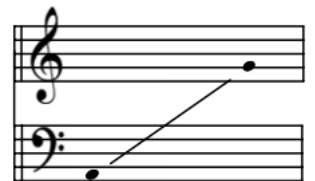
- **Tenor** (“tenere”= “to hold” - central notes of harmony)

The highest sounding male voice: often the leading role. Tenors, like sopranos, can have lyric or dramatic sound quality. Luciano Pavarotti was one of the world’s most famous lyric tenors. Tenors typically play characters that fall in love with sopranos, such as Alfredo in Verdi’s *La Traviata*.



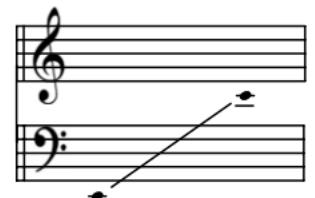
- **Baritone** (from the Greek term for “deep sounding”)

These voices are more mellow-sounding and slightly lower than tenors. The roles sung by baritones are usually father figures or counts and other nobles, and these are often important roles in the story (like Rigoletto in Verdi’s *Rigoletto*).



- **Bass** (“low”)

Basses are the lowest sounding human voices, and they often play roles of wise and older characters in opera, like kings, emperors, or gods. They can also play profoundly evil characters, like Satan in *Mephistopheles* or *Faust*. The basso profundo is the lowest voice in singing, and is commonly heard in Russian opera. One of the most recognizable bass roles in opera is Leporello in W.A. Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*.



Class Activities (Pre-performance)

Prior to viewing *The Three Little Pigs*, share the following information and/or activities with your students to help them engage with the characters, plot, and themes.

Library X Classroom Collaboration:

Project: A Library Visit With the Class

Use your school library to encourage reading—

- Have older students choose a picture book to read or act out to younger students
- Students should find a book that teaches them how to do something—make a recipe, start a garden, build a model plane, etc. They can work individually or as a group to complete the task.
- Find a biography or autobiography to read—create a poster of the person with at least 5 important facts.
- Find and read a book of fables—story with a moral (lesson) like *The Three Little Pigs*; turn the fable into a short play to act out for their class or another class

Values Education:

Procrastination

Procrastination, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is the act of intentionally putting off doing something that should be done.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do people procrastinate?
2. What happens when they do?
3. Predict what characters in *The Three Little Pigs* will be procrastinators. Why did you choose them?

Project (Grades K-6):

As a class, in groups, or individually, write a short poem about what happens when a person procrastinates. The poem can be humorous or serious. Illustrate the poem with original art or computer art. Consider making the poem into a poster that could hang in the classroom as a friendly reminder to stay on task to complete an assignment, task, or project.

Retelling The Three Little Pigs Story:

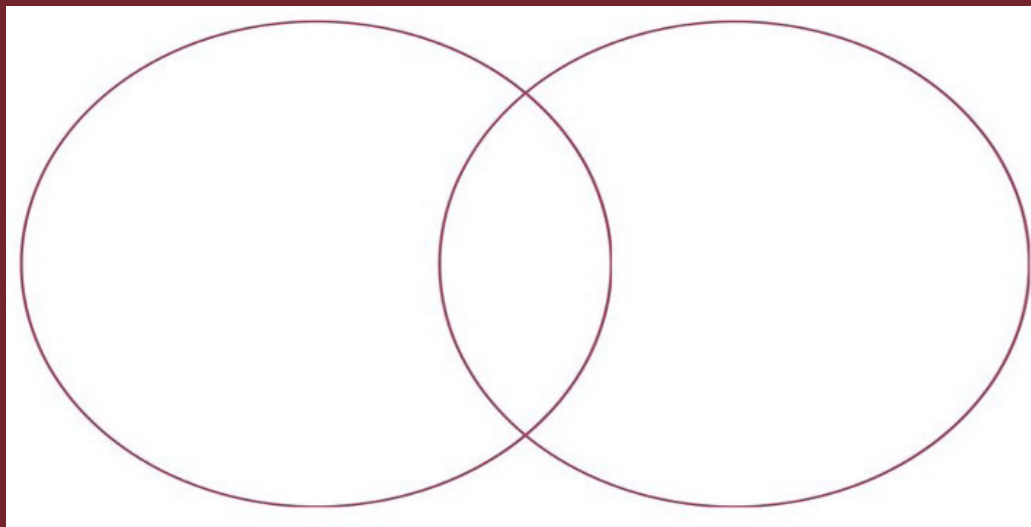
The Three Little Pigs is a fable or fairy tale that has been told for centuries. The story was part of an oral tradition of storytelling that was passed down from generation to generation. The story taught children the important lessons of hard work and preparation. *The Three Little Pigs* was first published in England in the 1840's. The traditional version we know today was written by scholar James Orchard Halliwell and published by Joseph Jacobs in the 1890's. The new version created by John Davies continues the oral storytelling tradition but through the songs of Mozart. While the original lessons remain part of the story, Davies adds the importance of using the library for learning. *The Three Little Pigs* has been updated and retold by many modern authors. Check out the link below from [imaginationsoup.net](https://imaginationsoup.net/three-little-pigs-retellings/) for books that retell this classic story.

