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SCHOOLS

An illustration of two people from behind, standing side-by-side. The person on the left has short reddish-brown hair and is wearing a teal sweater and dark blue pants. The person on the right has long, dark, curly hair and is wearing a red sweater and dark pants. The background is a light green color with a fine, dotted pattern.

# Elixir of Love

FEATURING THE  
BAUMGARTNER STUDIO ARTISTS

# OPERA GUIDE

## A Note to Teachers

Dear Educators,

Welcome! Thank you so much for choosing us to be a part of your school year. We are certain that you will find our program, ***Elixir of Love***, to be engaging and fulfilling for everyone who sees it! We encourage you to take advantage of our electronic format and share the opera guide with students and other colleagues.

In addition to the tour of *Elixir of Love* at the Florentine Opera this season, we encourage you to look into our other education and community engagement programs. Please visit [florentineopera.org/operaforstudents](http://florentineopera.org/operaforstudents) for more information on Community Circle discount tickets, Play & Perform programs, custom classroom visits, and more!

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding the performance, the opera guide, or the Florentine Opera.

Thanks again and we look forward to seeing you this year!

Renata Herrera  
Education and Community Engagement Manager  
[education@florentineopera.org](mailto:education@florentineopera.org)

The  
Florentine  
Opera

### What to Expect:

**Opera is a story told through music with singing, acting, movement, scenery, costumes, and more!**

- **The Florentine Opera's adaptation of *Elixir of Love* is a bilingual production with music by Gaetano Donizetti and our own English language twist!**
- **The music will be performed in Italian with dialogue in English.**
- **The performance runs 35 minutes.**
- **There will be a Q&A with the artists following the performance.**
- **Recommended for grades PreK-5th.**

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## Credits

### Elixir of Love

**Music by** Gaetano Donizetti

**Libretto by** Felice Romani

**English Dialogue by** Danielle Gedemer

**CAST:**

**Adina**, Jamila Drecker-Waxman

**Nemorino**, Zach Taylor

**Belcore**, David Drettwan

**Dulcamara**, Lauryn Nelson

**Pianist**, Daniel Weber

**Stage Director**, Jill Anna Ponasik

**Head of Music**, Aurelia Andrews

**Fine Artist Collaborator**, Taylor Leinstock

**Costume Designer**, Leslie Vaglica

**Prop Designer**, Bianca Gonzalez

**Stage Manager**, Marcie Friedman

**Costume Shop Manager**, Jordan Meyer

**Technical Director**, Libby Winchester Schultz

**Education & Community Engagement Manager**, Renata Herrera

**Adapted by The Florentine Opera, premiered January 2026**

## The Story of Elixir of Love

Once upon a time, almost 200 years ago, two very clever men from Italy, Gaetano Donizetti [gah-ay-TAH-no doh-nee-TSEH-tee] and Felice Romani [fay-LEE-chay roh-MAH-nee], decided to write an opera about a magic potion, a happy tear, and love. They called the opera **L'elisir d'amore** [lay-lee-ZIR dah-MOR-ay], meaning "The Elixir of Love" in Italian. The opera was filled with beautiful music, funny moments, and big, dramatic feelings.

When people saw the opera for the first time in 1832, they loved it right away. The music and the characters made everyone smile, and soon it became one of the most loved operas in all of Italy!

If *you* could make a magic potion, what would it do? Would it make people laugh, sing, turn your hair fun colors, or make your toys come to life?

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### **Elixir of Love: Adapted by The Florentine Opera**

Nemorino is a shy teenager with a big secret—he likes a smart and kind girl named Adina. But he is too shy to tell her. One day in school, Adina tells a story about two people who fell in love because of a magic potion. The whole class thinks: "How can I get this elixir? Someone, fall in love with me!"



After class, Nemorino wants to talk to Adina, but Belcore, a confident and strong boy, jumps in and asks Adina to walk to lunch with him. Adina says "okay", and Nemorino feels small next to Belcore's big personality.

Then a funny girl named Dulcamara appears. She tells Nemorino she can make him a love potion—just like the one in Adina's story. Nemorino drinks it, even though it tastes yucky! Only Dulcamara knows that the elixir has no magic—just a mix of hot sauce and apple juice! But she thinks, "if Nemorino believes in himself, maybe that's all the magic he needs."

Feeling brave, Nemorino plans to ask Adina to the school talent show.

# The Story of Elixir of Love



In class, Nemorino is so excited about the potion that he forgets to pay attention, and Adina tells him to focus or he'll get in trouble!

