

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen, writing musical notation on a staff. The quill is dark and the ink is black. The staff is part of a larger sheet of music paper. The background is a light-colored, textured surface, possibly a wooden table.

*A Young*  
**SCHOLAR'S**

**GUIDE**

to **COMPOSERS**

Melissa E. Craig & Maggie S. Hogan  
with Richard B. Pinkerton

A Young Scholar's Guide to Composers, 2nd Edition  
by Melissa E. Craig and Maggie S. Hogan

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# Introduction

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## ***Why Teach the Classical Composers?***

There are a number of good reasons for exposing children to classical music and the rich heritage of classical composers. First, music is from the Lord. He created it, and He created us with the ability both to make music and to appreciate music.

Second, although there are many different types of music in other cultures, what is called “classical” music is uniquely part of the heritage of our Western civilization. Becoming familiar with it opens a door into ideas and expressions that are inaccessible to those who have not been introduced to the musical classics. This familiarity allows us to participate in conversations and musical experiences that would otherwise remain a mystery.

Third, research suggests that both listening to and playing classical music is of great value to the development of the brain even in many other aspects of learning, including math, memory, and literacy.

Finally, there is the rich satisfaction that comes with the knowledge of having been exposed to great minds and talents and having gained a deeper understanding of music, of self, and of life. It is not always easy to crack the code of classical music, but even rudimentary exposure, over time, will increase our level of enjoyment and understanding.

Although this is just a one-year course, we are not suggesting that teaching classical composers should be a one-time activity. Ideally, you will continue to incorporate classical music into your curriculum, perhaps following the format we have developed or perhaps using other resources.

## ***How to Use This Book***

Any music appreciation course taught primarily through a book is lacking one important ingredient: actual music! This is where you play an integral role. It is imperative to play the music of the composers as you study them in order to truly gain any understanding of the classical composers and their music. Fortunately, it is easy to find recordings of music from every composer we will be covering by looking online, at your library, or in catalogs.

### ***Music and the Brain***

Although there has been much hype about the now mostly discredited “Mozart Effect,” it does not change the fact that there is a growing body of research that points to a strong link between music and positive brain development. From [www.sciencedaily.com](http://www.sciencedaily.com) (accessed May 16, 2008) we read this headline and the beginning of an article about music and brain development:

#### **“First Evidence That Musical Training Affects Brain Development in Young Children”**

*Science Daily —Researchers have found the first evidence that young children who take music lessons show different brain development and improved memory over the course of a year compared to children who do not receive musical training.*

*The findings, published 20 September 2006 in the online edition of the journal Brain [Oxford University Press], show that not only do the brains of musically trained children respond to music in a different way to those of the untrained children, but also that the training improves their memory as well. After one year the musically trained children performed better in a memory test that is correlated with general intelligence skills such as literacy, verbal memory, visiospatial processing, mathematics and IQ.*

### ***A Word about Music Lessons . . .***

Does this mean that your child is being sadly neglected if you don’t provide music lessons? Does this mean that his or her brain will shrivel up and become the size of a lima bean without the experience of piano practice? Of course not! This is just a further bit of motivation to encourage you, in whatever way works best, to provide basic lessons for a year or two. The piano is the typical instrument of choice, although some people prefer the violin, and others find a recorder is all they can handle space-wise and money-wise.

If your child is provided with a caring and competent teacher, an instrument to use, as well as scheduled and monitored practice time, the lessons are sure to be a success. Despite your best intentions, though, not all children will appreciate music lessons. Encourage your child to try it for one school year. If after that time they are still disinterested, at least you know you have given them the great advantage of exposure to the world of playing music. Many, many adults say how much they now appreciate the gift of music lessons in their childhood, even if at the time they vigorously opposed them. We can’t think of anyone who has told us the opposite!

### ***A Kind and Simple Approach to This Curriculum***

This course is intended to be as stress-free as possible. The plan is to listen to the recommended music a minimum of three times per week. The read-aloud lesson and the note-taking pages or Student Review questions should be done on Day One. The hands-on work of timeline, map, and Composer Info Card can be done on Day Two. In the interest of time, it is certainly feasible to do all the academic work on one day instead of two, but the music listening itself should be spread throughout the week.

## **Schedule**

In general, this is a guideline for following the curriculum. Keep in mind that this is just an overview. You will find specific instructions for each type of activity later in this introduction.

### Day One

- Listen to the recommended selections.
- Read the lesson.
- Fill in the note-taking pages or answer the Student Review questions.

### Day Two

- Listen to the recommended selections again.
- Fill in the Composer Info Card.
- Color in the timeline.
- Match the composer to his place of birth, using the maps in the *Companion Guide*.

### Day Three

- Listen to the recommended selections again.

### Listening Directions

- Say the name of the composer.
- Say the name of the selection.
- Play the piece.

We concur with the opinion expressed by Jessie Wise and Susan Wise Bauer in *The Well-Trained Mind*. They write:

*The first time the child listens to the piece, have her listen to it two or three times in a row. Then make sure she plays it again at the beginning of her next listening period. [Day Two] Familiarity breeds enjoyment. She can do hand-work such as Play-Doh™ or coloring books about the composers . . . but nothing that involves words; her attention should be focused on what she hears, not on what she sees.*

We would add that some children need to move to the music, some like to draw, and others do best just sitting and staring out the window!