<https://imaginationsoup.net/three-little-pigs-retellings/>

Class Activities (Pre-performance)

Activity (Grades K-3):

Have the students read the original story of *The Three Little Pigs*. Then, choose one of the books from the article to read to your class. Work together to analyze the comparisons and contrasts with the Venn Diagram below:



Activity (Grades 4-6):

Choose a favorite fairytale or fable:

- *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*
- *Cinderella*
- *Rumpelstiltskin*
- *Red Riding Hood*
- *Jack and the Beanstalk*
- *The Tortoise and the Hare*
- Choose one of your own

In groups of 3-5, update the story. In the oral tradition, tell the story to the class using exciting delivery and strong vocal variety.

Class Activities (Post-performance)

Library X Classroom Collaboration:

Discussion Questions—

- How does the library help Despina build her house?
- What lessons could Don Giovanni and Cherubino have learned by going to the library?
- Who helps the folks who visit the library?
- How can a library help folks learn?
- What lessons has the library taught you?

Theme/Moral: “When you fear a thing that’s scary, take your questions to the library.”

Project (Grades K-6):

Make a list of questions from the class (some scary, some not) that you could research in your school library. Divide into groups to look up the answers to the questions in the library using books and encyclopedias. Could you find answers to the questions? Who helped you?

Project (Grades K-6):

National Library Week – April 11-17, 2027

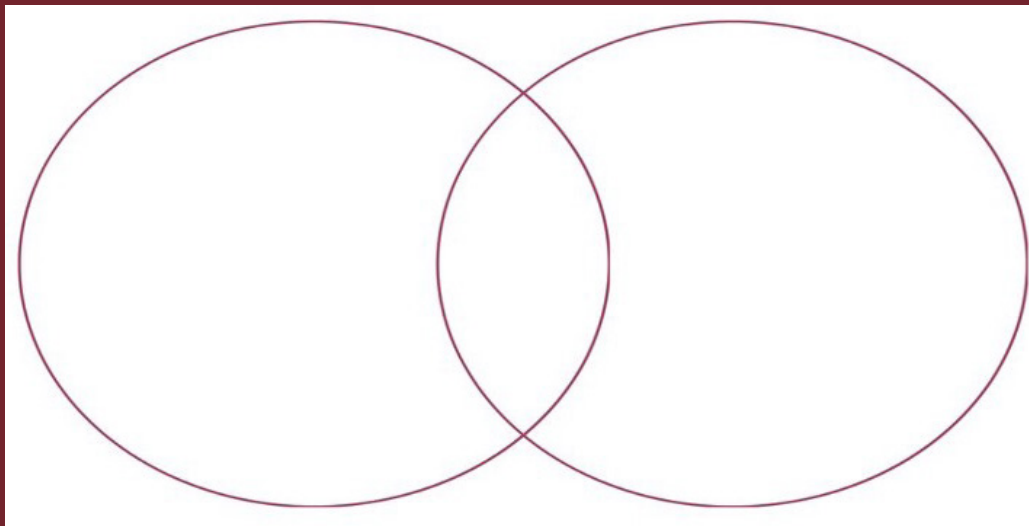
- Create a poster for NLW; the students can create the poster individually, as a group, or as a class. Display the posters around the school, creating a path to the library.
- Collaborate with local library about getting students library cards

Celebrate libraries with <https://www.goodgoodgood.co/articles/library-celebrations>

Work with your school or local library to celebrate one of the “library holidays” from the above dates.

Activity (Grades K-3):

After viewing the opera *The Three Little Pigs*, work together as a class to find the comparisons and contrasts between the original story and the opera using the Venn Diagram below:



Class Activities (Post-performance)

Values Education:

Practical Jokes and Consequences

A practical joke, as defined by Merriam-Webster, “is a prank intended to trick or embarrass someone or cause physical discomfort”; it is often called a prank. Discuss the following questions that pertain to the practical joke motif in *The Three Little Pigs*.

