

IT IS THE MOST BELOVED FAIRY TALE OF ALL TIME: A YOUNG WOMAN of unmatched grace, beauty, and goodness overcomes the abuse of her stepfamily, profits from the help of a fairy godmother, wins the heart of a royal suitor, and lives happily ever after. For almost two thousand years, versions of the Cinderella story have spread across the globe, inspiring interpretation by myriad authors, playwrights, musicians, and filmmakers. In the fin-de-siècle opera by Jules Massenet, the virtue of the title character is made more poignant by her sadness—occasionally, even her despair. In addition to incorporating the iconic elements familiar from Charles Perrault’s fairy tale—the carriage formed from a pumpkin, the midnight curfew, and the singular glass slipper—Massenet infuses his opera with comedy, romance, and wistfulness.

This new production by director Laurent Pelly quite literally brings the storybook tale to life. Inspired by an edition of Perrault’s *Cendrillon* as illustrated by Gustave Doré that Pelly read as a child, the production is steeped in the physical, typographical materials of the fairy tale. The set evokes the pages of a book, with black and white text forming its walls, and the shapes of characters and props appearing as large cut-out letters. With its blend of humor and darkness mirroring the tensions of the fairy tale genre itself, as well as its fantastical costumes and sets, the production hauntingly constructs a magical landscape as seen through the eyes of a child.

This guide is intended to help your students appreciate *Cendrillon* as well as introduce them to different versions of the Cinderella story from diverse cultural and historical contexts. By analyzing key differences between the various retellings, students will explore stylistic and structural elements of the narrative and think deeply about what exactly makes the fairy tale so compelling. They will also listen closely to Massenet’s score and consider the relationship between music and characterization. The activities on the following pages are designed to provide context, deepen background knowledge, and enrich the overall experience of this *Live in HD* transmission. This guide will also align with key strands of the Common Core Standards.



DIDONATO



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THE WORK: *CENDRILLON*

An opera in four acts, sung in French

Music by Jules Massenet

Libretto by Henri Cain

Based on the fairy tale
Cendrillon by Charles Perrault

First performed May 24, 1899
at the Opéra-Comique, Paris, France

PRODUCTION

Bertrand de Billy, Conductor

Laurent Pelly, Production

Barbara de Limburg, Set Designer

Laurent Pelly, Costume Designer

Duane Schuler, Lighting Designer

Laura Scozzi, Choreographer

STARRING:

Joyce DiDonato
CENDRILLON (soprano)

Alice Coote
PRINCE CHARMING (soprano)

Kathleen Kim
FAIRY GODMOTHER (soprano)

Stephanie Blythe
MADAME DE LA HALTIÈRE
(mezzo-soprano)

Laurent Naouri
PANDOLFE (bass)

Cendrillon is produced in association with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London; Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona; Théâtre Royal de La Monnaie, Brussels; and Opéra de Lille. Original production by The Santa Fe Opera.

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This guide includes five sections.

- **THE SOURCE, THE STORY, WHO'S WHO IN *CENDRILLON*, AND A TIMELINE**
- **CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:**
Two activities designed to align with and support various Common Core Standard strands used in ELA, History/Social Studies, and Music curricula
- **PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES:**
Two activities to be used during *The Met: Live in HD* transmission, highlighting specific aspects of this production
- **POST-SHOW DISCUSSION:**
A wrap-up activity, integrating the *Live in HD* experience into the students' understanding of the performing arts and the humanities
- **STUDENT RESOURCE PAGES:**
Classroom-ready worksheets supporting the activities in the guide

The activities in this guide will focus on several aspects of *Cendrillon*:

- The opera's source material and its connection to other versions of the Cinderella story
- How stylistic details and characterization affect a story's impact and meaning
- Massenet's musical technique in creating vivid dramatic landscapes
- Creative choices made by the artists of the Metropolitan Opera for this production
- The opera as a unified work of art, involving the efforts of composer, librettist, and Met artists

This guide is intended to cultivate students' interest in *Cendrillon*, whether or not they have any prior acquaintance with opera. It includes activities for students with a wide range of musical backgrounds, and seeks to encourage them to think about opera—and the performing arts as a whole—as a medium of both entertainment and creative expression.

SUMMARY Lucette, called Cendrillon by her stepfamily, wishes to go to the royal ball. Her father is too cowardly to stand up to his mean-spirited new wife and is unable to stop her from treating Lucette like a servant. Forced to stay home while the rest of her family travels to the palace, Lucette falls asleep wishing she could go with them. While she sleeps, her Fairy Godmother appears and transforms her dirty clothes into a beautiful gown. When Lucette awakes, her Fairy Godmother tells her that a pair of magic slippers will prevent her from being recognized by her family. The amazed Lucette leaves for the ball, knowing she must depart by the stroke of midnight. When she arrives, she and Prince Charming immediately fall in love. They spend the evening together and are both devastated when Lucette has to leave suddenly.

Back at home, Lucette realizes she has lost one of her slippers. Her family returns and her father promises they will leave the city and move back to the farm where they were once happy. Lucette, however, doesn't want to burden her father with her own heartbreak. She runs away and begs her Fairy Godmother for help. The Fairy Godmother magically unites Lucette and Prince Charming, and they fall into an enchanted sleep under an oak tree. Lucette later awakens to find that she has been ill and in bed for many days. Her father tells her he found her nearly frozen to death by a stream.



BILL COOPER / COVENT GARDEN

VOICE TYPE

Since the early 19th century, singing voices have usually been classified in six basic types, three male and three female, according to their range:

SOPRANO

the highest-pitched voice, normally possessed only by women and boys

MEZZO-SOPRANO

the female voice whose range lies between the soprano and the contralto (Italian “mezzo” = middle, medium)

CONTRALTO

the lowest female voice, also called an alto

COUNTERTENOR

a male singing voice whose vocal range is equivalent to that of a contralto, mezzo-soprano, or (less frequently) a soprano, usually through use of falsetto

TENOR

the highest naturally occurring voice type in adult males

BARITONE

the male voice lying below the tenor and above the bass

BASS

the lowest male voice

Lucette thinks her encounter with the Prince was just a dream. A few moments later, however, Lucette’s stepmother announces that the Prince has summoned princesses from across the world in an attempt to find the woman he loves—the owner of the lost slipper. Lucette realizes that her memories weren’t a dream, and again asks her Fairy Godmother for help. She is magically transported to the royal palace. Reunited, Lucette and the Prince pledge their love for each other, and the court welcomes her as their future queen.

THE SOURCE: CENDRILLON BY CHARLES PERRAULT With examples stretching back to the first century, the Cinderella tale displays both an ancient origin and a remarkable longevity, with instances of the tale recurring for over two millennia. The details that modern western audiences identify with the story, however, can be credited to the 17th-century French poet and writer Charles Perrault. Perrault’s collection *Stories or Fairy Tales from Times Past or Mother Goose Tales* codified the fairy tale as we now know it: a folk story, told in a simple and unaffected style, often betraying its oral origin, with wondrous or magical elements. Although Massenet and his librettist Henri Cain made a few adjustments to Perrault’s tale (most notably the addition of the scene in the enchanted forest), their opera largely hews to its 17th-century source and credits Perrault’s work explicitly as the basis for the libretto.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I: *Madame de la Haltière’s townhouse.* The servants of the household are complaining about their mistress when Pandolfe, her husband, enters. He agrees that his wife, Madame de la Haltière, is cruel and bad-tempered. He regrets marrying her and worries for his daughter, Lucette (called Cendrillon), who is forced to do household chores and is denied the expensive clothes worn by her stepsisters. Just as he swears to put a stop to their behavior, Pandolfe hears his wife coming and runs out of the room, afraid. Madame de la Haltière enters with her daughters, and they discuss preparations for the royal ball being held that night. Shortly afterward, an army of tailors and hairdressers enter and dress the three women. While the servants laugh at the ridiculous outfits they have chosen, Pandolfe joins his wife and stepdaughters, who are convinced they will win the prince’s affections. After her family has left, Lucette enters alone and thinks longingly of her stepsisters’ attendance at the ball. She tries to convince herself to find enjoyment in her chores and eventually falls asleep, dreaming of the royal celebrations. While Lucette dozes, her Fairy Godmother appears. She summons an army of fairies to transform Lucette’s rags into a beautiful gown. Lucette awakens and is amazed by her transformation. As she climbs into a magical carriage, her Fairy Godmother warns her that she must leave by midnight, when the spell will be broken.