Later, when he finally tries to talk to her, Belcore interrupts and asks Adina to be his girlfriend. Adina says yes, just so she won't be alone at the show.

Dulcamara reminds Nemorino to be patient and insists that the potion will work *after* the show. She also talks to Adina, encouraging her to be her true self. Then Dulcamara has an idea: they'll change their performance at the talent show.

On stage, they sing a new song about real love—being brave, kind, and true inside. Belcore realizes he doesn't have to copy others and chooses to follow his own dream: to be an opera singer! He tells Adina they should just be friends.

Finally, Nemorino finds the courage to tell Adina he loves her. Adina smiles and says she loves him too—just as he is. Dulcamara reminds everyone, "Though it's scary to have courage, to yourself you must be true. Only you can tell your story, there can't be another you!"



## Meet the Characters

### Adina [ah-DEE-nah]

Adina is a smart and popular girl who likes to read books and sometimes pretends not to care about love.

Adina's voice type is **Soprano**: the highest voice type for female singers.



Click to hear Adina tell the story of Tristano and Isotta, who fell in love because of a magic potion!  
Notice how music from the instruments helps the story feel romantic.



### Nemorino [neh-mohr-EEN-oh]

Nemorino is a shy boy who has a crush on Adina, but doesn't think she will ever notice him.

Nemorino's voice type is **Tenor**: the highest voice type for male singers.

Click to hear Nemorino sing about his love for Adina. Notice how the music begins sad and then turns happy when he realizes that Adina likes him back!



## Dulcamara [dool-cah-MAHR-ah]

Dulcamara is a funny and tricky girl who likes to help people solve their problems.

Dulcamara's voice type is **Mezzo-Soprano**: a medium high voice for female singers.



Click to hear Dulcamara convince Nemorino to take it easy. She tells him her secret to being happy, or in Italian "felici".



## Belcore [bel-COHR-eh]

Belcore is a quarterback who loves to show off. He thinks wants Adina to be his girlfriend.

Belcore's voice type is **Baritone**: a medium-high voice type for male singers.

Click to hear the Belcore show off for Adina. He calls himself "vezzoso", meaning charming. Listen to how he shows off by singing high, low, fast, and slow.



## Story Map

Use the story and the character guide to create a Story Map for *Elixir of Love*. Write 1 or 2 sentences in each box.

### Beginning

Consider: Who are the main characters? What is the problem of the story?

### Middle

Consider: How do the characters try to solve the problem?

### End

Consider: Is the problem solved? What changed throughout the story?

## Story Map (Bonus)

Use the story and the character guide to create a Story Map for *Elixir of Love*. Write 1 or 2 sentences in each box.

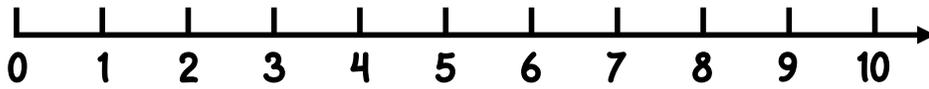
### So What?

What lesson(s) can we learn from this story? Sometimes we call this the “theme”.

## Dulcamara's Elixir Math

In our opera, Dulcamara mixes a pretend "magic" elixir to help Nemorino with his problems.

