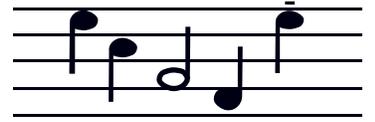


# OPERA LINGO



**Opera is a dramatic art form that combines music, theater, language and technical design. Opera is performed by singers and musicians and is often entirely sung-through with no or very little spoken dialogue. Use the Opera Glossary to offer familiarize students with the lingo of this legendary style of performance.**

## **Librettist**

Writes the words to each song.

## **Composer**

Writes the musical score.

## **Conductor**

Coordinates the music of the orchestra with the singers on stage.

## **Orchestra**

A group of instrumentalists who play the music to accompany the singers and to set the scene of the story.

## **Soprano**

The highest female voice (usually the heroine character of an opera who often falls in love).

## **Countertenor**

The highest male voice. The countertenor is male, but sings in the same range as an alto (lowest female voice). Oberon is a countertenor role in MIDSUMMER, it is very unusual for a lead role to be written for a countertenor.

## **Alto**

The lowest female voice (often an old woman or witch character).

## **Tenor**

A high male voice (usually the love interest). Unless there is a countertenor. The tenor usually takes the title of the highest male voice.

## **Baritone**

The second lowest male voice.

## **Bass**

The lowest male voice (often an old man or a funny character).

## **Recitative**

Words that are sung to drive the action forward in the story.

## **Aria**

A piece of music sung by one person (a solo usually sung by one character who sings directly to the audience to give information about who he or she is) or to portray their thoughts or feelings regarding what is happening.

## **Duet**

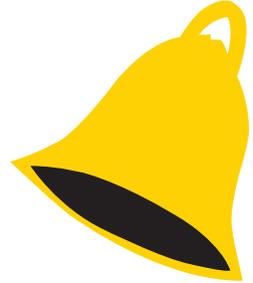
A piece of music written for two singers that can be used for dialogue in a scene, or to show the connection between two people.

## **Trio**

A piece of music for three singers with different vocal types that harmonize.

## **Finale**

The last number of an opera. It is usually the most extravagant and stirring part of the opera.



Additional Opera Resource for you and your students:

Opera America:  
[operaamerica.org/NOTES](http://operaamerica.org/NOTES)

NOTES is a free online platform showcasing exemplary opera learning materials from OPERA America and its member companies. Browse resources and search by opera title, grade level, subject area, time required and more!



**THE NEW VICTORY® THEATER**