

# Shreveport Opera Xpress (SOX)

presents

# *The Green Team*



## Study Guide

**\*THIS STUDY GUIDE IS SPONSORED BY PRATT INDUSTRIES AND AT&T\***



By Steve Aiken for Shreveport Opera 2009

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Thank you for inviting Shreveport Opera Xpress (*SOX*) to your school. We are delighted to bring this year's production to schools throughout the Ark-La-Tex. We are proud to present this short educational opera about recycling and energy conservation.

The SOX Program is an important part of Shreveport Opera. We are committed to producing outstanding professional operas for children that educate as well as entertain. The objectives of SOX and this study guide are:

- To introduce students to the fundamental components of opera
- To introduce basic music terminology
- To excite children about seeing live performances
- To plant the seed for the audience of the future
- To include a social impact message
- To help all involved understand that opera is also fun!

This Study Guide contains information that I hope you will find useful as you prepare your students to see *The Green Team*.

I urge your school coordinator or principal to please fill out and return the evaluation form. Your positive feedback and improvement suggestions are fundamental parts of ensuring grants and other funding opportunities for future performances.

Should you have any questions or need anything further, please don't hesitate to contact me at [executivedirector@shreveportopera.org](mailto:executivedirector@shreveportopera.org) or by phone at (318) 227-9503.

All the best,

Amanda J. Gouthiere, M.S.  
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# THE GREEN TEAM

## EVALUATION FORM

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

**Demographics** - For Shreveport Opera grant documentation, please give your best estimate for the number of students attending who are:

White \_\_\_\_\_ Black \_\_\_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ Special Needs \_\_\_\_\_

Total Students in Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Levels: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pre-Performance

Did you make use of the materials provided on the Shreveport Opera website? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

If No, please indicate why:

\_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, please rate the quality and suitability of the guide: \_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

### Post-Performance.

How would you rate the quality of the performance? \_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

How would you rate the quality of the overall experience? \_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

Did you find the performers easy to understand? \_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

Comments/Suggestions:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**We welcome and encourage student feedback. This form as well as any student drawings, notes, and/or thank you letters may be mailed to:**

**Please Mail To: Shreveport Opera  
212 Texas Street, Suite 101  
Shreveport, LA 71101**

**Fax to: (318) 227-9518**

# The Story of *The Green Team*

Curbit the Frog has been forced out of her bayou due to an increase of garbage in and around her home. All of her friends have moved away, and she is now on a mission of teaching people how to recycle many items that they have been simply throwing away. She also has some helpful hints about what we can do around the house to help us conserve water and electricity.

When we first see Curbit, she is pulling recyclable items out of the trash bin in a neighbor's yard. Brooke and Walker wander up and think that this frog has lost her mind – what a silly frog she is tossing all of that trash around! They tell her to get out of the trash and go home!

Curbit tries to explain that she is just taking things out of the garbage bin that can really go in the recycle bin. Curbit teaches Brooke and Walker about how glass, paper, cardboard, aluminum, and other items can be used again and again. Brooke and Walker don't quite understand, but after numerous explanations, they finally comprehend the importance of recycling.

Curbit also explains that there are other things we can do to help keep the planet green – like using less electricity and conserving our daily water usage. There are such easy things like using different light bulbs, opening the drapes, and turning off the water when you brush your teeth.

Brooke and Walker join Curbit in pledging to do a better job recycling and conserving water and electricity. They all encourage the kids in the school to take *The Green Team Pledge* to do a better job recycling around their home, school and community. Everyone is happy and *The Green Team* lives on to recycle into the future!



# MUSIC VOCABULARY & PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

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## Musical and Operatic Definitions

### **ALTO** (It.)

The lowest female voice. Also called contralto.

### **ARIA** (It.)

pronounced (AH-ree-ah) - A song for solo voice.

### **BARITONE**

pronounced (BARR-ah-tone) - The middle range male voice, between tenor and bass.

