



Scheherazade Narration and Listening-and-Learning Text

INTRO: An introduction to **Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade**, the story of the *Thousand & One Arabian Nights*.

1. In times long past in the far history of the world, there once was a girl of bravery and talent. She was the daughter of the king's chief minister. Her name was Scheherazade

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 1.

Welcome! My name is Scheherazade and this is my musical THEME. Every time I want to speak in this musical story, the composer Rimsky-Korsakov has used an instrument called the violin for my voice. What MOOD do you think my music has? Sweet? Yes! What COLOR do you think my voice has? Warm or Cold? Warm! Right!

2. When it came time for the great king to die, he left his lands and wealth to the young prince Sharayar and his older brother.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 2.

Listen! Do you hear the great king speaking? Do you hear the instruments that the composer has chosen for the King's THEME? Horns, or trombones talk for the king in this story. What ENERGY would you say the king's music has? Strong or sweet? Strong! Yes! Is the FABRIC or TEXTURE of the king's music thin like a wand or thick like thunder? Thick ! Right!

3. The Princes divided the land, and Prince Sharayar became skilled at ruling his kingdom and decided to marry.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 3.

Now King Sharayar has decided to marry his Queen. The plot thickens! Do you hear the swaying MOTION in this music? The MELODY that tells the story is made up of notes of music or PITCHES. The PITCHES move around from high to low using different notes of music.

4. Time passed, and one night as King Sharayar walked in the palace gardens, he overheard his Queen plotting with his enemies to betray him.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 4.

Oh, no! The King discovers his Queen has joined his enemies! The ENERGY of this music is getting stronger! Can you hear the musical thoughts of the King? They FLOW in PHRASES, or musical sentences. These PHRASES are creating a MOOD. What MOOD does this music express? Remember the King is really mad!

5. In his anger and sadness, he sent the Queen away from the kingdom.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 5.

Now King Sharayar is sad and mad! Can you hear that the MOOD of the music has changed? The King's thoughts are so sad as he decides to send his Queen away. Can you think about FABRIC or TEXTURE of the music? Since the music describes the king's inner thoughts, is it thin with fewer instruments playing or thick like the thundering of lots of instruments playing? Thin! Yes!

6. After this terrible event, King Sharayar decided that no other woman could ever be trusted again. He planned to kill each and every girl throughout his lands, one each night.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 6.

Do you hear the motion in this music? What ENERGY do you think the composer is trying to express with the musical PHRASES? What do you imagine King Sharayar is thinking and feeling right now?

7. The rumor of this caused great terror in the kingdom, there was nothing but fear and crying. Parents hid their daughters away.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 7.

Things in the kingdom are terrible! Can you hear the people crying? This music is creating a real MOOD of fear and upset!

8. Now, Scheherazade was a girl of quick mind who had learned a great many famous fairy tales. She was also strong, kind and good hearted. Her voice was so beautiful that people begged her to tell her stories.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 8.

Aha! Scheherazade can help the girls of the kingdom through her gift of storytelling. Before printed books and newspapers, storytelling was the way people shared information and entertainment. Click on the oil jar called "Storytelling" below to learn more about this ancient art.

9. Scheherazade made a plan to save all the girls of her kingdom. Knowing she would be in danger, she nevertheless went to speak to the King. He was charmed by her, but trusting not one girl, he ordered her to be the next to die.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade's Music 9.

Scheherazade is going to be brave and visit the King. Here is her violin voice! This time, as you listen to her musical voice, can you hear the violin speaking in a more excited way? She is going to try to persuade the King to listen to her stories instead of killing all the girls in the kingdom! Do you know where Scheherazade and the King live? In the ancient land of Persia! Click below on the "Geography" oil jar to see where this country was and how it compares to the modern world.

10. Scheherazade cried, saying “Sire, please allow me to tell you a last goodnight story.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade’s Music 10.

Can you see the beautiful garden behind the King and Scheherazade? This design is like that of the famous Persian miniatures. This ancient and famous art form started long ago to tell stories, or to illustrate fairy tales in books. The drawings were small, brightly colored pictures that often included the characters in a story, palaces, gardens, birds and flowers. To learn more about miniatures, click on the “Art” oil jar below.

11. The King remembered how sad and lonely he felt in the darkness of the night.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade’s Music 11.

Now the King is really sad and thinking about how lonely he is at night. The music you are hearing has a beautiful MELODY. Remember, MELODY Flows from notes or PITCHES that create MOTION, MOOD, musical ENERGY, and COLOR. Put your hand up in the air and pretend it is a feather floating in space. As you listen to this MELODY take your hand and draw the shape of the sound you hear as it goes in PITCH from high to low.

12. He told Scheherazade that he would spare her life if she would tell him an entertaining tale every night before bedtime.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade’s Music 12.

The King has decided to spare Scheherazade’s life, but only if she tells him an entertaining story every night. The stories that she will tell are all from the *1001 Arabian Nights*, an ancient collection of stories that were meant to entertain but also teach lessons about ways to become a good person and live a good life. These stories were first told by traveling storytellers, and later put into the book form that we know. To find out more about the *1001 Arabian Nights*, click on the “Storytelling” oil jar below. You can read them yourselves!

13. And so, Scheherazade continued to tell stories for the next thousand and one nights, saving her own life and the lives of all the young girls of the kingdom. Her tales were enchanting and also taught the King many lessons. He grew to trust and love again and they both lived a long life.

Listening and Learning about Scheherazade’s Music 13.

Scheherazade and the King are finally happy, and the girls of the kingdom are saved! Can you hear the swaying MOTION of the happy music? You have learned a lot about music!