



POP

PACIFIC OPERA PROJECT



Opera in the heights

#BilingualButterfly
#getyourPOPon

Education
Packet
Grades 3-8

蝶々夫人 Madama Butterfly

By Giacomo Puccini
Sung in Japanese and English



A co-production by Pacific Opera Project
and Opera in the Heights

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Recorded April 14,
2019, at the Aratani
Theatre at the Japanese
American Cultural and
Community Center in
Little Tokyo,
Los Angeles





HOW TO USE OUR EDUCATION PACKET FOR MADAMA BUTTERFLY

Before Viewing

1. Work through *Themes, Composer, Glossary, Main Characters, & Connection Points* articles.
2. Carefully work through the activities in *Responding to and Interpreting Music*. It is a preview of some of the music. Included are hyperlinks to sound samples. This may also be done after viewing the opera.
3. Read the *Plot Synopsis*, and preview *Discussion Questions*.
4. Optional, view the complete program and supplemental information at www.pacificoperaproject.com/butterfly

While Viewing

1. Have the Plot Synopsis open with a pencil in hand.
2. Start viewing the video, and pause when you want to lead discussion.
- 3.

View our full length opera with subtitles here:
<https://youtu.be/nQvPsQRZi8E>

To select scenes for an abridged viewing, look for hyperlinks embedded in the Synopsis.

4. Answer Discussion & Activities

After Viewing

Work through *Responding, Synthesizing, Producing* pages. Select the ones that most suit to you! We hope you enjoyed the opera!

Pacific Opera Project was founded in July of 2011.
Mission Statement:
To provide quality opera that is innovative, affordable, and entertaining in order to build a broader audience.

Madama Butterfly

Composed by Giacomo Puccini

New Libretto by
Josh Shaw & Eiki Isomura

Directed/Designed by
Josh Shaw



Conducted
by
Eiki Isomura



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Comments, suggestions,
inquiries welcome!

POP is a 501(c)3 non-profit
organization

About the Ground-Breaking Production

Madama Butterfly is about the marriage between a beautiful Japanese girl and a brash American Naval officer that begins with passionate love, but ends in tragedy.

Madama Butterfly was composed over 100 years ago by Giacomo Puccini. It premiered on February 17, 1904, at La Scala Opera House in Milan. The original libretto was written by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa.

This production was the first ever true-to-story, bilingual* Madama Butterfly. With a new libretto written by Josh Shaw (Artistic Director of Pacific Opera Project, Los Angeles) and Eiki Isomura (Artistic Director of Opera in the Heights, Houston), the production presented Puccini's story as if it would have actually happened and attempted to answer the question: *How would Butterfly and Pinkerton have communicated?*

Since Puccini spoke Italian, the original libretto was in Italian. But Director Josh Shaw wanted to tell the story in the most true way possible from the characters' points of view. Wouldn't it make sense for the Japanese characters to sing in Japanese, the American characters to sing in English, and for the Consul and marriage broker to be able to sing in both languages because of their lines of work? [Listen to Josh talk about it in our podcast here.](#)

This new version you will watch was recorded on April 14, 2019, at the Aratani Theatre at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, California.

[Read biographies about the Singers, Director, Conductor, and Costumer by clicking here.](#)



I'LL
TRANSLATE:
PINKERTON
SAID 'YOU ARE
BEAUTIFUL'

To stay true to the story, all Japanese roles were sung in Japanese by Japanese-American artists and all American roles are sung in English. Most of the chorus was composed of the South Bay Singers, led by Naoko Suga, who served as Chorus Master. POP and OH had conducted a multi-year audition process in Houston, Los Angeles, and New York, in addition to online submissions from singers across the United States and Japan.

Kimono masters from SK Kimono dressed all the Japanese characters in traditional fabrics, hairstyle, make-up design, and footwear. [Learn more at suekooshimoto.com.](#)

A wonderful by-product of this dedication to casting and costume was that use of yellow-face or cultural appropriation was negated.

Yellow-face: The practice of white actors changing their appearance with makeup in order to portray East Asian characters in movies, plays, opera, etc.

Cultural Appropriation: The act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing that you understand or respect this culture.

Composer



GIACOMO PUCCINI 1858–1924

Giacomo Antonio Domenico Michele Secondo Maria Puccini was a composer of the Late Romantic period of music, who was born into a family of musicians going back five generations. He was to inherit his father's position as choirmaster and organist but he was not interested in that style of music, and he doubted a career in music at all. When he was 15 years old, he went to hear a performance of Verdi's *Aida*. From that moment on he knew that what he wanted to do was compose operas, and he never did take over his father's jobs.

In 1880, he began studying at the Milan conservatoire (a school especially focused on musical and art training.) His first taste of success came in 1884 with the opera and ballet *La villi*. Very soon afterwards, his mother died, and Puccini eloped with a married woman, Elvira Gemignani. The couple would have a stormy relationship for the rest of his life.

Puccini led the operatic trend toward "**realism.**" It was very important to him to choose the right story for his operas, stories that would "make people weep...." Puccini had a string of major successes with *Manon Lescaut* (1893), *La bohème* (1896) which is probably the most loved opera ever written, and *Tosca* (1900). Despite suffering a major car accident in 1903, he completed *Madama Butterfly*, and it premiered in February 1904 in Milan. However, the opening night performance was received so poorly that the show was stopped, the beloved soprano quit, and Puccini immediately set to rewriting the score.