### **BASS**

pronounced (BASE) - Lowest of the male voices.

### **COSTUME**

Clothing a singer wears to portray a character.

### **COMPOSER**

The person who writes the music.

### **DESIGNER**

The person who creates the scenery, costumes and lights.

### **DUET**

pronounced (do-ET) - Music written for two people to sing together, usually to each other.

### **ENSEMBLE**

Two or more singers singing at the same time to express their emotions and tell the story.

### **LIBRETTO** (It.)

pronounced (lih-BRET-oh) - The word literally means "little book." The text or words of an opera.

### **MELODY**

A series of musical tones that make up a tune.

### **MEZZO-SOPRANO** (It.)

pronounced (MEDZ-oh soh-PRANH-oh) - The middle female voice, between soprano and contralto.

### **OPERA**

pronounced (AH-per-ah) - A play that uses singing instead of speaking and is accompanied usually by piano in rehearsals and orchestra in performances.

### **PIANO** (It.)

pronounced (pee-AN-oh) - A musical instrument used to accompany singers in rehearsals when there is no orchestra. The orchestral score is reduced from parts for many instruments to one part for the pianist, which combines all the important music that must be played to give a complete sound for the singers.

**RECITATIVE**

pronounced (ress-it-uh-TEEVE) - A type of music using words sung with the rhythm of natural speech with some melody added. Recitative can come before an aria or stand alone and it gives information or moves the story along.

**REHEARSAL**

The time singers and musicians spend practicing before a performance.

**PROPS**

Objects placed on the stage, excluding scenery. Short for “properties.”

**SCORE**

The book which contains both the music and the text of the opera.

**SET**

The scenery used on the stage to show location for the action.

**SOPRANO (It.)**

pronounced (soh-PRANH-oh) - The highest female voice.

**STAGE DIRECTOR**

The person who decides how the singers will move on stage and how they will act while they are singing their parts.

**TENOR**

pronounced (TEH-nor) - The highest male voice.

**TRIO (It.)**

pronounced (TREE-oh) - Music written for three characters to sing together.

**VIBRATO (It.)**

pronounced (vi-BRAH-toe) - The natural way for a voice or instrument to enlarge its sound through a very rapid but very tiny waver in pitch.

**VOCAL RANGE**

The scope of the human voice from its highest to its lowest sounds. Voices fall into these categories:

**female:** soprano – high  
mezzo-soprano – middle  
alto or contralto – low

**male:** tenor – high  
baritone – middle  
bass – low



# Investigate...the opera!!

## WHAT DOES THE WORD OPERA MEAN?

The meaning of the word "opera" comes from the Latin word "opus" which means a "work." What is a "work?" It is something that a person makes or thinks up. It is a poem or a song or a drawing or a composition or any other creative thing a person makes. The plural of opus is opera. "Opera" means "works" in the Latin language. Today we use the word "opera" to describe one large work of performing art that combines many kinds of performances. Opera = many works that are combined together. In opera there is a symphony orchestra, a dramatic play or comedy, singing and acting, scenery, costumes, special lighting and sometimes dancing.

## WHERE DID OPERA BEGIN?

Opera was created over 400 years ago in Florence, Italy. In 1597 a composer named Jacopo Peri wrote a play that was sung throughout instead of spoken. He did this because he was trying to write a play the way the ancient Greeks did. During this time period educated people were trying to learn all they could about the world of ancient Greece and imitate it. This first opera was about a character in Greek mythology and was called Daphne. The idea of presenting plays that were sung became very popular and more and more composers began to combine music and drama. Love of opera spread all over Europe and eventually the world. Operas have been written in every language and their popularity shows no signs of slowing down.

As in a play, designers must be called in to create the costumes, lights, sets and makeup for an opera production. As the actual performance approaches, the singers have dress rehearsals where they get to wear their new costumes and perform in front of the newly crafted scenery. Rehearsals give the singers an opportunity to practice their music and their acting with each other.

