



# SHOESTRING OPERA

PRESENTS...

# THE SCHOOLYARD CARMEN

OPERA FOR KIDS

# CARMEN

À LA RÉCRÉ

UN OPÉRA POUR ENFANTS

## STUDY GUIDE

Discussion Questions • Classroom Activities • Background

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# PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

## Option #1:

### *Introducing the Story*

*The Schoolyard Carmen* is based on a famous opera by Georges Bizet about a rebellious Spanish gypsy. Our Carmen is a feisty little girl with a dark past. Adopted by a Canadian uncle, she is a newcomer to this country struggling to fit in. She loves to dance, and sing, and is fiercely independent. When Tory Adair, “the coolest kid in school”, tries to bully her, she stands up to him. When he calls her and her dancing “stupid”, she flies into a rage and chases him all around the schoolyard. But this lands her in a whole lot of trouble and she is sent to the Principal’s office—on her first day at school!

### *En français!*

*Carmen à la récré* est basé sur le célèbre opéra de Georges Bizet, qui met en scène une Gitane espagnole à l’esprit rebelle. Notre Carmen est une petite fille combative au triste passé : ayant été adoptée par son oncle qui vit au Canada, elle éprouve des difficultés à s’adapter à son nouvel environnement. Farouchement indépendante, Carmen a deux passions : chanter et danser. Lorsque Tory Adair, “le gars le plus cool de l’école” essaie de l’intimider, elle lui résiste. Quand il la qualifie, elle et sa danse, de “stupide”, Carmen devient folle de rage et pourchasse Tory à travers la cour de récré, et se retrouve dans le bureau du directeur - dès son premier jour d’école!

**See Teachers Resource Page 27 for full synopsis.**

- Discuss what it means to be an immigrant
- Discuss the process of fitting in to a new family
- What does Canada offer to newcomers?
- Get any newcomers in the class to tell their stories, where they came from and what life is like for them in Canada
- What does it feel like to be sent to the Principal’s office?
- Without giving away the ending, ask the students to decide what happens to Carmen after she’s been sent to the Principal’s office.



## Introducing the Characters

**Carmen:** a feisty little girl, an orphan and refugee now living in Canada with her Canadian uncle.

**Uncle:** her relative/custodian

**Tory Adair:** the coolest kid in school

**2 other kids in the schoolyard**

**Mr Munday:** the Vice-Principal

See Student Activity Pages pages 19-25 for Pre- and Post-Show exercises on characters and dialogue.



- Introduce bits of dialogue from each character (page 13) and ask the students to decide what they learn about the story and the characters from the dialogue.
- Imagine what these characters look and sound like. Have the children draw or act out their ideas about the characters. Keep a record for post-performance discussion.



## Option #2:

Célestine Galli-Marié,  
the first Carmen



### Introducing the Opera

Georges Bizet's *Carmen* is one of the most popular and frequently performed works in the entire opera repertory. It was first performed in 1875 in Paris at the *Opéra-Comique*. The libretto was written by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, based on a novella of the same title by Prosper Mérimée.



Source: [www.pov.bc.ca/carmen.html](http://www.pov.bc.ca/carmen.html)

- Have students share their prior knowledge of Opera. (Have they listened to, attended, performed Opera?)
- Do they know any famous Opera music or performers?
- From this discussion decide on a definition of Opera and talk about how it is the same and different from other theatre.
- Introduce the various opera voices, (see page 6) and play some examples.
- Give the students the lines of dialogue (see pages 19-20, 23-24) and have them sing them aloud as they think the voices might sound.\*
- Explain that the story will be told through music and lyrics, and that the music will be used to set the mood, introduce the characters and move the action along.
- Play The Gypsy Dance from a recording of Bizet's *Carmen* (\*Recommended: recordings by Sir Georg Solti or Lorin Maazel) and have the children improvise dance movements that would suit this music. (see page 13 for post-show musical activity involving Flamenco dancing.)
- Introduce the students to the opera terms (aria, libretto etc) and the opera voices.

\*NOTE: have fun with this exercise and let them exaggerate as much as they like; it's a great way to get all the biases about opera out in the open and get all the silliness over with.

See Student Activity Pages pages 19-25 for Pre- and Post-Show exercises on music.

## Introducing the Opera

### What is an Opera?

It is a story that is sung. It differs from a play in that the music and singing carry us to a place of high emotion that words alone cannot reach. The art form is a larger-than-life experience, usually dealing with big human issues and emotions. Bizet's *Carmen* is written in French in the genre of opéra *comique*, which means that musical numbers are separated by dialogue.

### What is an Aria?

An aria (Italian for air) is a self-contained piece for one voice, usually with orchestral accompaniment.

### What is a Libretto?

The Libretto is the text of the Opera, the words that are spoken or set to music by the Composer.

## Introducing the Voices

The human voice is the oldest musical instrument in the world. In western classical music voices are first separated into male and female and then divided into high and low. Our two singers have trained their voices for many years so that they can sing loudly without the use of microphones, sing softly but still be heard in a large space, and do many special things with their voices that untrained singers can't do.



