



The Doll's Song 3

What have we learnt about Robert Epstine's online love story so far?

1. Listen to the snippet and fill the gaps with the proper forms of verbs _____

I _____ to think something was wrong.

I _____ something like "Hey, maybe

we _____ a phone call", or "You know, there's a chance I _____ lectures in Moscow, would you like _____ at some point?" Anything, it _____ even about something in the news, and to those kinds of questions I _____ answers. And that was, I mean, I _____ : I _____ !

Why does Robert's 'online dating experience' come up in the opera podcast? Is it relevant at all? Why? Why not?



2. Let's watch the video of Irish National Opera.

Which female role does Claudia Boyle play in this production of The Tales of Hoffmann? Who is Olympia in this production?

Why is she working with a choreographer?

What are the crew, the cast, and the director excited about?

3. Read the script and try to fill the gaps with the correct word forms of the words in brackets:

WAX POETIC



Someone who is speaking progressively in an excitedly poetic or lyrical manner

_____ (unobvious), there's a lot to say here about why Hoffmann falls in love with a beautiful but _____ (brain) woman. Hoffmann sees something really easy in Olympia, he sees zero

conflict, he sees someone who is existing to _____ (service) his purposes and to fulfill his desires. And when Hoffmann tries to speak to her, he goes on and on and waxes poetic and she just sits there like a _____ (sound) board and then she responds, 'Oui, oui,' and that is literally all she says _____ (side) from her aria – is oui, – yes, whatever you say. And I think there's a lot of deep commentary here about what some men want women to be. And how _____ (woman) are often treated as objects, and expected to have no _____ (feel), and expected to just be beautiful and _____ (impression), and say yes, and don't be difficult... And that's who Olympia is.



Listen to the snippet and check _____

Why is the picture Δ here?

4. Listen to this clip _____ . What are the inventors fighting over?
What does Olympia symbolize?

5. First, try to fill the gaps with chunks and then listen to the clip, order the statements and check yourself. _____



had sung before

to the next level

trying to top herself

she's making fools of

comes around

what she's capable of

___ And the further she gets in the aria, she's showing that there are no limits on her abilities, and she's discovering this as it happens. And _____ her inventors because they discover they can't control her. And that is really fun to play.

___ And she goes on with basically what she _____.

This time even together with chorus who sort of maybe supports our own as an audience feelings of admiration, of amazement, of 'oh, this is incredible, I haven't seen something like that, I haven't heard something like that, what is it?' Yeah? And the overall joy of that moment.



___ It's really magical because we see this doll, we know it's not a real human being and yet, then starts the music which is so incredibly charming and beautiful.

___ She spends the whole second verse _____, really. I like to think of Olympia as a learning robot. As she begins to sing, she's kind of like a baby learning how to walk, and she's discovering _____, and it's thrilling to her.

___ So, the second verse _____, she's just been injected with another dose of battery, and so she has totally fresh energy and she's ready to take this _____.



6. Listen to the snippet and join the junks

stop communicating

operating

was giving her the

thinking operating

wishful

with her immediately

a single-person-wanting-
to-find-a-good-mate

benefit of the doubt

completely boggles

forces

evolutionary

our minds

not necessarily

race going

keeps our human

bad thing



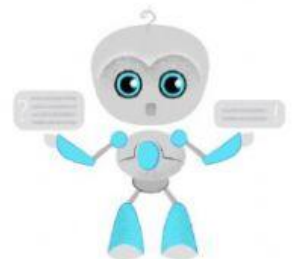
Try to explain in your own words the expressions:

wishful thinking

the benefit of the doubt

boggles our minds

7. Read the phrases and listen to the clips, then Mark the statements with JD for Johannes Debus, CS for Caroline Sindere and RE for Robert Epstein



- 1) humans look for personhood in other things ____
- 2) these days I'm reluctant to go online ____
- 3) an utterly human statement ____
- 4) to resist the temptation of a bot ____
- 5) we're dealing not only with the successes and our high aspirations ____
- 6) we can look at a bunch of scraggly lines and see a smile ____
- 7) they're motivated to fool you too ____
- 8) we're looking for attachment and personality even inside of unanimated objects ____
- 9) isn't it that often the most beautiful moments in life ____
- 10) into an era in which we won't know when we're dealing with a robot ____
- 11) we see things more bright and more vivid, more rose than they might actually be ____
- 12) so the design of this technology really matters ____
- 13) distinguishes human beings also from the automaton who can only take things at face value ____

JD _____ CS _____ RE _____

8. Read the lines. _____ Listen to the snippet and mark with V the lines that you can hear in it



- 1) to still be able to breathe ____
- 2) she runs out of gas, and collapses ____
- 3) she is aware of what's happening ____
- 4) it's kind of conquering the impossible ____
- 5) 'oh, no, not again' ____
- 6) it has to feel a little bit like jazz ____



7) just getting going again ____

8) goes further than she did before ____

9) in an effort to outdo herself ____

10) all of these cadenzas and variations completely rehearsed ____

11) she keeps getting higher and higher ____

12) it keeps everybody on their toes ____

13) a conductor who really trusts you ____

14) to throw in a high G above high C

15) what kind of direction the singer is giving those coloraturas

16) ridiculously high

17) and here we go, BUM!



Can you name the 3 things in the pictures above? How can they be relevant to the conversations we're listening to?

9. Listen to the clip and fill the gaps inside words with only three words _____

- It's the range of the voice that I would call strato____eric because we are getting to h____hts where we usually would use our oxygen tank to still be able to br____he. It's so extreme that no one can miss that. It's really the trapeze act; it's kind of con____ring the impossible.

- This is really the limit of the human voice.

- The singer can show all the te____ical command of their voices, so there's a certain form of freedom.

- It has to feel a little bit like jazz, a little bit improvis____onal. And, although we have all of these cadenzas and variations completely reh____sed, it's just nice to have a few different o____ in your pocket, so you can throw them out if they feel



good that night. It does need to feel and seem like she's discovering, and trying, and pushing, and ornaments are spontaneous. Fairly, it keeps it fresh for me, and I think it keeps everybody on their toes for sure. And you have to have a conductor who really trusts you if you're gonna do that.

- Obviously, I try to listen to the singer; I try to get an idea what kind of direction the singer is giving those coloraturas. You know, it's a bit like describing the curve of the thrown ball and where it lands. Yeah, you try to follow the curve of that thrown ball. Then you might signal to the orchestra: OK, careful, listen as I try to listen... And here we go, BUM! Yeah, and you hope that everyone is on beat. It doesn't work all the time, I know.

If you were an opera singer, would you want to play this role? What do you think you would feel like? What in your opinion is the biggest challenge of this part?

10. Read out the chunks then try to find the correct place for them in the script. Listen and check _____

across the pit

you've given them a gift

delighted with what you've done

full of awe

with their applause

went completely bananas

It was a big moment in my career when I started singing this role. This was the first time that I felt like an audience _____ for me in theater. I mean, what feel as a performer when you know that the audience is like

_____. You just feel like

_____. And then they return that

gift _____. And it's just this wonderful two-way communication. This wonderful energy that is passed _____. And it feels great! It feels great.



It's a bit like everyone around Olympia turns into a little child _____ and amazement. It's like turning the candles on a Christmas trees so to speak, that's what it is.

Now you can listen to Olympia song in full. Do you hear perceive it a little bit different than in the beginning of this series of lessons? _____

What do you think Erin wants to do after she finishes singing it? _____