



## Music Literacy Articles: *Porgy and Bess* Argument-Based Short Responses

**Directions:** Read the *New York Times* article written by music critic Anthony Tommasini, “All-Black Cast for *Porgy*? That Ain’t Necessarily So.” Then produce short responses to each of the argument-based questions below.

### 1. Argumentative Thesis

What is Anthony Tommasini’s overall thesis or position on the debatable question: Should musical and opera casts be cast so that the singer’s race and their character’s race always match?

### 2. Argumentative Claims

Tommasini includes at least three arguments in the article against race-specific casting of singers in musicals and operas, including George Gershwin’s 1934 classic *Porgy and Bess*. Put these argumentative claims in your own words.

1.

2.

3.

**3. Evidence and Reasoning**

For each of the argumentative claims that you summarized above, quote a passage from the *New York Times* article that supports the claim, and then produce your own reasoning that fleshes out the reasoning alluded to in the article, supporting the claim.

**1. Quoted evidence:**

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**Reasoning supporting the argument:**

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**2. Quoted evidence:**

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**Reasoning supporting the argument:**

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**3. Quoted evidence:**

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**Reasoning supporting the argument:**

#### 4. Counter-Argument and Response

Tommasini refers to at least two counter-arguments against his thesis in the article. Identify one of these counter-arguments, and how he answers the counter-argument.

**Counter-argument:**

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**Summarize the response to the counter-argument in the article:**

#### 5. Your View

What is your position on this issue? State it, and then defend it with two arguments. One should be the best one in the *New York Times* article, in your view. And one should be an argument that is not made in the article – a brand-new argument that you create.

**Your position:**

**Best argument that supports your position from the *NYT* article:**

**Best new argument that you create that supports your position:**