

OPERA FUNTIME
presents



Treemonisha

AN OPERA
BY SCOTT JOPLIN

OPERA FUNTIME COLLECTION

by the Young Patronesses of the Opera

The Abduction from the Seraglio	Mozart
Aida	Verdi
The Barber of Seville	Rossini
La Bohème	Puccini
Carmen	Bizet
La Cenerentola	Rossini
Così Fan Tutte	Mozart
Cristoforo Colombo	Franchetti
Don Giovanni	Mozart
Faust	Gounod
Die Fledermaus	J. Strauss
Hansel and Gretel	Humperdinck
Idomeneo	Mozart
Madama Butterfly	Puccini
Lucia di Lammermoor	Donizetti
The Magic Flute	Mozart
The Marriage of Figaro	Mozart
Otello	Verdi
Pagliacci	Leoncavallo
Rigoletto	Verdi
Roméo and Juliette	Gounod
The Tales of Hoffmann	Offenbach
Treemonisha	Joplin
Tosca	Puccini
La Traviata	Verdi
Turandot	Puccini

Copyright ©2024 by Young Patronesses of the Opera, Inc. (YPO).
All rights reserved by YPO, Inc. No part of this publication may be reproduced
without prior permission from YPO, Inc. For information and additional copies,
contact us at operafuntimes@ypo-miami.org or by visiting: www.YPO-Miami.org.

ISBN #: 978-09993895-4-6



Young Patronesses of the Opera

GulliverPrep

A YOUNG PERSON'S INTRODUCTION TO THE ARTS

featuring the opera

TREEMONISHA

by Scott Joplin

Gulliver Preparatory School EDITORIAL STAFF

Maria Alejandra de Urioste '22

Writer

Mia Carrasco and Valeria Castillo '24

Spanish Translation

Nalani Brown '22

Contributor

Sophia Demir '22

Artist

Victoria Poliak '22

Designer and Editor

Mia Carrasco and Valeria Castillo '24

Games and Resources

Faculty Advisers

Linde Barrett, IB CAS Coordinator

Monica Rodriguez, Digital Mass Media Department Chair

Tania Magnan, Learning Specialist

Treemonisha Opera Funtime produced by the following members of the Young Patronesses of the Opera: Linde Barrett, Leslie Cooper, Leatrice Damus, Carolina Friedhoff, Lisa Hogan, Amal Solh Kabbani, Susanne Kayyali, Judi Woolger



OPERA FUNTIME

This book has been created by Gulliver high school students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate and Digital Mass Media Programs, in collaboration with the Young Patronesses of the Opera, a non-for-profit organization, whose mission is to educate students in the operatic genre. This book is a young person's introduction to the arts through opera.



EDITOR'S NOTE

Through this virtual book, we are excited to promote real-world challenges such as race and equity while also emphasizing the significance of community, education, and hard work. We are also enthusiastic to introduce African-American composer, Scott Joplin, who died before his work became famous. Joplin not only wrote *Treemonisha* but also popularized the genre of music called ragtime. We are excited to share this publication with children and elementary schools to help cultivate young minds and appreciate Joplin's lost opera.



ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Scott Joplin was an African-American composer who was later known as the "King of Rags." Although the exact year of his birth is unknown - it is believed to be circa 1867. He was born in Texas to two musicians- his father played the violin and his mother sang.

Throughout his life, Scott Joplin composed 44 original pieces and had perfect pitch. His creativity came from meshing African music with opera sounds. Sadly, he was never recognized during his lifetime.

Although Joplin was a keyboard genius who had developed a folk opera with ragtime music and operatic talents, he failed to get his work accepted. In fact, Joplin paid for his opera, *Treemonisha*, to be published with his own money in 1911. When he tried to do a concert in Harlem, he had to play the 230-page piano score all by himself which he was unhappy about.





ABOUT THE OPERA

Treemonisha is an opera, written by Joplin in 1910, about a baby that is left under a tree who becomes adopted by sharecroppers and grows up to be a freed Black woman. Her name is Treemonisha. She is taught how to read by a white woman who she does chores for.

