



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
and
Emanuel Schikaneder

Adapted for young readers by Joshua Borths

A Reader's Theater Script for Young Audiences!

Cast of Characters (in order of appearance)

Narrators (1-3)		They guide the audience on the journey
Sarastro	(za-RA-stro)	The wise ruler of the Sun
Prince Tamino	(tah-ME-no)	A foreign Prince, the hero
Dragon		
Ladies (1-3)		The Queen's handmaidens, Each lady is different
Papageno	(pa-pa-GEH-no)	The Queen's birdcatcher, fun loving and funny
The Queen of the Night		An ultimately evil Queen, but she doesn't let people see it
Monostatos	(moe-NAST-tah-toes)	Sarastro's guard, who wants to marry Pamina
Pamina	(pah-ME-na)	The virtuous daughter of the Queen
Ensemble		Guards, animals, voices, attendants

A quick note about Reader's Theater...

Welcome to the Arizona Opera Reader's Theater version of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*! This script takes about 10-15 minutes to perform and guides the readers and audience through the first act of the opera. This script was created with 3rd–6th grade in mind.

This script helps develop reading **fluency**, **comprehension**, and **imagination** as both readers and audience members alike are guided through the story of the opera.

We encourage double casting (students reading more than one role) when appropriate. However, make sure everyone gets a chance to read out loud!

Props List (in order of appearance)

Mouth Lock	(For Papageno)
Picture Frame	(The picture of Pamina for Tamino)
Magic Flute	(For Tamino)
Magic Bells	(For Papageno)

A note about performance...

Putting together *The Magic Flute* should be a fun and educational experience for your students. Encourage them to look up words they don't know.

Mozart did not see this opera as a serious work, so play with it! If your students have staging, prop, costume, and set ideas, great!

This performance can be as simple or complex as you want. Feel free to make it your own. All props can be pantomimed or real... it's up to you!

Throughout the script, there are stage directions written in italics. These are not to be spoken in performance (although, having the teacher read them as students rehearse is very helpful).

Encourage your students to listen to the music of *The Magic Flute* as well. Contact Joshua Borths at Arizona Opera (jborths@azopera.org) if you need any teaching materials, study guides, musical excerpts, etc.

The education staff at the Arizona Opera is here to support you.

So, have fun!

And, as we say in the opera world, *toi toi toi* (pronounced “toy, toy, toy”)—it means good luck!

The Magic Flute: Part 1 (The Quest)

All students enter the stage and listen to the Narrators. Throughout the script, everyone can react to and demonstrate the text of the Narrators.

Narrator 1

In a kingdom you may recognize—
If you look behind its strange disguise—
There was war between the day and the night
Over which orb was the one, true light.

Narrator 2

The Queen of the Night tried to take the Sun's Crown,
So Sarastro's men ran her out of their town.
And there, in the dark, the Queen's anger raged,
Like a fearsome bird trapped inside a small cage.

Narrator 3

Sarastro, who sought only peace and love,
Cried out with a shout to the bright sun above,

Sarastro

Please help me unite the Sun and Moon,
Please, send us a hero! Send him or her soon!

All Narrators

And this was how the kingdom then stood,
When a stranger found trouble within a dark wood.

Everyone except the Narrators exit. The Narrators take their places on the side of the stage.

Tamino runs onstage. He is being chased by a dragon!

Tamino

Help me! Somebody please help me! A dragon is chasing me! A terrible, horrible, scaly, smelly dragon!

Dragon

Hello, little prince! Are you new to these woods? If so, it looks like I'm your welcoming committee!

Tamino

If you're the welcoming committee, then why are you trying to eat me?

Dragon

Smiling How else am I supposed to welcome a trespasser?!

Narrator 3

The stranger tried to be strong, brave, and bold,
But he tripped on a root and was knocked flat-out cold.

Tamino falls to the ground.

Narrator 2

Lucky for him, there were Three Ladies nearby,
And they stopped the mean dragon with their fierce battle cry.

All Ladies

Stop! Go back to your side of the forest, dragon!

Dragon

Defensive But, I was only trying to—

1st Lady

Go! Do you want us to go get the Queen of the Night and tell her all about what you've done? Do you want to be put in timeout?