#### THE SOPRANO

The Soprano is the high voice for females, and Alto is the low voice. Our Soprano sings the role of Carmen. Bizet's *Carmen* is scored for Mezzo-Soprano, halfway between Soprano and Alto.

#### THE BARITONE

The Tenor is the high voice for males and the Bass is the lowest voice. The Baritone is the male voice between a Tenor and a Bass. Our Baritone sings 3 very different roles: Uncle, Tory Adair, and Mr Munday.

#### THE CELLO

The cello belongs to the String Family, some of whose relatives are the violin, the viola, the bass and the guitar. It has four strings and is played with a bow, sometimes plucked. Listen for the difference in sound when the cello player plucks her instrument with her fingers instead of using her bow. This is called Pizzicato.

#### THE PIANO

Depending on what's available at your school, the pianist will either play your school piano (which will probably be an upright or a grand piano) or will bring an electric piano. All non-electric pianos have 88 keys. Electric pianos rarely have that many. The piano is a member of the Percussion Family even though it has strings (like those instruments in the string family). Why does it belong to the Percussion Family? It is the hammers that strike the piano strings to make them sound that place it in the percussion family. Pianists study and practice for many years to be able to move all ten fingers both together and separately at slow and super fast speeds, quietly and very loudly.

## Introducing the Composer

Georges Bizet (25 October 1838 – 3 June 1875) was a French composer, mainly of operas. During a brilliant student career at the *Conservatoire de Paris*, Bizet won many prizes, including the prestigious *Prix de Rome* in 1857. *Carmen* was first performed at the *Opéra-Comique* in Paris, on 3 March 1875, and was not at first particularly successful; before its first run of 36 performances ended, Bizet died suddenly of a heart attack, and thus knew nothing of the opera's later enormous popularity and fame. Bizet was convinced that the work was a failure.



Source: [musicmotionblog.com](http://musicmotionblog.com)

DO YOU KNOW OF OTHER ARTISTS,  
COMPOSERS, PAINTERS OR WRITERS,  
WHO ONLY GAINED FAME AFTER  
THEY DIED?



# DURING PERFORMANCE

## *During the show:*

Divide the class into groups and assign one or two points to each group so they can report to the class after the performance.

- *Which of the opera voices do you hear? From which character?*
- *How do the musicians become part of the action*
- *How does the music change to match the mood and action of the story?*
- *Which of the musical numbers sound like dance music?*
- *How many different locations does the story take place in? What are they?*

## *All Students*

Listen for the dialogue from the pre-show activities. Decide if the singer's meaning and emotion match your ideas about the character and this dialogue.

# POST PERFORMANCE

## *Reviewing the Story*

- *What surprised you in the story?*
- *What character were you most interested in? Why?*
- *Review the pre-show suggestions for what happens after Carmen is sent to the Principal's office.*
- *What did you learn about Carmen's background?*
- *How do you think her background influences the way she behaves?*

# EXPLORING THE THEMES



The Schoolyard Carmen deals with the following themes:

- Being an orphan
- The new immigrant in Canadian society
- Schoolyard bullying
- The value of independence
- The saving properties of art
- The Gypsy, Romani or Gitano people and prejudice\*

\*See Teacher Resource Page 26 for background on Gypsies and follow-up activities.



## IMMIGRANTS AND NEWCOMERS

### Conduct Class Interviews:

Take a partner and interview each other. Present the family history of your partner to the class. Some of your questions could be:

- *Where were you born?*
- *Where were your parents born?*
- *If your family has been in Canada for several generations, what are you most proud of about your heritage?*
- *If you or your parents are Newcomers to Canada, what are you most proud of about your heritage?*
- *What are the best contributions people from your country have made to Canadian life?*
- *Make a class map, showing countries where all the students or their parents came from.*

Now I shall dance for you, Tory  
And I will sing, Tory  
The song that I shall sing is from  
my old country  
Sit you down there, Tory Adair  
Watch me sing now!

HAVE THE CHILDREN  
PERFORM THEIR NATIVE  
DANCES OR SONGS.



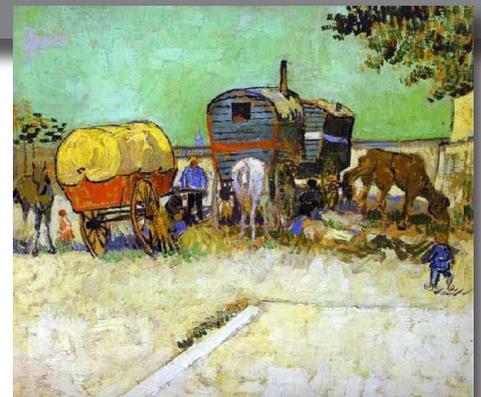
## THE GYPSY

Carmen is an orphan. She has lost both her mother and father and has been sent to a new country to live with an uncle and make a new life. In the original opera, Carmen is a Spanish Gypsy, also known as a Gitano. Our Carmen sings a snippet of music before she goes to sleep that begins, “By the Big Walls of Seville, I lost my father and mother”, which suggests that she too comes from Spain and may be a Gypsy, since like them she’s a wonderful dancer and loves to sing. Many gypsies are considered outcasts and have traditionally been persecuted all over Europe.