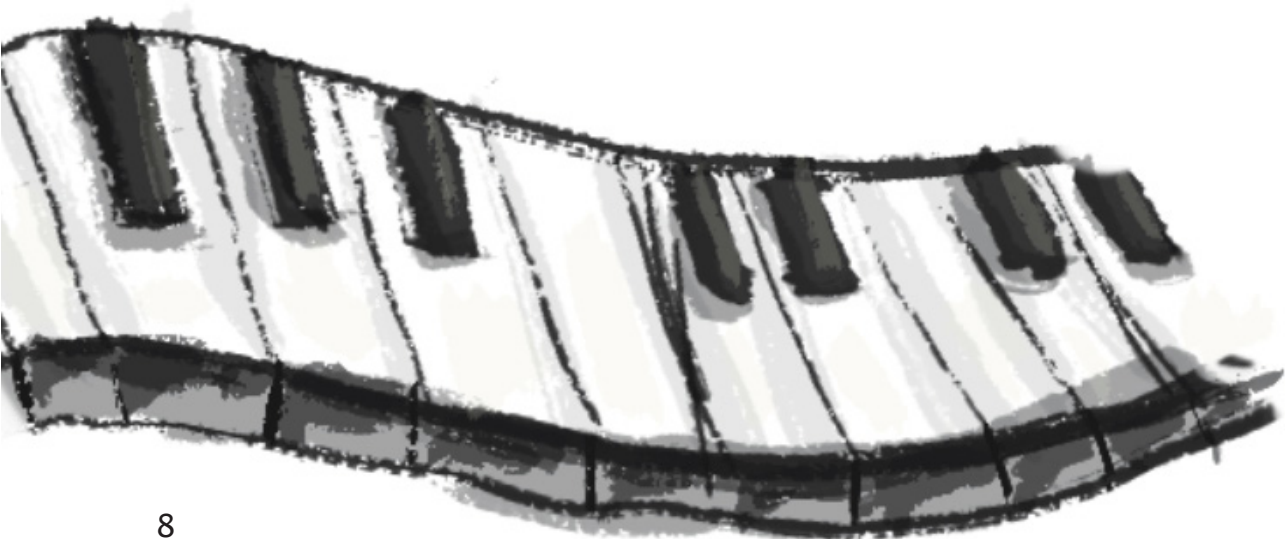
As the only educated Black woman in her community, Treemonisha comes back to her plantation of sharecroppers to teach them how to read. While doing this kind action, she is kidnapped by the evil Conjurers who have been spreading misinformation. Eventually, she is saved by her man and returns to her family.

Treemonisha uses her knowledge as power to fight against the Conjurers who are cheating, swindling, lying, and peddling superstitions to lead the Black community astray. She shows how education will triumph over misinformation and ultimately benefit the Black community.

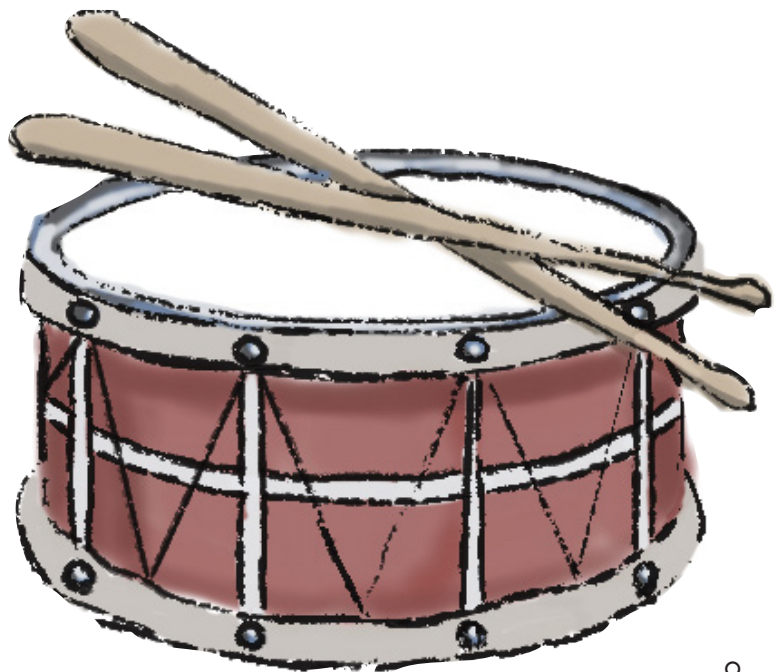


RAGTIME

In the later decades of the 19th century, pianists around the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers developed Ragtime - a popular form of American music from 1899 until 1917. The unique sound of ragtime is based on the




structure of its piano tunes. The style is called "ragtime" because of its ragged rhythm influenced by minstrel show tunes, African American banjo techniques, syncopated (off-beat) dancing rhythms, and aspects of European music.