Dragon

No! Please! Not that! I'll go! I'll go!

He exits.

Narrator 3

With the dragon now gone and out of their sight,
They looked at the stranger in the glowing moonlight.

2nd Lady

Now what?

3rd Lady

Yeah, what do we do now?

1st Lady

Well, I think you two should go tell the Queen about this stranger, and I will stay here with the handsome man.

2nd Lady

Why do you get to stay with him? I want to stay with him. He's so dreamy...

3rd Lady

How about *you* make sure the dragon is gone for good, and *you* go get the Queen, while *I* stay here with him. He's so dashing!

1st Lady

Be quiet! We can't all stay here with him. So, to be fair, all three of us will go and tell the Queen about this stranger. No one will stay here. Agreed?

All Ladies

Agreed.

The Ladies exit.

Narrator 1

As the ladies went off to see their great Queen,
A feathery creature arrived on the scene.

Narrator 2

Papageno enters His job is to wander and catch the Queen's birds,
Although, in his bird suit he looks quite absurd!

Papageno

To the Narrator Hey! I'm styling! Besides, I'm good at what I do. When I catch a bird and put it in a cage, it makes the Queen feel less lonely. I give her friends and she gives me candy!

Narrator 3

To Papageno But, isn't it lonely to catch birds all day?
Is there anyone here with whom you can play?

Papageno

No. Not yet. What I really want to catch is a girlfriend! *Yelling* I want a Papagena!

Narrator 1

This sudden shout echoed down the ravine,
And caused Tamino to wake up from his dream.

Tamino

Waking with a start Where am I? Where's the dragon?!

Papageno

Startled AAAH! Who are you?

Tamino

Who am I? Who are you?!

Papageno

My name is Papageno! I'm the royal bird catcher for the Queen of the Night.

Tamino

The royal birdcatcher? So, *you* must have destroyed the dragon. You saved me!

Papageno

Uh... sure! It was no problem. No problem at all...

Narrator 2

When Papageno told him this little, white lie,
Tamino was so grateful he started to cry.

Tamino begins to cry.

Narrator 3

At this precise moment, the ladies returned,
And based on their faces they all felt quite spurned.

The Ladies enter. They are clearly upset.

All Ladies

Papageno! Don't lie to the handsome stranger! It's not good to lie!

Papageno

I didn't lie to him!

All Ladies

You just lied again!

1st Lady

To Tamino We have come to ask you your name, handsome stranger.

Tamino

My name is Tamino.

2nd Lady

Hello, Tamino. Our mistress, the Queen of the Night, is on her way.

3rd Lady

She wants to talk to you about her beautiful daughter!

1st Lady

Here's a picture of her.

She hands Tamino a picture of Pamina.

Tamino

She's so beautiful! I've never seen anyone like her before. I've never *felt* like this before... Is this love? Whatever the Queen wants to tell me, I'm all ears!

All Ladies

Excellent! She'll be here soon!

1st Lady

But to make sure birdbrain here doesn't lie again and doesn't mess this up, we are going to lock his mouth for good measure.

They lock up Papageno's mouth.

3rd Lady

Sisters! Here she is!

All Ladies

She's here!

The Queen of the Night makes a stylish entrance.

Queen

She can't remember Tamino's name Hello, my handsome... Friend! My dear... uh...

All Ladies

Tamino.

Queen

Tamino!

I can tell from your look that you've seen a picture of my daughter. She is so kind, so smart, and so strong willed. She's always been independent and can stand up for herself.

But, she was taken from me! She was stolen by the *evil* Sarastro, the one who banished me to these woods! I can't get her back by myself...

But, you could. You could find my daughter, Pamina, and return her to me! You will be greatly rewarded if you do...

Tamino

I'll do it! I will rescue your daughter, Pamina! This must be why I'm in this story!

Queen

Perfect! My Ladies will help you find her. Farewell, Tamino... Until we meet again...

The Queen of the Night makes a mysterious exit.

Tamino

Wow. People come and go so quickly here.

1st Lady

Unfortunately, we can't go with you, but you can count on our good friends the Three Spirits. They will show you the way and guide you on your quest!