SOURCE: Puccini was inspired to write *Madama Butterfly* after seeing a play by David Belasco, also called *Madame Butterfly*, in London in 1900. The play had been very successful on Broadway earlier in 1900 before it was made in London. Puccini selected librettists Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa to write the libretto. It is still one of the top ten most-performed operas worldwide.

Realism (called "Verismo" in Italian) is a style of opera where the story is rooted firmly in reality. The stories were about people and conflicts that could be real, rather than mythological or supernatural.

The revised opera was very well received at its premiere in May 1904 and it went on to be a great success. Several years later, Puccini wrote three more operas with moderate success. He spent the last four years of his life writing his beloved opera *Turandot*. Unfortunately, he died of advanced throat cancer in 1924, and *Turandot* was left unfinished.

Puccini's genius lay in his ability to write beautiful melodies and vivid orchestrations. He also was able to create very human characters, and audiences could feel very emotional about them. Puccini made a great living because he had so many popular hits that were performed all over the world for so many years. At the time of his death in 1924, he had become the most commercially successful opera composer of all time, having earned \$4 million by today's standards.

Main Characters



Cho-Cho-San, soprano
Also known as Madama Butterfly, she is a young Japanese geisha who devotes herself to her new husband. Sung by Janet Todd.

B.F. Pinkerton, tenor
Young lieutenant* in the American Navy who marries Cho-Cho-San. Sung by Peter Lake.



Suzuki [soo-ZOO-kee], mezzo-soprano
Cho-Cho-San's faithful female servant and friend. Sung by Kimberly Sogioka.

Sharpless, baritone
The American Consul* who lives in Nagasaki. He is bilingual* and is knowledgeable about Japanese culture. Sung by Kenneth Stavert.



Goro [GOH-roh], tenor
Japanese man who arranges marriages between others. He is bilingual in Japanese and English. Sung by Eiji Miura.

The Bonze, bass
Butterfly's uncle, a Buddhist monk. Sung by Hisato Masuyama.



Imperial Commissioner, bass
Japanese official who performs the marriage ceremony. Sung by Norge Yip.

Prince Yamadori [YAH-mah-DOH-ree], baritone
A wealthy Japanese prince who wishes to marry Cho-Cho-San. Sung by Steve Moritsugu.



Registrar, tenor
Japanese clerk for official events. Sung by Takuya Matsumoto.



Sorrow
Son of Cho-Cho-San and Pinkerton. Played by Jussi Sjowall.

Kate Pinkerton, mezzo-soprano
Pinkerton's American wife. Sung by Chelsea Obermeier.



Plot Synopsis with Music Selections

Clicking on
underlined text
will open that
aria or moment
on Youtube

ACT 1. Nagasaki, Japan, around 1900.

A little house at the top of a hill.



On a flowering terrace above Nagasaki harbor, Lieutenant B. F. Pinkerton busily inspects the house he has leased* from Goro. Goro has also helped him purchase a geisha wife, Cho-Cho-San, known as Madama Butterfly. To the American Consul Sharpless, Pinkerton describes his carefree outlook on life and love. He says he will one day marry a “real” American wife. Sharpless warns Pinkerton that a Japanese girl may take the marriage seriously.



Then Butterfly, her mother, and relatives finally arrive, marveling at the beautiful scenery and singing about love. Cho-Cho-San tells a little about herself, how, when her family fell on hard times, she had to earn her living as a geisha*. She speaks mysteriously about her father who is dead. Goro tells Pinkerton that her father had performed seppuku* by order of the Emperor.



The Imperial Commissioner and Registrar arrive to lead the wedding ceremony. But first, in a quiet moment, Butterfly tells Pinkerton that she has converted to his religion, Christianity.

Butterfly shows Pinkerton her few earthly treasures, again acting frightened when Pinkerton carelessly handles her family heirlooms - hotoke* dolls and a dagger.



Soon, the marriage ceremony is performed, and Pinkerton toasts the guests who say the blessing “O kami, o kami” in response. The wedding celebration is interrupted by Cho-Cho-San’s uncle, a Buddhist priest called a Bonze, who curses the girl for renouncing her ancestors’ religion. Influenced by the Bonze, all the family disowns her and leave. Cho-Cho-San is broken-hearted at being abandoned by her family.



Plot Synopsis with Music Selections

Alone with Cho-Cho-San in the moonlit courtyard, Pinkerton comforts her and dries her tears. Evening has fallen and all is quiet. The servants are dismissed, except for Suzuki who helps Butterfly change her robes. While he waits, Pinkerton thinks about Butterfly as happily as a child thinks about a new toy. He longs to hear her say she loves him. Butterfly tries to tell Pinkerton that she loved him at first sight. The newlyweds prepare for their wedding night, by singing a passionate and lengthy love duet.



ACT 2. Three years later. Orchestra En'tracte

SCENE 1. Cho-Cho-San waits for her absent husband's return, her eyes fixed on the harbor. Suzuki recites Buddhist prayers, Izanagi, Izanami and sings her opening aria. When she shows Cho-Cho-San how little money is left, Butterfly reassures her that after joyfully waiting, one fine day, Pinkerton's ship will return.



Sharpless visits Butterfly in order to bring her a letter from Pinkerton. She asks him if the robins have nested in America yet. They are interrupted by Goro and the wealthy Prince Yamadori who has been asking to marry Cho-Cho-San for years. She defiantly tells them to leave, saying she already has a husband.



