

# EDUCATORS' GUIDE

## MAGIC TREE HOUSE®

# MERLIN MISSIONS

### ***Moonlight on the Magic Flute***



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#### **ABOUT** *Moonlight on the Magic Flute*

Jack and Annie head to 18th-century Austria, where they must find and help a musician by the name of Mozart. Decked out in the craziest outfits they've ever worn—including a wig for Jack and a giant hoopskirt for Annie!—the two siblings search an entire palace to no avail. Their hunt is further hampered by the appearance of a mischievous little boy who is determined to follow them everywhere. But when the boy lets the animals out of the palace zoo, Jack and Annie have to use the only magic at their disposal to save themselves and the naughty little fellow.

## CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

### **Vocabulary**

There are a number of words in this book that will not necessarily be familiar to 21st century children. It may be helpful to pre-teach some of the terms and pronunciation. Below is a list of words that may be new to students. Several of the words have multiple meanings based on the context (e.g., a coach or china):

petticoat, cobblestone, coaches, imperial, reins, clatter, immense, archduchess, rise, elegant, china (dishes), finery ("dressed in finery"), admire, snippy, portly, terrace, flowerbed, fountain, luminous, conducting (an orchestra), hoop skirt, expression, flourish, wig

### **Discussion Questions**

Annie and Jack decide to copy the actions of others when they arrive at the Summer Palace. Most adults tell children it is wrong to copy others. When is it a good idea to copy someone else?

Wolfie admires Jack when they first meet. In this case, he shows his admiration by teasing Jack. Why do we admire people? Who do you admire? Who admires you?

Why does Wolfie let the zoo animals out of their cages? How does Annie know it is Wolfie who has let the animals out even before she sees him?

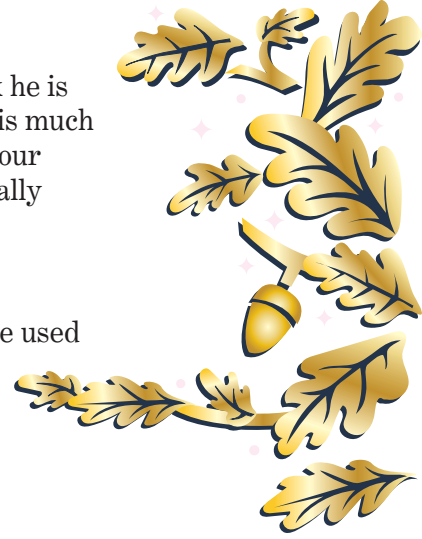
What makes someone a brilliant artist? Do you think the Wolfie's father understands what Jack and Annie are

looking for when they ask him about brilliant artists? Jack does not think he is working on his mission for much of the book. To his surprise, he actually is much closer to finding a brilliant artist than he thinks he is. Is there a time in your life when you thought you were doing the wrong thing but you were actually on the right track?

Why does Annie call Jack a clown? Do you think that was okay to do?

When would you think you could use a magic flute in your life? (It must be used to keep someone from danger after you have tried your hardest to solve the problem.)

Which parts of this story are real and which are imagined/magical?



## ACTIVITIES

### A Different Look

Find pictures of clothing from 1756. Using paper or art supplies have students design outfits that would have been worn in Mozart's lifetime.

In Mozart's lifetime, the closest thing to a piano was a harpsichord. Share a picture of a harpsichord with your class. Discuss the differences between a harpsichord and a piano.

### Groove to the Music

Annie and Jack say that Wolfie's music makes them feel many different things. Ask students about their reactions to music. Work with the class to find music that makes you want to dance, music that makes you feel sad, music that is gentle to your ears, and music that makes you laugh. Each radio station on the site plays different kinds of classical music. This site also provides a fun way to compose a song.

### Do as I Do

Have your class interview a musician or a music teacher at school. Encourage students to ask the adult about what Mozart contributed to the world of music. Have them record their responses and then make a display of responses on musical staff paper or adding machine tape that has musical symbols drawn in. To extend this activity, students could ask themselves (or others) what they would like to contribute to the world.

### The Sounds Have Changed

How is Mozart's music similar to or different from much of our music today? Work with students to help them find a recording of a piece of music by Mozart. Next, listen to a piece of music that is popular today. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast Mozart's classical music with the sounds and styles of today. Encourage students to think about things like the instruments used, the length of a piece of music, the rhythm and melody patterns, what the music communicates, and what the music is for.

### Verb Charades

Mary Pope Osborne uses lots of active verbs in *Moonlight on the Magic Flute*. Students always benefit from having a wide vocabulary with which to write and speak. To learn and practice some of the verbs Ms. Osborne uses, play charades! The page numbers are listed with each verb selected from the text. Once the students get the hang of the game, let them be the actor/actress!

*crammed* (p. 13), *squashed* (p. 13), *squeezed* (p. 13), *jumped* (p. 13), *hurried* (p. 13), *rumbled* (p. 16), *lurched* (p. 17), *rustling* (p. 20), *towering* (p. 29), *trimmed* (p. 29), *heaved* (p. 41), *padded* (p. 55)

*Teaching ideas by Beth Fawley, the 2006 Magic Tree House Educator of the Year; who is the K-12 Gifted and Talented Coordinator*