## **Lessons**

Each lesson runs about 1,200 words. Each will take approximately fifteen minutes to read aloud. There will often be unfamiliar vocabulary words within the lessons. These usually are defined for you within the lesson, allowing you to quickly explain them to the student before moving on. (There is also a handy glossary in the back of the book.) A composer who especially captures a child's interest would be worth further research. Fortunately, there are many biographies of composers available now, and there is a plethora of online information available as well. (Please see the caution regarding research on the next page.)

## *Content Considerations*

There are two issues we would like to address here:

1. Historical reliability
2. Spiritual lives

First, as with any research of historical events/people, there is much conflicting information. One source emphatically states “such and such is true,” and the other equally reliable source shouts out “absolutely not such and such!” This puts the researcher in a quandary. Whom to believe? If we were writing scholarly papers on the composers, we would spend large blocks of time chasing down original source documents and then having them translated. We would travel to Europe, where many of these documents are stored. We would hole up in the Library of Congress, falling asleep over mounds of dusty books. But as exciting as this sounds to us—and it really does—it just isn’t feasible to spend that kind of time and money conducting in-depth academic research for a one-year middle-grade curriculum.

However, accuracy is very important to us. What we have chosen to do is to limit ourselves to about a dozen resource books that are generally well regarded and websites sponsored primarily by universities or other reliable sources. We have tended to use the information that was most often agreed upon by these sources. But you will occasionally run into conflicting information if you do any research yourself. We have been careful, we have read until our eyes have popped, we have taken mountains of notes, and we have submitted our work to our music editor, Richard Pinkerton, for the opinion of someone who is considered an expert in his field of music. However, the truth may still remain elusive. Instead, realize that it is the bigger picture that we are pursuing, and enjoy and appreciate the music!

The second issue, and this is important for you to know as well, is that there is much material available about these composers that is *not* information we feel is appropriate for the age level of the students for whom this book is intended. Composers, even the classical composers, were sinners like the rest of us! It takes no real digging to come across sins of every nature. This leads us to those we included and those we decided to leave out and why.

Obviously, we couldn’t include every well-known composer. (In fact, there is plenty of material left for another entire volume!) We had to limit the number of people studied to fit within the time frame of a typical school year. We chose well-known composers who had a great impact on the music world. We included composers known to be Christian, composers known not to be Christian, and composers of whom we have no real way of knowing if they were Christian!

For example, we included Frédéric Chopin—a master of piano compositions and absolutely on just about everyone’s list of important classical composers. However, the evidence regarding his conversion to Christianity, possibly on his deathbed, is conflicting and controversial. The difficulty lies within the discussion of his lifestyle, including his having lived for many years with his female companion, George Sand (her pen name), a woman of highly questionable morals. This is an example of the types of issues we had to consider when deciding whom and what to leave in, whom and what to exclude, and how to word certain information.

An example of one we chose to leave out is Richard Wagner. Yes, he is considered one of the finest minds in classical composing, an opera writer in a class of his own. However, we could not write about him in any way without bumping into his blatant and boldly immoral lifestyle. We couldn't gloss over the facts, skip over the stories, or recommend doing "further research" on him! From all the evidence, the man was simply evil (and, interestingly, Hitler's favorite composer).

### ***Companion Guide***

For your convenience, we have provided a digital *Companion Guide*. You can download it free at [www.BrightIdeasPress.com/YSGC-Companion-Guide/](http://www.BrightIdeasPress.com/YSGC-Companion-Guide/). If asked for a password, use this: CGS71997Y. In this *Companion Guide*, you'll find answers to the exercises in the lessons, as well as answers to the Student Review questions. All of the reproducible items are included so that you can easily print them out, including the Student Reviews, coloring pages, and game templates. You'll also find a list of suggested resources.

### ***Note-Taking Pages and Student Review Questions***

Several note-taking pages follow each of the lessons on the musical eras, and ten student review questions follow each composer's biography. If your student is a competent reader/writer, it is best for him or her to answer the review questions on paper. Much of this course already involves listening, so doing a little writing at this point is worthwhile. The questions are in a mixed format and cover the vocabulary and main points in each biography lesson. All answers are in the "Lesson Answer Keys" section of the *Companion Guide*.

### ***Composer Info Cards***

The Composer Info Cards provide students an opportunity to do the following:

- analyze data
- reinforce the main points
- remember the points using visual reminders
- review the information presented

### **Directions**

Teachers: Copy Composer Info Cards onto sturdy paper or card stock. (If you use paper, then cut it out and paste the front and back onto a 5x7 index card. If you use card stock, you can make the copies on front and back.) Print illustrations from the *Companion Guide* onto regular paper.

Students: Cut out the illustration of the composer and place it on the front side of the card. You may choose to color in the picture. Fill in the name and musical period on the front as well.

The back of the card is fairly straightforward. Answer the questions, fill in the birth and death dates, and color the country of origin on the map. Choose the Composer Info Card with the correct map on the back for each composer. (For example, almost all of the composers we study were born in Europe, so you will use the Europe card most. But Tchaikovsky was born in Russia, and a number of the Contemporary period composers were born in the U.S.)

The trickiest part for some of the cards will be the question about the composer's faith. Teachers may need to discuss this with the student or help him or her decide if the lesson contains any clues.