- Get the children to put together a scrapbook or collage of photographs of old Seville, particularly of the Gitano neighbourhood.
- Have the students make a photo montage of drawings and photographs of gypsies, particularly Spanish Gitanos.
- With older children, teachers may wish to open up the discussion of persecution and prejudice.
- What do the students know about gypsies, their culture, how they live and what kinds of work they do?

**See Teacher Resource page 26 for history and background of the Roma people in Spain.**

Vincent van Gogh:  
The Caravans -  
Gypsy Camp near  
Arles (1888, Oil on  
canvas)



Source: wikipedia

## CARMEN'S TALENTS



- Carmen loves to sing and dance; when Tory calls her singing and dancing “stupid,” she flies into a rage. Why is it important to her that she be recognized for what she does?
- Get the students to tell what they are proud of being able to do.
- Anyone proud of singing or dancing? Get them to demonstrate.



## BULLYING

- Is Tory Adair a bully? Identify the ways he tries to bully Carmen
- When Carmen gets in trouble for chasing him, “he just blamed me and then he hid”. What does this say about him?
- Why is it so difficult to convince Mr Munday that the fight was Tory’s fault?

*And now it's time to think up some fine way  
To get revenge and really make him pay...*



## CARMEN'S REVENGE

- Is this the way to deal with bullies?
- What would you do if Tory Adair called you “stupid”?



## ORPHANS

- *What is it like to be an orphan? Discuss.*
- *Have the students write a story about an orphan.*

HAVE THE STUDENTS DO SHORT IMPROVISATIONS TO TEST THEIR ALTERNATIVE CHOICES.

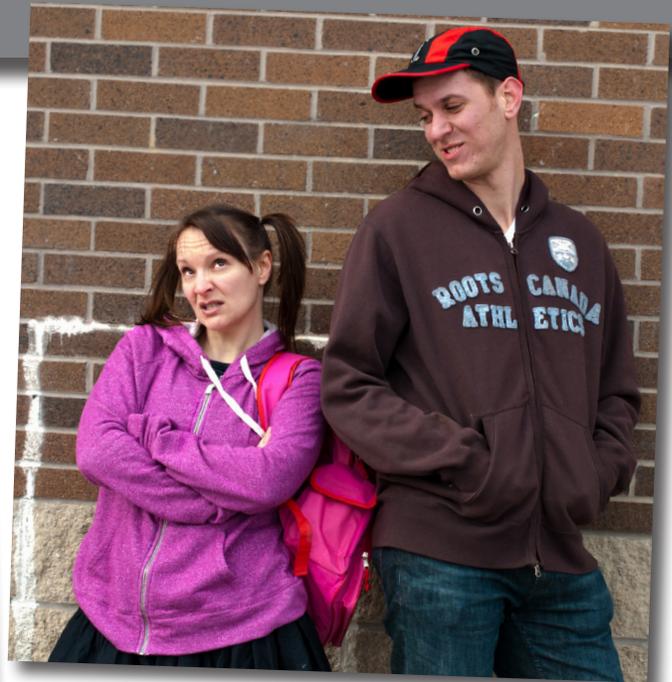


## CARMEN'S CHOICES

Carmen gets into a lot of trouble? Why? At several points in the story, Carmen has a choice about how to react.



- *What would you do if Tory called you "stupid"?*
- *How would you explain to Mr. Munday why you chased Tory?*
- *Would you run away?*



# EXPLORING THE ARTS



## LANGUAGE ARTS

- Write a letter from Carmen to her brothers in Seville, describing her new life in Canada.
- Write a libretto or a play about Carmen's 2nd day at school. Will she get into more trouble?
- Choose pairs of students to play out the scenes between:  
Uncle and Carmen • Tory and Carmen • Mr Munday and Carmen



## THE MUSIC

Bizet based much of the music of Carmen on **FLAMENCO** rhythms and dances. Flamenco is the musical style associated with Spanish gypsies.

**FLAMENCO** is fiercely rhythmic and involves singing, guitar playing, dancing, and palmas (hand clapping), or simply pounding in rhythm on a table. The Spanish word means “flamingo”, a bird native to Southern Spain and all along the migratory routes of the Romani people from India to North Africa. The word may have been a Spanish colloquialism to connect the dance with the bird's elegant movements.

Watch a video of Flamenco dancing. Call the students' attention to its emotional intensity, proud posture of the body, expressive use of the arms and rhythmic stamping of the feet, the lightning-fast footwork performed with absolute precision. In addition, the dancer may use props such as castanets, shawls and fans. There are many videos on the internet of Flamenco dancing. Have the students watch at least one.