Discussion Questions (K-6):

1. Describe the practical joke that Don Giovanni and Cherubino play on Despina.
2. Describe the practical joke that the Wolf plays on Don Giovanni and Cherubino.
3. Describe the practical joke that Don Giovanni plays on Cherubino. How does that joke affect Don Giovanni?
4. Do any of these jokes go too far? Explain.
5. Is it ever okay to play a practical joke on someone? Explain.
6. Describe other practical jokes that you’ve seen on television and/or in movies.

Activity (Grades K-3):

Wolfgang Big Bad knocks on the doors of the homes of the little pigs. Create your own “knock-knock” joke to share with a classmate. Example:

A: Knock, knock!

B: Who’s there?

A: Tank.

B: Tank who?

A: Tank you for letting us in!



Activity (Grades 4-6):

In groups of 3-5, create a comedy sketch with a practical joke as the central focus. Present your sketch to the class.



Class Activities (Post-performance)

Science Education:

The *Three Little Pigs* STEM Project (K-6):

The following science experiment is by Emma VanStone (<https://www.science-sparks.com/three-little-pig-houses/>). She created this experiment to bring a STEM component to this classic tale. This Three Little Pigs STEM Challenge is a brilliant science experiment for learning about the stability of structures and properties of materials. It's great for early learners, but it can also be extended for older children. You will make six different types of *Three Little Pig* houses loosely based on the story.

You will need

- Sticks
- Straws - plastic and paper
- Marshmallows
- Elastic bands
- Cardboard
- LEGO
- Squeezy bottle or small fan to use as wind
- Sugar cubes

Three Little Pigs STEM Challenge Instructions:

In the classroom, set up five different areas with different materials for the house building and let the children explore each area.

Three Little Pigs Stick House



Talk about the properties of sticks, which make them suitable for house building. The best sticks were quite smooth, without too many bumps and all a similar size.

Three Little Pigs Straw House



Bundle the straws up to make them easier to build with and let the children work out the best way to put them together.

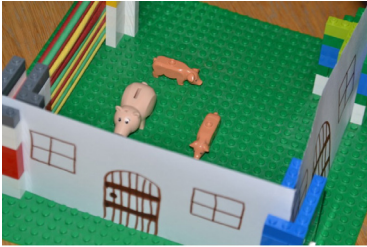
Three Little Pigs Sugar Cube House



This one was the most popular and kept the children occupied for a long time. Once finished, you could extend this task by spraying the house with water or sticking the cubes together with different materials, such as icing sugar or marshmallow fluff, or even just dampening the cubes to see if they stick that way.

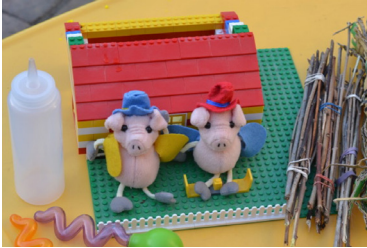
Class Activities (Post-performance)

Three Little Pigs Paper/Cardboard/Straw Walls



Build a frame using LEGO and cut paper and cardboard walls to test, as well as a wall that could be built from straws. The children then used a squeeze bottle to blow “wind” onto the walls and observed what happened.

Three Little Pigs LEGO/Brick House



Build this LEGO house and leave one side of the roof empty so the children can test sticks, ripped cardboard and the LEGO tiles to see which protected against the squeeze bottle wind the most. Place some tissue paper squares inside the house so the effect of the wind is visible to the children.

Three Little Pigs Marshmallow and Straws

The children loved this one, but it did get a bit sticky, and the houses were not very stable. Smaller, harder sweets and cocktail sticks might work better.

Three Little Pigs STEM Challenge Extension Tasks

Ask children to spray each house with water and observe what happens. They can also make predictions too.

Children can shake their test houses to find out how stable they are.

Suggest and test other materials.

Nutrition:



Wolfgang Big Bad - The Hangry Wolf (K-6):

