Opera stories always include a hero, a heroine, and a bad guy or two. *Aida* is set in ancient Egypt. Its plot centers around Rhadames, a captain in the Egyptian guard, and two women, Aida and Amneris. Amneris is the daughter of the Pharaoh, the leader of Egypt; Aida is a slave, or servant. Unknown to others is the fact that she is also the daughter of the King of Ethiopia. During the first act, we discover that while Rhadames and Aida are in love, Amneris also loves this captain. Meanwhile, the countries of Egypt and Ethiopia go to war and Rhadames is chosen to lead the Egyptian army. He defeats the enemy and returns as a conquering hero. However, Aida secretly mourns for her native country and her father, who has been taken prisoner.

In the second act of the opera, Egypt’s victory is celebrated by a grand parade, for which the “Triumphal March” is performed. Musicians playing long trumpets lead the Egyptian troops into the city. Dancers follow, waving palms and banners, and the crowds sing a moving song of praise. More troops enter, bringing with them slaves bearing gifts for the gods, and Rhadames appears in a golden chariot. At the height of the celebration, he meets the Pharaoh, who steps down from his throne to embrace him. Can you imagine this grand parade as you listen to Verdi’s music. How did he create the feel of a march? What instruments did he use?

Giuseppe Verdi was one of the world’s greatest opera composers and was honored and adored by opera fans throughout the world. His works are known for their dramatic power. Perhaps this is because he was involved in some very exciting events during his lifetime. Verdi lived in Italy during the rise of Italian Nationalism. He was a champion of this cause, and sometimes wove politics and yearnings for independence into his works. His name was even used as a revolutionary symbol; V E R D I are the first letters of the phrase, “Vittorio Emanuele, Re d’Italia,” which translates to “Victor Emanuel, King of Italy.” This man was the person the Italians wanted as their ruler. Little did the ruling Austrians know that when the Italians shouted “Viva Verdi” they were talking politics, not music.

Unlike many composers, Verdi was an old man when he died at 87, and was rich and famous during his lifetime.
Unscramble the names of some the instruments you will hear during “The Triumphal March”

Across
2. “Vittorio Emanuele, Rei D’Italia”
6. “The __________ March”
7. Italians would shout this phrase to show unity.
10. Verdi’s name became a _________ statement.

Down
1. The composer’s first name
3. A stage work that combines music (solo singers, orchestra, and sometimes a chorus), costumes, and scenery to tell a story.
4. The Italian town where Verdi was born.
5. The country which ruled over Italy.
8. The country in which Verdi lived.
9. The name of the opera where “The Triumphal March” happens.

Verdi aida

Aida  Egyptian  Opera
Amneris  Ethiopia  Rhadames
Giuseppe  Triumphal  Egypt
March  Verdi

Unscramble the names of some the instruments you will hear during “The Triumphal March”

HECNFR OHRN AIINPMT NIIOLO MEPRUTT BYCASLM