### Review

Cards can be stored in a box, wrapped in a rubber band, placed in envelopes, or inserted into Folderbooks. They should be brought out and reviewed often.

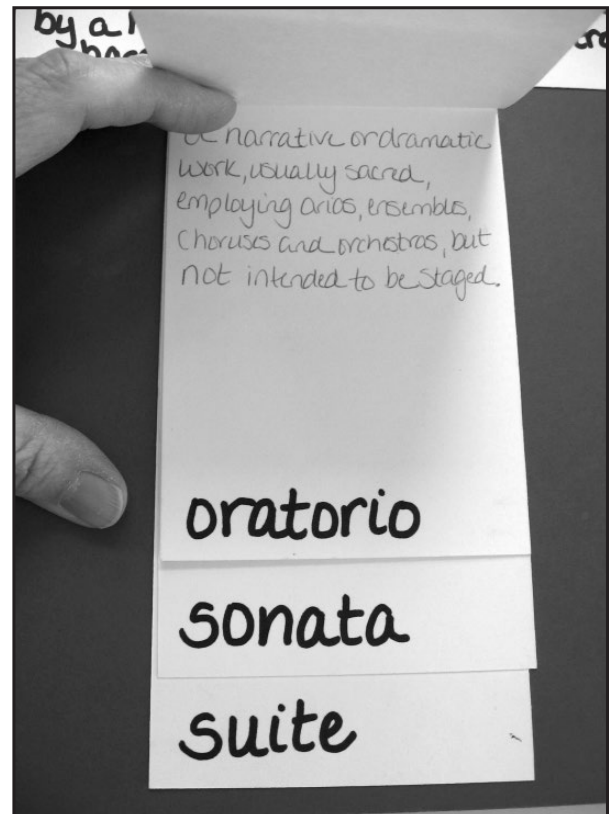
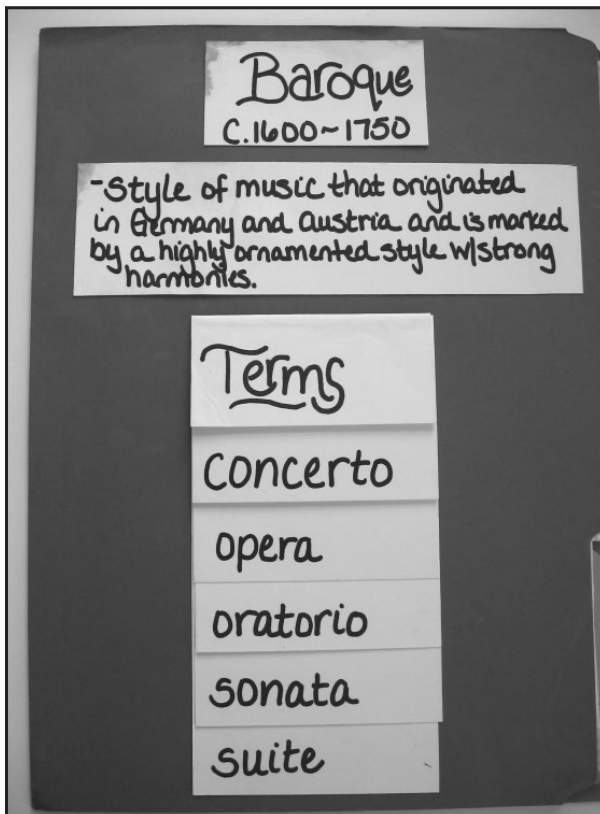
A simple but effective manner of reinforcing the chronology of composers is to mix up the cards on the table, picture side up. Ask the student to stack them in the order of the composers' birth dates. Students can then easily self-check by turning the cards over to check the dates to see if they were right.

A quick review game is for the parent or one student to hold up the card, picture side facing outward to a student. The student states the name and then lists either the names of the composer's works or three facts.

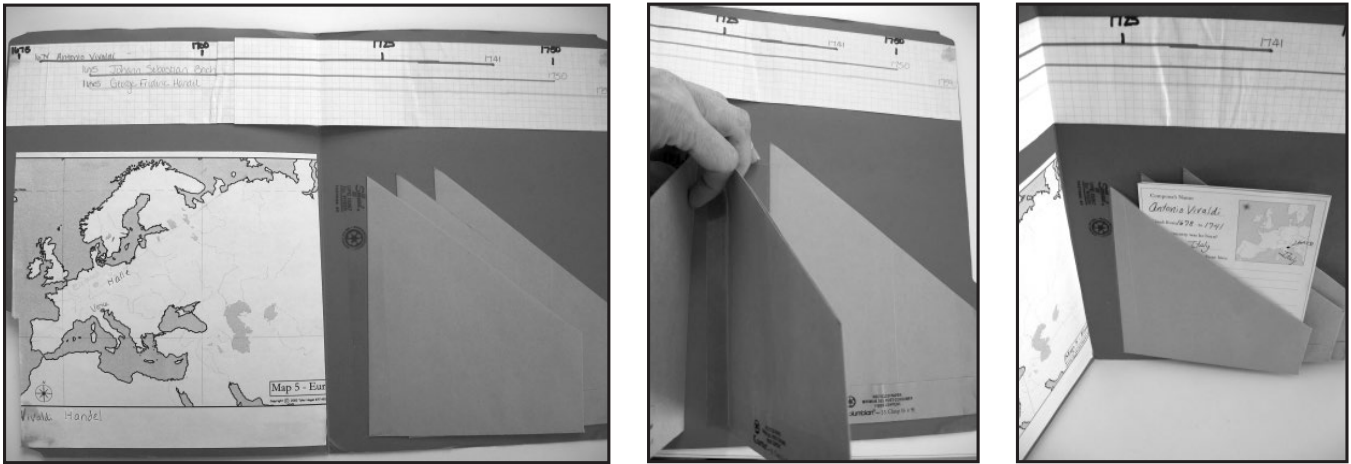
Note: The spelling of a composer's name can vary widely. We picked a common spelling for each composer and used it consistently.