ACT II: *The Royal Palace.* Prince Charming is withdrawn and sad, despite the best efforts of the royal courtiers. Left alone, the Prince longs for someone to love. The King then enters and commands the Prince to attend the evening's ball. He instructs the Prince to choose a daughter of a noble family and marry her. The Prince is introduced to a parade of women who are all desperate to be his bride, including the Haltière sisters. When Lucette arrives at the ball, her beauty and poise stun the crowded room, and the Prince is immediately enthralled. Once they are alone, the Prince expresses his admiration for her. But just as he declares his love, the clock strikes midnight and Lucette is forced to flee.

ACT III: *Madame de la Haltière's townhouse.* A frightened Lucette arrives home, realizing she has lost her slipper. Shortly afterward, her family also returns, complaining about a mysterious woman who offended the Prince at the ball. They claim that after this unknown lady left, the Prince and the royal household mocked her. Lucette is visibly horrified by this false report, and seeing her distress, her father is goaded into finally standing up for her. He kicks his wife and stepdaughters out of the room and promises Lucette that they will leave the city and return to the countryside where they were once happy. Lucette, however, is heartbroken and decides she cannot burden her father with her grief. She runs away.

The Enchanted Forest. When summoned by the Fairy Godmother, the fairies report that Lucette and Prince Charming are both wandering in the darkness, miserable and alone. Although they cannot see one another, each can suddenly hear the other's voice. They beg for the Fairy Godmother's help. The Fairy Godmother appears and demands that the Prince hang his bleeding heart from the oak tree. He does so, and the fairy magically unites the lovers. They fall into an enchanted sleep in each other's arms.

ACT IV: *Lucette's room.* Pandolfe watches his sleeping daughter, remembering how he found her, nearly frozen, next to a stream. When Lucette awakens, she asks about her condition. Pandolfe tells her that, in her semi-conscious state, she was babbling about Prince Charming, an enchanted oak tree, and a glass slipper. Believing it all to have been a dream, a devastated Lucette consoles herself by looking forward to the return of spring. Just then, Madame de la Haltière arrives with the news that the Prince is summoning princesses from across the world in search of the owner of the lost glass slipper. Realizing it wasn't a dream after all, Lucette begs her Fairy Godmother for help.

The Royal Palace. Princesses from across the world arrive at the palace to try on the slipper. The Prince is desperate to find his unknown love. The voice of the Fairy Godmother rings out, and Lucette appears. She has come to return the Prince's heart; he insists she keep it. The crowd acknowledges Lucette as their future queen. Lucette's family arrives, and an astonished Madame de la Haltière loudly expresses her adoration for her stepdaughter. The entire company turns to the audience and celebrates the story's happy conclusion.

A sketch of Cendrillon's costume in Act I by Laurent Pelly



WHO'S WHO IN CENDRILLON

CHARACTER		PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
Cendrillon / Lucette	A young woman from the country; daughter of Pandolfe	son-dree-yonh / loo-SET	soprano	Beautiful and good-natured, Lucette is forced to act as a servant by her jealous stepmother.
Prince Charming (Prince Charmant in French)	Royal prince and heir to the throne	PREHNS shar-MON	soprano	Prince Charming falls in love with Lucette immediately and desperately tries to discover her true identity. The role of the Prince is a "trouser role," a term used in opera for the character of a young man played by a woman.
Madame de la Haltière	Lucette's stepmother and mother of Noémie and Dorothée	mah-DAHM deh la hal-TYAIR	mezzo-soprano	Cruel and vain, Madame de la Haltière spoils her own daughters while forcing Lucette to live as a servant.
Pandolfe	Lucette's father	pan-DOLF	bass	Although he loves his daughter, Pandolfe is incapable of standing up to his domineering wife.
Fairy Godmother (la Fée)	Lucette's godmother, a fairy	la FAY	coloratura soprano	Lucette's magical protector, the Fairy Godmother watches over her goddaughter and Prince Charming, securing their ultimate union.
Noémie and Dorothée	Lucette's stepsisters, the daughters of Madame de la Haltière	no-eh-MEE & dor-oh-TAY	soprano and mezzo-soprano	Slow-witted and vain, these spoiled sisters follow their mother's example, mocking Lucette's ragged appearance.
Le Roi	The King and Prince Charmant's father	le RWAH	baritone	Determined to see his son married, the King insists that the Prince attend the royal ball.

- ca. 850 The Chinese fairy tale *Ye Xian*, in which the main character loses a shoe on her way home from a royal party, is included in a collection of folk tales by a poet of the Tang Dynasty in China. It is one of the earliest recorded precursors of the Cinderella tale.
- 1634 The first extant European version of the Cinderella story, entitled *La Gatta Cenerentola* (The Cinderella Cat), is published in *Il Pentamerone*, a collection of stories by the Italian poet Giambattista Basile.
- 1697 Charles Perrault's *Cendrillon* is published as part of his *Histoires ou contes du temps passé ou Les Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* (Stories or Fairy Tales from Times Past or Tales from Mother Goose). Possibly intended originally for Perrault's own children, these tales preserve such well-known folk tales as *Puss in Boots*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, and *Sleeping Beauty*.
- 1810 The French composer Nicolas Isouard uses Perrault's story as the basis for his opera *Cendrillon*, which premieres at the Paris Opéra-Comique on February 22. Although it is not the first operatic adaptation of the Cinderella fairy tale, it finds immediate success and remains popular for several years.
- 1817 Gioachino Rossini composes *La Cenerentola*, his opera buffa version of the Cinderella story. It departs from several of the most distinctive elements of the fairy tale: There is no fairy godmother, glass slipper, or magic. The opera is popular across the globe within years of its premiere, and since its revival in the 1920s, it has never left the standard repertory.
- 1842 Jules Massenet is born on May 12 in Saint-Étienne, the capital of the département of the Loire, in France. The youngest of 12 children, he begins taking music lessons with his mother, who is a talented pianist and composer.
- 1847 When Massenet and his family move to Paris after his father's business fails, his mother begins giving piano lessons to earn extra income. By the time he is ten years old, Massenet is accepted into the piano class at the prestigious Paris Conservatoire.



Massenet

- 1861 Having achieved awards in his piano studies, Massenet begins composition lessons at the Conservatoire. He helps fund his education by playing timpani in the orchestra for the Théâtre Lyrique, where he is exposed to the works of contemporary French composers such as Gounod and Berlioz.
- 1867 Massenet's comic opera *Le Grand'tante* premieres at Paris's Opéra-Comique. His first opera to be staged, it runs for 17 performances and is well received.
- 1877 Massenet's opera *Le Roi de Lahore* premieres in Paris and is enthusiastically received. A series of commissions for new works follows, and with the recent death of Georges Bizet, Massenet is left as the pre-eminent French stage composer of his generation.
- 1887 Massenet completes *Werther*, his operatic adaptation of Goethe's famous novel. It is rejected by the impresario at the Opéra-Comique, who considers its subject matter too depressing for the stage. The opera will not receive its premiere until 1892 at the Vienna Hofoper. Together with *Manon*, the opera is now one of the composer's most popular works.
- 1894 While in London with his librettist Henri Cain for the premiere of their opera *La Navarraise*, Massenet makes preliminary plans to adapt Charles Perrault's fairy tale *Cendrillon* into an opera. He rents a house in the French countryside and composes the opera over several months, finishing it while staying in Nice.
- 1896 The premiere of *Cendrillon* is delayed in order to accommodate a performance of a newer work, Massenet's *Sapho*.
- 1899 *Cendrillon* premieres at the Opéra-Comique on May 24. Enhanced by a lavish set and the full support of the new director of the Opéra-Comique, the work is an immediate success and is soon performed across the world.
- 1907 Despite gradually worsening health, Massenet continues to compose at an impressive rate, producing five new operas and a number of smaller-scale works in the last five years of his life.
- 1912 Having suffered from cancer for some time, Massenet dies in Paris in August at the age of 70.



