



Teacher/Viewing Guide

Hanan Alattar – Episode 111

Soprano

Grade Level: 9-12

Episode Overview:

Hanan Alattar is an international opera singer who considers herself multi-cultural: She is Arab, American, and Texan! She was born in Houston, Texas to an Iraqi father and a Palestinian mother who met while they were attending the University of Texas. In high school, Ms. Alattar chose to take a chorus class, primarily because she attended a Catholic girls' school in Houston and chorus was one of the few classes that was co-ed. That was her first exposure to music performance and she instantly fell in love with it.

In college at the University of Texas, Ms. Alattar wanted to pursue a degree in vocal performance, but her father was wary of the impracticality of that dream. He realized how difficult it would be for her to have a successful career as a performer. He wanted her to convince him that others also saw her promise by obtaining scholarship money for school, which she did.

After college she was advised by her teachers to pursue a master's degree and again her father was concerned that she would not be able to make a living in music performance. She ended up being accepted to the prestigious Julliard Academy in New York, and she lived in New York for the next 12 years. Ms. Alattar had always felt a desire to sing and perform, but being surrounded by the energy of New York really gave her the inspiration and confidence to pursue her dream of making it a career.

Today, Ms. Alattar is a successful opera performer and travels all over the world to sing soprano parts in famous operas. Her favorite aspect of performing is stepping inside a character's persona and experiencing their culture. She considers music a vehicle to communicate with her audience, and values the empowerment of working with an orchestra and other players to do that. To her, music is a universal language, complete with emotions, nuances, and messages that anyone can understand.

Previewing Questions:

1. If you wanted to be a professional musician, how would you go about it?
2. What personal characteristics do you feel are necessary to fulfill a unique career goal?
3. How does a person's geographic region affect who they are as a person and their path to success?

Vocabulary:

1. Opera: A dramatic work, in one or more acts, set to music for singers and instrumentalists.
2. Soprano: The highest of the four standard singing voices.
3. Nuance: A subtle difference in or shade of meaning, expression, or sound.
4. Scholarship: A grant or payment made to support a student's education, awarded on the basis of academic or other achievement.
5. Regionalism: The theory or practice of local, rather than central, systems of administration or economic, cultural, or political affiliation.
6. Prestigious: Inspiring respect and admiration; having high status.

Teacher/Viewing Guide

Lesson Overview/Review:

After viewing the segment on Hanan Alattar, students should be prepared to brainstorm about characteristics of their school, town/city, and region.

Journal Option: Have students take a moment to write about what they think influences their personal identity (school, town, city, country, culture.)

Post Viewing Class Discussion: Conduct a short discussion to synthesize the information they gained from viewing the video segment. Some possible topics:

1. Why did Ms. Alattar's father continually challenge her decisions to pursue a career in music?
2. How did Ms. Alattar's regional identity affect her success?
3. Why does Ms. Alattar choose to participate in live performances versus other types of performance?

Activity: For this activity, students will investigate regional identity in the United States. The lesson will begin with a blank map of the US on which the students will draw, from memory, what they consider basic regions of the US. Once students have finished, break them up into groups of no more than four students each and give each group another blank map. The groups should work together to come up with a single regional map. At this point the teacher will bring the class back together and have groups share their maps, while recording the regions students identified on the board. These will be the main regions for research. Each group will then be assigned a specific region to investigate, using the leading questions below. Before beginning formal research, groups should list characteristics of their assigned region. Answers to the questions can be recorded on a single sheet of paper or poster board to be turned in for the group:

1. Where is your region located geographically?
2. How is it referred to? What is it called?
3. What are the dominant economic, religious, political, and demographic characteristics of the region?
4. Record any historical national significance of the region.
5. What are the stereotypes about the region? What influences these stereotypes?
6. Compare your initial list of characteristics to your research. What are the similarities and differences?

It is best if groups are given time to present their findings to the class. For a final assessment, students should answer these essay questions: Why did regional differences develop in the United States? Are we better with these differences or would it be better if we were all the same? What is the value in having a regional identity?

Assessment Ideas: Students will be graded on:

1. Participation in class discussion and class work.
2. Participation in group work.
3. Group research answers and maps.
4. Final essay.

Explore Online: Use the following resources to allow your students to further explore the topic and the Arab American community.

1. Arab American Museum: <http://arabamericanmuseum.org/>
2. Opera America: <http://www.operaamerica.org/>
3. Arab American Antidiscrimination Committee: <http://adc.org/>
4. Regions of the US: <http://usa.usembassy.de/travel-regions.htm>



Teacher/Viewing Guide

Interdisciplinary Options: Geography; Psychology; Sociology; Career Education; Fine Arts

In this episode, students will see how having a strong personal identity helps an individual pursue their dreams.

Common Core Alignment:

- RI7: Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account
- W1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- W8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information, while avoiding plagiarism.
- W9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- SL4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.