### **Folderbooks**

Folderbooks are a simple and interesting way for students to show what they have learned. Think of them as a place to store tidbits of information, pictures, drawings, maps, etc. By helping your students to learn to organize and display what they have studied, you are training them to sift through ideas, choose what is important, and present it in a logical manner. This kind of learning will be useful for the rest of their lives!



If you are familiar with Lap Books, think of Folderbooks as the simple, quicker version. Instead of multiple layers, a Folderbook consists of just one file folder. Instead of elaborate, clever folds and time-consuming layouts, a Folderbook can be assembled rapidly. Although Lap Books are a wonderful learning tool, sometimes all we have time for is simple!



Ideas for your composer Folderbook:

- Paste envelopes inside and put cards with information or smaller books inside the envelopes.
- Include pictures, maps, or timelines as appropriate.
- Make small books or flip books and paste them inside.
- Decorate lists and glue them on.
- Let imagination and creativity be your guide.
- Decorate the cover in an appropriate fashion. Coloring pages make easy covers.

### ***Timeline***

The *Companion Guide* includes a timeline for every 50-year period, beginning with Vivaldi, the earliest composer in our study who has been given his own lesson. We have provided the birth and death dates for each composer and a shaded line connecting these two dates. Students should use a colored marker or highlighter to draw over this shaded line for each composer. This simple method enables students to see at a glance which composers composed in which period and who preceded whom, visually reinforcing what they are learning in the lessons. They should use a different color for each musical period: red for Baroque, blue for Classical, green for Romantic, and orange for Contemporary.

We also want students to recognize the relationships among the composers. In this study students will learn that some composers influenced other composers and some composers were friends. Students should mark influence with purple and friendship with gold. If one composer influenced another, draw a purple vertical line from the influencer to the one who was influenced. Put an arrow at the end of the line so that the direction of the influence is clear. If two composers were friends, draw a vertical gold line from one friend to the other. Some relationships may be difficult to draw because the related composers may not have lifelines on the same page. In this case, students can write the missing composer's name on the page and draw the vertical line to it.

A Significant Events line is provided at the bottom of the timeline. Some significant events have already been labeled. You may want your older students to fill in a few additional historical events on each page as they complete the timeline. This is a quick visual tool to show where each composer fit into world events. These timeline pages illustrate that these composers did not live in isolation but were influenced by the people and events around them.

Following the blank timeline page is a Timeline Reference Key. It shows influences (in purple) and friendships (in gold). The purple and gold lines are intended to show connections but are not chronologically precise. This serves as an answer key for the timeline activities and shows both explicit and implied relationships from the lessons. Do not expect your students to find all of the relationships on these charts. However, the relationships your students find should be on them. You can check the Timeline Reference Key to make sure the relationships your students found are correct.

### **Maps**

The mapping exercise in *A Young Scholar's Guide to Composers* is easy and visually powerful. This geography component consists of three maps—a map of Europe (two views, one with an inset of Russia for Tchaikovsky) and a map of the United States. Students should have their own copy of each map. When the student discovers where the composer was born, he simply draws a line from the composer's portrait (found in the border of the map) to the country or state in which the composer was born. Students will use the same color-coding system for musical periods on the map as they use on the timeline.

This map exercise will reinforce several things:

- geography awareness
- visual identification of composers
- recognition of composers within their musical periods

There are two composers whose sphere of influence is as important as their place of birth. In these cases, the student should draw a second line so that both places are represented. These composers are:

- George Frideric Handel (who was born in Germany but did much of his work in England)
- Antonín Dvořák (who was born in Europe, yet was significantly influenced by his time spent in the United States)

We've tried to make this clear in our biographies, but adding it to the map will help to cement the information.

We use the modern-day equivalent of each country's name. There were many small kingdoms in earlier times, especially in the area that is modern-day Germany. Older students may wish to look in a historical atlas and locate the original name.

### **Coloring Pages**

The *Companion Guide* includes a coloring page for each composer. These pages offer students a visual representation of one poem discussed in each lesson. These can be used by students who would like an additional way to engage in the lesson and by those who enjoy more tactile ways of learning. Students

should fill these in with crayons, colored pencils, markers, or whatever creative medium suits their artistic desires.

### **Games**

The following games will help students grow in familiarity with composers. You can make the games yourself, but we recommend that you include your students because the process will be a good review.

Several of the games require a deck of cards that you can make easily by copying the composer illustrations in the *Companion Guide*. Cut them out and paste them to index cards or card stock. If your students are artistic, they may want to produce a design for the back of the cards. The cards will last longer if you laminate them or cover them with clear packing tape.