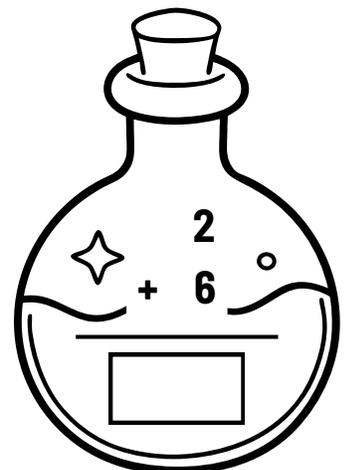
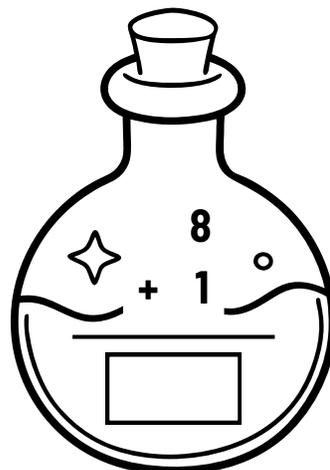
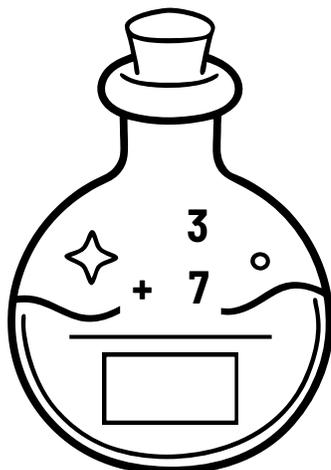
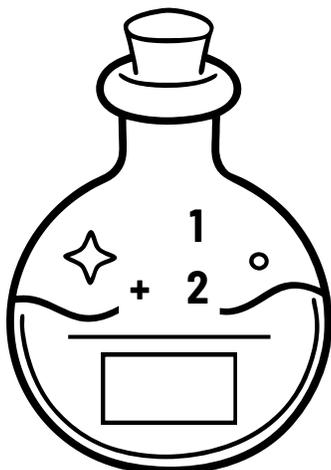
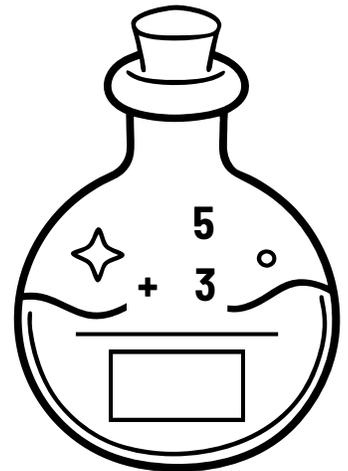
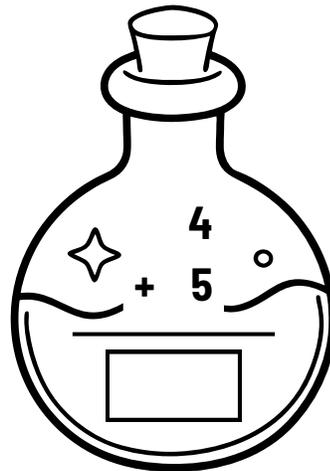
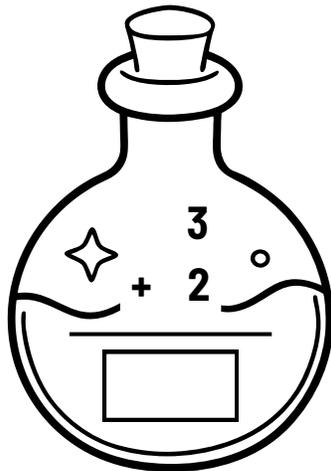
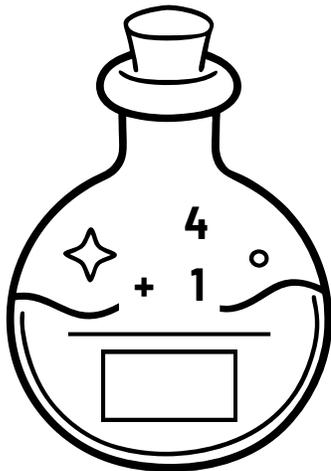
Solve the math problems below to help her get the mix just right! Add and write the sums in the elixir. Use the number line of needed. Color the elixir by the code.



If the sum is even,  
color the bottle **blue**



If the sum is odd,  
color the bottle **green**



## Dulcamara's Elixir Math

In our opera, Dulcamara mixes a pretend "magic" elixir to help Nemorino with his problems.

