

## FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN

### 1732-1809



Franz Joseph Haydn was born in Rohrau, Austria, a small village southeast of Vienna. As a young boy he sang in the church choir and also played the violin and piano. Most of his musical training was at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna where he served as a choirboy until his voice changed at age 16. In 1761, Haydn was appointed assistant music director to Prince Esterhazy, a powerful Hungarian nobleman. He wrote music and conducted the orchestra for the Esterhazy Family over a period of 30 years.

Composing during the Classical period, Haydn wrote 104 symphonies, a large volume of chamber music and several large choral works, including *The Seasons* (1798-1801) and *The Creation* (1796-1798). Haydn made two trips to London, England and composed 12 symphonies that were first performed there. Among his most famous symphonies are the *Farewell* (1772), *Surprise* (1791) and *Drumroll* (1795).

■ 1732 Birth of Franz Joseph Haydn, Birth of George Washington

■ 1742 Handel's *Messiah* first performed in Dublin, Ireland

■ 1752 Benjamin Franklin proves that lightning is electricity

■ 1760 George III crowned King of England

■ 1770 James Cook discovers east coast of Australia

■ 1775 American Revolution begins

■ 1783 Mozart composes *Mass in C minor*

■ 1802 Beethoven composes *Symphony #2 in D Major*

■ 1809 James Madison becomes 4th President of U.S.

### QUESTIONS

1. Haydn was born in what country?
2. How long did Haydn work for the Esterhazy Family?
3. Haydn composed how many symphonies?
4. Name two of his most well-known symphonies.
5. Name another composer who was writing music during Haydn's lifetime.

Optional Listening Response  
Please complete for each composer

Using YouTube, Spotify, iTunes, or another music playing app or service, please listen to one piece from the composer and answer the following:

Composer name:

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Title of composition:

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Was this a fast or slow song?

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What instrument or voice performed the melody?

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What emotion would you give this piece?

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Other thoughts you had about this piece of music:

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If you could not do the listening for this assignment, it's ok. I hope you have the opportunity to hear the composers' works someday.



## JOHANN STRAUSS, JR. 1825-1899



Johann Strauss, Jr., sometimes referred to as Johann Strauss the younger, came from a musically rich family. His father, Johann Strauss the Elder, was a popular composer of waltzes and marches, and his brothers Josef and Eduard, also composed music. Born in Vienna, Austria, Strauss composed waltzes and polkas that were extremely popular in his day. He conducted his own orchestra that played for parties where elegant Viennese couples danced through the night.

Writing towards the beginning of the Romantic period, Strauss also composed several operettas which could be compared to the music we hear today for the Broadway stage. Two of his most famous operettas are *Fledermaus* (The Bat) and *Der Zigeunerbaron* (The Gypsy Baron). *The Blue Danube* and *The Emperor* are among the most popular of the hundreds of waltzes that Strauss composed.

- **1825** Birth of Johann Strauss, Jr.
- **1837** Michigan becomes a state of the U.S.
- **1847** The Mormons found Salt Lake City
- **1859** Work begins on the Suez Canal
- **1861** The Confederate States of America formed
- **1867** The Dominion of Canada is established
- **1875** Mark Twain writes *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*
- **1885** Brahms composes *Symphony #4 in E minor*
- **1899** Sibelius composes *Symphony #1 in E minor*

### QUESTIONS

1. What type of music did Johann Strauss, Jr. compose?
2. Strauss composed during what period of music?
3. What famous novel was written during Strauss' lifetime?
4. Two famous waltzes composed by Strauss are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Optional Listening Response  
Please complete for each composer

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## EDVARD GRIEG

1843-1907



Edvard Grieg is, without a doubt, Norway's most famous composer. Writing during the late Romantic period, he used Norwegian folk music as a inspiration for his own compositions. Born in Bergen, Norway, he studied composition in both Germany and Denmark. He was also a virtuoso pianist and conductor. Grieg was very active in Norway's quest to become independent from Sweden, and has been identified as a very nationalistic composer.

Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A Minor* (1868) is one of his most famous compositions. He wrote this masterpiece at the age of 25. The two *Peer Gynt* suites, composed in 1876 to accompany Henrik Ibsen's play about a young Norwegian peasant, are also well-known and frequently performed today.