Sharpless starts to read the lieutenant's letter but is interrupted by Butterfly's excitement that the letter means she will be seeing Pinkerton soon. The Consul cautions that Pinkerton may not return, and suggests that she accept Yamadori's hand. Cho-Cho-San is crestfallen, but reveals her son to Sharpless, adding that Pinkerton would not turn his back on his own son. She would rather die than return to her former life.



Sharpless leaves, without having revealed the full contents of the letter. He promises to tell Pinkerton about his son. Suzuki and Cho-Cho-San beat Goro for wishing ill will on the baby.



Plot Synopsis with Music Selections

Cho-Cho-San, hears a cannon in the harbor; using a spyglass, she discovers Pinkerton's ship entering the harbor. Now delirious with joy, she orders Suzuki to help her "shake the cherry branch" and they fill the house with flowers (Flower Duet.) Then Butterfly asks Suzuki for "Make-up - I want to be pretty!"

Overnight, the sublime Humming Chorus is heard while Butterfly keeps vigil for Pinkerton to arrive home any moment, while Suzuki and little Sorrow sleep.

SCENE 2. As dawn breaks, Pinkerton has not arrived. Suzuki insists that Cho-Cho-San rest. Humming a lullaby to her child, she carries him inside. Sharpless enters with Pinkerton and Kate, Pinkerton's American wife. When Suzuki realizes who the American woman is, she sorrowfully agrees to aid in breaking the news to her mistress (Trio). Pinkerton, remorseful but unable to face Butterfly, bids an anguished farewell to the scene of his former happiness in his parting aria, then rushes away, leaving Kat behind.

When Cho-Cho-San comes forth and finds Kate, she guesses the truth. Sharpless tells Cho-Cho-San the Pinkerton's will take care of her son. Shattered, all hope of a happy future gone, she agrees and asks for Pinkerton to come to her. Then, sending even Suzuki away, she takes out the dagger with which her father committed suicide, choosing to die with honor rather than live in disgrace. In a futile attempt to stop Cho-Cho-San, Suzuki pushes the child into the room. Sobbing farewell, Cho-Cho-San sends him to play, then stabs herself. As she dies, Pinkerton enters, calling her name, and reunites with her - and his son - upon her last breath. **The End**



Connection Point: Music Preview

Connection Point. Get ready to recognize these Key Japanese phrases from the music.
Best if all students do Step 1-2 together, Steps 4-6 in partners. Do all 6 steps on first word.

Step 1: Point to the Japanese word, listen to the audio guide, mimic it as well as you can

Step 2: Say the Japanese word, then the English meaning, adding a physical movement

Step 3: Partner A gives English meaning, Partner B recalls matching Japanese word & movement

Step 4: A gives B Japanese word, B recalls English meaning & movement

Step 5: B gives A English meaning, A recalls Japanese word & movement

Step 6: B gives A Japanese word, A recalls English meaning & movement

Now move to next word.

Hana or Ohana
meaning "flowers"

[CLICK TO HEAR L1](#)

Shizukani!
meaning "Quiet!"

Said noticeably by Goro
and Sharpless

[CLICK TO HEAR L3](#)

Shiawase
meaning "happiness"

1. wished upon the couple
2. uttered by Butterfly in her love duet with Pinkerton
3. later wished upon Kate by Butterfly

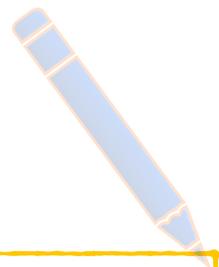
[CLICK TO HEAR L2](#)

Bōya
meaning "little boy"

Used by Butterfly to describe
her child

[CLICK TO HEAR L4](#)

Connection Point: Music Preview



Butterfly's Act 2 Opening Aria^ "One Fine Day"

This is one of the world's most beloved arias



Listen at
1:29:45



*One fine day, we'll begin to see from across the sea, a strand of smoke,
And eventually there will appear
A white ship entering the port with a thunderous greeting.*

*You see? He has returned! But I do not go down to greet him.
At the edge of the hill, I wait. And though I may wait a long time, I will not mind.
And then emerging from the crowded city, the figure of a man starts to climb up the hill.*

*Who can it be? And what will he say? He will call "Butterfly" from far away.
I won't answer and will keep hidden a while so I won't die at the elation of seeing him.*

Worried, he will call: "my darling little wife, verbena blossom," the way he called me then.

*All of this will happen, I promise you. So no more crying.
Keep believing with me, and let us wait!*

Your response:

Imagine you are hoping for something wonderful to happen, like Butterfly. What might it be? Write or draw it here:



Middle School.

If you were the composer, which word or syllable would you use on that last high note?
Why?

Themes

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM



Japan and its History

Japan is an island country lying off the east coast of Asia. It consists of a great string of islands - four main islands and many other smaller ones - in a northeast-southwest arc that stretches for approximately 1,500 miles (2,400 km) through the western North Pacific Ocean. Today, the national capital, Tokyo, is one of the world's most populous cities. The city of Nagasaki*, where the opera takes place, is a port city located on the Western coast of Southwest-most large island, Kyushu.

According to tradition, the sun goddess Amaterasu founded Japan in the 7th century BC and was an ancestor of the first of its emperors, Jimmu. Even today the emperor is known as the "Son of the Sun," and a popular name for the country is "Land of the Rising Sun."

Humans have occupied Japan for tens of thousands of years. Contact with China and Korea in the early centuries brought lasting changes to Japan, including the Chinese writing system, Buddhism*, and many artistic forms.