*NOTE in particular this beautiful and instructive film:*

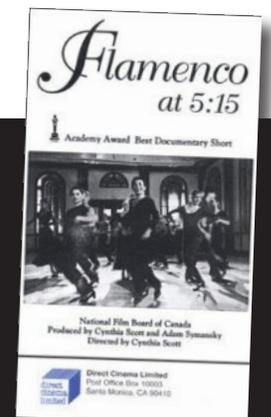
**FLAMENCO AT 5:15** [www.nfb.ca/film/flamenco\\_at\\_515/](http://www.nfb.ca/film/flamenco_at_515/)

*Cynthia Scott's Oscar®-winning short film is an impressionistic record of a flamenco dance class given to senior students of the National Ballet School of Canada by two great teachers from Spain, Susana and Antonio Robledo. The film shows the beautiful young North American dancers—inspired by the flamenco rhythms and mesmerized by Susana's extraordinary energy—joyously merging with an ancient gypsy culture. 1983, 29 min 22 s*

Belen Maya,  
flamenco  
dancer



Source: wikipedia





## MOVING TO MUSIC

After the students have watched *Flamenco at 5:15* or another video of authentic Flamenco dancing, play Carmen's "La la la" aria ("Je vais danser") or "The Gypsy Dance" ("Les Tringles des sistres") from Act 2, and divide the class into teams.

- Team A will dance to the music, noting the foot stamping, hand movements and erect posture.
- Team B will clap or pound out the rhythm or play any substitute for castanets.

Play the **Chorus of Schoolboys** from Act 1:

- Teach the children to sing this very simple melody
- Have the children march and act out the activities of children on the first day of School.

**Chorus of School Boys**  
Shoestring Opera: The School Yard Carmen

Georges Bizet  
Arr. by Doug Price

Lyrics by Mark Brownell

Am                      E                      Am                      E

Voice

Here we are an - oth - er year.      Stand in line, now don't you fear.  
There are lots of new kids here.      Stand - ing wait - ing all in tears.  
Here we are with lunch and snack      safe - ly stored in our back - pack.

Piano

5      G              C              F#dim              B              E              Am              E              Am

Voice

Good - bye mom - my, so long Dad.      This new school ain't all that bad.  
I am brave and will not cry.      As my par - ents say good - bye.  
What you got now let me see.      I have a pea - nut all - er - gy!

Pno.



## Castanets:

2 wooden shell-like objects looped together with a string that is hooked over the thumb. The castanets are held in the palm of the hand and make a clacking sound when snapped. You can make the same effect by clacking together 2 sticks, 2 pieces of pottery, 2 shells, 2 wooden rulers, or just by clapping your hands. There is always a great deal of clapping in Flamenco dancing, by the dancers and by the audience.



## IMPROVISE AN OPERATIC ARIA



### 2 Famous Arias from Carmen

#### *The Habanera*

Write new words to **“I’m not like any other girl”** and develop an argument between two students: what is it that Student A will never ever do? In Bizet’s opera this aria is called *The Habanera*.

*See:* the great soprano Maria Callas <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rjOrOt6wFw&feature=related> or Agnes Baltsa <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aY5HJ5c14E&feature=related>

#### *The Toreador Song*

Write new words and have the children boast and preen and strut around the classroom. Others can clap and cheer.

*See:* [www.youtube.com/watch?v=4g\\_otRgzerI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4g_otRgzerI)

**Improvise music: See Student Activity Page 21 for words to set to music**

# I'm Not Like Any Other Girl (Habanera)

Lyrics by  
Mark Brownell

Shoestring Opera: The School Yard Carmen

Georges Bizet  
Arr. by Doug Price

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each with a vocal line for Carmen and a piano accompaniment (Piano/Pno.). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes lyrics and musical notations such as triplets and dynamics.

**System 1:** Carmen's line begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics "I'm not like an - y oth - er girl. I'm not the". The piano accompaniment starts with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present.

**System 2:** Carmen's line continues with "one that you can tame. And I'll give your big brain a twirl should you now". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic patterns.

**System 3:** Carmen's line continues with "try to play that game. Noth - ing you can say or can do will make me". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic patterns.

**System 4:** Carmen's line concludes with "want to go to school. Hold my breath til my face turns blue. Yes I'm as". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic patterns.

17

Carmen

stub - bum as a mule. No school!

Pno.

21

Carmen

No school. No school!

Pno.

25

Carmen

No school.

Pno.

# Tory Adair (Toreador)

Shoestring Opera: The School Yard Carmen

Georges Bizet  
Arr. by Doug Price

Lyrics by  
Mark Brownell

Tory Adair

I am the great - est boy that ev - er was.

Piano

*f* *p*

5

Tory

If you ask why, I say be cause I'm so strong and clear - ly in con trol.

Pno.

9

Tory

I score all of the goals! There's just one oth - er thing

Pno.