A Tale Retold Through Time

English/Language Arts

IN PREPARATION

For this activity, students will need the reproducible resources available at the back of this guide entitled *A Tale Retold Through Time*, as well as the audio selections from *Cendrillon* available online or on the accompanying CD. You will also need a whiteboard or chalkboard, pens, and paper.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

English/Language Arts, Poetry, Creative Writing, World Cultures, History, French Language and Literature

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To think critically about how different cultural contexts shape folk tales
- To consider how characterizations and stylistic nuances affect a narrative arc
- To explore the opportunities and challenges presented when adapting an iconic story
- To incorporate rigorous analysis and observations drawn from close reading

The story of a girl who rises above her lowly circumstances with the help of a very special shoe is not exclusive to the Western canon. Indeed, the story of *Ye Xian* by a poet of the Tang Dynasty in China dating from as early as 850 contains many elements that we now associate with the Cinderella fairy tale: a good-natured daughter who is abused by her step-mother, the magical transformation of her humble clothing, a lost shoe, and a royal suitor who searches his kingdom for the shoe's owner. In this story and in many other adaptations of the Cinderella tale closer to our own time, the author's creative choices determine the overarching affect of the story, as well as the work's participation in the fairy tale genre.

This activity invites students to compare and contrast versions of the classic tale while also investigating what exactly makes this story so enduring. They will:

- analyze structural and stylistic elements of various adaptations of the Cinderella story



Gustave Doré's illustration of the slipper scene for an 1862 edition of Charles Perrault's fairy tales

- read excerpts from the libretto of Massenet’s opera and consider the composer’s intentions
- compare and contrast different versions of the Cinderella character
- create an original version of the Cinderella figure based on their analysis

STEPS

Students will identify and analyze the key elements of the Cinderella story with which they are most familiar. After being introduced to Massenet and Cain’s adaptation, they will consider how shifts in how characters are depicted can shape the overall effect of a story. They will then read and discuss different adaptations of the Cinderella tale before creating their own version of the Cinderella character based on these different versions of the famous story.

STEP 1: Ask students to describe the story of Cinderella as they know it. You can structure this as a loose conversation with students raising hands to contribute different elements of the Cinderella story. You may also use the “Story Circle” theater game, in which students form a circle and take turns contributing one sentence of the story. You may initiate the story by providing the prompt, “Once upon a time, there was a ...” As your class tells the story of Cinderella as they understand it, be sure to write down key elements they mention (e.g., “Fairy Godmother,” “Evil Stepmother,” “pumpkin turning into a carriage,” the “stroke of midnight,” “glass slipper,” etc.). If you wish, you can use the following chart to organize your conversation over the course of the class activity, adding each row as you introduce the various versions of the story.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE CINDERELLA STORY

VERSION OF CINDERELLA	CHARACTERS, OR WHO	PLOT POINTS, OR WHAT HAPPENS	OTHER
Version I’m most familiar with:			
Massenet’s Cendrillon			
Duan Chengshi’s Ye Xian			

STEP 2: Now, ask students to name as many different adaptations of the Cinderella story as they can. Have they seen movie adaptations? Theatrical versions? Different novelized retellings? Some popular versions you might suggest or elicit from students are listed below:

- Disney’s 1950 animated classic
- Disney’s 2015 live adaptation starring Lily James

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CENDRILLON

This activity directly supports the following ELA-Literacy Common Core Strands:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.5

Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.9

Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.6

Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

- The 1957 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, starring Julie Andrews
- The 1997 adaptation of the Rodgers and Hammerstein *Cinderella* musical, featuring Brandy and Whitney Houston
- The 1998 film *Ever After*, starring Drew Barrymore and Angelica Huston
- Gail Carson Levine's 1997 novel *Ella Enchanted*, or the 2004 film of the same name, starring Anne Hathaway
- Gregory Maguire's 1999 novel *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister*

Once students have compiled a list of several different versions of the story, ask them to look for differences and similarities among the versions. As they name these characteristics, write them on the board as well, adding them to the chart if you choose to use it.

STEP 3: Explain to your students that the Cinderella folk tale has been around for many centuries and has appeared in the stories of various cultures from around the world. Introduce them to the name Charles Perrault and briefly explain that he was a 17th-century French writer who published many fairy tales that are familiar to us. His version of Cinderella, which he published in 1697, is the inspiration for most of the versions students will have encountered, and is the direct source material for Jules Massenet's opera *Cendrillon*, written in 1894. Perrault is considered to have created the fairy tale genre as we now understand it.



STEP 4: Once students are familiar with this context, distribute the synopsis found in this guide and read it aloud as a class. (You may find the summary to be more accessible for younger students.) Again, ask students to identify characters and plot elements that are familiar from their prior knowledge of the Cinderella fairy tale, as well as those aspects that are surprising or different.

STEP 5: Now have students turn to the worksheet found in the reproducible handouts at the end of this guide. Have them read the excerpt from Cendrillon's aria "Ah! Que mes sœurs sont heureuses!" ("Oh, how my sisters are happy") aloud before playing the associated audio clip from the opera (**Track 1**). Ask students to pay attention to Massenet's musical characterization of Cinderella and how the music reflects the words of the excerpt. It is not necessary for students to have an in-depth knowledge of music theory; rather, they should respond emotionally to the overall musical tone and gesture. You may guide their discussion with the questions on the following page:



Cinderella: A Brief History

The Cinderella story is one of the most immediately recognizable of all fairy tales. It would be nearly impossible to compile a comprehensive history of the tale, with its precursors going back to the first century BCE, when Greeks living in Egypt told of a girl who attracted a king with her shapely sandal. Chinese storytellers recorded a version sometime during the Tang dynasty (618–908) in which the main character loses a shoe on her way home from a royal party. Other interpretations are told in countries across Asia, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Korea, and Vietnam.

Cinderella seems to have made her way to western Europe during the Renaissance. In an early version, the character of

Zeuzola in Giambattista Basile's *Il Pentamerone*—a collection of fairy tales published in Italy around 1635—is aided by a fairy living in a date tree. In this iteration one can clearly see the roots of the story that is so recognizable to modern western audiences beginning to take shape. Some 60 years later, Charles Perrault, in his *Cendrillon* (1697), added several familiar details, creating the foundations for the now-traditional Cinderella story—the fairy godmother, the pumpkin-turned-carriage, and the story's most iconic feature, the glass slipper. In contrast, the Brothers Grimm's famous German version, which appeared in print in 1812, featured its protagonist Aschenputtel losing a golden

slipper and her salvation coming from doves in a tree.

As Cinderella's popularity continued to grow, adaptations appeared in opera houses across Europe, including Jean-Louis Laruelle's *Cendrillon* (Paris, 1759), Niccolò Piccinni's *La Buona Figliuola Maritata* (Bologna, 1761), Nicolas Isouard's *Cendrillon* (Paris, 1810), and Stefano Pavesi's *Agatina* (Milan, 1814). Some of these versions, like Gioachino Rossini's well-known *La Cenerentola* of 1817, dispense with the fairy tale's magical elements, featuring instead the help of good and wise human beings rather than that of a fairy godmother. Massenet's opera *Cendrillon* dates from the last years of the 19th century; in the 20th, the Cinderella tale inspired

a ballet by Sergei Prokofiev and a musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein, among others. The character also supplied part of the storyline of Stephen Sondheim's musical *Into the Woods*.