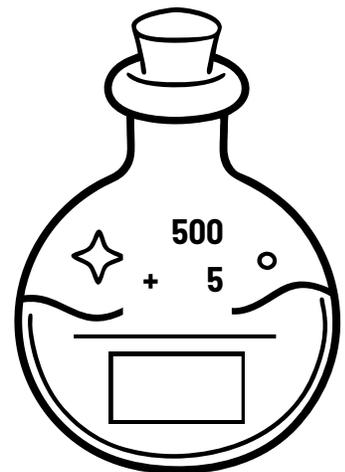
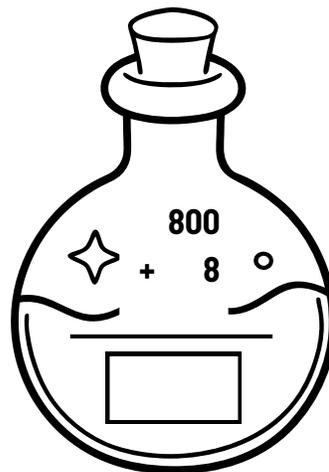
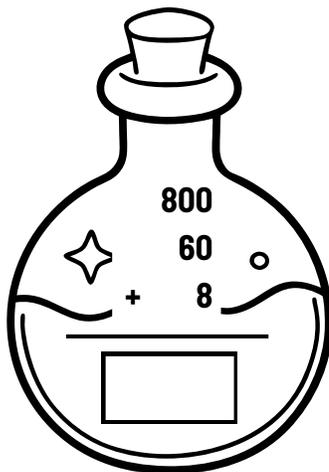
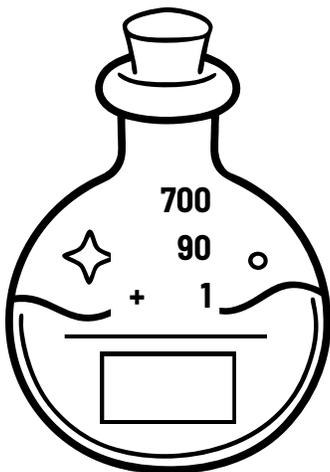
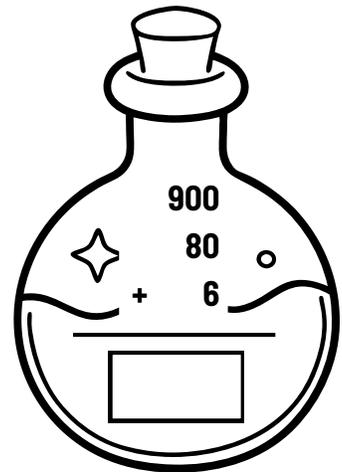
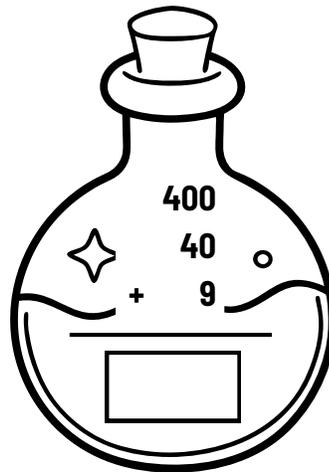
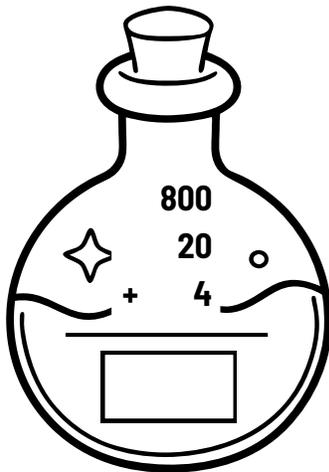
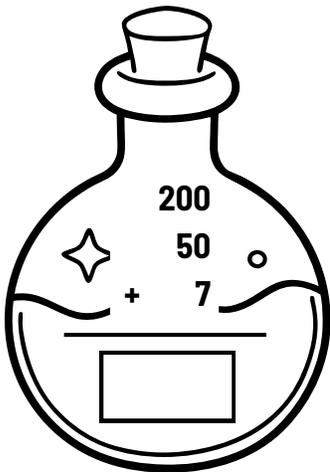
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If the sum is even, color the bottle **blue**

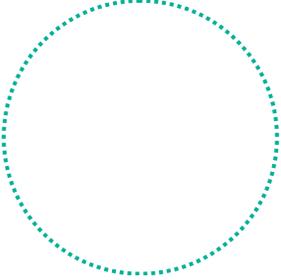


If the sum is odd, color the bottle **green**



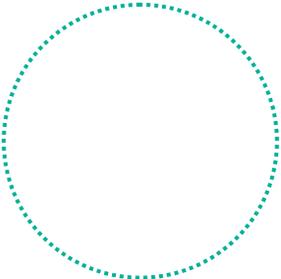
## Making the Opera Happen

### Story



Every opera starts with a **story**. It might come from a book, a myth, a fairy tale, real life events, or even someone's imagination. *Elixir of Love* is based on the story for a different opera called, *Le philtre* (the potion).

### Librettist & Composer

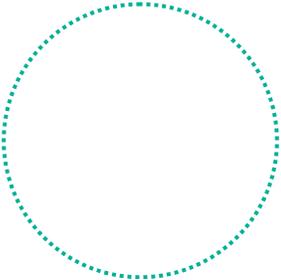


The **librettist** is a writer who turns the story into a script, like a play. In opera the script is called the libretto.

