Do you like opera? How many operas have you seen? How many titles can you name?

Watch the scene from Pretty Woman. What does Edward Lewis say about people's reaction to opera? Can you recognize the opera in this scene?

Here are the titles of some famous operas and short clips from the most famous areas from them. Enjoy the music and try to match the clips and titles correctly

1. *La Traviata* a_____
2. **The Marriage of Figaro** b_____
3. NORMA c_____
4. Nabucco d_____
5. **The Queen of Spades** e_____
6. **Carmen** f_____
7. **The Barber of Seville** g_____
8. **Orpheus and Eurydice** h_____
9. RIGOLETTO I_____



LIVEWORKSHEETS

Read the very short plot summaries and type in the numbers from the previous activity under the corresponding description.

In this opera by Jiuseppe Verdi (1841) the plot rotates around the biblical episode of the Jewish captivity in Babylon.

____

This is one of the best known Mozart's operas (1786), it shows the aristocracy as strongly clinging to their privileges and the third state as struggling to survive.

_____

This opera by Jiuseppe Verdi tells the story of the tragic love between the courtesan Violetta and the romantic Alfredo Germont.

_____



Vincenco Bellini, 1831. When a close-knit community's way of life is threatened by unstoppable change, the people want war. Their priestess, secretly in love with one of the enemy, resists. But now he has a new love.

_____

In order to help her smuggler kinsmen, a sultry gypsy seduces and corrupts an officer of the Civil Guard turning him into a traitor and murderer. This opera by Georges Bizet was written in 1874

_____

The Duke lives the high life. The court jester taunts too well. Revenge has unintended consequences both times it is attempted.

_____



LIVEWORKSHEETS

In this opera by by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1890) a Russian officer of German ancestry learns that a fellow officer's grandmother, an old countess, possesses the secret of winning at faro, a high-stakes card game.

_____

Based on one of the great tragic love stories from Greek mythology, this opera was written by Christoph Willibald Gluck in 1762.

_____

Gioachino Rossini, 1816. Count Almaviva, a Spanish nobleman, is in love with Rosina, the rich ward of Dr Bartolo, an old physician, who plans to marry her himself. Almaviva has followed Rosina from Madrid to Seville, disguised as a poor student.

_____



You are going to read and listen to excerpts from the essay *Opera – Coming to it Late* by Julian Barnes.

Listen to the first snippet _____.

What was the writer's "point of entry" into classical music? When did it happen? What were his "guilt-free blind spots"?

Listen to the clip 2 _____and finish the sentences:

When I said I had a serious problem, I should have said *several* problems. To begin with, those of _____ _____ _____.

I would go to the opera every so often but always _____ _____ _____ _____.

I would enjoy the overture any orchestral interlude that might turn up, but as soon as they started singing, I was lost: _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

I read up the plot summary in the programme, but plot summaries tend to make everything seem either thumpingly banal or _____ _____ - _____ .

And even if you knew that A was jealous of B because B was in love with C, what _____ _____ _____ _____ ___ _____ ?

The modal auxiliary verb *would* is used in this part to:

1) talk about the future in the past
2) express desire or polite request
3) talk about habitual actions in the past
4) to create conditional mood

Listen to the clip 3. _____
Why was Julian Barns always feeling "left out"?

Clip 4. Read the words and phrases taken out of the text. Try to put them (their numbers) back to places. Then listen to the clip and check.

_____

1) fundamentally 2) another element 3) appreciation of art

4)"good riddance" 5)snobbery

6) were they public or private in form 7) bugger off

And then there was _____ of exclusion caused by some of the people who went to opera. I've always believed the arts, _____, to be _____ democratic or inclusive. I see no virtue in hermeticism, or aesthetic _____, or the wearing dinner jackets and expensive dresses and the consumption of the Champaign picnics as necessary appendages to the _____. Opera struck me as both excluding and exclusive. Its patrons seem to be saying to me, "_____ , we know what opera is and how it ought to be enjoyed". So, I let myself be discouraged and thought ____ .

Clip 5 _____

1. What helps the audience to understand opera better now?
2. What "something" happened to Julian?
3. How old was he when "the worst, the most catastrophic thing" happened?



LIVEWORKSHEETS

Clip 6. _____

Listen and fill the gaps in the plot with correct verb forms.

You might read the plot summary and think: OK, so, the man _____ his wife and is _____ by the gods to _____ down into the underworld to _____ her, but he's ____ that if he once _____ at her while _____ her up to the surface, she will _____ again and _____ , this time truly forever. Whereupon she _____ him to _____ at her which he _____ and she _____ all over again before his eyes.



Clip 7 _____Listen.

Listen again and put the sentences in order (the first one is already in its place).

1. Grief flees you and leaves you helpless, vulnerable, open, primitive.

____ And so my attitude to opera had swiveled on its axis.

____ Or, perhaps it was like a dolphin, slipping under the struggling swimmer and holding him above the surface.

___ Song is a more primal means of communication than the written word, both older and deeper.

___ I suddenly wanted to see every opera that had ever been written and go to every opera house in the world.

___ All my prejudice and misunderstanding fell away.

___ The song of opera washed over me like a tide reaching my body on the beach surrounding it then lifting it up, and bearing it upwards sustainingly.

LIVEWORKSHEETS