#### Composer Memory

##### **What You Need to Play**

- Players – This game can be played alone or with 2–4 players.
- Playing Cards – Make two copies of each composer’s picture from the *Companion Guide*. Paste the pictures on index cards or card stock.

##### **Playing the Game**

- Arrange the cards face down on a flat surface in rows in a rectangular pattern.
- The group chooses a player to start the play. The turns proceed in a clockwise order.
- The first player selects a card and turns it face up so that all players can see, and then chooses a second card and turns it face up.
- If the cards do not match, the player turns them back over and that player’s turn is over.
- If the cards do match, the player removes them and keeps that pair of cards.
- The player continues to turn over pairs of cards until he turns over two cards that do not match.
- The game is over when all of the pairs of cards are matched.
- The winner is the player with the most cards.

##### **Advanced Version**

- Make this game more challenging for older students by creating a deck of cards where students will match the picture of the composer to his musical period, one of his compositions, or his birthplace.

#### Go Fish for Composers

##### **What You Need to Play**

- Players – This game can be played by 2–6 players.
- Playing Cards – Make three copies of each composer’s picture. Paste them on index cards or card stock.

##### **Playing the Game**

- Deal five cards to each player. Place the remaining cards face down in the middle to form a fishing pool.

- The player to the left of the dealer begins play.
- A turn consists of asking a specific player for a specific composer card. (“Ben, do you have Bach?”) The player who asks must have at least one of those cards in her hand in order to request it. If the person asked has any cards with that composer in his hand, he must give them all to the person asking. She may continue asking specific players for specific cards as long as she continues to be successful.
- If the person asked does not have any cards of the composer named, he says, “Go Fish.” The asker then chooses a card from the fishing pool. If the card picked is the one requested, she gets another turn. If not, she keeps the card and it is the next player’s turn.
- As soon as a player collects a book of three of the same composer, she lays them down in front of her.
- The game proceeds until either someone has no cards left or the fishing pool is empty.
- The winner is the player with the most books.

### **Advanced Version**

- The player requesting cards must provide some information about the composer before he can receive the card. (Keep the glossary nearby.)

### Composer Bingo

#### **What You Need to Play**

- Players – This game can be played by two or more players.
- Bingo Cards – Use the template in the *Companion Guide* to create a bingo card for each player.
- Write a different composer’s name in each space on the card, and arrange the composers in a different pattern on each card. Note: There are more composers than spaces on the card.
- Markers – Pennies, beans, cereal, mini-marshmallows, or some other type of marker for the card
- Easy version: Index cards or slips of paper with a different composer’s name on each one.
- Advanced version: Index cards or slips of paper with a fact about a composer on each one. You may want to make new fact cards each time you play or create a set to reuse each time.

#### **Playing the Game: Easy Version**

- Put the cards in a basket or bag and mix them up.
- Draw one and read the name written on it.
- If the players have that composer on their board, they cover that space with a marker.
- Set aside the cards that have been read until the next game.
- The first player to get five in a row in any direction wins.

#### **Advanced Version**

- Put the fact cards in a basket or bag and mix them up.
- Draw one out and read the fact written on it.
- If the players can identify the composer and they have that name on their card, they cover that space with a marker.
- Set aside the cards that have been read until the next game.
- The first player to get five in a row in any direction wins.

## Composer Peril

### **What You Need to Play**

- Players – This game can be played with 2 or more players but probably works best with 2–4. It can also be played with 2 or 3 teams.
- Question-and-Answer Cards – Use the information from the lessons or the composer cards that you filled out. Create five questions for the composers from each musical period that could be the answer to “Who is (fill in the name of the composer)?” Put the answer on one side of a card and “Who is \_\_\_\_\_?” on the other side of the card. Here are two examples:
  1. At the end of his manuscripts, he always included the initials S.D.G. (Soli Deo Gloria—To God Alone the Glory). The answer is “Who is Bach?”
  2. He was totally deaf by the age of 48, but he continued to compose. The answer is “Who is Beethoven?”
- A game board – You can use the board in the *Companion Guide* or create your own. The board should have six rows and five columns. Place your Q&A cards (answer side up) in the appropriate columns. Then cover each card with a card that has a dollar amount on it so that the answers remain hidden until they are chosen.
- Buzzers – Provide buzzers or some other device so that players can “buzz in” if they think they know the answer. A wooden spoon on a pot will work nicely.

### **Playing the Game**

- Decide who will start the game.
- That player chooses a time period and dollar amount.
- The host of the game picks up the question in that box and reads it.
- Any of the players may buzz in if they know the answer.
- If the first player to buzz in answers correctly, they receive the money card that covered the question and may choose the next category and dollar amount.
- If they answer incorrectly, any other player may buzz in. The other players are not required to buzz in and guess.
- If none of the players answers correctly, whichever player originally chose the question may choose again.
- Play continues until all of the questions have been answered.
- The player with the most money wins.

## Composer Info Card Timeline Game

### **What You Need to Play**

- Players – One, although this could be adapted to work as a team game.

### **Playing the Game**

- Place all the Composer Info Cards on the table with the picture/name side facing up.
- Scatter/shuffle the cards about.
- Now place cards in proper chronological sequence.
- Self-check by turning cards over and looking at the dates.