The first steps at political unification of the country occurred in the late 4th and early 5th centuries under the Yamato court. A great civilization then developed first at Nara in the 8th century and then at Heian-kyō (now Kyōto) from the late 8th to the late 12th century. The seven centuries thereafter were a period of domination by military rulers. That resulted in near isolation from the outside world from the early 1600s to the mid-1800s.



The West A term for the countries of the Americas and Europe as a group

Asia and The Pacific Were the Target of American Imperialism

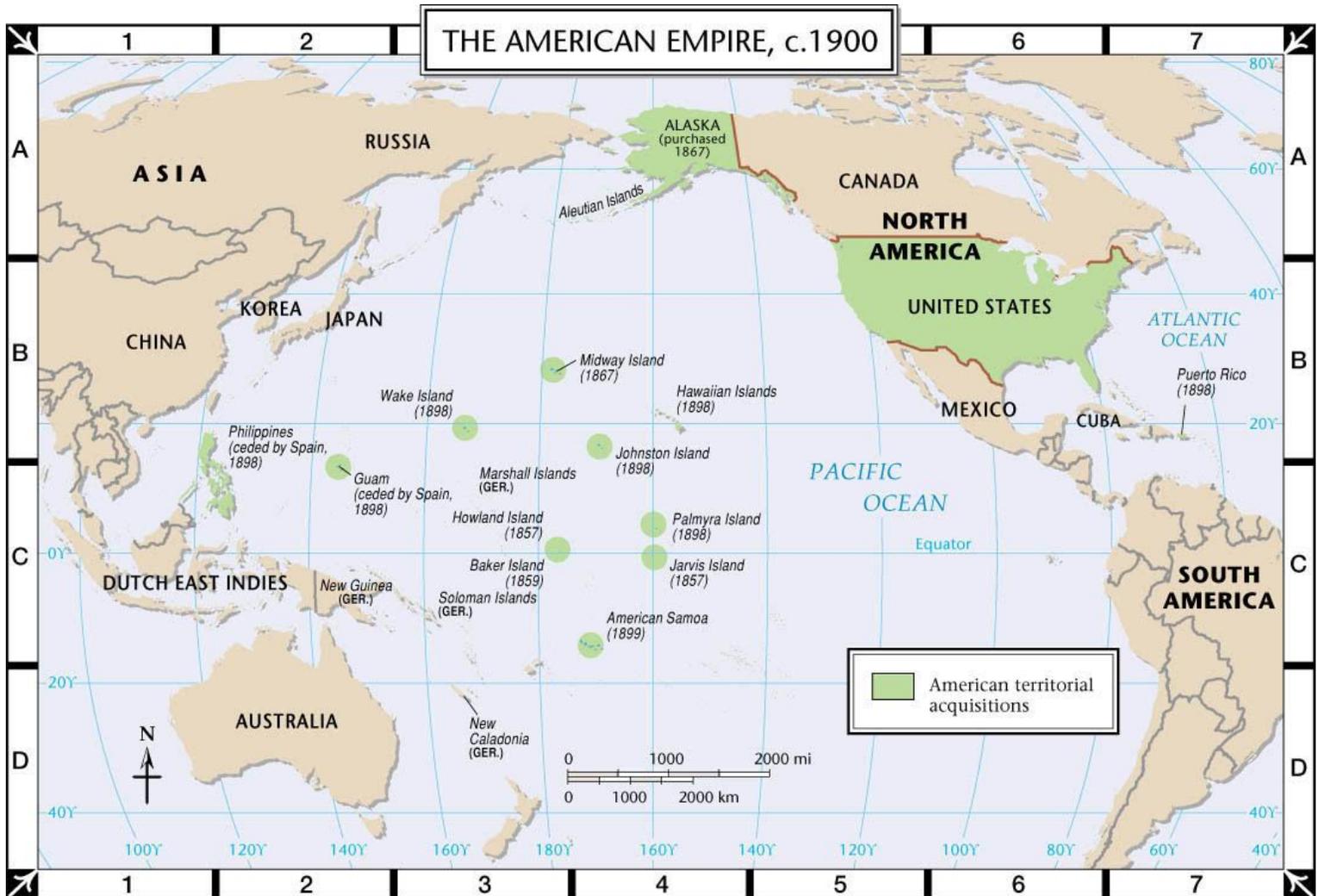
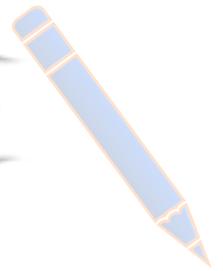
Japan was aggressively persuaded to open a relationship with the West in 1853, as a direct result of American Imperialism. U.S. Navy Commodore Mathew Perry signed the Treaty of Kanagawa on March 31, 1854, with Japan. In signing, Japan agreed to open its ports to foreign trade and for ships to stop for fuel. As a result, Japanese crafts and goods were brought to the West, and a craze for all things Japanese - "japonisme" - soon spread throughout the West, most especially Britain, France, and the Netherlands. Eventually, stories and plays about Japan were being written.

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

1. ES. Locate Nagasaki on the map; circle it
2. ES. Which year is this map from?
3. MS. Draw an arrow on the map pointing East
4. MS. Circle all the land that belongs to Japan

Themes

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM



Imperialism is when a country purposefully expands its power, influence, and economy to lands outside its current or natural borders. A country would do this by going to a foreign country to acquire land there, to take advantage of their natural resources, or to sell goods to them (called "trade"). Imperialism can be driven by a strong sense of Nationalism (a sense that one's own country and culture are superior to another's.)