ACT I

In 1884, between Texas and the Red River, there stood a former plantation. In the plantation lived Treemonisha with her mother, Monisha, and her father, Ned. One day a witch doctor named Zodzetrick goes up to Monisha. He tries to sell Monisha and her husband a bag of luck.



Ned chases him away. As he runs away, Treemonisha and her friend, Remus, can hear the people singing as they get ready for the day.



Before everybody gets to work
Treemonisha asks if they would
like a ring play, and everyone
agrees. Andy, another of
Treemonisha's friends, leads
the singing and dancing.



As the dancing stops,
Treemonisha sees that many
women in the neighborhood
have wreaths around their
heads and decides she wants
one for herself. So, she goes
up to a tree and tries to get
leaves for the wreath.





Treemonisha's mother runs to stop her just in time. Monisha tells her that the tree is sacred and begins to sing about when she discovered Treemonisha under the tree as a baby.

Treemonisha is shocked when she learns that Monisha and Ned are not her biological parents. To cheer her up, Monisha tells her daughter that she was the only person in the neighborhood to be educated (which was uncommon at the time).

Suddenly, another witch doctor named Parson Alltalk rides into the neighborhood in his wagon.

The man talks of spells and magic, enchanting them with make-believe stories, sneakily distracting the people so that they can kidnap Treemonisha.

After Alltalk leaves, everyone realizes that Treemonisha is missing. Her best friend Remus bravely decides to go and rescue her.



WRONG IS NEVER RIGHT

Scott Joplin

Andante con espressione

rall. e dim.

Remus

Nev - er treat..... your neigh - bors wrong,..... By

mak - ing..... them... feel... blue;..... Re-

cresc.

Never treat your neighbors wrong
By making them feel blue
Remember that the whole day long
The Creator is watching you

REAL SLOW DRAG

Scott Joplin

INTRO. Larghetto. ♩ = 100
(Treenonisha and Lucy stand on bench in rear of room.)

mf

(Salute partners.)
Treenonisha. (Slow Drag forward.)

Sa - lute your part - ner, do the drag, drag,

mf

(All stop.) (Slow Drag backward.)

drag..... Stop and move back - ward, do the. drag.

Salute your partner, do the drag, drag, drag.
Stop and move backward, do the drag.
All of you stop.
Look to your right and do the drag, drag, drag.
To your left, that's the way.
Marching onward, marching onward,
Marching to that lovely tune;
Marching onward, marching onward,
Happy as a bird in June.
Sliding onward, sliding onward,
Listen to that rag.
Hop and skip,
Now do that Slow Drag.

Help!





ACT II

In the lair, the witch doctors sing a song about superstition because they want to punish Treemonisha for getting in their way.

Treemonisha is tied up by the witch doctors. While she is bound, odd creatures emerge and perform a ballet dance around her.

The tension gets higher and higher as two witch doctors, Simon and Cephus, take Treemonisha to a giant wasp nest.



They are about to throw her in the nest when they are suddenly interrupted.



A devil man appears, but it is Remus in disguise! He scares away the witch doctors and gets there just in time to rescue Treemonisha.

**SHE IS
SAVED!**






ACT III

Remus and Treemonisha return and everyone is so happy to see them. In celebration of their arrival, the community has a big party.

In the end, Remus and Treemonisha surprise everyone because they have captured two of the witch doctors: Zodzetrick and Luddud.




After this is revealed, the neighborhood decides what to do with the conjurers. Remus gives a speech about good and evil, stating that a wrong is never right.



Andy still wants to punish the conjurers and starts gathering people in the neighborhood to attack them.

Then, Treemonisha convinces Andy to forgive the conjurers and lets them go. Luddud decides to change his ways and chooses good, but Zodzetrick insists that Luddud will always remain the same.



Treemonisha is chosen by the neighborhood as their new leader, and she will lead in education.

Everybody is happy and they celebrate Treemonisha with a closing dance.



ON STAGE

Treemonisha was first performed as a concert read-through in Harlem in 1910 after Scott Joplin finished composing it. It was not completely performed until 1972, more than fifty years after the composer's death. Joplin was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in music posthumously in 1976. With its support of women and African-Americans, mixing American folk music and European opera, and focus on compassion, culture, and hard labor, *Treemonisha* has been called an important part of American opera history.



