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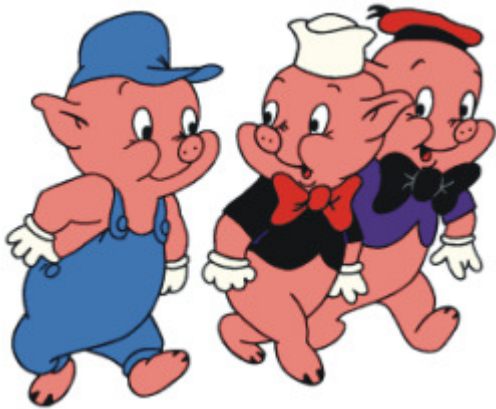
*Present*

## The Three Little Pigs



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## *Synopsis of The Three Little Pigs*

**An operatic version of the story of *The Three Little Pigs* based on scenes from operas by W. A. Mozart.**

**While brother pigs Don Giovanni and Cherubino set off to make homes of sticks and straw, their sister, Despina, goes to the library to read up on "huff-proof, puff-proof" home construction. After Wolfgang Bigbad blows down the boys' flimsy homes, they run to their sister's sturdy new brick house quite ready to admit that going to the library and reading books is a pretty smart thing to do after all.**

## Dear Teacher:

We are looking forward to performing *The Three Little Pigs* for your students! These materials will help you prepare your class for our visit.

What to Expect:

♪ We will be performing an operatic comedy in English for your school's K – 5th grade students. The performance lasts approximately 40 minutes.

♪ There is an entertaining plot and the show is also an educational introduction to opera.

♪ Our show requires attentive silence from the audience, but it is also interactive.

♪ We will be singing with a pianist, not an orchestra.

♪ The opera will probably take place in your school's gymnasium rather than an auditorium, so your classes will be seated on the floor.

♪ You and your students will be invited to ask questions at the end of the performance.

## Questions for Class Preparation:

Please take a few moments to speak with your class about opera before our visit! This question/answer model can help you lead the discussion.

**Explain:** We are going to see an opera in the gym. You will sit on the floor during the show. The singers will perform with a pianist playing for them, and they will be telling you a story through their singing.

**Question:** Who can tell me what an opera is?

**Answer:** *A play that tells a story, in which the characters usually sing instead of speaking.*

**Question:** Why do they sing instead of talking?

**Answer:** *Because the music tells part of the story too, just as it does in a movie or cartoon.*

**Question:** Will they sing in a different language?

**Answer:** *There are many operas in many different languages, but these singers will perform in English.*

**Question:** How should we behave during the opera?

**Answer:** *We should sit quietly, keep our eyes on the performers, and listen to the words. When they ask us questions we should join in. We should raise our hands to answer questions or do the things they ask us to do. It is also OK to laugh out loud, cheer, and clap.*

**Children Might Ask:** Will there be fat ladies with horns on their heads?

**Answer:** *Wait and see. You might be surprised to find out what opera is really like!*

# Quality Core Requirements

**So you think opera is just a musical thing? Take a look at some of the ways that the study of opera can meet the Quality Core Curriculum standards of the North Carolina Department of Education.**

**Music:** Because opera has been an integral part of musical development for 400 years, the study of opera can become a window into the various style periods from early Baroque to contemporary. An opera performance provides students with the opportunity to learn pieces by some of the most famous composers ever known as presented by professional musicians trained in the performance practices of the day.

Performances also display various voice parts and the use of ensembles and soloists. Students will develop their skills in critiquing performances as they identify and process the elements of a live performance.

**Language Arts:** Opera is a story told with music and, as such, contains all the elements of storytelling and drama. By following the plot of the libretto and learning the context of specific songs within a particular opera, students learn about story structure, sequencing, character development and other dramatic elements. Many operas are based on plays, books or stories that were popular in a given time (including many of Shakespeare's plays—or on fairy tales like *The Three Little Pigs*) and can give a new insight into a work's meaning with the added element of music. After seeing a live performance, students will compare and contrast their reactions and will begin to form opinions and make judgments about what they experienced.

**Social Studies:** Western opera is an art form that was born in late 16th-century Italy. However, the practice of telling stories with music has been present in every major culture of the world for as long as we have historical records. Many operas are set in times and places far removed from our own. The costumes are unlike our clothes of today, the settings are different, as is the manner of speech. However, often the problems and concerns of the characters reflect many similarities to today's world. Opera can give students a looking glass into a world of the past while connecting the past to the present.

**Art:** Music has often paralleled the stylistic development of the visual arts. An opera performance can offer art students a look at the performing arts of a particular style period and provide opportunities for discussion to compare and contrast the arts scene of that time. Our productions are fully costumed

with scenery and lighting, so there are many visual images that relate to the development of the visual arts.