12

Tory

I have to say: I rule you ev - 'ry day.

Pno.

3

# STUDENT ACTIVITY PAGES

## Student Activity Page #1 Pre-Show



### The Characters Option #1

- What do you learn about the story and the characters from these bits of dialogue?
- What do these characters look like?
- Draw a picture or act out your ideas about the characters
- Sing the bits of dialogue in the way you think their voices would sound.

NOTHING YOU CAN SAY OR CAN DO  
WILL MAKE ME WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL  
HOLD MY BREATH TILL MY FACE TURNS BLUE  
YES, I'M AS STUBBORN AS A MULE.

CARMEN

TO SCHOOL.  
GO TO SCHOOL! TO SCHOOL!  
GO TO SCHOOL!  
YOU'RE GOING TO SCHOOL NOW AND THAT IS THAT  
YOU'RE GOING TO SCHOOL OR I WILL EAT MY HAT!  
I'M SO AFRAID, I JUST WANT TO RUN AND HIDE!

UNCLE

I HOPE IT TASTES GOOD—YOUR SILLY HAT  
'CAUSE YOU'LL BE EATING IT I PROMISE YOU THAT.  
NOW GO TO SCHOOL!  
NO, I WILL NOT  
NO MATTER HOW YOU SHOUT, AND SCHEME AND PLOT  
NOW GO TO SCHOOL!  
NO, I WILL NOT  
NO I WILL NEVER EVER GOOOD TO SCHOOL!

CARMEN  
AND UNCLE

I AM THE GREATEST BOY THAT EVER WAS  
I HAVE HE STYLE. I HAVE THE BUZZ.  
IF YOU THINK THAT BIEBER'S REALLY COOL  
I'LL KICK YOU OUT OF SCHOOL!  
THERE'S JUST ONE OTHER THING  
YOU HAVE TO SEE  
THE ONE I LOVE IS ME.

TORY ADAIR

WHO'S THAT NEW KID? SHE LOOKS ODD  
STARING AT ME / WHAT A CLOD  
DARING ME WITH HER FAT FROWN  
THINK I WILL HAVE TO KNOCK HER DOWN.

KIDS IN THE  
SCHOOLYARD

HE IS A ROT-TEN AWFUL KID  
PLEASE PUNISH HIM FOR WHAT HE DID  
HE JUST BLANNED ME AND THEN HE HID  
THAT ROTTEN KID—BLANNED ME AND HID  
DID YOU SEE WHAT THAT TOOO-RY DID?

CARMEN

## Student Activity Page #2 Pre-Show



### The Characters option #2:

Clip the following lines and hand them out to the students. Who do the lines belong to? See list of characters on page 4.

Sing the lines aloud as you think they should sound.

1. There's just one other thing  
You have to see  
The one I love is me.

2. There are a lot of new kids here  
Standing, waiting all in tears  
I am brave and will not cry  
As my parents wave goodbye

3. He is a rot-ten awful kid  
Please punish him for what he did  
He just blamed me and then he hid

4. My father used to say, "when  
you see trouble—run!"  
Run fast and far away  
And so it's time to go and run  
without delay  
Run a-way. Run a-way.

5. NOTHING YOU CAN SAY OR CAN DO  
WILL MAKE ME WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL  
HOLD MY BREATH TILL MY FACE TURNS BLUE  
YES, I'M AS STUBBORN AS A MULE.

6. Once the school bell sounds  
I start to prepare  
Waiting for the kids  
Who are in my care

7. Carmen we have so much stuff to buy  
There's no need to be quite so shy  
See there! See there!  
Real cool backpack!  
It's on saaaale!

## Student Activity Page #3 Pre-Show



### WRITE YOUR OWN MUSIC

#### Intermediates:

Below are the words that go with four different arias from the opera. Try **setting them to music**, i.e. make up your own tunes to go with them.

What kind of instrument(s) would you choose to accompany each tune?

1. *Look at me, oh yes do look at me*  
*I'm standing tall and strong*  
*I am amazing*  
*My name is Tory-O*  
*I'll tell my story-O*  
*Just sit back, chill out, and listen to my song*
2. *My father used to say, "when you see trouble—run!"*  
*Run fast and far away*  
*And so it's time to go and run without delay*  
*Run a-way. Run a-way.*  
*If I choose to stay he may send me on my way*  
*So now without delay*  
*I must now run away*  
*A-way*  
*A-way*  
*I must not stay.*
3. *I recall a time when you were younger*  
*A bright young child with sparkling eyes*  
*The image of your parents' grace*  
*I saw it in—your newborn face*
4. *I'm not like any other girl*  
*I'm not the one that you can tame*  
*And I'll give your big brain a twirl*  
*Should you now try to play that game*

## Student Activity Page #4 Post-Show

Describe each of the characters in 4 words. Draw a picture of each character.

### CARMEN

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a picture of the character Carmen.

### UNCLE

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a picture of the character Uncle.

### TORY ADAIR

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a picture of the character Tory Adair.