2nd Lady

And I give to you two gifts: this Magic Flute, and these Silver Bells.

The Ladies give Tamino the bells and flute.

3rd Lady

May they help guide you if you lose your way, and may their music help you find your voice when your voice is gone.

All Ladies

Goodbye!

Papageno

HMMMMMMM!!!

Tamino

Wait! Can you free my friend? I will need his help on the journey I'm sure. Can you please unlock his mouth?

1st Lady

Fine. As long as he promises to never lie again!

2nd Lady

Remember, if you fulfill your role and go on Tamino's quest, you may even get your Papagena!

The Ladies unlock Papageno's mouth.

Papageno

I promise!

Tamino hands Papageno the silver bells.

All Ladies

Remember to watch out for the evil Sarastro... and always follow the advice of the Spirits! Goodbye!

Papageno and Tamino

Goodbye!

The Ladies exit.

Narrator 1

And so the two friends went off on their way,
To find poor Pamina and win the whole day.

All Narrators

But, just as they learned not to lie, not to scheme,
They were soon to learn things were not as they seemed.

Tamino and Papageno exit.

Narrator 2

While these events were set into motion,
Across the kingdom there was quite a commotion.

Narrator 3

Pamina's held captive against her free will
By the guard, Monostatos, who's holding her still!

Monostatos, the guards, and Pamina enter.

Monostatos

Oh, my dear little dove, I can't wait till we're married! Once I bring you to Sarastro, he will reward me handsomely. You will be mine for good!

Pamina

Why do you think I would ever marry you? You are unkind and selfish.

Monostatos

Unkind? Selfish? Who put these thoughts in your head? Come on, let's play house! When we are done, you will see what I great husband I could be!

Pamina

To herself Maybe then I will find my opportunity to get away from here. I want to go back home. Oh, there's no place like home!

Monostatos

Guards!

Guards

Yes, boss?

Monostatos

Bring me my fake food, plastic oven, and baby carriage. Pamina and I are going to play house!

Guards

We're on it, boss!

The Guards exit.

Narrator 3

It may seem like luck was not on her side,
But suddenly Papageno arrived.

Papageno enters, looking around.

Papageno

How did I get here? I think I'm lost. *Shouting* Spirits! A little help here!

Pamina

Who are you?!

Papageno

I'm your new best friend!

Pamina

But, I don't know you! If you don't leave right now, I'll scream!

Papageno

Why are you so frightened? *He recognizes her* You must be Pamina! That's why the spirits brought me here!

Don't be afraid! Your mother sent me. I'm supposed to rescue you and bring you to Prince Tamino! And if all goes well, we will all live happily ever after... I will even get my Papagena!

Pamina

How do I know I can trust you?

Papageno

Trust me? Well, I was given these Silver Bells by your Mother's back up dancers, the Three Ladies!

Pamina

THE Silver Bells?

Papageno

Like the bells on the Polar Express!

Pamina

If they gave you the bells, then I can surely trust you.

She looks at them.

I have never seen them up close before...

The guards make noise offstage.

Oh no! They're coming back!

Papageno

AAAAA!!! What should we do? Where can we hide?

Pamina

Don't panic. I have a plan. When I say "Go," play the bells!

Papageno

When you say what?

Pamina

"Go!"

Papageno

Okay!

He begins to play the bells.

Pamina

Not yet!

Monostatos and his guards reenter.

Monostatos

So! You've found a new friend while we were away? *To the guards* Boys! Tie them both up!

Guards

You got it boss!

Pamina

To Papageno Now!

Papageno

What?

Pamina

GO!!!

The actor playing Papageno starts to “play” the bells by singing a song of his choosing. The Guards and Monostatos start dancing. It is the power of the bells! The dancing should be as exaggerated and ridiculous as possible.

Pamina

It’s working!

The guards dance offstage.

Papageno

Now we just need to get back to the Queen of the Night before—

All

From offstage Make way for Sarastro! Make way for Sarastro!

Papageno

Uh-oh...

Pamina

I wonder if the bells called them here.

All

Make way for Sarastro! Make way for Sarastro!

Narrator 3

Pamina thought their situation was dire,
She cried--

Pamina

--Out of the pan and into the fire!