Activities & Games

FOR TREEMONISHA
AN OPERA
BY SCOTT JOPLIN

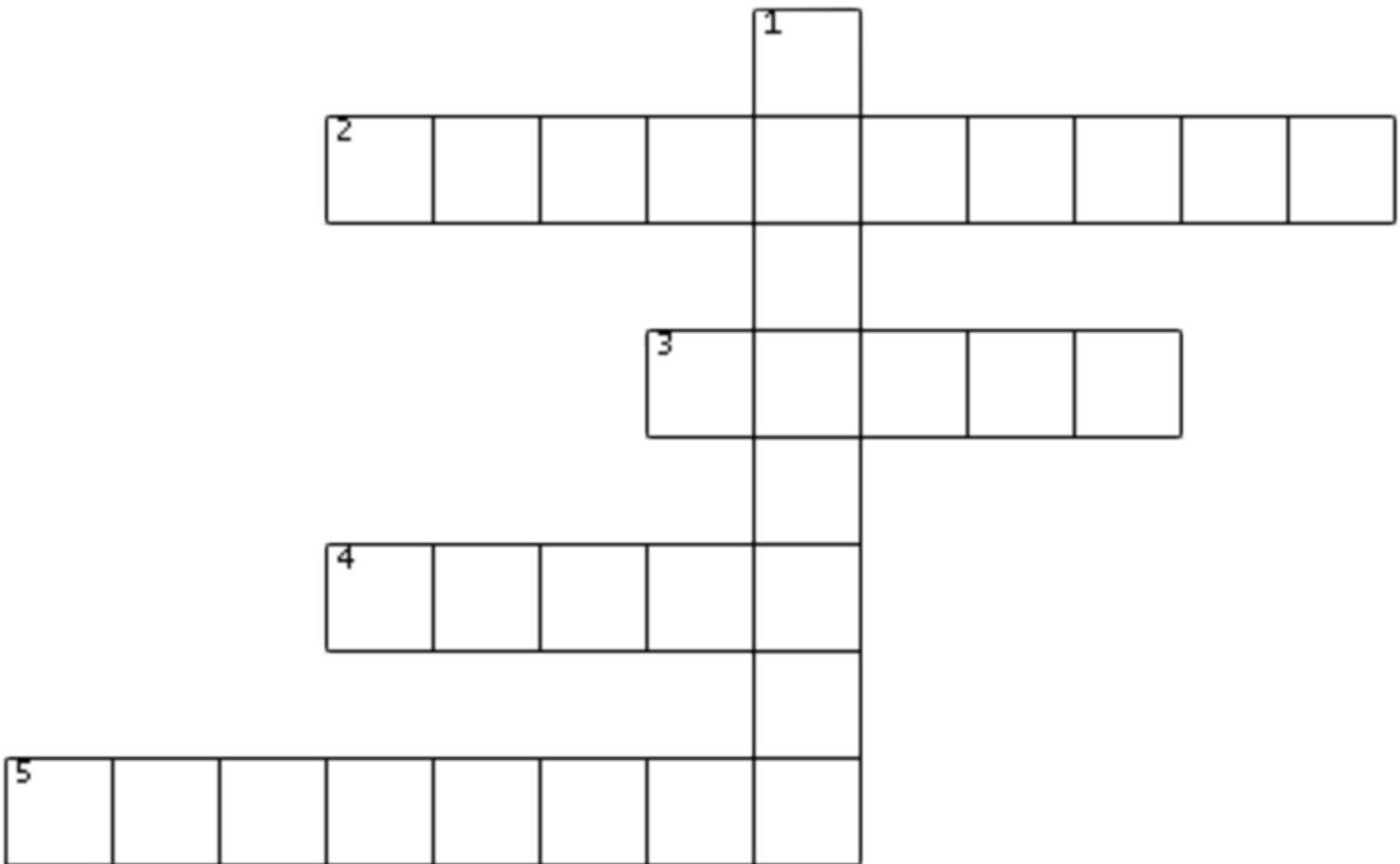


CAST SCRAMBLE

DIRECTIONS: Unscramble the cast characters' names below.