**Career Education:** While the opera singer gets most of the limelight there are many other ways in which to have a career in the world of opera. Workshops and other interactions with the various contract artists who work with the opera companies in such areas as set/prop design and construction, costume design and construction, technical direction, stage direction and arts administration can address career opportunities in those areas as well as in musical performance areas.

## A brief look at Opera

The Italian word *opera* is derived from a Latin word that means ‘work.’ An opera is a play in which the words are sung, not spoken. The music is a partner, and is just as important as the story. An opera is staged, like a play, so must be seen as well as heard. It combines music, plot, sets, staging, and costumes to create an exciting and emotional spectacle. The story of an opera is usually not original. Many operas are based on historic events, plays, novels, Bible stories, mythology, or fairy tales—like *The Three Little Pigs*.

## Glossary of Opera Terms

Listed below are words commonly associated with Opera. Learning these words will help you understand the individual pieces that, when put together, form an opera production.

### **Elements of Opera:**

#### **Actor (ak tor)**

A performer who has dialogue or significant action, but who does not sing.

#### **Aria (är ē a)**

Aria means air. Since a singer’s voice travels on air, the Italians decided to call the songs they sing arias. In an aria, the characters usually share their inner thoughts or feelings.

#### **Bravo (brä vō)**

This is a word that audience members shout to the singers if they think they have done a good job. Bravo in Italian means GREAT! If the singer is a female, we shout *brava*.

#### **Cast (kast)**

All the singers and actors who appear on stage.

#### **Chorus (kôr us)**

A group of singers (made up of all voice parts) who mostly sing together; sometimes this group contains actors and dancers who do not sing, but who are part of the group as a whole.

#### **Choreographer**

The person who creates the movements for the dancers.

#### **Comprimario (kom pri mā riō)**

From Italian, meaning “next to the first”. A singer who performs a small character role in an opera. Confidants (a person you trust to tell your secrets to), maids, servants and messengers are often in this category.

**Conductor** (kon duk t\_r)

The person who directs the singers and the orchestra during the performances. They use specific patterns of movement with his or her hands and a baton, which is similar to a wand.

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**Libretto** (li bret ò)

Libretto means “little book.” It is the words or text of an opera and is the same as the script of a play. The person who writes these words is called the librettist.

**Opera buffa** (op era bu fa)

Buffa means “funny,” used for a comic opera. *Così fan tutte* by Mozart is an example of an opera buffa.

**Opera seria** (op er a ser ē a)

An opera with a story that is very serious. Usually, one of the characters dies in the end.

**Orchestra** (ôr ke stra)

In most cases, group of musicians plays for an opera. Led by a conductor, an orchestra is made up of string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments.

**Overture** (ō ver chur)

A piece that may be played at the very beginning of the opera before any action takes place on the stage (not all operas have overtures).

**Principal** (prin se pil)

A singer who portrays a primary character of an opera, often times heroes, heroines or villains.

**Recitative** (res i tā'tiv)

The English word “recite” both looks and means the same as the Italian word recitative. A recitative is the part of an opera where the singers talk to each other. The music of a recitative tries to imitate the rhythms and inflections of speech.

**Stage director**

The person who guides the action on stage and tells the singers where and how to move.

**Score** (skôr)

Musicians read from a score. It is a piece of music showing each vocal or instrument's part on its own staff.

**Supernumerary** (sōō pur nōō'me rer'ē)

A performer who appears in a non-singing or non-speaking role, like an “extra” in a movie.

## **Vocal categories**

### **Contralto** (kon tral tō)

The lowest female voice part. Often contraltos play old women, witches, comic roles.

### **Baritone** (bar i tōn)

A male voice between the tenor and bass. Usually they are helpful companions or villains but occasionally can be the hero.

### **Bass** (bās)

The lowest male singing voice. Usually basses play kings, villains and priests.

### **Mezzo-soprano** (mez ō so prä nō)

Mezzo means middle and a mezzo-soprano is the female voice in the middle, between the soprano and contralto. You see these voice parts most often in the parts of mothers, older women, villains, and servants. Sometimes mezzo-sopranos even play young boys! These roles are called “trouser roles”.

### **Soprano** (so prä nō)

The highest singing voice in women and children. Most often the heroine of the opera.

### **Tenor** (ten er)

The highest male voice part. Tenors most often are the romantic heroes of an opera.