### **Advanced Version**

- Set a timer and beat your own time or race against another player.

Note: We designed the Composer Info Card with this game in mind. Hence, there are no dates on the front of the card—only on the back.

### **Endnote**

<sup>1</sup>Fujioka, Takako, et. al. “One year of musical training affects development of auditory cortical-evoked fields in young children.” *Brain* 129.2593 (2006). <<http://brain.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/full/129/10/2593>>.



# *Student Introduction*

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**S**top and think for a moment about what music really is. Is music something that sounds good to your ears? Does it have to have a melody? Are drumbeats music? How about raindrops or bird tweets? Humans have been challenged with this question for years. It's interesting to think about what music is or isn't. You may even develop your own definition of music as you study this course. For our purposes, however, we will go with a traditional definition of music. Webster's dictionary says that music is "the science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity." What a mouthful! What this means is that music is sounds that have been put together in a purposeful way to produce sounds that go together in meaningful ways.

When did music begin? Music probably began on day six of Creation. We believe that Adam and Eve sang in the Garden of Eden. We read in Genesis that Jubal was a maker of musical instruments. So we can see that God gave people the gift of music, and people have loved music from the start—enough not only to produce music with the voice, but also to create instruments that make unique sounds.

Music is found in all different cultures, but in each culture, it sounds different. Have you ever been to a Chinese restaurant where they have played traditional Chinese music? Could you tell that it was Chinese? How about an Indian restaurant? What made it sound Indian? One difference was that the instruments they use are different from the instruments that we are used to hearing. Did you like the way it sounded? Would you like to listen to that kind of music on the radio? Probably not, and here's why:

In our Western culture, we are used to hearing sounds played from a certain kind of scale. If possible, on a piano or keyboard find middle C, and then play all of the white keys up to and including the next C. That is called a scale. All of the black keys are half steps, so if the keys were numbered, you would have 1, 1½, 2, 2½, 3—but wait, is there a 3½? No. However, there's a 4½, 5½, and a 6½. But there's no 7 ½. That's because in the scale that we use for Western music, the natural half steps are between 3 and 4 and between 7 and 8. When we hear music, that's what we are used to hearing. In other cultures, their scales have natural half steps in different places. People who have grown up there are used to hearing it that way, but we are not. Music based on scales with different half steps sounds strange to us. Some cultures even use quarter steps or quarter tones—notes whose sounds are squeezed between the notes

we see on our piano. We can't even hear quarter steps because our culture doesn't use them. However, people who have grown up listening to that type of music can.

When music is so foreign to us, it can be difficult to understand because our ears aren't trained that way. Because studying Western music will keep us very busy, we are going to focus only on Western music in this course. As you learn about other cultures in your history studies, however, it's a good idea to go to the library or the Internet and listen to some samples of music from those cultures to help you understand them even better.

Frequently, when people study music history, they start in 1678 with Vivaldi in the Baroque period. When you read a book about composers, he is often the first one discussed. But music didn't suddenly start in the Baroque period, with harpsichords and violins and musical notation that everyone knew how to read. All of that had to develop. You will see that although music has progressed a great deal, human nature has not changed much at all, and it is human nature that has spurred on many of these changes. Music that we consider classical today (and maybe even boring) was once very controversial. People argued and fought about it! Sometimes it was even banned. People's ears had to become accustomed to the new types of music. People within the church even disagreed about what music would be appropriate in a church—just as they do today!

In this course, we hope to show you why classical music isn't boring. You will listen to different kinds of music and learn about the composers who created the music. Did you know that music can be funny? Haydn wrote a symphony, called *The Farewell Symphony*, in which the people playing the different instruments were to get up one by one and walk off the stage while the rest of the orchestra was playing, until only two violinists were left. (Haydn wrote this piece to make a point to his benefactor—you'll hear this great story in the lesson on him.) Did you know that some music you hear on television today, often during commercials, was written two hundred years ago?

We're going to learn about different time periods in music history and what it was like for the composers growing up then. We'll study composers and see how God influenced their lives—and we'll see that some composers didn't know God at all. We think you'll have fun learning how to listen to music so that you can understand it better. You'll create a Folderbook that will help you remember all the things you've learned. Most importantly, you'll begin (or continue) to appreciate one of God's many wonderful gifts to us: the gift of music.

# Scott Joplin

c. 1867<sup>1</sup>–1917

**S**cott Joplin, the first African American composer in this study, was born sometime between July 1867 and January 1868<sup>1</sup> in Texas into a musical family. Information about Scott's childhood and teen years is very sketchy and poorly documented. His father was a former slave. His mother cleaned homes and supported his love of music. There is a plausible anecdote that young Scott gained access to a piano in a home where his mother worked. He taught himself the rudiments of music, and by age 7 he was so good that a local German immigrant musician offered him free piano lessons and taught him theory and an appreciation of European music. He also introduced Scott to composers such as **Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven.**



*Joplin was known for his ragtime music, a syncopated music popular from 1899 to 1918.*

While Scott was still a young child, his family left the farm on which his father worked as a laborer. They moved to the newly established town of Texarkana (which straddles the Texas-Arkansas border).