Cinderella has appeared in films and cartoons involving everyone from Georges Méliès and Walt Disney to Jerry Lewis and Elmer Fudd, and versions of the character have been played by the likes of Mary Pickford, Julie Andrews, Brandy, Drew Barrymore, Anne Hathaway, Selena Gomez, and Lily James. The Cinderella story has had tremendous resonance for audiences across the world and throughout the centuries. A sweet fantasy of mystery and magic, it is also a classic demonstration of the triumph of virtue.

FUN FACT: Due to scheduling and programming conflicts at the Opéra-Comique in Paris almost four years elapsed after Massenet completed the score before *Cendrillon* was finally performed.

- Based on what you've just read and heard, what might you imagine Cendrillon's body language to be as she sings?
- What is her mood? Is she happy? Sad? Why?
- Does this portrayal match your prior understanding of Cinderella? Why or why not?

For a more kinesthetic learning experience, you may ask a brave student or two to create a living "tableau" (or frozen picture) of the character of Cendrillon based on this discussion. Quickly facilitate a discussion after the exercise. Here are some points you'll want to highlight for your students:

- Massenet's Cendrillon is less optimistic than the classic Disney character.
- She is less content with her workload.
- She is frank about her jealousy of her stepsisters.
- She is resigned to a sad fate, rather than hopeful for her future.



A 1922 illustration by Harry Clarke shows Cinderella, her skirt in patches, helping her stepsisters to get ready for the ball.

OPTIONAL: If time permits, have a student read the text from “A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes,” Cinderella’s first song from Disney’s 1950 movie adaptation. If possible, play a clip of the song, which can be easily found on YouTube and music streaming services such as Spotify. After having students read the text and listen to the clip, lead a discussion in which students compare the two depictions of the Cinderella character. What are the similarities? What are the differences? What does the music tell you about the two protagonists and their outlooks on life?

Before moving on, be sure to emphasize that this is a specific and unique *characterization* of the Cinderella figure. Introduce the idea that along with plot elements that may change, the specific characterization of the protagonist can drastically change the nature of the story. Ask your students the following questions:

- What does it do to the story to have such different take on Cinderella/Cendrillon?
- What does it do to the story to introduce a Cinderella that is not optimistic or happy, but instead deeply sad and still mourning her mother?
- Does this choice tell us something about what the librettist and composer are interested in exploring or communicating? What might that be?

As always, there are no right or wrong answers. The goal is for students to think critically about how a composer or author’s creative choices regarding a character affect the overall story being told.

STEP 6: Now divide the class into several small discussion groups. They will now read the tale of Ye Xian by the Tang poet Duan Chengshi. The text of the story is included in the *A Tale Retold Through Time* reproducible handout found at the end of this guide. Direct students to read this version of the Cinderella tale, discuss the story within their groups, and complete the first section of the reproducible worksheet.

STEP 7: Now, have them either individually or collaboratively create a song, aria, or monologue that introduces the protagonist of an original story, who should be based on one of the versions of Cinderella discussed above, Ye Xian, or another version they are familiar with from popular culture. As students begin to work on their creations, ask them the following questions:

- What is important to them as authors/librettists?
- How can they make their character specific and interesting?
- What do they want this introduction to their protagonist to explore or communicate to their audience/reader?

STEP 8: Finally, ask students to share their work. Invite a selection of students to read their creations aloud to the class. Ask the rest of the class to reflect on what they’ve heard and how these works interpret and depict elements of the Cinderella character.



Laurent Pelly's costume designs for Madame de la Haltière and foreign princesses at the royal ball



FAIRY TALE TROPES

Fairy tales have not only received attention from authors, composers, and movie producers, who have created endless adaptations of the tales, but also literary critics and even psychologists, who have subjected them to analysis. In 1977, the literary critic and scholar Northrop Frye suggested that fairy tales serve as “secular scriptures,” or non-religious texts that deeply influence a society’s sense of morality, understanding of romance, and construction of gender roles.

These studies have resulted in many works that attempt to identify and index these stories from around the globe, classifying folk tales by the various plot elements and motifs they have in common.

The following elements are among the most common tropes of classic fairy tales, and they also appear in *Cinderella*.

The absent or deceased mother.

Many fairy tales feature young women who are, for a variety of reasons, motherless.

The wicked older woman.

Be it controlling stepmother or malicious witch, fairy tales also often include an older female figure who torments the young protagonist out of jealousy.

Marriage as conclusion. Almost all of today’s best-known fairy tales end with a happy marriage.

A supernatural or magical helper.

Many stories feature a magical figure who aids and protects the young protagonist. This character may take the form of a fairy godmother, a deceased ancestor or spirit, a magical animal, or an enchanted tree.

Rags-to-riches. Many fairy tales follow protagonists who have been reduced to lowly circumstances, are held in some sort of captivity, or have been exiled and/or denied their rightful inheritance. The narrative arc of these stories often concludes with the hero/heroine reclaiming or even exceeding the social status and material wealth that was rightfully his or hers.

Next, you may select another volunteer to create a frozen picture, or tableau, based on each classmate’s work. What did they learn about this version of Cinderella from the song, aria, or monologue? How does this Cinderella character feel about her future? What is her current state of mind? Is she optimistic? Angry? Jealous? Finally, how might a performer translate that information into physical gesture?

Reflect on how many versions of the Cinderella story your class was able to create in such a short amount of time. Be sure to discuss the many ways an author can adapt a well-known story. Emphasize that along with the obvious ways to change a story (such as changing the characters, plot points, setting, era, and cultural details), authors can change the ways they portray given characters and their emotional journeys to change the story’s entire meaning and impact.

FOLLOW-UP: In a subsequent class meeting or as homework, you may give students the text from Cendrillon's Act III aria, "Enfin, je suis ici" and analyze it in a similar fashion. Is Massenet's depiction of her state of mind after attending the ball surprising or different from what students expected? What does it do to their understanding of the story? What do they think Massenet and his librettist were trying to make the audience feel or think about?

Have students think about this moment in their own version of the Cinderella story. What would the Cinderella they've just created be feeling or thinking after returning from the ball, festival, or court? How would she or he express it? Ask them to write a monologue or aria for this moment in their specific story. What are they interested in exploring and communicating to the audience/reader? How do the plot elements of the folk tale they're adapting inform their writing?

Music

IN PREPARATION

For this activity, students will need the reproducible resources available at the back of this guide as well as the audio selections from *Cendrillon* available online or on the accompanying CD.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Music, Humanities, and Arts

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To introduce and/or reinforce knowledge of musical terminology
- To listen to musical examples critically and to identify their basic harmonic and melodic shape, as well as their characteristic elements of orchestration
- To analyze various techniques of musical characterization

Music of Magic and Dreams

In his operas, Jules Massenet was a master of expressive orchestration, using the timbres and ranges of his instruments and voices to paint evocative operatic scenes. In *Cendrillon*, Massenet reserves some of his most striking music for the scenes with the Fairy Godmother, in which he deploys all of the artistic forces at his disposal to depict scenes of magic and enchantment. This activity is designed to help students dissect various elements of Massenet's score and explore how orchestration, ornamentation, harmony, and text-setting contribute to the creation of a vibrantly illustrative and dramatic musical work. Students will:

- listen critically to musical examples and identify their disparate components
- learn new musical terminology to describe what they hear
- analyze how Massenet's musical choices create atmosphere and reflect the text

STEPS

Following an introduction to the *Ten Essential Musical Terms* drawn from this activity, *Music of Magic and Dreams* is designed in two parts, with each part drawing on a different musical number from *Cendrillon*. The first part will ease students into labeling and categorizing what they hear. In the following section, they will analyze the musical materials of an excerpt in more depth, describing the musical elements moment-by-moment in the Fairy Godmother's scene "Ah! Fugitive chimères."