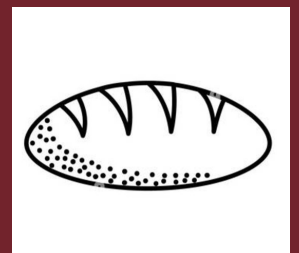
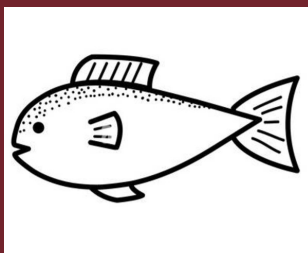
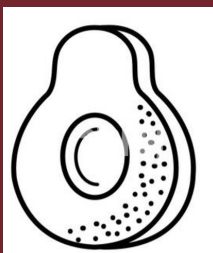
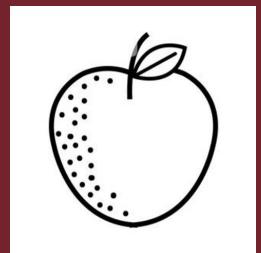
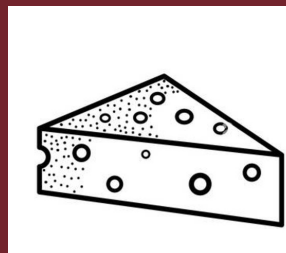
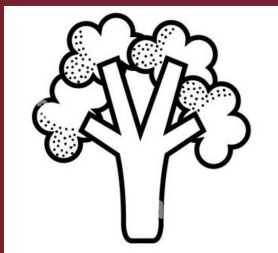
Wolfgang Big Bad is angry because he is hungry; the word for this is hangry. Merriam-Webster defines hangry as “irritable or angry because of hunger.” It is a “blended word” that brings together the words hunger and angry. “Hanger” is a real condition; it occurs when blood sugar levels drop, and the body releases cortisol (a stress hormone) and adrenaline to rebalance the blood sugar levels. Getting too hungry can also cause fatigue, lack of concentration, and mistakes in schoolwork. Below is an article from the Cleveland Clinic website with more insights into this temporary condition.

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/is-being-hangry-really-a-thing-or-just-an-excuse>

Class Activities (Post-performance)

Activity (Grades K-3):

Design a lunchbox for Wolfgang Big Bad. Next, make a healthy lunch for the Big Bad Wolf. Feel free to add other foods that would help Wolfgang to not feel “hangry.”



Class Activities (Post-performance)

Activity (Grades 4-6):

Keep a nutrition diary for 3-5 days. Write down the times when you ate and the specific foods you ate. Answer the questions that follow.

[illegible]

Questions:

1. Did you find yourself eating 3 defined meals or more small meals throughout the day? (Circle your answer)
2. Do you have a definite meal schedule? Explain.
3. How many fruits and vegetables did you eat?_____ Grains?_____ Meat/Protein?_____ Dairy?_____ Sugary foods/drinks?_____ Other?_____
4. Was there a time during the day when you felt “hangry”?_____ If so, what time?_____ How did you manage it?
5. What was your favorite meal?

Class Activities (Post-performance)

For Teachers Only:

The Mozart Effect on Children's Brains



In 1993, studies showed that the Mozart Effect, playing music by Mozart, improved the cognitive function of babies. Many new parents flocked to music stores to purchase *The Magic Flute*, *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, and *The Marriage of Figaro*, etc. to play for their children. CDs were specially curated with Mozart's music to best engage the newborn brain. In the generation since the discovery, the theory has been debunked. However, having children engage directly with music has many benefits at all age levels. Here are two articles that further explain the theory and how the view has changed.

<https://www.classics4kids.org/does-the-mozart-effect-actually-work/>

<https://www.theparentz.com/parenting/effects-of-music-on-child-development>

Video of the Opera, *The Three Little Pigs* by John Davies

John Davies' iteration of *The Three Little Pigs* has been performed by schools and opera companies across the country for a decade. Each version differs based on the genders of the performers, venue(s) of the performance, technical capabilities, the vision of the director, and other variables. The composer may update the plot and lyrics to accommodate the company performing the work and cultural references of the time. The video that is included here is from 2017 and performed by the UMHB Opera Cru at the Cultural Arts Center in Temple, Texas. Because of these modifications, the Toledo Opera's version will differ from the video below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJLMUbybQyk>

The Resurgence of Books

As AI and screentime became the cutting-edge teaching tools in the classroom, something old is new again—books and paper. State legislatures in twenty states, including Ohio, have begun banning cell phone usage in the classroom. College professors are going back to the composition blue book for exams. About 2/3 of American children ages 3-5 are ready for kindergarten because of early literacy skills. Schools in Europe are leading the charge of going back to books. In Finland, many schools are pushing back against technology and returning pencil and paper. Multiple studies have shown that students retain more information gleaned in the classroom by taking handwritten notes versus typing on a computer. Here are two articles that corroborate the “back to books” movement. Feel free to read and share.

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Children-And-Watching-TV-054.aspx

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/books-screens-out-some-finnish-pupils-go-back-paper-after-tech-push-2024-09-10/>





Meet Despina Pig!