In the 1880s, the teenaged Joplin lived for a while in Sedalia, Missouri, where he attended an African American high school. Unconfirmed anecdotes tell of his starting a musical career in the 1880s and then traveling to St. Louis.

During the summer of 1891, Joplin moved back to Texarkana, where he worked with a minstrel troupe. In 1893, he was in Chicago at the World's Fair, leading a band and playing the cornet. After the fair, he returned to Sedalia and played with a local ensemble of black musicians. After playing with this band for only about a year, he formed his own band. He also attended music classes at an African American college.

Joplin played a type of rhythmic piano music called ragtime. **Ragtime**, defined as “syncopated piano music,” is a unique type of music that was popular from 1899 to 1918. It is the music that brought in the Jazz Era, although it's quite different from jazz itself. In it, piano players try to copy fast banjo solos with **syncopated** (stress on a normally unstressed beat) rhythm with one hand and strong, steady beats with the other hand. It isn't like the jazz we hear today. Joplin became the most famous ragtime pianist and composer ever.

Joplin traveled with his music; he also gave music lessons and worked on composing. His first published piano rag was entitled “Original Rags.” However, the piano rag that Joplin is most famous for is “Maple Leaf Rag,” which sold hundreds of thousands of copies by 1909 and earned Joplin a steady income for the rest of his life.

Right on the heels of the publication of the “Maple Leaf Rag,” Joplin completed *The Ragtime Dance*, a stage work for dancers, with a singing narrator. This ballet was unique in that during the show, narrators told the audience the types of dances being performed. A group of talented young locals from the Black 400 Club performed the work in Sedalia in 1899.

Most people in Joplin’s time didn’t consider ragtime music an art. Many people disapproved of it. This was extremely frustrating to Joplin because as an African American, he wanted to write classical compositions that would increase respect for his race. In addition to his rags, he also wrote marches, waltzes, and two operas, but prejudiced music critics who wouldn’t recognize his hard work and talent dismissed his music.

In 1901, he married his first wife, Belle. Early in 1903, he filed a copyright application for an opera, *A Guest of Honor*. Newspapers of the time disclosed that the opera was about the African American leader Booker T. Washington’s dinner at President Roosevelt’s White House in 1901. This event gave unique honor to African Americans in a time when racism and prejudice were at a peak. Joplin paid tribute to Roosevelt with his piano rag “A Strenuous Life” and later tried to celebrate the event with the opera *A Guest of Honor*.

He formed a large opera company and began a tour. Early on, someone stole the box office receipts, ruining the company’s financial position. The tour ended with Joplin unable to meet his payroll or to pay for the company’s bills at a boardinghouse. His possessions, including the music from the opera, were confiscated. Sadly, the music was never recovered.

In June, his marriage to Belle having ended, Joplin returned to Arkansas and married Freddie Alexander in Little Rock. The couple traveled by train to Sedalia, stopping at towns along the way so that Joplin could give concerts. Early in July, they arrived in Sedalia. Freddie developed a cold that worsened, and she died at the age of 20—just 10 weeks after their marriage.

Joplin’s admirers describe him as intelligent, mannerly, and articulate. He was also a quiet, modest man who was generous with his time, assisting and instructing younger musicians. All his life he had an intense belief in the importance of education.

When Joplin moved to New York City in 1909, he wrote his second opera, *Treemonisha*. He was so passionate about it that when he couldn’t find a publisher, he attempted to publish it himself. He trained musicians to perform it and wrote a piano-only version so that if audiences heard it and liked it, they might give him money to produce this huge project. This opera was important to music history because it was the first example of popular music combined with classical music in a classical music



*The publication of “Maple Leaf Rag” provided Joplin with a steady income for the rest of his life. In this cartoon a man is trying to play that piece.*

In piano recitals and rock concerts, the public universally loved ragtime music. Joplin would have been so pleased.

Although he was somewhat underappreciated during his lifetime, Joplin is an inspiration. Despite the prejudices he endured, he continued to compose great music. His publisher John Stark said at his funeral, “Here is the genius whose spirit was filtered through thousands of cheap songs and vain imitations.” At that time, of course, no one realized that Joplin would someday rank as one of America’s finest composers. In 1976, he was posthumously awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his contributions to American music.

Teacher Note

<sup>1</sup> His exact birth date is unknown.



*The 1973 movie The Sting featured Joplin’s music.*

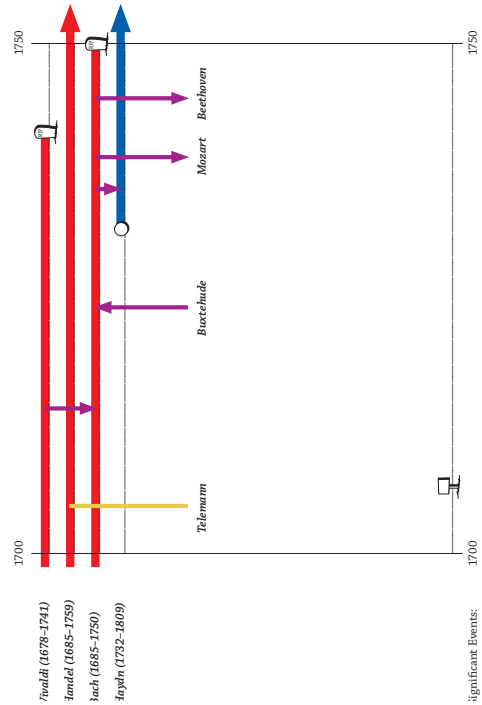


## European Composers - Romantic Period

Draw a line from the composer's portrait to the country in which he was born. Use the same color-coding system for musical periods on the map as you used on the timeline.