STEP 1: Distribute copies of the *Ten Essential Musical Terms* sidebar and have your students review it as a pre-lesson assignment. Alternatively, you may prefer to discuss it at the beginning of class, using the audio clips listed below or demonstrating the concepts with your own instrument or voice. Students will be using these terms, among other musical vocabulary words that they already know, to describe the musical excerpts to follow.

TRACK	MUSICAL TERM
2	Arpeggio
3	Celesta
4	Chromaticism
5	Coloratura
6	Harmonics
7	Melisma
8	Mute
9	Staccato
10	Tessitura (the audio example demonstrates a very high soprano tessitura)
11	Trill

STEP 2: Now distribute the *Music of Magic and Dreams* reproducible handout found at the back of this guide. Begin the discussion by examining the scene that introduces the Fairy Godmother, first by reading aloud the text and translation provided on the handout. Next, proceed to listening to the scene in full, provided on **Track 15**, while following along to the text.

This scene, in which the Fairy Godmother first appears, marks a turning point in the opera's action. Thus far, the characters and situations have all reflected real life. But with the arrival of the Fairy Godmother, the opera turns to a different, magical realm, with a corresponding shift in the music.

The first page of the handout includes charts that correspond to three excerpts from this scene. The charts will aid students in identifying the musical techniques that Massenet uses to evoke magical characters and situations. Play **Tracks 12–14** individually, giving students time to check off the musical elements they hear.

A completed chart is provided below for your reference. With repeated listening, it will be clear that Massenet employs many of these elements over the course of each excerpt.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CENDRILLON

This activity directly supports the following ELA-Literacy Common Core Strands:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.2

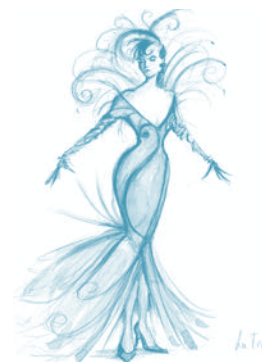
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.7.3

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.



FUN FACT: In his operas, Massenet was unabashed about freely imitating the style of his musical predecessors. His 1889 work *Esclarmonde* is modeled on Wagner, while *La Navarraise* of 1894, a work of operatic verismo (realism), aimed to capture a share of the enormous popularity of Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*. For *Cendrillon*, Massenet took as his model Humperdinck's fairy tale opera *Hänsel und Gretel*.



In 1912, English soprano Maggie Teyte sang *Cendrillon* in New York with a touring opera company.

Track 12: The fairy appears. She assures the sleeping Lucette that she has heard her laments and bids her not to despair. She summons her company of fairies and elves to her service.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly major harmonies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocal arpeggios |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly minor harmonies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High tessitura in the voice |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mixture of major and minor harmonies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trills |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dissonance | <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonics |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chromaticism | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A recitative-like vocal line |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strings | <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth, legato melodies |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodwinds | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choral interjections sung in harmony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brass | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied voice(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Celesta | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rapid tempo changes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harp | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Long, sustained notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocal melismas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fast and rapidly shifting notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Syllabic text setting | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coloratura | |

Track 13: The fairies and elves appear, and the Fairy Godmother commands them to do what she asks. Cendrillon shall attend the royal ball, splendidly dressed by the fairies and admired by all.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly major harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal arpeggios |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly minor harmonies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High tessitura in the voice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of major and minor harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Trills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissonance | <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonics |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chromaticism | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A recitative-like vocal line |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smooth, legato melodies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodwinds | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choral interjections sung in harmony |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brass | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied voice(s) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Celesta | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rapid tempo changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harp | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Long, sustained notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocal melismas | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast and rapidly shifting notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Syllabic text setting | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coloratura | |

Track 14: The Fairy Godmother promises to watch over Cendrillon, and while she dreams of these marvelous visions, the whole company of fairies praises her beauty.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mostly major harmonies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocal arpeggios |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly minor harmonies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> High tessitura in the voice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of major and minor harmonies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissonance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harmonics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chromaticism | <input type="checkbox"/> A recitative-like vocal line |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strings | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Smooth, legato melodies |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodwinds | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choral interjections sung in harmony |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brass | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied voice(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Celesta | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rapid tempo changes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Harp | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Long, sustained notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vocal melismas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fast and rapidly shifting notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Syllabic text setting | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coloratura | |

FUN FACT: Massenet's contemporary and fellow composer Vincent D'Indy was one of his harshest critics. Massenet's colleague Jules Barbier commented on the fractious relationship between the two composers when he said, following the premiere of *Cendrillon*, that Massenet's new opera would quickly make everyone forget all the "d'Indys et dindons" ("D'Indys and turkeys") of their age.



FUN FACT: In an effort to establish definitive scores for his works without the interference from theater managers, Massenet systematically destroyed his own compositional sketches and revisions before the publication of his works. This led to the unfortunate conclusion by some of his early biographers that his method of composition was superficial and lacked the depth of careful consideration.

FUN FACT: Massenet's unusual setting of Prince Charmant as a trouser role, together with the soprano role of *Cendrillon* and the coloratura soprano of the Fairy Godmother, creates a striking timbre when the three voices sing together. In fact, the group's evocative Act III trio, in which all three female voices sing in harmony, anticipates Richard Strauss's famous trio from Act III of *Der Rosenkavalier*—which is known for exactly the same distinctive distribution of voices—by 12 years.

STEP 3: Now that students have become acquainted with some of the musical materials Massenet uses when depicting a magical sound world, they are prepared to analyze a longer scene featuring the Fairy Godmother.

The text for the scene is provided on the handout.

Before listening to the music (provided on **Tracks 16–20**), have students read the scene aloud. Once they understand the action, they are ready to turn to the chart. The scene is broken up into brief moments, each with its own audio track. For each moment, students should describe the instruments and musical devices Massenet uses to portray the text, as well as literal or abstract word-painting.

A completed chart is provided below for your reference.

TRACK #	CHARACTERISTICS	DESCRIPTION (Describe and list musical devices and instruments you hear, as well as the resulting feeling of the moment)
16	Vocal arpeggios, unaccompanied voices, soft dynamics, chromaticism, mixture of major and minor harmonies	The chorus sings quietly in harmony. The Fairy Godmother enters, repeating their melody. The tempo is very slow and the dynamics are very soft. The effect is one of mystery and other-worldliness.
17	Syllabic text-setting, legato melodies, harp, sustained notes in the orchestral accompaniment, mostly major harmonies	The Fairy Godmother declaims the text in a simple, smooth style. The first two lines form a musical idea, and the next three lines function as a response, completing the phrase.
18	Trills, coloratura, melismas, chromaticism, high vocal tessitura, vocal arpeggios, harp	The chorus repeats the Fairy Godmother's melody, with the Fairy Godmother entering later to flitting above the slowly intoned notes of the chorus. Her music is rapid and virtuosic, with lightning-fast scales and trills.
19	Celesta, staccato, mostly minor harmonies, fast and rapidly shifting notes in orchestral accompaniment, dissonance	After a brief orchestral introduction with the unusual orchestration of celesta and oboe, the chorus enters on a unison note. The voice of the Fairy Godmother rises up against this backdrop in a long, held high note. When she enters a second time, her note is dissonant to the underlying harmony. The atmosphere is restless, as the Fairy Godmother calls her fairies to flight.
20	Melismas, coloratura, staccato, mostly major harmonies, unaccompanied vocal lines, high vocal tessitura, harp	The chorus again recites its text in a slow, legato manner. The voice of the Fairy Godmother floats above it in a virtuosic display of rising staccato scales, arpeggios, and trills, which extend into the highest soprano tessitura.