The **composer** writes the music in a way that best tells the story. The written-out music (with the words

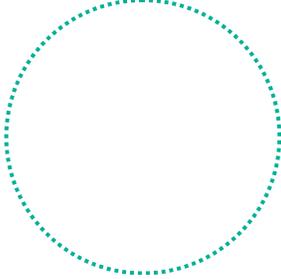
of the libretto) is called the score. The composer for *Elixir of Love* is Gaetano Donizetti. We have two librettists for this opera. Felice Romani is the librettist who worked with Donizetti to write the words for the original opera. The dialogue in English was written by Danielle Gedemer.

### Cast



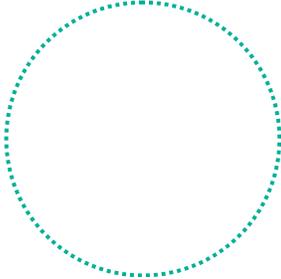
The **cast** includes all of the singers who perform the opera.

### Designers



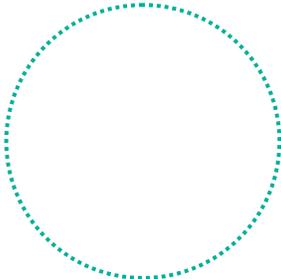
The **designers** work with the director on how the opera will look and how its story will be told. They create the set, the costumes, and the props.

### Music Director



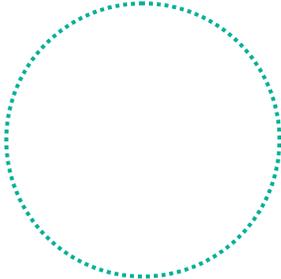
The **music director** leads music rehearsals.

### Instrumentalists



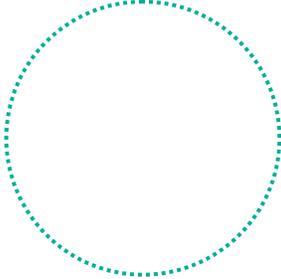
The **instrumentalists** are musicians that play the music written by the composer. A composer may write for all sorts of instruments depending on the opera. In our adaptation of *Elixir of Love*, there is only one instrument—the piano!

### Stage Director



The **stage director** decides how the opera will look and be acted out onstage.

### Audience



The **audience** is YOU. What would a show be without an audience? That's when everybody's hard work pays off.

## Image Bank

Read each description on the previous page and look for the picture that matches it. Cut out the picture, and glue it to the matching description!



# Composer History Timeline

**1797** In a city called Bergamo in northern Italy, Gaetano Donizetti was born. His family was poor, but he loved music and showed great talent. A music teacher named Simon Mayr gave Donizetti a scholarship (that means he could learn music for free) to study at the beautiful church of Santa Maria Maggiore.



Young Donizetti

**1811** When Donizetti was 14 years old, he starred in a big play at Santa Maria Maggiore called *The Little Composer*. His teacher wrote the story, and Donizetti's character said: "I have a big imagination! I am a thunderbolt at composing." Everyone could see that Donizetti really was *The Little Composer*!

**1822** When Donizetti was almost 25 years old, a very important man named Domenico Barbaja invited him to come to a city called Naples, the best place for opera in southern Italy. He lived there for 16 years, sometimes he traveling to share his music. He worked with a writer named Felice Romani, their first opera flopped, but later they made the famous *Elixir of Love*!

**1827** Donizetti made a deal to write 4 operas every year for Naples! Even while busy, more people in other cities loved his music, and soon, everyone wanted him to compose! It was a time when Donizetti was working very hard.

**1828** Donizetti became the director of the royal theaters in Naples! That means he helped run the big theaters where operas were performed. But, he still loved writing music for other theaters all around Italy.

**1832** *Elixir of Love* was shown for the very first time on May 12 in Milan. It was the sixth opera Donizetti created with his writer friend Felice Romani. Soon people all over the world loved it!

**1835** Gaetano Donizetti got his first big job outside Italy! He was asked to write an opera for a theater in Paris called the Théâtre-Italien. And guess who asked him? The very famous composer Gioachino Rossini, who had lived in Paris for a long time!

**1842** Donizetti moved to Vienna to be the special composer for the emperor. He still traveled to Paris and Italy to write new music and help with old operas.

**1848** Donizetti passed away in his hometown Bergamo on April 8. Even though he was very famous, many people were busy with big troubles in the country and didn't hear the news right away. He was first buried in the Bergamo cemetery, but later, in 1875, he was moved to the beautiful cathedral of Santa Maria Maggiore with his first music teacher, Simon Mayr.



Adult Donizetti