In opera, the composer sometimes writes both the words and the music. However, the person who usually writes the words is the librettist.

## HOW IS THE OPERATIC VOICE DIFFERENT?

Operatic singing is different from popular singing. There is more vibration in an opera singer's voice. This vibration is called vibrato, an Italian word. It helps the singer hold notes for a long time without taking a breath. Proper breathing is very important because the air in the lungs must be let out very slowly in a controlled way. Opera singers must be able to sing very high and very low, in a wide range and sing fast runs, which are many notes in a row, sung very rapidly. They do not use microphones or amplifiers to project their voices. All the power in their voices must come from inside their bodies. It takes years of study and breath control to learn how to do this. The highest singing voice is called soprano and the lowest voice is bass. Opera singers must also be able to sing in different languages because most operas are performed in the language in which they were originally written.

# YOUR SCHOOL'S WASTE REDUCTION & RECYCLING PROGRAM

## Rethink...Reuse...Recycle

### TIPS TO REDUCE BEFORE RECYCLING

Create scrap boxes for class paper.

- Use both sides of the paper. If you can't double side copies, reuse the back side for notes and scrap.
  - Use white boards for quick review exercises.
- Encourage students to use reusable lunch containers.
  - Choose reusable or recycled party supplies.
    - Reuse your decorations.
  - Use a half sheet of paper for reminders.



### TIPS TO IMPROVE THE EXISTING RECYCLING PROGRAM

- Make sure the classroom recycling bin is in a spot that is easy to see and easy to get to.
  - Label the bins with colorful, reused paper that says in big bold letters what goes into the bin.
- Spot check the classrooms, office, and library to make sure that students and staff are using the recycling bins correctly. Check the trash can for recyclables too.
  - Make signs out of reused scraps with fun instructions on what does and does not belong in the recycling bin (i.e. food waste on paper).
    - Ask the custodian what students can do to help improve school recycling.
- Reward the class with the best recycling record. Ask students to use both sides of the paper before recycling.



### TIPS TO ADD MORE RECYCLABLES TO YOUR PROGRAM

Adding new recyclables to your system may reduce the school's garbage bill. To make sure recycling something new is successful, be sure to:

- Create posters and signs, out of reused scraps of course, introducing the new recyclable to other students and asking for their help in recycling it.
  - Make sure all recycling bins are labeled for the new item.
- Check with the custodian to see what you can do to help in collecting/preparing the new item.



# Set Up Your Classroom To Encourage Reuse

**Some of these ideas and projects may be new and some may be familiar. Either way, have fun and be creative with them!**

- Set up a scrap box for single-sided school paper. Students can put in old homework, scratch paper, completed handouts, etc. The paper can be reused for in-class work, doing math problems, or making scrap tablets. Set up a separate scrap box for construction or craft paper to reuse in art projects. Have the students decorate the boxes with reused paper, crayons or markers to make them flashy and encourage their use and reuse!
- Have a contest (weekly or biweekly) for students to reuse a piece of paper for as long as possible.
- If you can purchase your classroom party supplies, choose reusable cups, utensils and plates. If this is too costly, encourage your students to bring in their own party cups, plates and utensils.
  - Use snacks that don't require utensils.
- Reuse your party decorations from year to year or have students make the decorations from reused scraps.
  - Use the toilet roll cardboard for a hamster or gerbil tunnel.
  - Reuse empty milk cartons or pop bottles for planting seeds.
    - Use pop tops and bottle caps for counting activities.
  - Reuse glass jars or soda bottles for terrariums, bugs or rooting plants.
  - Reuse paper bags for book covers. Leftover giftwrap works well too.
    - Reuse plastic tubs for odds 'n ends containers.
  - Have students bring in water bottles for reuse throughout the school year.
    - Reuse newsprint for protection underneath a messy art project.
      - Have a book swap with another classroom.
- If the district is in charge of ordering all supplies, have the class send a letter to encourage them to purchase recycled paper and other supplies!



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