- 1843 Birth of Edvard Grieg, Charles Dickens writes *A Christmas Carol*
- 1853 Verdi composes the operas *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata*
- 1861 April 12 is the outbreak of the American Civil War
- 1873 Tchaikovsky composes *Symphony #2* in Moscow
- 1876 Brahms composes *Symphony #1, Opus 68*
- 1882 American Baseball Association founded
- 1894 Rudyard Kipling writes *The Jungle Book*
- 1904 Work begins on the Panama Canal
- 1907 Baden Powell founds the Boy Scout Movement

### QUESTIONS

1. \_\_\_\_\_ was an inspiration for many of Grieg's compositions.
2. True or False: Grieg was very active in Norway's quest to become independent from Russia.
3. Name one other composer who was writing music during Grieg's lifetime.
4. The play *Peer Gynt* was written by Henrik \_\_\_\_\_.

Optional Listening Response  
Please complete for each composer

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## JOHANNES BRAHMS

1833–1897



Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, Germany. Among musicians, he is often referred to as one of the “Three B’s”: Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. His father was a double bass player in the local symphony and young Johannes studied piano. He helped his family financially by playing popular music in the Hamburg dance halls. As a young man, Brahms became very good friends with the composer Robert Schumann and his wife Clara, and actually lived with them for a time. His career as a composer was greatly helped by this association.

Writing during the Romantic period, Brahms composed four symphonies, several solo concertos and many chamber pieces. His style of composing was so much a continuation of what Beethoven had done that his First Symphony has been referred to as *Beethoven’s 10th*. Brahms’s music always reflects his love of form and structure. He composed his famous *German Requiem* for chorus and orchestra between 1857 and 1868.

- 1833 Birth of Johannes Brahms, Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna becomes President of Mexico
- 1843 Beginning of skiing as a sport in Norway
- 1862 Jean Foucault successfully measures the speed of light
- 1865 Confederate States of America formally surrender, U.S. Civil War ends
- 1867 Sir John Macdonald becomes first Prime Minister of Canada
- 1884 Mark Twain writes *Huckleberry Finn*
- 1888 George Eastman perfects “Kodak” box camera
- 1892 Tchaikovsky composes *The Nutcracker* ballet in St. Petersburg, Russia
- 1897 William McKinley inaugurated as 25th President of U.S.

### QUESTIONS

1. True or False: Johannes Brahms was a German composer.
2. Name a very famous American novel that was written during Brahms’s lifetime.
3. How many symphonies did Brahms write?
4. What are the names of the composer and his wife who were Brahms’s best friends?

Optional Listening Response  
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## WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756-1791



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria and was perhaps the most famous child prodigy ever. His father, Leopold, was a composer and violinist who recognized his son's talent at a very early age. Wolfgang was composing by age five, and toured Europe playing the piano at age six. By the time he was 16, Mozart had already written several symphonies, sonatas and concertos.

Along with composers Haydn and Beethoven, Mozart developed many of the symphonic forms that define the classical period of music. He wrote 41 symphonies, numerous solo concertos and several famous operas. Unfortunately, he died young, at age 35, shortly after composing his famous *Requiem* for chorus and orchestra. Mozart's *Symphony #40 in G Minor* (1788), *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* (1787) and the operas *Don Giovanni* (1787) and *The Marriage of Figaro* (1786) are some of his most well-known compositions.

- 1756 Birth of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- 1760 Haydn composes *Symphonies #2, 3, 4, and 5*
- 1763 The *Peace of Paris* treaty yields much of Canada to Great Britain
- 1764 London, England introduces practice of numbering houses
- 1770 Handel's *Messiah* first performed in New York
- 1783 American Revolutionary War ends
- 1787 The Constitution of the U.S. signed in Philadelphia
- 1789 Beginning of the French Revolution
- 1791 Haydn composes *Surprise Symphony*

### QUESTIONS

1. Mozart's exceptional talents, shown at a very young age, allow him to be referred to as a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Besides Mozart, two other very famous classical composers were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The last composition Mozart wrote before he died at age 35 was \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What war was taking place during part of Mozart's lifetime?

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