### MR MUNDAY

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a picture of the character Mr Munday.

# Student Activity Page #5 – Bilingual Pre-Show

## The Characters Option #1



- What do you learn about the story and the characters from these bits of dialogue?
- What do these characters look like?
- Draw a picture or act out your ideas about the characters
- Sing the bits of dialogue in the way you think their voices would sound.

On n'peut rien dire, on n'peut rien faire  
Pour me faire aller à l'école  
Je vous ferai subir l'enfer  
Et je saurai tenir parole

CARMEN

I AM THE GREATEST BOY THAT EVER WAS  
I HAVE HE STYLE. I HAVE THE BUZZ.  
IF YOU THINK THAT BIEBER'S REALLY COOL  
I'LL KICK YOU OUT OF SCHOOL!  
THERE'S JUST ONE OTHER THING  
YOU HAVE TO SEE  
THE ONE I LOVE IS ME.

TORY ADAIR

TO SCHOOL,  
GO TO SCHOOL! TO SCHOOL!  
GO TO SCHOOL!  
YOU'RE GOING TO SCHOOL NOW AND THAT IS THAT  
YOU'RE GOING TO SCHOOL OR I WILL EAT MY HAT!  
I'M SO AFRAID, I JUST WANT TO RUN AND HIDE!

UNCLE

WHO'S THAT NEW KID? SHE LOOKS ODD  
STARING AT ME / WHAT A CLOD  
DARING ME WITH HER FAT FROWN  
THINK I WILL HAVE TO KNOCK HER DOWN.

KIDS IN THE  
SCHOOLYARD

NOW GO TO SCHOOL!  
Non, j'irai pas  
T'a beau crier, prier et faire la loi  
NOW GO TO SCHOOL!  
Non, j'irai pas  
Je n'irai jamais jamais àààààà l'école!

CARMEN  
AND UNCLE

J'ai mille raisons d'le détester  
Qu'ils soit puni pour c'qu'il a fait  
Il m'a blâmé, puis s'est caché  
Ce ..., il s'est caché  
Vous savez ce que Tooo-ry est?

CARMEN

## Student Activity Page #6—Bilingual Pre-Show



### The Characters option #2:

Clip the following lines and hand them out to the students. Who do the lines belong to? See list of characters on page 4.

Sing the lines aloud as you think they should sound

1. There's just one other thing  
You have to see  
The one I love is me.

2. There are a lot of new kids here  
Standing, waiting all in tears  
I am brave and will not cry  
As my parents wave goodbye

3. J'ai mille raisons d'le détester  
Qu'ils soit puni pour c'qu'il a fait  
Il m'a blamé, puis s'est caché

4. Mon père disait toujours -  
Face aux dangers - sauve-toi!  
Prends tes jambes à ton cou  
Le moment est venu de me  
sauver de tout  
M'échapper. M'échapper.

5. L'école m'effraie, c'est gros, c'est gris  
C'est plein d'effrayants professeurs aussi  
Je n'irai pas, z'avez compris?  
Je ne veux pas y aller, jamais d'la vie!

6. Once the school bell sounds  
I start to prepare  
Waiting for the kids  
Who are in my care

7. Carmen we have so much stuff to buy  
There's no need to be quite so shy  
See there! See there!  
Real cool backpack!  
It's on saaaale!

## Student Activity Page #7—Bilingual Post-Show



Draw a line from one column to the other connecting the French word with the English word that means the same.

<i>école</i>	<i>nice</i>
<i>sac à dos</i>	<i>road</i>
<i>fatigué</i>	<i>coat</i>
<i>effrayant</i>	<i>peace</i>
<i>jamais</i>	<i>truth</i>
<i>manteau</i>	<i>schoolyard</i>
<i>chanson</i>	<i>poor</i>
<i>le bureau du directeur</i>	<i>happiness</i>
<i>la cour de récré</i>	<i>scary</i>
<i>gentil</i>	<i>tired</i>
<i>chemin</i>	<i>principal's office</i>
<i>vérité</i>	<i>king</i>
<i>pauvre</i>	<i>backpack</i>
<i>bonheur</i>	<i>never</i>
<i>paix</i>	<i>school</i>
<i>le roi</i>	<i>song</i>

# TEACHER RESOURCE PAGES

## THE ROMA, GYPSY, or GITANO

The *Romani* are an ethnic group living mostly in Europe, who trace their origins to the Indian Subcontinent. Romani are widely known in the English-speaking world as *Gypsies*. The English term Gypsy originates from the Middle English *gypcian*, meaning Egyptian. It was once believed that the Romani originated in Egypt. However, as a term ‘gypsy’ is considered derogatory by many members of the Roma community because of negative and stereotypical associations with the term.

There are an estimated four million Romani people in Europe (as of 2002), though some put the numbers as high as 14 million. Significant Romani populations are found in the Balkans, in Spain, France, Russia and Ukraine. Several more million Romani may live out of Europe, in particular in the Middle East and in the Americas.