Despina Pig
is clever,
confident,
and ALWAYS
has a plan!



She loves opera
and helping
her friends.

From
Mozart's
COSÌ FAN
TUTTE

Draw your
favorite colors
and make
Despina Pig
shine!

Caroline Friend as Despina

★ Meet Cherubino Pig!



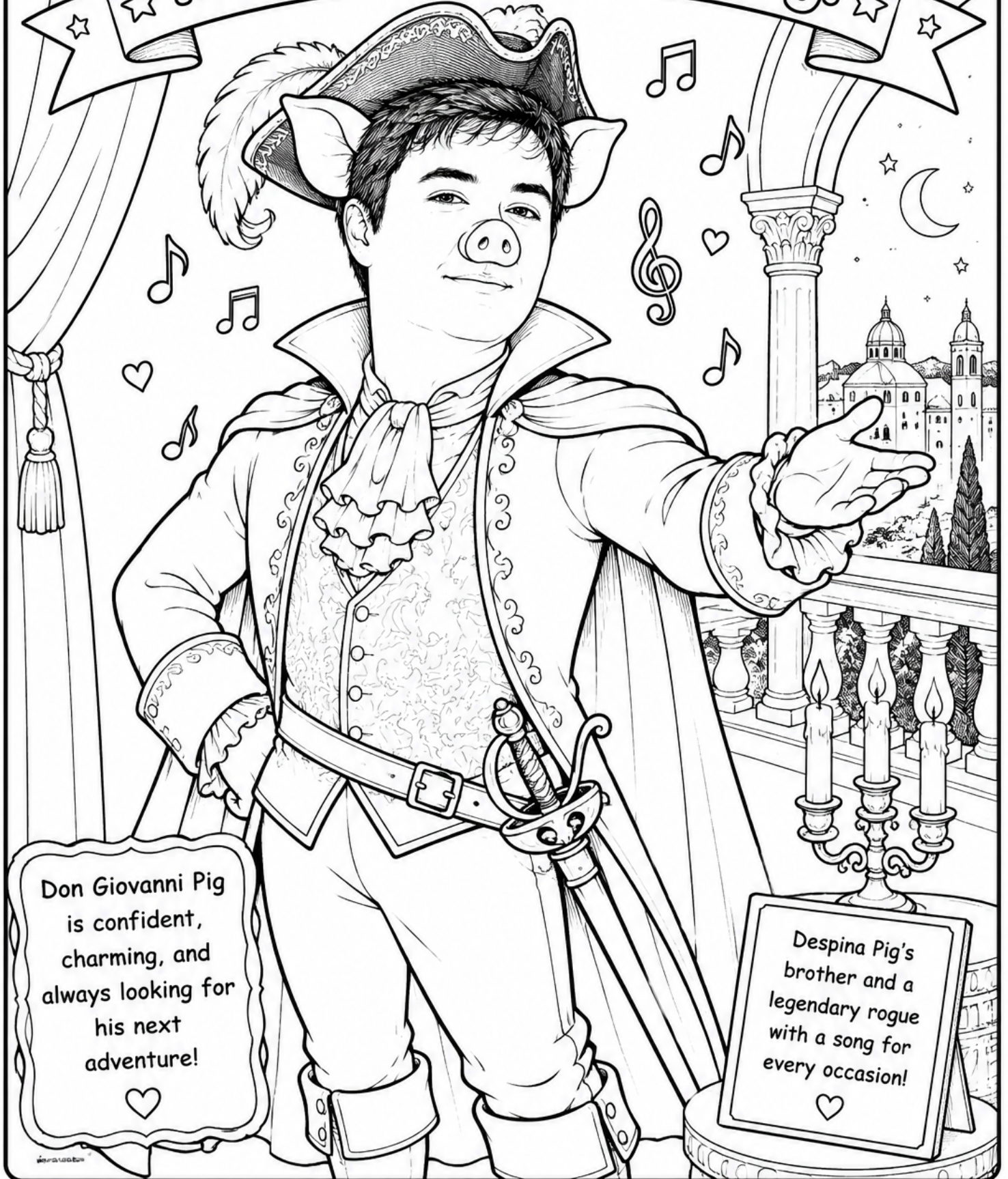
Cherubino Pig
is energetic,
curious, and
always ready
for a new
adventure!



Despina Pig's
brother and
a helper to
Count Almaviva!



★ Meet Don Giovanni Pig! ★



Don Giovanni Pig
is confident,
charming, and
always looking for
his next
adventure!



Despina Pig's
brother and a
legendary rogue
with a song for
every occasion!