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITIES

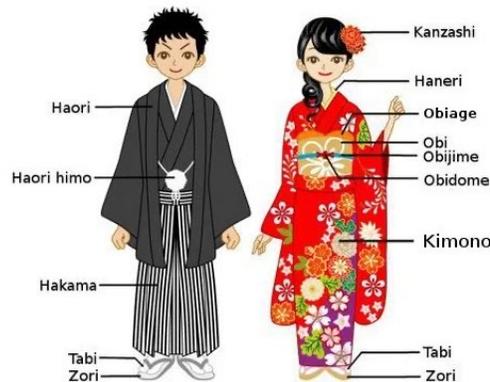
1. ES. Circle the entire Pacific Ocean on the map
2. ES. Which year is this map from?
3. ES. Circle 2 territorial acquisitions; write their names _____ and _____
4. MS. Label the approximate location of Nagasaki
5. MS. Draw any straight line "as the crow flies" between a point in U.S. & Nagasaki; calculate the distance using the map scale
6. MS. List America's territories by year

Themes

CHO-CHO-SAN'S WORLD

Geisha comes from two Japanese words, 芸 (gei) meaning "art" and 者 (sha) meaning "person who does". She is a member of a professional class of women in Japan who are trained in many arts, such as dance, singing, instruments, games, conversation and tea ceremony. They provide entertainment to men at banquets and gatherings. They are finely dressed in traditional kimonos*. The geisha system is thought to have emerged in the 17th century and was traditionally a form of indentured labor (where you are working to pay back for your training). When a geisha marries, she retires from the profession.

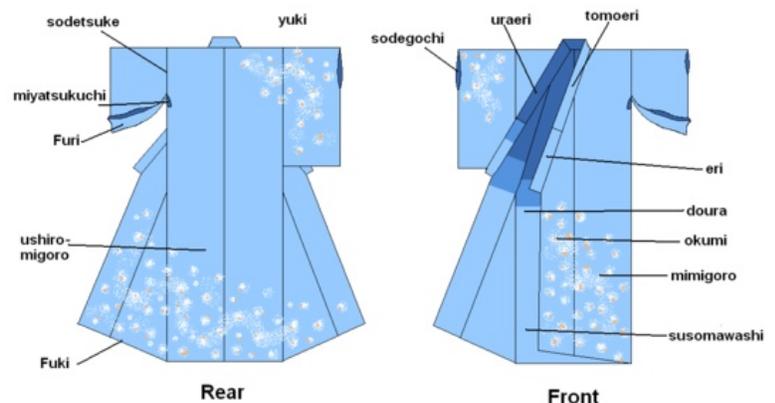
Cho-Cho-San tells about the circumstances that had led to her becoming a geisha. When she marries Pinkerton, she happily leaves the profession, and she counts on Pinkerton for money to support them. Later she thinks about whether or not she would be happy to become a geisha again.



Kimono* is a traditional garment worn by men, women, and children. The word "kimono" literally means a "thing to wear" (ki "wear" and mono "thing"). Kimonos are T-shaped, straight-lined robes worn so that the hem falls to the ankle. The collars are continuous with the robe. The sleeves are long and wide. Each kimono is traditionally made from one single bolt (piece) of fabric called a tan, measuring about 14 inches wide and 12½ yards long.

Kimonos are wrapped around the body, always with the left side over the right and secured around the waist by a sash called an obi, which is tied at the back. The yukata kimono is a light cotton kimono worn during the summer and at festivals. When dressing the dead for burial, wrap right side over left.

Photo on Left: Registrar and Goro from our production, and on Right, Butterfly. She wore the very long-sleeved kimono. Notice the fabric is ornate, with highly detailed flowers embroidered in many vibrant colors.



Themes

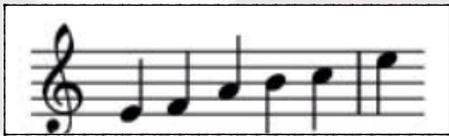
EXOTICISM IN MUSIC

In music, Exoticism was when a composer created music in the real or imagined style of a country not their own. To do this, a composer would use the rhythms, melodies, or instrumentation of that foreign country.

Exoticism in music, visual art, and other forms of expression was extremely popular in Europe when Puccini lived. Since the Japanese backdrop of the opera was exotic to Puccini, he carried out a lot of research on Japanese music to compose music that would invoke the tone world of Japan. He consulted with the Japanese ambassador's wife, who sang folk songs to him, and he used fragments of those folk songs in the opera. He also used the Japanese Pentatonic scale and even Japanese Bells in the instrumentation.

As a result, many scenes and Japanese characters incorporate motifs* from Japanese folk music. As a matter of fact, America was exotic to Puccini also, and he quotes a motif that Americans will find highly recognizable.

Puccini quoted several traditional Japanese melodies which use of the Japanese Pentatonic Scale, pictured here.