1. ISAHNOM _____
2. EDN ____
3. YADN _____
4. URSME _____
5. OSMIN _____
6. EMASHEOTRNI _____
7. SHCEPU _____
8. RONSAP TALLKAL _____
9. ULUDDD _____
10. EZODEITIRZCK _____

CROSSWORD



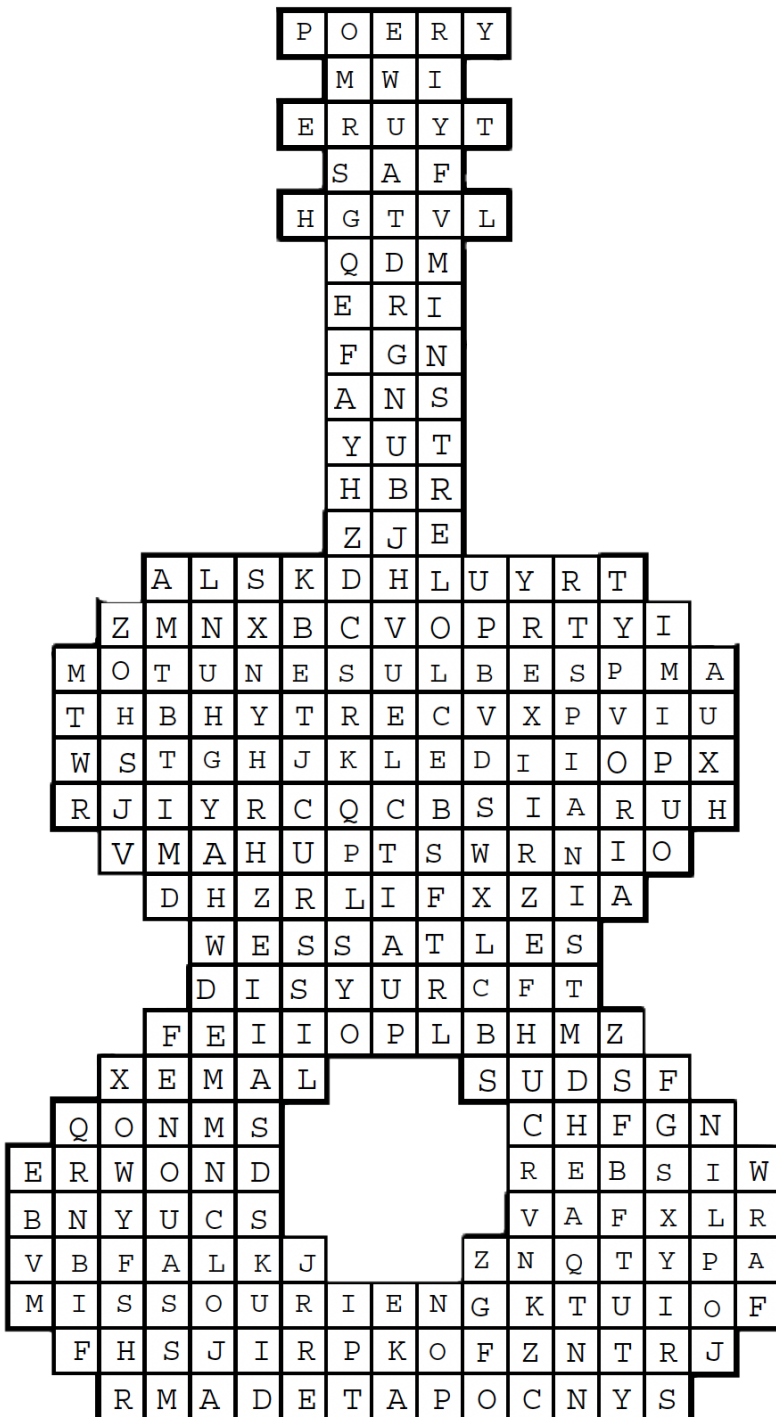
ACROSS:

- 2. Scott Joplin's nickname
- 3. The genre of the play **Treemonisha**
- 4. The state Scott Joplin was born in
- 5. The prize Scott Joplin was awarded after his death for his contribution to music

DOWN:

- 1. A person who writes music (hint: Scott Joplin)

WORD SEARCH

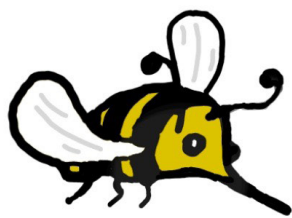


WORDS:

1. MINSTREL
2. TUNES
3. RHYTHM
4. MISSISSIPPI
5. PITCH
6. MISSOURI
7. BANGO
8. JOPLIN
9. SYNCOPATED

ALWAYS REMEMBER...