# A Checklist for Opera Singers

A good opera singer must have:

♪ **Volume:** Opera Singers are trained to be heard in large theatres without using microphones. Singers train for years to be able to sing loud enough to be heard over other soloists, a chorus, and a large orchestra of about 50 musicians. Opera singers can sing *really* loud.

♪ **Stamina:** Stamina is the strength or power to resist getting tired. An Opera singer requires the ability to sing for two to three hours. Operas are rarely performed on consecutive evenings because they are so physically exhausting for the performers. Piedmont Opera plans its schedule so that the artists can rest up for a day between performances. Piedmont Opera productions are performed on Friday evenings, Sunday afternoons, and Tuesday evenings.

♪ **Range:** Operatic music, as written, requires singers to have a wide vocal range; they must be able to sing very low notes as well as extremely high notes.

♪ **Acting ability:** Opera singers don't just stand on stage and sing – they must be able to act as well. Just like actors in a play, the singer must make the audience believe in the characters they portray.

♪ **Different languages:** Since operas started in Europe, most of them were written in languages other than English. A singer must be familiar with the pronunciation and each word of the foreign language. American singers perform in Italian, French, German, and even Russian.

## Opera Vocabulary Matching: Match the word with its proper definition!

- |              |                   |                   |                 |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Orchestra | 7. Opera seria    | 13. Tenor         | 19. Recitative  |
| 2. Conductor | 8. Principals     | 14. Mezzo-Soprano | 20. Aria        |
| 3. Score     | 9. Comprimario    | 15. Baritone      | 21. Bravo       |
| 4. Overture  | 10. Supernumerary | 16. Contralto     | 22. Opera Buffa |
| 5. Cast      | 11. Chorus        | 17. Bass          |                 |
| 6. Actors    | 12. Soprano       | 18. Libretto      |                 |

A: A part of the opera in which the singers talk to each other.

B: A song in which a character usually share their inner thoughts or feelings. In English it translates to “air”.

C: All the singers and actors who appear on stage.

D: The lowest male singing voice.

E: A group of singers who mostly sing together; sometimes this group contains actors and dancers who do not sing, but who are part of the group as a whole.

F: An ensemble that is comprised of string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments.

G: A notated piece of music showing each vocal or instrumental part on its own staff.

H: The words or text of an opera.

I: This Italian word is used by audience members to shout to the singers if they think they have done a good job.

J: Performers who have dialogue or action on stage, but do not sing.

K: An opera with a very serious story.

L: A singer who portrays a primary character in an opera.

M: The highest singing voice in women and children.

N: The individual who determines the musical direction of the singers and orchestra during the performances by using specific patterns of movement with his or her hands and a baton.

O: A male voice between the tenor and bass.

P: An orchestral piece that may be played at the very beginning of the opera before any action takes place on stage

Q: The highest adult male voice.

R: From the Italian, meaning “next to the first”, a singer who performs a small character role in an opera.

S: A performer who appears in a nonsinging or non- speaking role, like an “extra” in a movie.

T: Female voice between the soprano and contralto.

U: A comic opera.

V: The lowest female voice part.

## **ANSWER KEY FOR WORD MATCHING**

**F** Orchestra

**N** Conductor

**G** Score

**P** Overture

**C** Cast

**J** Actors

**K** Opera seria

**L** Principals

**R** Comprimarios

**S** Supernumerary

**E** Chorus

**M** Soprano

**Q** Tenor

**T** Mezzo-Soprano

**O** Baritone

**V** Contralto

**D** Bass

**H** Libretto

**A** Recitative

**B** Aria

**I** Bravo

**U** Opera buffa

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES

## A BIT ABOUT PIGS -- DID YOU KNOW?

### Facts about Pigs

- Pigs are the fourth most intelligent animal in the world.
- Pig's Tongue contains 15,000 taste buds. For comparison, the human tongue has 9,000 taste buds.
- Pork is the world's most widely-eaten meat.
- In Denmark there are twice as many pigs as people.

## More Pig Fun Facts

### Other Names

A pig is also called *swine*, *hog*, *sow* (female), *boar* (male), *piglet* (young).

### Intelligence Level

Pigs are smarter than dogs!

Only chimpanzees, dolphins, whales, and elephants are known to be smarter than pigs.

### Sweat and Mud

Pigs have no sweat glands and, therefore, do not sweat. Which means, pigs are clean: they do not sweat and become greasy. They only get dirty when they roll in mud to cool themselves off.

Pigs need mud on their body for the following reasons: to cool themselves off (since they can't sweat) and to keep bugs and other insects off their body.

# Egg Carton Pig



By [Sherri Osborn](#), About.com Guide

Follow these directions and you can create your own little piggy using a couple of egg carton cups and a few basic craft supplies.