FOLLOW UP: For a take-home assignment, students may delve deeper into the ways that other composers have depicted magical characters and settings. They may start by identifying a scene or character in a movie of their choice (excerpts are readily available on YouTube). Next, they should use the analytical tools they developed in this exercise to identify the instruments, musical characteristics, and other ways that the composer of the movie music depicted the scene. They should then write a brief paragraph outlining their findings.

Ten Essential Musical Terms

Arpeggio From the Italian verb for “to play the harp,” an arpeggio is a musical figure in which the notes of a chord are played in succession rather than at once. Arpeggios may span large intervals, with upper notes repeated at the octave, and they may jump between notes of the chord, playing them out of order. In coloratura passages, arpeggios are often included as a part of the virtuosic vocal patterns.

Celesta A keyboard instrument resembling a small piano, in which sound is produced by striking steel bars with a hammer. The instrument has a bell-like sound with a sharp attack. It was created by the French instrument inventor Victor Mustel and patented by his son August in 1886.

Chromaticism Chromatic notes are those that don’t belong to the prevailing harmony or scale of a musical composition (so named because in early music notation these notes were colored). Chromatic is the opposite of diatonic, which refers to notes of a scale or harmony derived exclusively from those available in its given key. Chromaticism can add drama and intensity to music by introducing notes or chords that are dissonant to the key and that call for resolution.

Coloratura From the Italian word for “coloring,” coloratura refers to florid, elaborate vocal passages with heavy ornamentation. It may also refer to a singer who possesses the vocal agility necessary to perform such music.

Harmonics On string instruments, harmonics are sounded by lightly resting a finger at various fixed points on the string. The resulting sound is higher in pitch than if the string were fully depressed, and the timbre has a silvery and open purity of sound. Harmonics result from the inherent, physical attributes of sound vibrations.

Melisma A group of several notes sung while remaining on the same syllable of text. Melismatic singing is the opposite of syllabic singing, in which a single note is sung for each syllable of the text. Melismas show off a singer’s breath control, vocal flexibility, and virtuosity. They can vary in length and complexity, often combining step-wise movement from note to note with larger, more difficult leaps.

Mute A device used to reduce or dampen the sound of an instrument. Mutes often also change the timbre of an instrument, causing it to have a muffled or covered sound. Called “sordino” in Italian and “sourdine” in French, mutes for string instruments are rubber or wooden devices that fit onto the bridge, whereas mutes for brass instruments fit into or over the bell. Composers indicate in the score when mutes should be used and removed.

Staccato An articulation marking that tells musicians to play a note in a “short and detached” manner. Playing a note “staccato” gives it a crisp, sharp feeling. The staccato symbol is a dot underneath or on top of a note in the score.

Tessitura/Range An Italian word for “texture,” tessitura describes the particular range in relation to the instrument or voice that’s performing it—for instance, either high, middle, or low. The term “range” refers to the total span of a piece. It can be narrow or wide. Extremes in tessitura and range are difficult to perform.

Trill An ornament in which the main note alternates very quickly with the note directly above it in the scale. Trills provide melodic and rhythmic interest and often occur toward the ends of phrases. While any instrument can perform trills, they are considered particularly virtuosic in the voice, where evenness and rapidity of execution is particularly difficult to achieve.

Supporting the Student Experience during *The Met: Live in HD* Transmission

Watching and listening to a performance is a unique experience that takes students beyond the printed page to an immersion in images, sound, interpretation, technology, drama, skill, and craft. Performance activities help students analyze different aspects of the experience and engage critically with the performance. They will consider the creative choices that have been made for the particular production they are watching and examine different aspects of the performance.

Each Performance Activity incorporates a reproducible sheet. Students should bring this activity sheet to the *Live in HD* transmission and fill it out during intermission and/or after the final curtain. The activities direct attention to details of the production that might otherwise go unnoticed.

For *Cendrillon*, the first activity sheet, *A Dream Come True?* asks students to examine the ways in which Massenet's opera blurs the line between dreams, waking fantasy, and reality. Using their observations on the production's set, staging, and lighting, as well as Massenet's music, students will draw conclusions on when the opera is depicting characters' dream states.

The second, basic activity sheet is called *My Highs & Lows*. It is meant to be collected, opera by opera, over the course of the season. This sheet serves to guide students toward a consistent set of objective observations, as well as to help them articulate their own opinions. It is designed to enrich the students' understanding of the art form as a whole. The ratings system encourages students to express their critique: Use these ratings to spark discussions that require careful, critical thinking.

The Performance Activity reproducible handouts can be found in the back of this guide. On the next page, you'll find an activity created specifically for follow-up after the *Live in HD* transmission.

IN PREPARATION

For this activity, students will need the Performance Activity reproducible handouts found in the back of this guide.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CENDRILLON

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.5

Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.



Defining and Defying the Fairy Tale Genre

IN PREPARATION

This activity requires no preparation other than attendance at the *Live in HD* transmission of *Cendrillon*.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To become familiar with the concept of genre
- To identify the tropes and structural devices of the fairy tale genre
- To think deeply about how genre can either be supported or undermined

COMMON CORE STANDARDS AND CENDRILLON

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.c

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4

Present information, findings, 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.

Start the class with an open discussion of the Met performance. What did students like? What didn't they? Did anything surprise them? What would they like to see or hear again? What would they have done differently? The discussion offers an opportunity to apply the notes on students' *My Highs & Lows* sheet, as well as their thoughts about the visual design of the Met production—in short, to see themselves as *Cendrillon* experts.

Massenet's faithful adaptation of Perrault's story has all the hallmarks of a sugar-coated fairy tale: All ends well for the lovers, the villains are chastened, and magic abounds. Indeed, according to Laurent Pelly, the production's director, his inspiration for the design concept came straight from a storybook he read at his grandmother's house as a child. In its literal depiction of the physical words of the story, however, the production also cleverly undermines the overly sweet sentimentality of many adaptations of the Cinderella tale.

Introduce the idea of genre to your students as a category of art works—movies, plays, novels—that are similar in content, style, and form. A few examples, such as the genres of horror movies, science fiction stories, or romantic comedies, might help them grasp the concept. Once they are familiar with the term, invite them to think about the fairy tale genre and lead a discussion about how Massenet's opera does, and does not, fit into that genre. You may guide your discussion with the following questions:

- What are some elements that are typical of the fairy tale genre? If you were about to watch a fairy tale, what would you expect to see?
- Which elements of Massenet's *Cendrillon* seem like they belong to the fairy tale genre? What are some elements you might have expected to see, but were missing from this opera?
- Did any of the characters or situations seem foreign to the fairy tale genre? For example, consider the deepness of Lucette's grief and sadness at the beginning of the opera. Did this surprise you? Why or why not?
- What about the production? Did the costumes, lights, and sets all seem to match the fairy tale genre? Did any elements of the production surprise you or seem out of place for a fairy tale?
- If anything stood out to you as being surprising for a fairy tale, consider why those choices might have been made by Massenet and/or the production's creative team. What do you think those choices were intended to communicate? How did they affect your experience and understanding of the story?



Encourage your students to think about how specific aspects of the opera and the production's design affect their impression of the story. For example, Massenet chose not to present his *Cendrillon* as an irrepressible optimist who is content with her lot in life. Similarly, rather than depicting a refined and elegant royal ball, Pelly's production conjures a frenetic, almost absurd revelry. Once your students have identified some aspects of the opera that they find surprising, prompt them to think about how these shifts might change one's understanding of the story. Remind them that versions of the Cinderella story have been told countless times for over thousands of years. Invite them to consider how each version's slight differences might vastly change the story's impact.

As a take-home assignment, have students consider making one change to the Pelly production. It could be the addition of a new character, the deletion of a scene, or simply the alteration of an unflattering costume so as to make a certain character more attractive. Students should write a few sentences explaining the edit they've decided to make and include a thorough explanation of how they think this change will affect an audience's understanding of the opera.

