



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activity #1, The Tale of Scheherazade

- You will read the story of Scheherazade. First, let's practice pronouncing the following words as they may be challenging!

TERM / CHARACTER	PRONUNCIATION
Rimsky-Korsakov	RIM-skee KAWR-suh-kuhf
Scheherazade	Shuh-HARE-uh-zahd
Sultan	SUUL-than
Shahryar	SHAR-eee-ARE
Vizier	vi-ZEER
Dunyazad	DIN-uh-zahd

- Now read the Tale of Scheherazade. This tale is commonly called a "frame tale" because it is a story with many more stories within it. It's a device that keeps the reader wanting more, and as you'll see in this case, the Sultan wanting more too! Famed Russian composer and master orchestrator, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, drew inspiration from this story to create his beautiful orchestral work!



Activity #1, The Tale of Scheherazade

THE TALE OF SCHEHERAZADE

Once upon a time in a land far away, there was a Sultan who had been so brutally betrayed by his wife that he made a promise to himself. Each night Sultan Shahryar required his grand vizier to bring him a new bride, each night he was married, and each morning, he ordered the bride's head cut off. This horror continued for many years until one day, the vizier's eldest daughter, Scheherazade, came to her father to ask for a rather unusual favor. "Oh Father," she cried, "how long will you allow this killing to go on? I think I can stop the killing. I have a favor to ask. Will you grant it to me?" "Please my Daughter," said her father. "I can't deny you anything that is fair. What is your favor, dear?" Scheherazade was a very smart woman. She had read every book in the royal library. She knew the story of kings and the works of the poets. Not only was she well-read, but also she was well-mannered, able to tell a good story, and kind-hearted. "I would like you," Scheherazade paused, "to give me in marriage to Sultan Shahryar. I have a plan to keep myself and the other women from being killed." "No!" cried the vizier. I have worked for years to keep you away from him." "You must make me his wife," Scheherazade said. "It's the only way." The vizier cried and begged his daughter to rethink her plan, but in the end it was of no use. At last he agreed to her wish. The evening of the wedding, Scheherazade spoke in confidence to her sister, Dunyazad. "Pay attention to what I am going to tell you. After the wedding, I will ask the Sultan to send for you so that we may spend my last few hours together. You must not be sleepy. Ask me to tell you a story. I will tell you a story that will save our kingdom." Dunyazad bowed her head and agreed to this plan. That evening Sultan Shahryar was married to Scheherazade. When the ceremonies were complete and they were in the royal bedroom, Scheherazade dropped to her knees and began to weep. "Oh, great and powerful Sultan," Scheherazade said. "I have a younger sister, and I would like to say goodbye to her before I die." The Sultan agreed and sent for Dunyazad. The young girl sat at the foot of the bed. "Oh, Sister," Dunyazad said, "tell me a delightful story to listen to during these last few hours of our waking life." "That would please me," Scheherazade said. "If our wise Sultan will permit me, then I will begin." "Tell on," said the Sultan, who for once was having trouble sleeping. Scheherazade rejoiced, for this was part of her plan. And on this, the first night of the Thousand and One Nights, she began to tell her stories.

-text by Amy Peters

-based on a Persian Myth

- Think about how to use context clues to help determine a word's meaning. Fill out the description/definition of each term in the chart below and answer the following questions.

TERM/CHARACTER	DESCRIPTION/DEFINITION
Rimsky-Korsakov	
Scheherazade	
Sultan	
Shahryar	
Vizier	
Dunyazad	

1. Summarize the story.



Activity #1, The Tale of Scheherazade

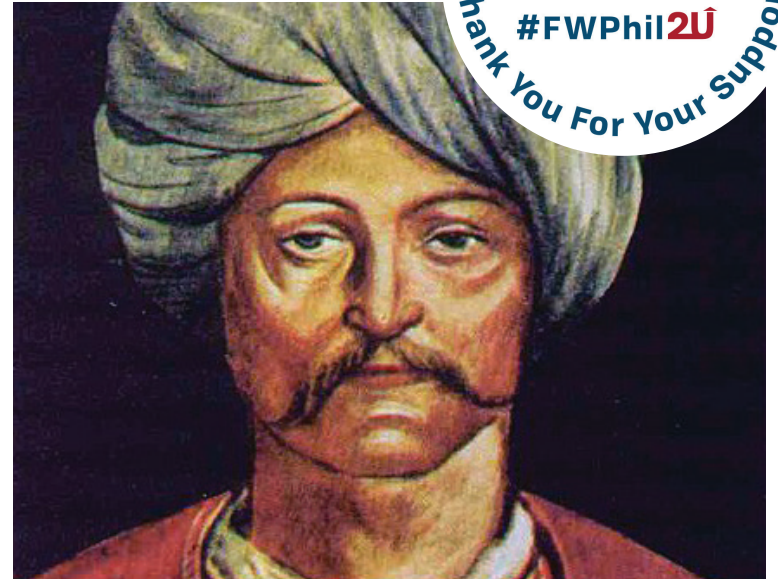


2. Who are the main characters in the story?

3. Describe Scheherazade. Cite specific details in the text to support your view.

4. How did Scheherazade overcome the challenge to stay alive?

5. Compare and contrast Scheherazade and the Sultan. Cite specific details in the text to support your view.





STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activity #2, Musical Predictions

