

CATAPULT ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS MOUZART

MOUZART INFO AND STUDY GUIDE

Mouzart is the true story of Mozart's older sister, Maria-Anna. Her nickname was Nannerl and you will hear both names in our story. For our purposes Nannerl is the older version who is narrating the story about when she was a young girl. Her younger self is referred to as Maria-Anna. She was a musical prodigy and her more famous brother, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was inspired to learn music because he looked up to his older sister. We hear a lot about Wolfgang Mozart as one of the world's greatest composers but almost nothing about his older sister. In the 18th century it was expected that women would raise children and run the household – it was not considered proper for a young woman to perform on stage in front of the public. Because of this the genius and talent of Maria-Anna is lost to the world. Nothing remains of her compositions and her career as a famous musician ended when she was 15. Maria- Anna and Wolfgang were both child stars. They were famous all over Europe and performed before royalty on a regular basis.

In our story there is a musical mouse who lives in the Mozart house and he is of course a fictional character. He has a difficult relationship with his father who wants him to stay away from humans. Maria-Anna's father forbids her to play music. In what way might both fathers be trying to protect their children?



Mozart – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was a child prodigy who played and composed music starting at age 5. He lived from 1756 to 1791. He is considered one of the world's most accomplished and productive composers even though he only lived to the age of 35.



Classical Music - music written in the European tradition between 1750 to 1830. Distinct from Jazz, folk or current popular music.

Child Prodigy – a very young child that shows great ability in some area of arts or sciences.

Historical Fiction – a work of fiction based on historical characters or events but not constrained by historical facts. You can expect some actual events to be mixed with imagined events.

Themes - Mozart examines themes around women's roles, Family expectations and the tension created by trying to follow one's own dreams when one's family and society expect something else.

Gender roles and customs of the time - The customs of the time specifically what girls and boys were allowed to do and expected to do with their lives.

Activity: Describe what jobs women were expected to do in the late 1700s and what jobs they could do. How are today's expectations different? Are there things that have not changed? Notice that because women had very few options to work jobs for money in the 18th century, their ability to survive had much to do with getting married and dependence on a husband.

Perceptions of women's roles in society. Are women still expected to get married and raise children instead of working? Could a man stay home with the children while his wife went to work to support the family?



Maria- Anna Mozart – a true historical figure – elder sister of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart – also a child musical prodigy. She was born in 1751 and lived to be 78 years old.

Mouzart – a fictional mouse. Titular character in Mouzart the Shadow Play.

Memoir - a story told by a narrator remembering past events of their own life.

Activity: Write your own short memoir in poem format. Start with the line: “I Come From –“ Fill in the things about your family and upbringing that stick out to you, things that you love and or things that you find challenging. Give your readers a window into your life and upbringing so far. Use vivid language that can paint a picture for us. Use words that evoke all the senses: Taste, touch, hearing, sights, smells and also emotions.

Activity for after: write a memoir poem for any character in Mouzart. Use the same “I Come From –“ format and imagine you are the character speaking in the first person. Fill in what you don’t know with your imagination so it will be a historical fiction memoir poem. In this case it’s ok to make things up.

Mouzart and Maria-Anna Mozart have some things in common. See if you can list some of them:

1. They both love ... (fill in the blank)
2. They both have a family member who is not necessarily supportive of their dreams. (Who is it?)
3. They both have to make a decision about whether to be obedient or to defy expectations (How do each of them choose?)
4. Describe the choice that Maria-Anna makes and how it is different from the one that Mouzart makes
5. What do you imagine are the positive and negative consequences of the decision they each make. They both give up something they love what did they gain, what did they lose?