Excerpts taken from the video recording at the Royal Opera House courtesy of Warner Classics

CENDRILLON

Joyce DiDonato

PRINCE CHARMING

Alice Coote

FAIRY GODMOTHER

Eglise Gutiérrez

MADAME DE LA HALTIÈRE

Ewa Podles

PANDOLFE

Jean-Philippe Lafont

CONDUCTED BY

Bertrand de Billy

Royal Opera Chorus and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House

Joyce DiDonato appears courtesy of Warner Classics

- 1 Excerpt from "Ah! Que mes sœurs sont heureuses"
- 2 Ex. Arpeggio
- 3 Ex. Celesta
- 4 Ex. Chromaticism
- 5 Ex. Coloratura
- 6 Ex. Harmonics
- 7 Ex. Melisma
- 8 Ex. Mute
- 9 Ex. Staccato
- 10 Ex. Tessitura (in this example, a very high soprano tessitura)
- 11 Ex. Trill
- 12 "Ah! Douce enfant, ta plainte légère" opening
- 13 Excerpt continues at "suivez exactement mes lois"
- 14 Excerpt continues at "Je veux qu'aux fêtes de la cour"
- 15 "Ah! Douce enfant, ta plainte légère" in full
- 16 "Ah! Fugitives chimères" opening
- 17 Excerpt continues at "Fugitives chimères"
- 18 Excerpt continues with the chorus
- 19 Excerpt continues at "Flottez!"
- 20 Excerpt continues at "Ah! Fugitives chimères"

CENDRILLON

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Tale Retold Through Time

From Massenet's *Cendrillon* (1899)

TRACK 1

CENDRILLON: Reste au foyer, petit grillon...
résigne-toi, Cendrille...
car ce n'est pas pour toi que brille
le superbe et joyeux rayon:
Ne vas-tu pas porter envie au papillon?
A quoi penses-tu, pauvre fille?
Résigne-toi! Travaille, Cendrillon!

Stay by the hearth, little cricket...
resign yourself, Cinderella...
because this glorious and joyful ray of light
shines not for you:
Would you be jealous of a butterfly?
What are you thinking of, poor child?
Resign yourself! Work, Cinderella!

What strikes you about this character? What do you imagine to be Cendrillon's mood, or attitude toward life? Does she seem hopeful? Sad? Despairing? Be sure to point to evidence in the text above to support your argument.

Does this characterization of Cendrillon surprise you? Is it different from other versions of the Cinderella story you've encountered? Why or why not?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
A Tale Retold Through Time (CONTINUED)

From Disney’s *Cinderella* (1950)

CINDERELLA: A dream is a wish your heart makes
when you’re fast asleep.
In dreams, you lose your heartaches
whatever you wish for, you keep.

Have faith in your dreams and someday
your rainbow will come smiling through.
No matter how your heart is grieving
if you keep on believing
the dream that you wish will come true.

Does this text and music make you think differently about the character of Cinderella? How?

Do you think this affects the meaning of the story? Why or why not?

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

A Tale Retold Through Time (CONTINUED)

Ye Xian by Duan Chengshi, China, 853 CE

Among the people of the south there is a tradition that before the Ch'in and Han dynasties there was a cave-master called Wu...He married two wives. One wife died. She had a daughter Ye Xian, who from childhood was intelligent and good at making pottery on the wheel. Her father loved her. After some years the father died, and she was ill-treated by her stepmother, who always made her collect firewood in dangerous places and draw water from deep pools.

She once got a fish about two inches long, with red fins and golden eyes. She put it into a bowl of water. It grew bigger every day, and after she had changed the bowl several times, she could find no bowl big enough for it, so she threw it into the back pond. Whatever food was left over from meals she put into the water to feed it.

[The stepmother] called to the fish. The fish at once put its head out, and she chopped it off and killed it. The fish was now more than ten feet long. She served it up, and it tasted twice as good as an ordinary fish. She left the bones under the dung-hill. The next day, when the girl came to the pond, no fish appeared. She howled with grief in the open countryside, and suddenly there appeared a man with his hair loose over his shoulders and coarse clothes. He came down from the sky. He consoled her, saying, "Don't howl! Your stepmother had killed the fish and its bones are under the dung. You go back, take the fish's bones and hide them in your room. Whatever you want, you have only to pray to them for it. It is bound to be granted." The girl followed his advice and was able to provide herself with gold, pearls, dresses and food whenever she wanted them.

When the time came for the cave-festival, the stepmother went, leaving the girl to keep watch over the fruit-trees in the garden. She waited till the stepmother was some way off, and then went herself, wearing a cloak of stuff spun from kingfisher feather and shoes of gold....

This cave was near to an island in the sea. On this island was a kingdom called T'o-han. Its soldiers had subdued twenty or thirty other islands and it had a coastline of several thousand leagues. The cave-man sold the shoe in T'o-han, and the ruler of T'o-han got it. He told those about him to put it on; but it was an inch too small even for the one among them that had the smallest foot. He ordered all the women in his kingdom to try it on; but there was not one that it fit. Then they went everywhere through all the people's houses and arrested them. If there was a woman's shoe, they arrested them and told the king of T'o-han. He thought it strange, searched the inner-rooms and found Ye Xian. He made her put on the shoes, and it was true. Ye Xian then came forward, wearing her cloak spun from halcyon feathers and her shoes. She was as beautiful as a heavenly being. The stepmother and stepsister were shortly afterwards struck by flying stones, and died. The cave people were sorry for them and buried them in a stone-pit, which was called the Tomb of the Distressed Women. The men of the cave made mating-offerings there; any girl they prayed for there, they got. The king of T'o-han, when he got back to his kingdom, made Ye Xian his chief wife.

(Excerpted from the translation by Arthur Waley in *Folklore* 58 (1947).

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY
A Tale Retold Through Time (CONTINUED)

What are some of the differences and similarities between the story of Ye Xian and the version of Cinderella you know?

If you had to write a song, monologue, or aria introducing Ye Xian to an audience, what would you want to include? How would you want it to set up the rest of the story? Give it a try below:

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Music of Magic and Dreams

TRACK 12

The Fairy Godmother appears. She assures the sleeping Lucette that she has heard her laments and bids her not to despair. She summons her company of fairies and elves to her service.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Ah! Douce enfant, ta plainte légère
comme l'haleine d'une fleur,
vient de monter jusqu'à mon cœur.
Ta marraine te voit et te protège: espère!

SPIRITS AND ELVES: Espère!

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Sylphes, lutins, follets,
accourez à ma voix, de tous les horizons,
à travers les espaces...

Ah! Sweet child, your slight complaint,
like the breath of a flower,
has risen to my heart.
Your godmother sees you and protects you: have hope!

Hope!

Sylphes, elves, and willow-the-wisps,
hear my voice from every corner
near and far...

CHECK OFF ALL OF THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS THAT YOU HEAR IN THIS SCENE:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly major harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Celesta | <input type="checkbox"/> A recitative-like vocal line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly minor harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Harp | <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth, legato melodies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of major and minor harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal melismas | <input type="checkbox"/> Choral interjections sung in harmony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissonance | <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabic text setting | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied voice(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chromaticism | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloratura | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid tempo changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strings | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal arpeggios | <input type="checkbox"/> Long, sustained notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodwinds | <input type="checkbox"/> High tessitura in the voice | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast and rapidly shifting notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brass | <input type="checkbox"/> Trills | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonics | |

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Music of Magic and Dreams (CONTINUED)

TRACK 13

The fairies and elves appear, and the Fairy Godmother commands them to do what she asks. Cendrillon shall attend the royal ball, splendidly dressed by the fairies and admired by all.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: (*the Spirits and Elves appear*)

Suivez exactement mes lois:

Apportez-moi tous vos talents, toutes vos graces!