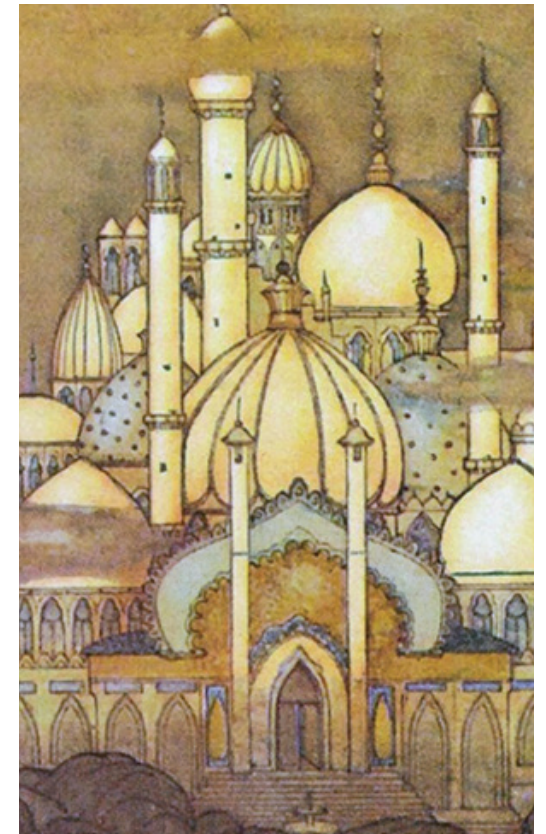
MAKE PREDICTIONS ABOUT THE STORY

We often select a book to read or a piece of music to listen to by reading the title, imagining what it might be about, and then deciding if it holds interest for us. Good readers not only make predictions from a title, but also as they read the story. This myth clearly does not end where the excerpt ends. What do you think happens? What predictions do you have and why? Answer the following questions below:

1. Why do you think the Sultan was so angry at all of the women he married? What did his wife do to betray him?

2. What types of stories do you think Scheherazade told the Sultan?

3. How do you think Dunyazad felt when she was asked to be a part of this plan? Do you think she was afraid for her life?



Activity #2, Musical Predictions



4. How do you think this story ends?

MAKE PREDICTIONS ABOUT THE MUSIC

Think about all the different characters in the story. Predict how the composer would make them sound. Do these characters evoke angry feelings? Joyful feelings? Think about the overall setting of the story and describe the mood. Describe how you think the music would sound. Specifically, be sure to describe the tempo, dynamics, timbre, and the style of the music. It often helps to visualize what a scene looks like, and then what it sounds like. Questions to answer:

1. What is the mood of the story? How would you convey that in the music? What instruments would you use?

2. What is the overall mood/attitude of the Sultan? What instruments would you use to make him sound this way?

3. What is the overall mood/attitude of Scheherazade? What instruments would you use to make her sound this way?

4. What is the tempo? (how fast/slow?)

5. What is the dynamic level? (how loud/soft)

6. What is the timbre? (what instruments are playing and what is their tone quality?)

7. What is the style? (Is the music smooth and flowing, or harsh and detached?)



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activity #3, Listening Excerpt

Listen to Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade, op. 35, I. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dgo-lzDdVeo>

1. As you listen, look at your predictions about the music.
Were your predictions correct? Why or why not?



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Activity #4, Listening Excerpt continued

Listen to the beginning of Scheherazade and look at the two main themes that represent "The Sultan" and "Scheherazade". Answer the following questions below.

THE SULTAN



SCHEHERAZADE



1. The Sultan's theme has a dynamic marking of:

2. Why do you think the Sultan's theme is marked with a loud dynamic? Would the feeling and overall effect be changed if the dynamic marking was soft?

3. Does the sound of this theme do a good job portraying the cruel Sultan? Why or why not?

4. Scheherazade's theme is performed by which instrument?

5. Compare and contrast with the Sultan's theme. Think about the dynamics, instruments, tempo, style, etc.

6. Does Scheherazade's theme give the feeling of a fanciful, beautiful storyteller? Why or why not?
