



LESSON 5

Compose an Aria

OVERVIEW

Students explore the form of an aria by using familiar tunes to create original songs.

MATERIALS

- ◆ Chart paper and markers
- ◆ Rubric (5.1)

EMOTIONAL ARIAS

An *aria* is a song which is sung by one singer in an opera, and it is usually reflective. Arias do not move the story forward; they do not contain any action. Rather, they represent moments of reflection, as the character explores their feelings about the situation they are in. Arias, therefore, are usually very emotional.

Ask your students to name songs that talk about emotions.

What songs do they know, and what emotions do they talk about? How do they know what emotion the song is trying to convey – from the lyrics? the melody? the speed? the volume?

5.1 ACTIVITY: CLASSROOM COMPOSERS

As a class, choose a moment in the *Cinderella* story (if you are using this lesson as part of the overall unit, choose the scene you are already working on, or have students work on a song in their groups which have already been established). Choose a character, and decide which emotion they are feeling at that moment. For example, as Cinderella leaves for the ball, she is happy or excited or nervous. Next, decide on a familiar song which is associated with that emotion. Choose a simple song that everyone knows well – it can be a nursery rhyme, like *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*, or *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. An example of a taunting song for the stepsisters might be *Red Rover Red Rover*, or a happy song could be *Happy Birthday*.

Credit: All lessons for the *Cinderella* School Tour Study Guide were developed by former OISE intern, Miriam Greenblatt.

As a class, write new words for the song which talk about the character's emotion.

For example (*Happy Birthday*, re-written for Cinderella's happy departure to the ball):

*I'm go-ing to the ball,
In the great pa-lace hall,
I can't wait to get there,
To da-ance with all!*

ASSESSMENT

Student can be assessed using Rubric 5.1 below.

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

If this lesson is being used as part of the overall unit, the music developed here is used for the final performance in the culminating activity. Be sure to create a song that is appropriate for the script you have already written.



ASHLIE ALERT

Any tips for writing text for music?

Remember the words are not going to be spoken, but sung. This is really important, as some sounds are easier to sing than others. For example, if a singer is to sing a long note, an open vowel, such as an "ah" or "oh" sound, is pretty important.

RUBRIC 5.1

CATEGORY	1. Below Standard	2. Approaching Standard	3. Meets Standard	4. Above Standard
Selection of Song	Demonstrated an emerging understanding of link between music and emotion. Song selected is not very appropriate.	Demonstrates some understanding of link between music and emotion. Song selected is somewhat appropriate.	Demonstrates understanding of link between music and emotion by selecting an appropriate song to re-write.	Demonstrates in depth understanding of link between music and emotion by selecting an appropriate and original song to re-write.
Writing Process	Student devotes little time and effort to the writing process.	Student devotes some time and effort to the writing process but is not very thorough.	Student devotes sufficient time and effort to the writing process (drafting, reviewing, and editing). Works diligently	Devotes a lot of time and effort to the writing process (prewriting, drafting, reviewing, and editing). Shows care and creativity in writing.
Lyrics: Focus	No attempt has been made to relate the lyrics to the chosen emotion and moment.	Some of the lyrics are related to the chosen emotion and moment, but a listener does not learn much about how the character is feeling.	Most of the lyrics are related to the chosen emotion and moment. The listener can learn something about the character's emotions.	All lyrics are related to the chosen emotion and moment and allow the listener an insight into the characters thoughts on the situation.
Creativity in the lyrics	There is little evidence of creativity in the lyrics. Lyrics and music seem disjointed.	The lyrics contain a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they distract from the emotional expression. Lyrics and music are not a perfect fit.	The lyrics contain a few creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the listener's enjoyment. Lyrics and music suit each other well.	The lyrics contain many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the listener's enjoyment. Lyrics and music suit each other nicely.
Use of class time (Time and Effort)	Class time was not used wisely and the student put in no additional effort.	Class time was partially used, but a better effort to concentrate and participate could have been made.	Class time was used wisely. Student concentrated and participated most of the time.	Class time was used wisely. Much time and effort went into writing well thought out lyrics.
Working with others	Rarely listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Often distracts other group members and displays poor team player qualities.	Sometimes listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others, but sometimes is not a good team member.	Usually listens to, shares, with, and supports the efforts of others. Does not cause problems or discomfort in the group.	Always listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others. Constantly encourages others to work well together.