

Name _____ Date _____

QUESTION COUNTDOWN

1. What styles of music do not generally fit under the term "classical music"?

2. The term "classical" specifically refers to the style of music from which centuries?

3. What type of history does the term "classical" refer to during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe?

4. What are the two important elements of music and art during the Classical period?

5. One of the criteria of music in the Classical era was that it needed to be universal. Explain.

6. What type of people did music in the Classical period need to appeal to?

7. Who were the three main composers of the Classical period?

8. What is meant by the term "emancipation" of composers?

9. Of the three major composers in the Classical period, which of the three was most successful in freeing himself from patronage?

10. Which of the three composers of the Classical era died in poverty?

READING

MUSIC IN THE CLASSICAL PERIOD (1750–1820)

The term "classical music" is often a general term that is applied to any music that is not of the jazz, rock, or popular music styles. It applies more specifically, however, to the style of music that was composed in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Europe. The term "classical" during this time period was taken from art history, where the styles of art were influenced by ancient Greek and Roman sculptures. The important elements of music and art during the Classical period were the stresses on balance and clarity of structure.



Classical music was designed to appeal to a wide-ranging audience.

There were four basic criteria that music of the Classical era needed in order to meet the needs and the desires of the public. (1) It needed to be universal, not limited by boundaries of countries or cities. The music of the Classical period needed to be able to communicate to people everywhere. (2) It was to have an aspect of nobility to it and, yet, be entertaining so as to meet the needs of the aristocracy and the middle class. (3) It needed to be expressive within the bounds of an established decorum. It was to express emotion and passion within the bounds of musical and social etiquette. (4) Music in the Classical period was natural and free of any technical complications. It had to be readily accessible to all ears: those of a trained musician and those of the common folk.

The three main composers of the Classical period were Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), and Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827). Each of these composers had a very different style and approach to the composition of their music. During their lifetimes they saw a drastic shift in power from the aristocracy and the church to the middle class. An important development that occurred during the Classical period was the emancipation of the composer, and each of these composers represents different stages in that emancipation evolution.

Joseph Haydn chose to live and compose as a musical servant to a wealthy aristocratic family for most of his professional life. Mozart attempted to break away from this lifestyle, but perhaps because of his temperament, he was unable to be successful with this and died in poverty. Beethoven was the first successful major composer to completely break away from the service of an aristocratic family and make his living as a freelance composer, thereby setting one of many standards for the composers who would follow him.

Salient Features of Classical Music

1. Stresses on Balance and Clarity of Structure
2. Universal, Not limited by boundaries of counties or cities
3. For Nobility, yet, be entertaining for the middle class.
4. Expressive but within the bounds of musical decorum.

3 Main Composers

1. Franz Joseph Haydn
2. Amadeus Mozart
3. Ludwig Van Beethoven