- **Age Guideline:** 6 Years and Up
- **Time Required:** 30 minutes (*Does not include drying time*)

*The above age and time guidelines are estimates. This project can be modified to suit other ages and may take more or less time depending on your circumstances.*

## Materials Needed:

- [Egg Carton](#)
- [Paint](#)
- [Craft Foam](#)
- [Wiggle Eyes](#)
- [Chenille Stems](#)
- [Craft Glue](#)
- [Paint Brush](#)
- [Scissors](#)

## Instructions:

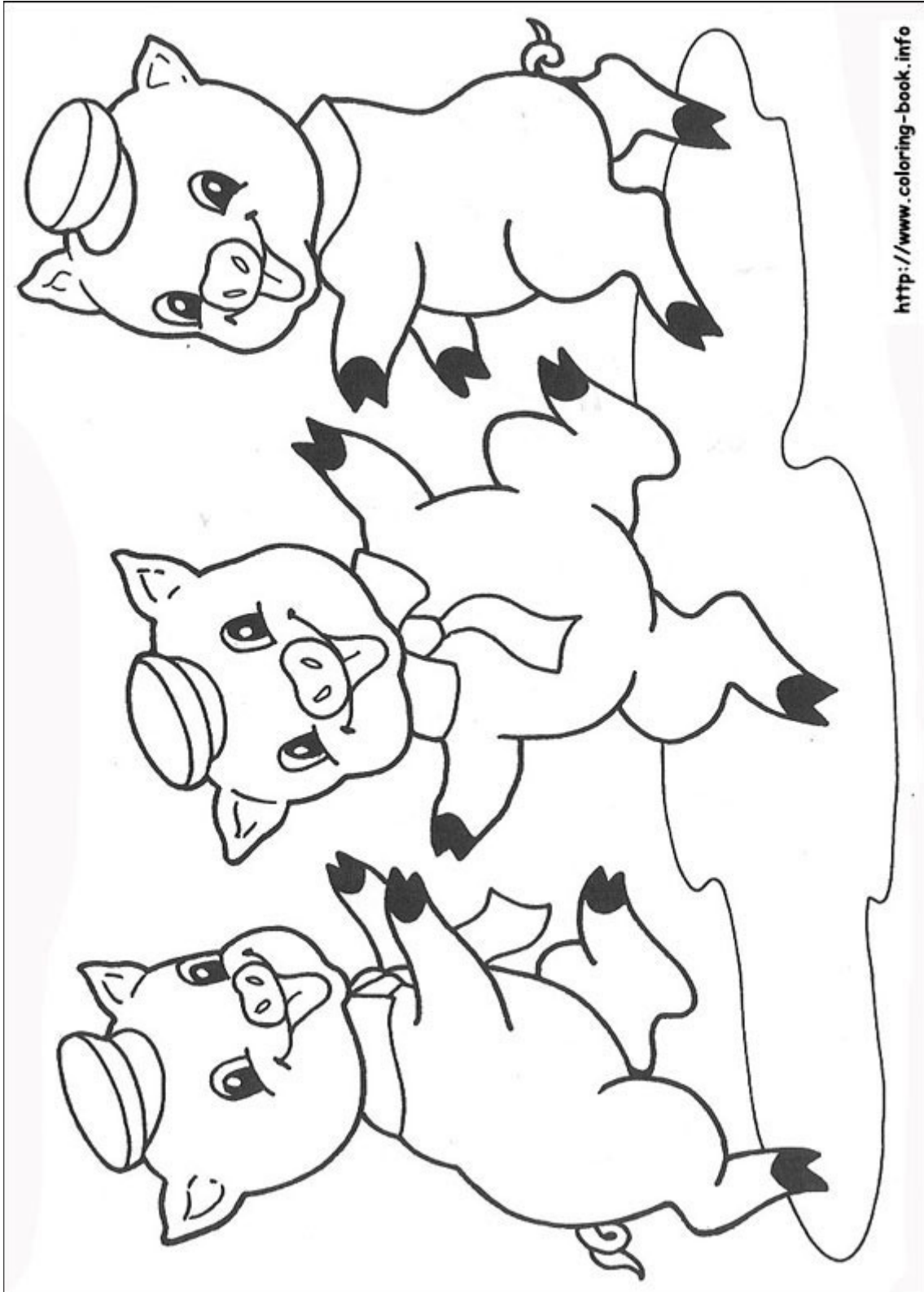
To make this cute pig, start off by cutting a two-cup section from an egg carton, leaving the cups attached. Bend the egg carton cups towards each other so they are rim-to-rim. This will make an oval shape. Glue the the rims together and let dry the glue dry.

