



The Snow Queen

Sheet 3: improvisation - the characters of the opera

In *Die Schneekönigin*, Gerda encounters many individual figures on her journey. While Gerda and the young trolls are main characters throughout the opera, other characters appear only very briefly. These secondary characters are very diverse and should be presented with the following scenic exercises.

Exercise 1: Develop your own role card

Each pupil is given the task of drafting the profile of a secondary character in the second person (you). Key features of the character such as name, age, profession, place of residence, characteristics and hobbies are noted down and a costume design is created. The role cards are finally presented to the class.

Exercise 2: Getting into the role

The students can either keep the card they've created, or you can choose to encourage them to exchange cards for this exercise.

Before playing each role in the Stage game, it is helpful to get used to the different roles.

- Each student receives a role card, which they read through. They underline important features. Afterwards, all students read out their role card together and in a second round change the wording from the second person singular on the card (you) to the first person singular (I).
- Run: students move around the room. Each one has a fixed point in the room to which they are running. Once they arrive to their fixed point, they look for another fixed point.
- FREEZE!: The students freeze in their movements at a signal from the teacher. This step is repeated as often as desired during the entire exercise. It is important to respond to the postures of the children, which should be clearly shown in the "freeze".
- Developing a posture: Everyone moves freely around the room in their role and develops a posture corresponding to their figure: how does the figure move their feet, legs, hips, arms, stomach, etc. What is their facial



expression? This can then be supplemented by speaking and singing based on the cues on the given role cards (Material 2).

- o Meet and Greet: the children continue to move in their roles through the room. They meet another classmate, welcome them in their role. This can be worked out step by step by starting with eye contact, then followed by a hand greeting and then by a short improvised greeting dialogue.

Exercise 3: Improvising encounter scenes

In the following exercise, the children improvise welcome scenes between the individual protagonists of the opera either on the basis of the role cards or of the fairy tale. The following scenes are recommended:



1. Devil troll and young trolls
2. Grandmother, Gerda and Kay
3. Kay and the two young trolls
4. Kay and the Snow Queen
5. The Snow Queen and the two young trolls
- 6.10 Gerda and Flower Girl / Crow / Prince and princess / robber girl / young trolls

Musical characteristics and distinguishing features of individual figures

Almost every character is characterized by specific music. The pupils can be made aware of it before listening to the opera. Especially the melodies of the crow and the reindeer can be easily worked out with pupils: 'The Crow and Gerda' (music sheet 3) and 'The Reindeer Song' (music sheet 4).