Papageno and Pamina exit. Tamino enters. They don’t see each other.

All Narrators

Meanwhile...

Narrator 1

Tamino wondered how he’d become so lost,
But he’d sworn he would free her, no matter the cost!

Narrator 2

So...
Tamino yelled out with all of his might,

Tamino

Where is the daughter of the Queen of the Night?!

Narrator 2

A chorus of voices came echoing back,

All

From offstage Keep going, young Prince, you're on the right track!

As you search for Pamina, you must remain mute!

All Narrators

So Tamino called her with his Magic Flute!

Tamino begins to "play" the flute. Just like when Papageno "played" the bells, Tamino sings a song of his choosing to be the music of the flute.

Narrator 1

As Tamino wandered through the dark bramble,
His music attracted every strange animal!

The animals enter and start to dance.

Narrator 2

Lions, tigers, and bears were entranced,
And to the sound of the flute, they started to dance!

Narrator 3

When Tamino was playing his musical spell,
He heard the peel of some strange, distant bells.

Tamino

Those were Papageno's magic bells! I would bet anything he found Pamina!

Narrator 3

Tamino ran with his flute in hand,
And came to the edge of the Queen's darkened land.

Tamino

If I take one more step, it will be the farthest away from home I've ever been.

The animals exit.

Narrator 1

Tamino arrived at a Temple—filled with pride,
He opened the door and stepped slowly inside.

Sarastro, Papageno, Pamina, and the entire chorus enter the stage.

All

Welcome, Prince Tamino!

Papageno

Tamino!?! Is it really you!?

Pamina

To herself It is really Tamino?

Tamino

To himself Is it really Pamina?

Sarastro

Hello, Prince Tamino!

Tamino

Step back, Sarastro! Don't come near her! Give me Pamina before I—

Sarastro

Patience, little prince. I have just finished explaining everything to your friends.

Narrator 2

Sarastro told Tamino about the day and the night,
And Tamino realized that Sarastro was right!

Tamino

So, the Queen of the Night is actually evil?

Sarastro

Yes, I'm afraid so.

Tamino

It's strange. The more I experience, the more I realize how much I don't understand. When I began this quest, everything seemed so simple.

Sarastro

You've found Pamina, the simple part of your journey is finished. Now, *you* three—

Papageno

Don't you mean, "You two?"

Sarastro

No, Papageno. You still have a part to play in all of this. All three of you must now prepare yourself to unite the kingdoms and be better leaders than those who came before you.

You all must pass the 3 trials in our Temple. Only then will you prove yourselves strong enough, brave enough, and selfless enough to bring peace to our land.

Narrator 1

So, the three young friends went into the dark,
To face new trials and make their mark.

Narrator 2

But this time, they did not feel afraid,
Because they knew they were both strong and brave.

All Narrators

They knew they *could* make it through the trials alive,
With their friends, Bells, and Flute by their side.

End of Part I

The Magic Flute: Part 2 (The Trials)

All Narrators

Sarastro's trials had already begun.
And darkness descended in the realm of the Sun.

Narrator 1

The boys turned right and ran ahead—blind,
But, the guards forced Pamina to stay far behind.

Narrator 2

The first trial they faced was a trial of will.
They had to stay silent and keep their lips still.

Papageno

Tamino?

Tamino

Shhh.

Papageno

Tamino! I'm bored!

Tamino

Shhh!!!

Narrator 1

Papageno decided he was no good at this game,
When a woman appeared with an old, wizened frame.

Papagena appears. She is disguised as an old woman.

Papageno

Whoa! Who are you, old woman? Get away from me, you're giving me the creeps!

Papagena

Sounding like an old woman I'm not that old, you little angel.

Papageno

Ha! Really? How old are you then?

Papagena

I'm 16, my love.

Papageno

Hmmm... You look much older than 60—

Papagena

I said 16!

Papageno

16?! But, I'm 16! There's no way we are the same age.

Papagena

Well, if that's how you feel, you'll never deserve to marry me.

Papageno

Wait, you want to marry me? That's a laugh! Now, What's my bride-to-be's name?

Papagena

Papagena!

Papageno

Papagena! Ha!... Wait... Papagena?