The Romani of Spain (Gitanos) emigrated from Northern India as early as 1000 A.D., concentrating in Andalusia and adopting the region’s unique hybrid culture as their own. Flamenco music, an art form which is Andalusian in origin but, having been strongly marked by gitanos in interpretative style, Flamenco is now commonly associated as Gitano by many Spaniards. It is a mixture of various western and oriental influences from Andalusian history, with later Indian influence infused by the Romani. Flamenco dance style derives much from Romani dances with elements that can be traced all the way back to northern India, from where the Romani originated, and can still be seen there in the present day Kathak dance.

All through their history, Romani have been the subject of persecution. In the Byzantine Empire, Romani were slaves of the state. In 1749 the Spanish monarchy ordered a nationwide raid of Romani known as *The Great Roundup*, that led to separation of families and placement of all able-bodied men into forced labor camps. The persecution of the Romani reached a peak during World War II in the Porajmos, the genocide perpetrated by the Nazis

during the Holocaust. In 1935, the Nuremberg laws stripped the Romani people living in Nazi Germany of their citizenship, after which they were subjected to violence, imprisonment in concentration camps and later genocide in extermination camps.

In Spain, attempts to assimilate the Gitanos were under way as early as 1619, when Gitanos were forcibly settled, the use of the Romani language was prohibited, Gitano men and women were sent to separate workhouses and their children sent to orphanages. Similar prohibitions took place in 1783 under King Charles III, who prohibited the nomadic lifestyle, the use of the Calo language, Romani clothing, their trade in horses and other itinerant trades. The use of the word gitano was also forbidden to further assimilation. Ultimately these measures failed, as the rest of the population rejected the integration of the Gitanos.

Many fictional depictions of Romani people in literature and art present romanticized narratives of their supposed mystical powers of fortune telling or their supposed irascible or passionate temper paired with an indomitable love of freedom and a habit of criminality. Particularly notable are classics like the story *Carmen* by Prosper Mérimée and the opera based on it by Georges Bizet, Victor Hugo’s *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and Miguel de Cervantes’ *La Gitanilla*.

After WWII Spain’s industrialization negatively affected Gitanos as the migration of rural Spaniards to major cities led to the growth of shanty towns around urban areas. Traditional Gitano neighbourhoods such as Triana in Seville became gentrified and Gitanos were slowly pushed out to the periphery of newer shanty towns outside the old walls of Seville. Federico García Lorca, the great Spanish poet of the 20th century, wrote in *Romancero Gitano* (“Gypsy Ballad Book”) “*The Roma is the most basic, most profound, the most aristocratic of my country, as representative of their way and whoever keeps the flame, blood, and the alphabet of the universal Andalusian truth.*”

# TEACHER RESOURCE PAGES

## THE SCHOOLYARD CARMEN:

### FULL SYNOPSIS

Carmen is a feisty little girl with a dark past. Adopted by a Canadian uncle, she is a newcomer to this country struggling to fit in. She loves to dance, and sing, and is fiercely independent.

It is the evening before her first day at her new school. Her Uncle takes her to the Mall (“To the Mall – what a sprawl”—*Sur la place*) to buy everything she needs, including a large pink backpack. Carmen thinks it’s ugly, her Uncle insists it is just right, and eventually she gives in. The next morning she stubbornly refuses to go to school (“I’m not like any other girl”—*The Habanera*). They argue. Uncle puts his foot down and drags her off to school where she meets other children (“Here we are another day”—*The Schoolboy Chorus*). In the schoolyard When Tory Adair appears, the other girls drool over him, “the coolest kid in school”, as he sings about himself, the king of the schoolyard. (“Look at me, oh yes do look at me”—*the Toreador song*) Carmen congratulates him on his song, saying she likes to sing too, and dance, which she proceeds to do. (“Now I shall dance for you”—*Je vais danser*) Tory tries to imitate her steps, finds he cannot keep up with her, and growls “Your dancing is stupid, your singing is stupid, you are stupid!” Carmen flies into a rage and chases him all around the schoolyard. The whistle blows and she finds herself in a whole lot of trouble. She is sent to the Principal’s office—on her first day at school!

Outside the office, Carmen seethes and plots her revenge. (“I think it is an unfair thing”—*the Gypsy Dance: Les Tringles des sœurs*), imagining with glee the humiliations she will visit on Tory. Vice-Principal Munday arrives carrying a watering can. He describes how he nourishes the children eager to learn. (“Once the school bell sounds—*La cloche a sonné, Chorus of cigarette girls*). Carmen plays the innocent victim, but her fury gets the upper hand and she cannot resist complaining about “that stinky old rotten big jerk named To-ree”. Mr. Munday defends Tory who told a different story, and when Carmen refuses to tell her side of the story (“You can trap me and keep me”—*Coupe-moi, brûle-moi*). Mr Munday threatens her with detention and decides he must contact her Uncle. Carmen is suddenly terrified, what if her Uncle sends her back? (“And now what will I do”—*Mêlons! — Coupons!*) She has been taught if there’s trouble, to run, fast and far away. And she does. Voices call for her, her Uncle is distraught. Suddenly a large pink backpack lands at his feet. He sings of his memories of Carmen as a little child (“I recall a time”—*La fleur que tu m’avais jetée*). He knows he can never replace her father and mother, but he vows to do his best to take care of her and love her. Carmen finally emerges, head down.