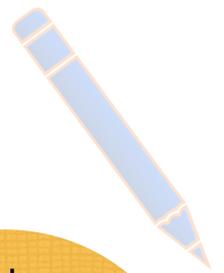


1. Try playing this on any instrument. Notes: E, F, A, B, C. Then they repeat in the next octave.
 - A. Sakura is in this exact Pentatonic Scale pitch
 - B. Composers will transpose the scale to another key
2. Listen to the original Sakura folk song
 - A. Listen to it used to underscore the discussion of Butterfly's earthly treasures, including her hotoke and her father's dagger, Sakura Sakura in the orchestra as accompaniment.
3. The Japanese national anthem, Kimi ga yo.
 - A. Puccini borrows for matters of Butterfly's fate, her father, honor, tradition, or national identity.
 - B. He uses similar instrumentation each time, and also uses other tunes to expand.
4. The toast O Kami, O Kami, with Pinkerton builds on the traditional tune, O Kami, for toasting the bride and groom.
5. Suzuki's prayer at the beginning of Act II. The original Japanese tune is Suzuki's vocal line itself Izanagi, Izanami.

More examples of Exoticism

<u>Title,</u> <u>Exotic Target</u>	<u>Composer,</u> <u>Country of Origin</u>
The Trojans Greece	Berlioz France
Lakme India	Delibes France
Turandot China	Puccini Italy
Pearl Fishers East Asia	Bizet France
Land of Smiles China	Lehar Germany
Africa Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra Africa	Saint-Sean's France
Scheherezade Arabia	Rimsky-Korsakov Russia
Capriccio Espagnol Spain	Rimsky-Korsakov Russia

Responding To & Interpreting Music



EXPLORE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE THEME, MOTIF* OR ARIA^

Elementary through Middle School.

Possible forms of exploration:

You could sketch, draw, or color freely.

You could create a gesture or pose.

You could move your body freely.

You could jot descriptive words, action words.

You could jot feelings or emotions.

You could assign human attributes.

You could loosely diagram how
the music might be written.

^An **aria** is a type of song that conveys strong emotion. It is identified by the first few words that are sung.

*A short musical idea is called a *motif* (moh-TEEF). A theme is a longer musical idea, often several *motifs* that have been combined.

To
listen to a
sample of the music,
look for the symbol



Middle School.

Also use these words to describe what you hear:
Melodic Contour (soaring, winding, skipping, circular, or sinking).

Rhythmic Patterns (choppy, march-like, lumbering, flowing, unpredictable.)

Responding To & Interpreting Music



Pinkerton's Theme
Horn Introduction to "Across the Ocean"
"America Forever"

Your response:



Listen at 18:15

And 21:05



Before The Star-Spangled Banner became the American national anthem in 1931, the American Navy (a branch of the military) had made it their anthem in 1889.



Butterfly's Motif / Love Duet Themes
"Called Here by Love"
"Come Here My Darling"

Your response:



Listen at 26:50

And 34:15



Responding To & Interpreting Music



Goro Motif

Instrumental. When Goro shows the house to Pinkerton.

Your response:



Listen at 11:45



Cherry Blossom* Motif

"Shake the Cherry branch" - Flower Duet
(Remember what Cherry Blossoms symbolize?)

Your response:



Listen at 1:57:57

And 1:59:59



Responding To & Interpreting Music



Fate, Tradition, Honor Motif

First, listen to the Japanese National Anthem. Notice the first 8 pitches.

Listen how this Japanese melody appears in the following sound examples, but a much faster:

1. Sharpless asks about her father.
2. Butterfly tells Pinkerton that she converted to Christianity.
3. Butterfly takes out her father's sword near end of Act 2.



Listen at 31:15

And 37:35

And 2:31:40

Your response:



Elementary School.

Do you hear low or high instruments?

Friendly or Dangerous?

Middle School.

Which instruments (or instrument family) do you hear playing?

Describe the articulation.

**Compare
2 versions of "One
fine day" with ours.**

Maria Callas

Yunah Lee

Our Janet Todd

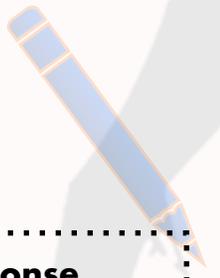
Discussion Questions

Elementary School (Grades 3 - 5)

1. How old is Butterfly when she marries Pinkerton?
 - A. How old is she when Act 2 opens
2. Butterfly shows Pinkerton a few earthly treasures before their wedding.
 - A. Name as many as you can.
 - B. What item is she fearful of yet protective of?
 - C. What item does Pinkerton mistake for dolls?
3. Which religion does Butterfly convert to and why?
 - A. Which religion is Suzuki practicing at the beginning of Act 2?
4. Why does Butterfly hang an American flag in her home?
5. Goro, Prince Yamadori, and Butterfly make different arguments about Butterfly's marital status.
 - A. _____ thinks Pinkerton has abandoned Butterfly, so Butterfly is free to re-marry.
 - B. _____ thinks Pinkerton will return to Japan, and that Butterfly should still act like she is married.
 - C. _____ thinks Butterfly should marry Yamadori because he loves her.
 - D. Do you think Butterfly should have married Yamadori?
6. Why does Butterfly decorate the house with flowers at the end of Act 2, Scene 1?
 - A. What is her emotional state?
 - B. Why does she change her clothes and do her make-up?
7. Share something you have waited up till late for? Did the thing you were waiting for come? How did you feel about it?

Your Response

Discussion Questions



Middle School

1. What actions communicate Butterfly's and Pinkerton's levels of commitment to each other?

- A. List Butterfly's actions and words toward the marriage.
- B. List Pinkerton's actions and words toward the marriage.