Trim off any rough edges around the section you glued so you have a nice oval which will now serve as your pig's body. Paint the egg carton oval pink so it resembles a pig. Let the paint dry.

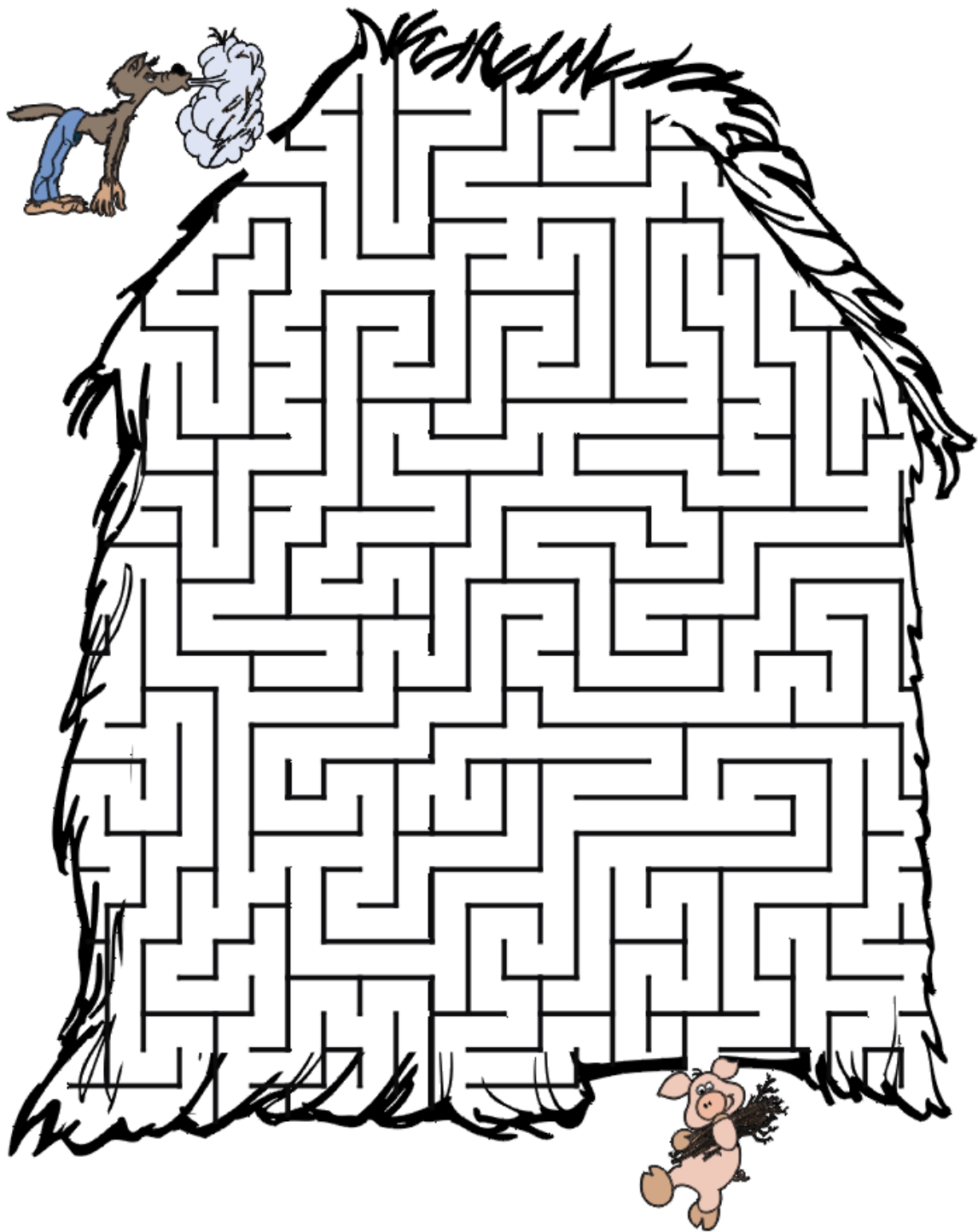
Use the supplies I have listed above or whatever materials you have on hand to add the details to your pig. I made a snout using craft foam, ears and a tail using chenille stems, and wiggle eyes. I also painted on the nose holes. Use your own imagination to make your pig unique.

Let and glue or paint dry and display your pig with pride.

# Three Little Pigs Coloring Page



<http://www.coloring-book.info>



## About Our Performers

The performers are graduate level students of the A. J. Fletcher Opera Institute of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, working on professional degrees in opera. In most cases, these students have already performed with professional opera companies throughout the United States.