Her Uncle tells her that he and Mr Munday think that she and Tory have to work this out together, to make peace. Reluctantly, Carmen begins to tell her side of the story (“Here is my story of Tory Adair”—*La Seguidilla*) and Tory chimes in with his side. Together they realize that they “can’t go on hating forever” and that they must start again as though the fight never happened. Again she shows him her dance, and this time he’s able to follow! This doesn’t make them best friends, but it’s better. Carmen decides that she may be okay here in her new home with her Uncle. Uncle calls her to get ready...for her second day at school. Eek! She runs.

# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS



## Oral Communication

- 1.6 extend understanding of oral texts by connecting, comparing, and contrasting the ideas and information in them to their own knowledge, experience,
- 1.9 identify a variety of presentation strategies used in oral texts and analyze their effect on the audience
- 2.5 identify a range of vocal effects, including tone, pace, pitch, volume, and a variety of sound effects

## Text

- 1.7 analyze oral texts in order to evaluate how well they communicate ideas, opinions, themes,
- 2.4 identify various elements of style - including voice, word choice, and the use of hyperbole, strong verbs, dialogue, and complex sentences



## Oral Communication

- Produce two- and three-dimensional works of art that communicate a variety of ideas (thoughts, feelings, experiences) for specific purposes (e.g. puppet making)
- Explain how the effective use of the elements and principles of design contributes to an art work's ability to communicate feelings, convey ideas



## Music

- Use correctly the musical terminology associated with the specific expectations for this grade.
- Write new words to familiar melodies, using their knowledge of rhythm to ensure that the new text fits the melody
- Sing or play expressively, giving particular attention to using suitable dynamics and tempi
- Describe how various elements of music are combined to create different moods.



## Drama

- Represent and interpret characters by speaking, moving and writing in role.
- Demonstrate an understanding of voice and audience by speaking and writing in role as characters in a story
- Describe and interpret their own and other's work, using appropriate drama vocabulary
- Identify and explain the use of significance of symbols or objects in dramatic presentations.

# THE SCHOOLYARD CARMEN

Music by *Georges Bizet*

Musical Arrangements by *Doug Price*

Libretto by *Mark Brownell*

French translation *Dominique Denis*

Directed and dramaturged by *Molly Thom*

## Shoestring Opera

**Shoestring Opera** was established in January 2004 by cellist Anne Rankin with the mandate to bring opera to children in the schools. Its first project, *The Shoestring Magic Flute* is based on Mozart's opera, and was written for two singer-actors (baritone and soprano) and two instrumentalists (cello and piano). Canadian playwright Greg Robic wrote the script and arranged the music, and it was dramaturged and directed by Molly Thom. *The Shoestring Magic Flute* has delighted audiences in schools and theatres all over Ontario, has been performed at Harbourfront's Carnivalisma Festival and the Music Garden in Toronto, the Montreal Baroque Festival, three times to sold-out audiences at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, and sixteen times at the Solar Stage Children's Theatre, Toronto. *Prologue to the Performing Arts* toured *The Shoestring Magic Flute* in two versions, a bilingual version and an all-English version. In 2008 Shoestring Opera developed a second opera for children, an adaptation of Puccini's comic opera Gianni Schicchi entitled *Bozo's Fortune*, with a libretto by Shirley Barrie, directed and dramaturged by Molly Thom, which also toured Ontario with *Prologue to the Performing Arts*. *The Schoolyard Carmen* in 2012 is Shoestring's third opera, and is performed in English and also in a bi-lingual version.



[www.shoestringopera.com](http://www.shoestringopera.com)

*The Schoolyard Carmen was developed with the assistance of*



[www.torontoartscouncil.org](http://www.torontoartscouncil.org)

*Thank you to our generous donors, your contributions have made  
the production of *The Schoolyard Carmen* possible.*

### **Shoestring Archangels**

*The Hon Henry N.R. Jackman  
Morden Yolles*

### **Shoestring Angels**

*John McKellar  
Brigitte Shim  
Oscar Signoretti*

### **Shoestring Friends**

*Sherri Appell, Mary Bredin, Robert Broley  
Mary and Evan Church  
Helen Dunlop, Margaret Edgar  
Victoria and Alastair Grant  
Dr. Elon Griffith, Daphne Harris  
Dr Charles Hayter, Susan Jefferies  
Linda Lewis, Brian and Andrea Meeson  
Kristin Michie, Chris Rankin, Jane Smith,  
Mary-Walton Ball, Mary Wentz, Linda A. Wood*