Narrator 3

After a flash of lighting, there came a loud crack.
With the thunder, Papagena disappeared in her tracks.

Papageno

My Papagena exists! She's real!... She's hideous... but it's better than nothing.

Papageno shouts to Tamino.

Tamino! I've learned my lesson! I *will* pass this trial and I will stay silent. I will grin and bear it even though we have no idea what's going on.

Narrator 1

When Tamino nodded and they went on their way,
The Three Ladies appeared with something to say:

All Ladies

Hello, Tamino!

Papageno

How did you guys get in here? Is that allowed? How did you—

Tamino

Papageno, don't talk! Ignore them... We have a trial to pass if we want to unite the kingdom once and for all.

1st Lady

No need to be rude, Tamino.

2nd Lady

After all, we were the ones who saved you.

3rd Lady

We discovered you!

All Ladies

We gave you the Flute and Bells!

Papageno

Tamino, they have a point. Shoudn't we at least hear them out?

Tamino

No! We must concentrate on our true mission. The gifts are wonderful. We couldn't have gotten here without them, but we must focus on what's good for the whole kingdom. That's what Sarastro wants. The Queen and her Ladies only want what's good for them!

1st Lady

How dare you! You will regret this, Tamino! Just you wait until the Queen hears about this. You think the war is almost at an end? Ha!

All Ladies

It's only just begun!

Narrator 2

Just then, the Temple began to shake.
The Ladies realized that they had made a mistake.

Narrator 3

They left our two heroes as quick as they could,
To find their Queen back inside her dark wood.

Papageno

People come and go so quickly here!

Tamino

Shhh!!!!

Narrator 1

Outside the temple Sarastro kept vigil,
Praying our heroes destroy the Queen's evil.

Sarastro

If Tamino and Pamina can't balance the day and night, and Papageno can't bring simplicity back to a complex world, I'm afraid I don't know how the kingdom will ever be saved.

Narrator 2

Far from the hall where the Ladies appeared,
Pamina discovered she had much still to fear.

Queen of the Night

Angrily Pamina!

Pamina

Who's there! I can't see in this dark temple!

Queen of the Night

Who's there?! I'm your mother, dear.

Pamina

Mother? The Queen of the Night?!

Queen of the Night

How could you betray me?!

I worry about you, I send a Prince to find you, and I do everything I can to save you. But then, I discover you in the temple of my greatest enemy?!

Pamina

You don't understand—

Queen of the Night

Not another word! Sarastro wants to take away my power. He wants to bring balance and order to the kingdom. HA! Doesn't he know that I will never rest until I rule the entire kingdom and plunge us all into eternal night?!

Pamina

But, don't you think—

Queen of the Night

You are not allowed to speak. Suddenly sweet I am forgiving. I will take you back, but only under one condition: You must take this knife and kill Sarastro.

Pamina

Mother!

Queen of the Night

If you ever want to return to the forest again, you will do as I say!

Narrator 3

The Queen left Pamina and flew into the night,
But Pamina did not have her mother's anger and spite.

Pamina

No! I will not do it. I don't care what she does to me. I will not kill Sarastro.

Narrator 1

All three of our friends passed their very first test,
Now they just need to pass all the rest!

Narrator 2

The next test they face is about self-denial.
This test is the hardest of the temple's great trials.

Narrator 3

So, Pamina took matters into her own hands,
To go find Tamino and unite the whole land.

The three spirits appeared and guided her way.
When they found him at last she had so much to say:

Pamina

Tamino! I'm so glad I found you. My mother appeared and you have not idea
what she wanted me to... Tamino? Why aren't you looking at me?... Tamino!
Don't you hear me?... Tamino? Don't you see me?

Narrator 1

Tamino can't look at the girl of his dreams.
He must prove that he can take one for the team.

Pamina

Tamino, I don't know why you're ignoring me. *Stronger* What I do know is that
we need to get through this temple and restore balance to the kingdom. This story
is bigger than you and me... Even though you no longer seem to love me, we will
accomplish what we came here to do. Everyone's counting on us.

Narrator 2

Both of their hearts were breaking inside,
When the next doors in the temple swung open wide.

