



Muse Performers

by Link Education League and OPPA!
2022-2023 Program Syllabus
Arabian Nights and The Secret Garden

In Greek mythology, the muses were inspirational goddesses of literature, science, and the arts. Our Muse Performers class draws on all the disciplines, teaches creativity, and grounds students in history. It isn't just a production class with homeschoolers as actors. It is a deep dive into the context of the play that synergistically utilizes hands-on and multi-disciplinary learning. Students also take on leadership roles such as directing and designing for a truly student-produced play.

While the topics and plays for each year vary, For example, instead of just learning a song about chimney sweeps, students will learn about why chimney sweeps were necessary, the science and history of coal as an energy source, and why children were doing such dangerous work. Instead of pulling a prop to use in the play, students will make their own props while learning more about the historical context. For example, the prop newspaper newsies try to sell is actually a student-produced newspaper that reports on the things they are learning. As students research, build, paint, and write, they will also be creating the set and props for their productions.

Age range: While the class is open to students 7-18, students will be engaged at their level of learning and will regularly be broken into groups. Activities will be adapted to be simple enough or more complex appropriately.

2022-2023 School Year

The time period for the year's studies is the early 1900s in India and England. In *The Secret Garden*, the main character Mary Lennox is born in India and that is where the play starts. It should also be noted that Raj India included more than just current India– Pakistan and Bangladesh and other surrounding countries.

Dec 7 Performance: Arabian Nights One-Act

April 27, 28, 29 Performance: The Secret Garden Musical

May 24 (end of class) Student Showcase: Student-written and Produced Scenes

Main Subjects Covered (subject to change):

Science:

- Ecology – comparing the Moors of Yorkshire to India
- Botany and a closer study of specific plants in English Gardens
- Disease, Medicine, and Disability of the period – Cholera outbreak, Colin's illness

Language Arts:

- Children's stories from Raj India : Panchatantra Tales, Arabian Nights, Pakistani Folk Tales, etc.
- Children's Literature of the early 1900s, including Fairy Tale books of Andrew Lang, nursery rhymes and other works of Frances Hodgson Burnett (The Little Princess, Little Lord Faunterloj)
- Genres, Adaptations of stories, and Serial Publication
 - Students will write a retelling adaptation of a story in serial installments throughout the year, and then adapt it for a scene as part of our end-of-year Student Showcase.
- Metaphors, Poetry, Imagery, Symbolism

Social Studies:

- Social Hierarchy in England and India
 - Rich vs Poor in England
 - Colonial India
- The Lives of Children during the early 1900s
 - Games, Family Relationships, Work
- History and Geography of York and the British Raj (Colonial India before Partition)

Engineering/Technology

- Transportation Technology of the time – ship, trains, carriages
- Location specific building methods. Stone-building of English Manors vs “Bungalows” of India
- Engineering and Technology required for building the technical aspects of their production.

Theatre:

- Acting, Dancing (Ballroom and Bollywood), Singing
- Self-Presentation
- Confidence
- Older students will have the option to become choreographers, scene directors, designers, and more.

Technical Theatre: Based on student interest, we will have larger projects in at least some of the following areas:

- Set Design
- Lighting
- Costume Design

- Props
- Sound Design

Expected Homework:

Students will be expected to practice their parts, songs, dances, and memorize at home. They will also be asked to read one age-appropriate book per semester related to the time period we are studying. This could be fiction or nonfiction.

We will offer optional challenges students can do at home but are not required such as additional reading, writing, and research.

Not Included in the Cost of Tuition:

Tickets/Admission for Performances (except the Student Showcase)

Optional T-Shirts

Some costuming items (shoes, underclothing or simple basics like leggings)

PR Photos

Materials Students Need to Provide

Materials Students Need to Provide:

- ½ 3 ring binder with pockets and with lined notebook paper. Line sizes can be age appropriate, up to parental discretion. Clearly marked with student's name.
- Water Bottle with name on it