

Zorro: Performance Preparation Teacher Guide

Grades 9–12

This guide prepares students for attending a live performance of Zorro. It introduces the story, characters, and musical elements to help students engage more fully with what they see and hear. Designed for use in one class period prior to the performance.

Three Focus Areas

1. Story Overview

Zorro is set in early 19th-century Alta California. Diego de la Vega returns home and must choose between comfort and responsibility. He adopts the masked identity of Zorro, becoming a symbol of courage and justice.

2. Characters to Watch

- Diego de la Vega / Zorro – A nobleman who secretly becomes the masked hero.
- Ana Maria – A determined advocate who challenges Diego to act.
- Alcalde Moncada – The authority figure whose leadership creates conflict.
- Toyapurina – A respected elder representing wisdom and grounding.
- Suzanna – A complex character whose choices influence the drama.

3. What to Listen For

- Zorro's Theme – Bold brass music signaling heroic action.
- Recurring Motifs – Musical ideas connected to characters.
- Cultural Influences – Elements inspired by Mexican and Spanish traditions.
- Bilingual Libretto – English and Spanish blended in storytelling.
- Orchestral Storytelling – The orchestra expressing emotion and tension.

Additional Resources for Teachers

How to Use the Zorro Lecture Companion

The Companion can extend classroom preparation and discussion.

- Left Panel – Navigate between Story, Characters, History, and Music.
- Chatbot – Ask for summaries, clarifications, or discussion prompts.

- Audio Tracks – Play short excerpts and connect music to character and action.

Glossary

- Aria – A solo song expressing emotion.
- Recitative – Speech-like singing that moves the story forward.
- Libretto – The text of an opera.
- Motif (Leitmotif) – A recurring musical idea linked to a character or theme.
- Orchestra – The instrumental musicians performing the score.
- Soprano / Tenor / Baritone – Operatic voice categories by range.
- Bilingual – Using two languages; this opera includes English and Spanish.