SPIRITS AND ELVES: Que nous ordonnes-tu?

Nous écoutons tes lois.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Je veux que cette enfant charmante, que voici, soit aujourd'hui hors de souci: je le veux; et que par vous, splendidement parée, elle connaisse enfin le bonheur à son tour.

Follow exactly my directions:

Bring me your talents, all of your arts!

What do you command us?

We listen to your instructions.

I want this charming child you see here to be free from care today: I wish it; and then, so splendidly adorned by you, I want her to have her turn at happiness at last.

CHECK OFF ALL OF THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS THAT YOU HEAR IN THIS SCENE:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly major harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Celesta | <input type="checkbox"/> A recitative-like vocal line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly minor harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Harp | <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth, legato melodies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of major and minor harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal melismas | <input type="checkbox"/> Choral interjections sung in harmony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissonance | <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabic text setting | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied voice(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chromaticism | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloratura | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid tempo changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strings | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal arpeggios | <input type="checkbox"/> Long, sustained notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodwinds | <input type="checkbox"/> High tessitura in the voice | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast and rapidly shifting notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brass | <input type="checkbox"/> Trills | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonics | |

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Music of Magic and Dreams (CONTINUED)

TRACK 14

The Fairy Godmother promises to watch over Cendrillon, and while she dreams of these marvelous visions, the whole company of fairies praises her beauty.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Je veux qu'aux fêtes de la cour
elle soit la plus belle et la plus admirée!
Je le veux! Ah!
O ma petite Cendrillon,
fleur d'innocence et d'amour
sur toi je veille! O Cendrillon.

CENDRILLON: (*asleep*) Vision ravissante!

SPIRITS: Cendrillon, tu seras la beauté sans pareille!

CENDRILLON: Étonnante merveille!

SPIRITS: Cendrillon, tu seras la beauté sans pareille!

When she goes to the palace ball, I want her
to be the most beautiful and the most admired!
I wish it! Ah!
O my small Cinderella,
flower of innocence and love,
I shall watch over you! O Cinderella.

What an enchanting vision!

Cinderella, your beauty shall have no equal!

What an astonishing dream!

Cinderella, your beauty shall have no equal!

CHECK OFF ALL OF THE MUSICAL ELEMENTS THAT YOU HEAR IN THIS SCENE:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly major harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Celesta | <input type="checkbox"/> A recitative-like vocal line |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mostly minor harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Harp | <input type="checkbox"/> Smooth, legato melodies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixture of major and minor harmonies | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal melismas | <input type="checkbox"/> Choral interjections sung in harmony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissonance | <input type="checkbox"/> Syllabic text setting | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied voice(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chromaticism | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloratura | <input type="checkbox"/> Rapid tempo changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strings | <input type="checkbox"/> Vocal arpeggios | <input type="checkbox"/> Long, sustained notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodwinds | <input type="checkbox"/> High tessitura in the voice | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast and rapidly shifting notes in the orchestral accompaniment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brass | <input type="checkbox"/> Trills | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Harmonics | |

The full aria can be heard on Track 15.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Music of Magic and Dreams (CONTINUED)

TRACK 16

CHORUS OF SPIRITS AND FAIRY GODMOTHER: Ah!

Ah!

Characteristics:

Description:

(Describe and list musical devices & instruments you hear, as well as the resulting feeling of the moment)

TRACK 17

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Fugitives chimères,
O lueurs éphémères,
âmes ou follets,
glissez sur les bruyères!
Flottez sur les genêts!

Fleeting illusions,
O ephemeral glimmers,
spirits and elves,
glide over the heather!
Float over the broom!

Characteristics:

Description:

(Describe and list musical devices & instruments you hear, as well as the resulting feeling of the moment)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Music of Magic and Dreams (CONTINUED)

TRACK 18

CHORUS OF SPIRITS: Fugitives chimères,
O leurs passagères,
âmes ou follets,
glissez sur les bruyères!
Flottez sur les genêts!

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Chers follets, brillez!
Chers follets, glissez!
Flottez sur les genêts!

Fleeting illusions,
O ephemeral glimmers,
spirits and elves,
glide over the heather!
Float over the broom!

Dear spirits, shine!
Dear spirits, glide!
Float over the broom!

Characteristics:

Description:

(Describe and list musical
devices & instruments
you hear, as well as the
resulting feeling of the
moment)

TRACK 19

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Flottez!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS: Ah!

Float!

Ah!

Characteristics:

Description:

(Describe and list musical
devices & instruments
you hear, as well as the
resulting feeling of the
moment)

THE MET: LIVE IN HD
CENDRILLON

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Music of Magic and Dreams (CONTINUED)

TRACK 20

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Ah!

Ah!

CHORUS OF SPIRITS: Fugitives chimères,
O leurs passagères,
âmes ou follets,
glissez sur les bruyères!
Flottez sur les genêts!

Fleeting illusions,
O ephemeral glimmers,
spirits and elves,
glide over the heather!
Float over the broom!

Characteristics: _____

Description: _____

(Describe and list musical
devices & instruments
you hear, as well as the
resulting feeling of the
moment)

At the Met: *A Dream Come True?*

Cendrillon is, above all else, a story about a “dream come true.” While we use this phrase to describe the feeling of a hope or desire turning into reality, Massenet’s opera arguably takes the saying quite literally. Throughout the opera, various characters fall asleep, wake up, have magical nighttime encounters, and repeatedly question whether they are truly experiencing reality.

In this production, can you distinguish between dreams and reality? As you watch the opera, be on the lookout for settings and moments that you think might depict a dream state. Make notes on the moment or scene below and write a few sentences about why you think it is, or is not, a dream.

ACT I & II

Description of moment/scene	<u>Moment 1:</u> _____
Evidence for why you think it is, or is not, a dream	<u>Evidence:</u> _____

Moment 2: _____

Evidence: _____

Moment 3: _____

Evidence: _____

At intermission, compare notes with your classmates. Did they have different opinions about what was a dream and what was real?

During the third and fourth acts, again be on the lookout for moments that you think might not be what they seem. Record them below for further conversation after the opera ends.

ACT III & IV

Moment 1: _____

Evidence: _____

Moment 2: _____

Evidence: _____

Moment 3: _____

Evidence: _____

Cendrillon: My Highs & Lows

APRIL 28, 2018

CONDUCTED BY BERTRAND DE BILLY

REVIEWED BY _____

THE STARS	STAR POWER	MY COMMENTS
JOYCE DIDONATO AS CENDRILLON	☆☆☆☆☆	
ALICE COOTE AS PRINCE CHARMING	☆☆☆☆☆	
KATHLEEN KIM AS THE FAIRY GODMOTHER	☆☆☆☆☆	
STEPHANIE BLYTHE AS MADAME DE LA HALTIÈRE	☆☆☆☆☆	

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN/STAGING
MONSIEUR PANDOLFE IS AFRAID OF HIS WIFE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
THE WOMEN PREPARE TO ATTEND A BALL MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
LUCETTE IS SAD AND LONELY MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
THE FAIRY GODMOTHER AND HER FAIRIES APPEAR MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
PRINCE CHARMANT FINDS NO JOY IN HIS LIFE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
A PARADE OF WOMEN ARRIVES AT THE BALL MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
THE PRINCE AND LUCETTE MEET AND FALL IN LOVE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

THE SHOW, SCENE BY SCENE	ACTION	MUSIC	SET DESIGN/STAGING
THE HALTIÈRE WOMEN RETURN FROM THE BALL MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
AN ENCHANTED LANDSCAPE MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
LUCETTE AWAKENS AFTER A LONG ILLNESS MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
WOMEN FROM ACROSS THE LAND TRY ON THE GLASS SLIPPER MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
THE PRINCE AND LUCETTE ARE REUNITED MY OPINION OF THIS SCENE:	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5