If you need help, here are some hints:

Hint 1: Pinkerton's Act 1 Aria

Hint 2: Butterfly's religion

Hint 3: Butterfly's Act 2 opening aria to Suzuki

Hint 4: Butterfly's attitude toward Prince Yamadori

Hint 5: Robin making its nest

Hint 6: Kate Pinkerton

2. Butterfly shows Pinkerton a few earthly treasures before their wedding.

- A. Name as many as you can.
- B. What do they tell us about Butterfly or Japanese culture?
- C. What item is she fearful of yet protective of?
 - 1. Why? (Goro tells)
 - 2. When and why does this item reappear?
 - 3. What does this item symbolize?
- D. How does Pinkerton handle the hotoke dolls?
- E. What cultural differences does this reveal?

3. Pinkerton's return to Nagasaki

What emotions (at least 3) does he experience and why?

4. Butterfly's death

- A. What would have made her the most happy?
- B. What might she feel when she realizes who Kate is?
- C. What is/are Butterfly's reason(s) for killing herself?
- D. Why does she use what she does to kill herself?
- E. What added layer of meaning is there when Butterfly is wrapped in the American Flag at her death

Your Response

A large rectangular area with a dashed border, intended for the student's response to the discussion questions.

Responding, Synthesizing & Producing



Sketch the Set

On 4 pieces of paper taped together to make 1 really big piece of paper, sketch a copy of the stage and set. These are just the buildings and structures that the characters walk on. (Sketch on the side without the tape.) How many details can you recall from memory?

Use one regular pencil or an assortment of colored pencils. Maybe you have watercolor, crayons, chalk, or ink pens.

Now add characters and details from your favorite scene. The wedding? The flower decorating? The vigil?

Make the sketch as similar or different from the real set as you like. Or feel free to pause the video on a scene you like and sketch that for more inspiration!

Elementary. Make your sketch like you're seated in the audience, looking at the stage. Label your scene with words like house, terrace, garden, stairs, trees, bedroom, window, doors, or whatever makes sense.

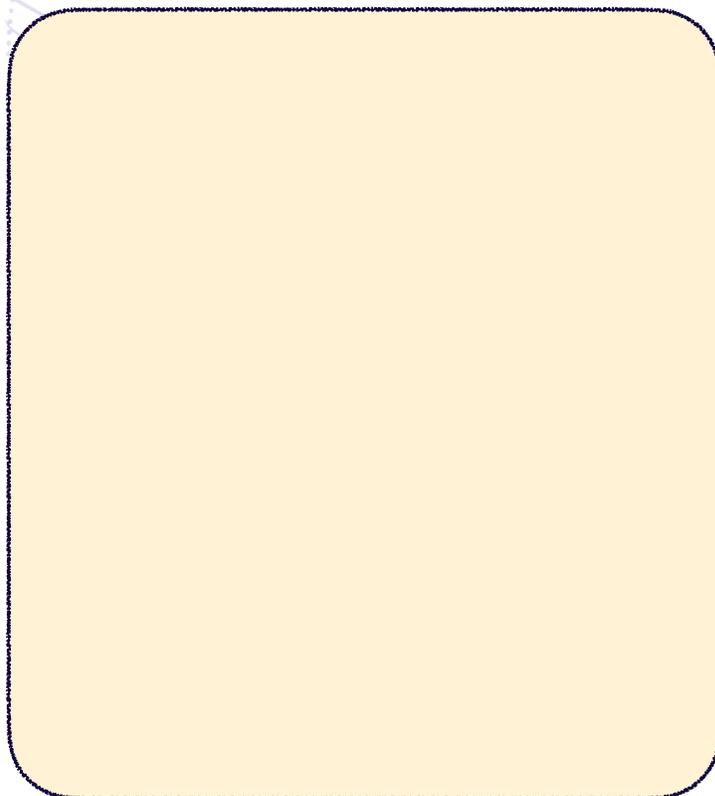
Middle School. After you make your sketch from the front, use some more paper to make a sketch from a bird's eye view. Be sure to sketch the "stage floor" itself, and then sketch the set pieces with in. Can you think of a way to match the widths from your first sketch on your second sketch? Label your scene with words like house, terrace, garden, stairs, trees, bedroom, window, doors, or whatever makes sense.

Portrait of Someone Special

Cho-Cho-San keeps a portrait of Pinkerton in her home. She puts the portrait on a chair when she is on the patio, as if he is keeping her company. Later she gives the portrait to her son, as if to help him know his absent father.

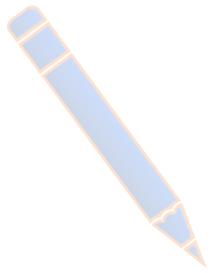
A portrait usually shows only the face or head and shoulders of the person.

Think of a person you love, a famous person, or a character from a work of fiction. Sketch a portrait of them. Carefully choose a hairstyle and clothing for them that helps them be recognized. When you've finished, cover the name, and have a friend guess who your portrait is of!



PORTRAIT OF _____

Responding, Synthesizing & Producing



Letter Writing

Pinkerton sends a letter to Butterfly through Sharpless in Act 2.

ES Write a simple letter in response to Pinkerton in America, as if you were Butterfly. Tell him how you feel. Tell him you have a little boy.

MS Write a simpler letter in response to Pinkerton in America, as if you were Suzuki. Talk about your concerns.

Dear _____,

Sincerely,

Play Acting

Recreate the Marriage Scene, starting with the arrival of the guests and Butterfly. Ending with Uncle Bonzo's curse.