Opera Etiquette



on



neatly;



+

quiet;

stay



ed;

N-joy,



others



also

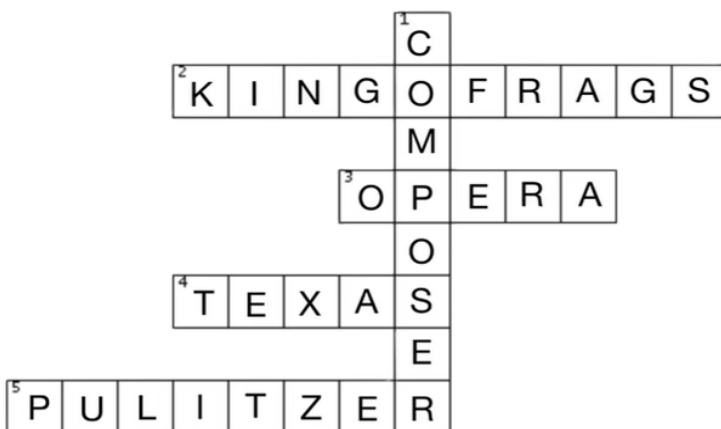
N-joy!

ANSWER KEY

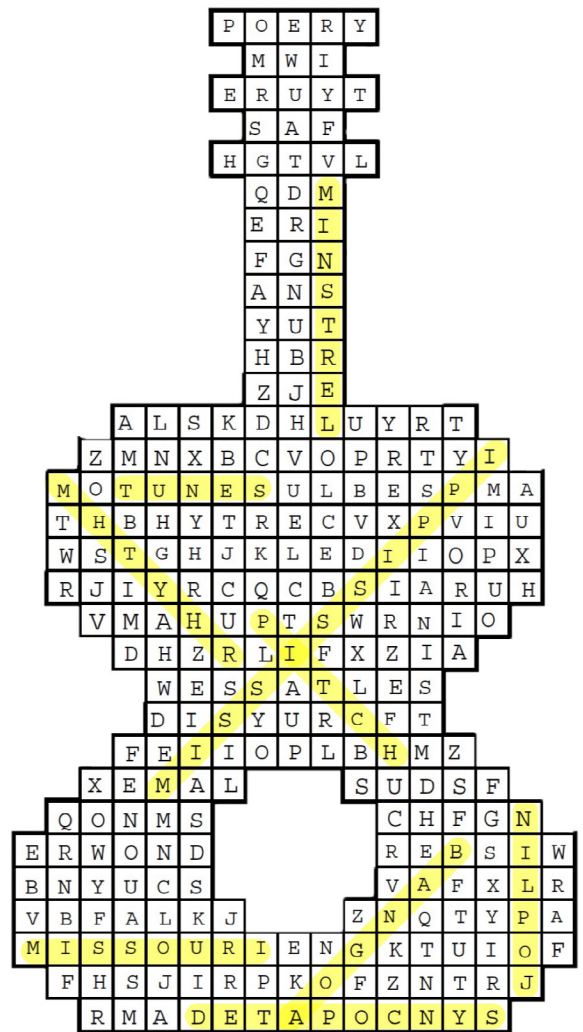
UNSCRAMBLE CAST OF CHARACTERS

1. MONISHA
2. NED
3. ANDY
4. REMUS
5. SIMON
6. TREEMONISHA
7. CEPHUS
8. PARSON ALLTALK
9. LUDDUD
10. ZODEZETIRICK

CROSSWORD



RAGTIME WORD SEARCH



RESOURCES

Useful links:

[Classics for Kids](https://www.classicsforkids.com)

<https://www.classicsforkids.com>

[Discovery Education](https://www.discoveryeducation.com)

<https://www.discoveryeducation.com>

[Performance of “Wrong is Never Right”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WrhSFnC2TI)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WrhSFnC2TI>

[Performance of “A Real Slow Drag”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukgWU6JCZkg)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukgWU6JCZkg>

[Treemonisha: Complete Opera Score](http://en.instr.scorser.com/CC/All/Scott+Joplin/Treemonisha.html)

<http://en.instr.scorser.com/CC/All/Scott+Joplin/Treemonisha.html>

Extension Activities Ideas:

1. Design an original Playbill
2. Construct a diorama of the set design
3. Create costumes of the time period
4. Write a short report on Ragtime, Scott Joplin, or opera as an art form

The End 





OPERA IS FUN
FOR EVERYONE!