Narrator 3

They both denied impulse, and still remained strong.
They both denied selfishness, and now could move on.

Narrator 1

Papageno had sat, wearied by the unknown,
Now he opened his eyes, and saw: he was alone.

Papageno

Uh-oh. I don't see Tamino... or any of those funny guards... Or my Papagena!
This is awful. I want to be back home! I want to catch my birds and mind my own
business. I want simplicity... That's what I bring to the party: An appreciation of
good, old-fashioned living. Forget princes and princesses, night and day, good
and evil, I just want a hot meal and a nice, long nap.

Oh well, that's not why I'm here. Time to find Tamino and help him get out of
trouble.

Narrator 2

Papageno was ready to deny his own needs,
When the spirits appeared onto the scene.

They told Papageno to play his great Bells!
He will love the results of their magical spell.

Papageno plays his bells.

Papagena

Hello, my angel!

Papageno

Whoa! You look good!... I thought you were an old woman—

Papagena

I was disguised as an old woman until you passed your trials.

Papageno

I passed my trials?

Papagena

Of course! Kingdoms need more than royalty and nobility. They need good,
decent, loving people to live there. That's why you're here. You've proven to be
loyal, good, and kind. You show us what's important in life.

We all have our parts to play.

Papageno

Wow... I guess that's true... And now I get my Papagena!

Papagena

And I get my Papageno!

Narrator 1

The second trial was over and they had all passed!
The end of the journey was upon them at last.

Sarastro

Pamina and Tamino!

Pamina and Tamino

Sarastro?

Sarastro

You have done well. You have shown us that your will is stronger than your fear,
and that you put the needs of others over your own desires.

Tamino

Oh, Pamina, I'm so sorry if I hurt your feelings! You are the most amazing woman
I've ever met.

Sarastro

You must face the final trial—together. You must pass through the great waterfall
and the realm of fire. Only then can you reach the other side and be deemed
worthy to start our kingdom anew. No one has ever made it through this trial
alive. We are all counting on you.

Tamino

How will we ever get through this trial? In order to defeat the Queen of the Night
we must—

Pamina

No! We must remember we are not trying to destroy my mother and her realm.
We are simply trying to restore the order and balance that's been lost. We need
both day and night to achieve perfect harmony. Tamino, *you* are from the land of
the Sun and *I'm* from the realm of the Moon. That's why we alone can achieve our
mission.

Well, these trials are in Sarastro's temple! So, in order to pass this trial, we need
something from my mother's forest to help us...

Tamino

The Flute! We will play the Magic Flute! We will pass Sarastro's final trial
through the power of music... Music your mother gave me!

Pamina

I'm ready if you are!

Narrator 2

And so they both walked toward the fire and water,
Hand and hand, they hoped in the Flute's magic power.

Narrator 3

Now remember Monostatos? Sarastro's rouge guard?
He's the one who fell for Pamina quite hard.

Narrator 1

He's now in cahoots with the Queen of the Night.
He made sure she entered with no one in sight.

Queen of the Night

If my daughter won't kill Sarastro, we will do it ourselves! We will destroy
everyone and everything!

Narrator 2

Instead of conceding, she'd destroy the whole nation
Since desperate times trigger severe desperation.

Narrator 3

When it looked like the Queen might soon have her way,
The temple shook, and it quaked, and it started to sway.

Sarastro

They did it! Pamina and Tamino made it through to the end of the temple!

All

Make way for Pamina and Tamino! Make way!

Queen of the Night and Ladies

No!!!!!!!

Narrator 1

The Queen and her Ladies were stripped of their power.
And Tamino and Pamina climbed the Sun Tower.

Narrator 2

Our heroes became rulers of the day and the night,
And balance was brought to the Kingdoms of Light.

Narrator 3

Papageno cheered and waved up to his friends.
All of their journeys had come to an end.

Narrator 1

Now, if this story seems quite silly and strange,
Then look at your world: is there something to change?

Narrator 2

Is there disorder and chaos that must be addressed?
If so, now embark on your own special quest.

Narrator 3

With the help of your friends and imagination,
Your voice can ring out and change a whole nation.

All

With your friends and your gifts, and a sensible head,
You can joyfully tackle the trials ahead!

THE END