CHARACTERS

Cho-Cho-San

Pinkerton

Goro

Imperial Commissioner

Registrar

Suzuki

Sharpless

Relatives

Uncle Bonzo

PROPS

Marriage certificate and brush pen

Umbrellas

Fans

COSTUME

Jacket/Uniform for Pinkerton & Sharpless

Make-shift Kimonos for all others

Hat and Cane for Goro

Staff for Uncle Bonzo



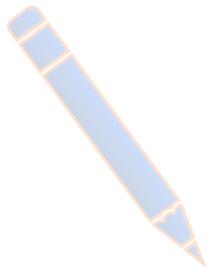
Interpretive Movement

[Click here to play The Humming Chorus.](#)

ES Move to the music. Be sure that you can always hear the music as you move. Describe your movements while you dance or afterwards. Try to move differently when the music changes.

MS Move to the music using only your upper body, shoulders, arms, and head. You may bend knees or turn in place, but stay in the same spot. If you are able, have a partner mirror your moves. Then switch.

Responding, Synthesizing & Producing



A FLAG TO REPRESENT YOU

Butterfly hangs an American flag in her home to represent that she identifies with America.

1. Review what 3 colors are on an American flag?
Now invent a flag that represents you!
2. Jot down up to 3 major colors you want to use in your flag.

3. Choose 1 or 2 symbols or shapes you want to use in your flag.

4. Decide which color will go with which symbol.

5. Decide which color will be the background color. _____
6. Draw and color your flag!

Middle School.
Write what each color on
your flag means:

Large empty rectangular box for drawing and coloring the flag.

Phrase Book

*Your turn to practice
with a partner!
After all, this is the first
#BilingualButterfly!*

Basics

Hello.
It's nice to meet you.

Hajime-mashite.
Yoroshiku onegai shimasu.

[CLICK TO HEAR A1](#)

Thank you very
much!

Arigatō gozaimasu!

[CLICK TO HEAR A3](#)

My name is _____.

_____ to mōshi masu.

[CLICK TO HEAR A2](#)

You're welcome!

Dō itashi mashite!

[CLICK TO HEAR A4](#)

Among Children

Hello!
Let's be friends!

Konnichiwa!
Yoroshiku-ne!

[CLICK TO HEAR C1](#)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
6, 7, 8, 9, 10

ichi, ni, san, shi, go,
roku, shichi, hachi, kyū, jū

[CLICK TO HEAR C4](#)

(response)
Yes, that would be
wonderful!

Kochira koso!

[CLICK TO HEAR C2](#)

I am _____ years old.

_____sai desu.

[CLICK TO HEAR C3](#)

Phrase Book

The most intimate temper of
a people, its deepest soul,
is above all in its language.
— Jules Michelet

Dining

I would like to place
an order.

Chūmon iidesuka?

[CLICK TO HEAR F1](#)

Do you have any
recommendations?

Osusume wa arimasuka?

[CLICK TO HEAR F2](#)

This is delicious!

Totemo oishii desu!

[CLICK TO HEAR F3](#)

At the Opera

Bravo! Brava!

Bravo! Brava!
(The same!)

[CLICK TO HEAR O1](#)

Do you enjoy opera?

Opera wa osuki
desuka?

[CLICK TO HEAR O3](#)

How beautiful!

Utsukushii!

[CLICK TO HEAR O2](#)

(response)

I love going to the opera!

Opera wa daisuki desu!

[CLICK TO HEAR O4](#)

Madama Butterfly Glossary

Throughout this Education Pack, when you see a word with *, it will be defined in this glossary

Bilingual [bye-LIN-gwul] – The ability to speak and comprehend two languages well. Communicating equally through two different languages.

Buddhism [BOO-dizm] – A religion that originated in India in the 6th century BC and spread across Asia. The central teaching is that suffering is normal in life and that one can be freed from it by studying wisdom, virtue, and concentration.

Cherry blossoms – “Sakura” in Japanese. Japan’s most celebrated flower which blooms once a year in the spring for less than one month. They are symbolic of Japan’s national identity, harvest, and religion. They remind us of the natural cycle of life, death, and new life.

Consul – An American statesman who lives in foreign country in order to handle American business with that country. They may be able to speak the language of that country and are somewhat knowledgeable about foreign culture, because it is helpful for their job.

Geisha [GAY-shah] – A woman highly trained in many fine arts so as to provide entertainment to men at banquets and gatherings.

Hotoke [hoh-toh-KEH] – Small statues representing the souls of ancestors

Jigai – Female ritual suicide, performed by cutting the jugular vein with a sword.

Kimono and Obi – Basic and universal Japanese garment. ki "wear" + mono "thing". An **obi** [OH-bee] is the sash worn with a kimono.

Lease – A contract where one person gives land (or property) to a second person in exchange for a fee. After a certain amount of time, the second person returns those things to the first person.

Lieutenant [lew-TEN-unt] – A lieutenant is a high-ranking junior officer.

Marriage Broker/ Matchmaker – A person who arranges marriages for other people.

Milk punch – A refreshing cold beverage of milk and alcohol

Nagasaki – A major port city in Japan. There is enough room for large ships to safely stay. The name comes from naga "long" + saki "headland, promontory."

Ornithology [OR-nih-THOL-o-jee] – The scientific study of birds

Seppuku (stomach cutting) – A form of male Japanese ritual suicide, originally reserved as an honorable way for a samurai to die, rather than fall into the hands of an enemy.

Vigil – A devotional watching, or keeping awake, during the customary hours of sleep.

You'll find definitions for general opera terms in our Universal Opera Glossary