Portraits of composers and their birth countries:

- Elgar (England)
- Mendelssohn (Germany)
- Dvořák (Czech Republic)
- Tchaikovsky (Russia)
- Brahms (Germany)
- Debussy (France)
- Schumann (Germany)
- Fauré (France)
- Strauss (Germany)
- Verdi (Italy)
- Bruckner (Austria)
- Liszt (Hungary)
- Chopin (Poland)



## Composer Peril Game Forms

For a premade game board, print this page and cut out the board. If you'd prefer to use different categories, cut off the words from the top row and replace them with your own. Game directions are in the introduction of the book.

Baroque	Classical	Early Romantic	Late Romantic	Contemporary
\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300
\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400
\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500

### Contemporary

#### Ives

*What Charlie Heard: The Story of the American Composer Charles Ives* by Mordicai Gerstein. ISBN 978-1591122784. Grades 3-6.

#### Gershwin

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#### Williams

[www.johnwilliams.org](http://www.johnwilliams.org)

<http://tinyurl.com/8tphw9>

<http://tinyurl.com/cu7rdj>

#### CDs

*Peter and the Wolf* by Sergei Prokofiev. Can be found in many versions as a CD or book and CD set.

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*Hallelujah Handel*

*A Young Scholar's Guide to*  
**Composers**  
*Companion Guide*

*A full year's curriculum in 32 weekly lessons*

Melissa E. Craig and Maggie S. Hogan



A Young Scholar's Guide to Composers, 2nd Edition, Companion Guide  
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# *Note-Taking Pages and Student Reviews*



## Lesson 28: Scott Joplin

1. Scott Joplin lived in which of the following towns during his lifetime? (Circle all that apply.)
  - a. Texarkana
  - b. New Orleans
  - c. New York City
  - d. Pittsburgh
2. By age \_\_\_\_\_, Joplin was taking piano lessons from a German immigrant.
3. For what style of music is Scott Joplin famous? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Ragtime music can be described as \_\_\_\_\_.
5. True or False: Ragtime is the style of music that led to today's rock music. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Joplin's most famous rag is called "\_\_\_\_\_."
7. Which of the following did Scott Joplin write? (Circle all that apply.)
  - a. waltzes
  - b. opera
  - c. a ballet
  - d. a requiem
  - e. marches
8. One of the reasons that Joplin's work was not respected as art during his lifetime was probably that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
9. *Treemonisha*, Joplin's second opera, was performed for the first time in what year? \_\_\_\_\_
10. True or False: Joplin was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1976 for his contributions to American music. \_\_\_\_\_

# *Answer Key for Note-Taking Pages and Student Reviews*



## Lesson 28: Scott Joplin *Answer Key*

1. Scott Joplin lived in which of the following towns during his lifetime? (Circle all that apply.)
  - a. [Texarkana]
  - b. New Orleans
  - c. [New York City]
  - d. Pittsburgh
2. By age 7, Joplin was taking piano lessons from a German immigrant.
3. For what style of music is Scott Joplin famous? ragtime
4. Ragtime music can be described as syncopated piano music.
5. True or False: Ragtime is the style of music that led to today's rock music. False
6. Joplin's most famous rag is called "Maple Leaf Rag."
7. Which of the following did Scott Joplin write? (Circle all that apply.)
  - a. [waltzes]
  - b. [opera]
  - c. [a ballet]
  - d. a requiem
  - e. [marches]
8. One of the reasons that Joplin's work was not respected as art during his lifetime was probably that music critics were prejudiced against him because he was an African American.
9. *Treemonisha*, Joplin's second opera, was performed for the first time in what year? 1970
10. True or False: Joplin was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1976 for his contributions to American music. True

# *Suggested Resources*

## *For Teachers and Students*



---

## Contemporary

### Ives

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*Beethoven Lives Upstairs*

*Hallelujah Handel*

# *Listening Suggestions*



---

**Richard Strauss**

*Till Eulenspiegel*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mbatJgtNk0>

- Have you ever heard this piece before?
- Where do you think you've heard it?
- Look up the reference to this piece in Wikipedia and read about it.

**Scott Joplin**

“The Entertainer”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqR-DQYcmP0>

- Is this tune familiar to you? Where have you heard it before?
- What is the most distinctive characteristic of this piece—melody, harmony, or rhythm?

Any of the ragtime piano works—there are many!

**Charles Ives**

*Variations on “America”*

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R\\_N9PF2JwIc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_N9PF2JwIc)

Things to listen for:

- The introduction. Can you tell that “America” will follow?
- The theme follows the introduction (My Country 'Tis of Thee). Does it sound just like a hymn?
- The five variations come after that. Listen for the theme (My Country 'Tis of Thee...).
- Does the third variation (3:53) sound a bit like a waltz?
- What does the fourth variation remind you of? (4:50)
- At 5:40, where is the interest? (Ives wrote: “The organist may hold on to the bench with the left hand at this point.”)

**The Unanswered Question**

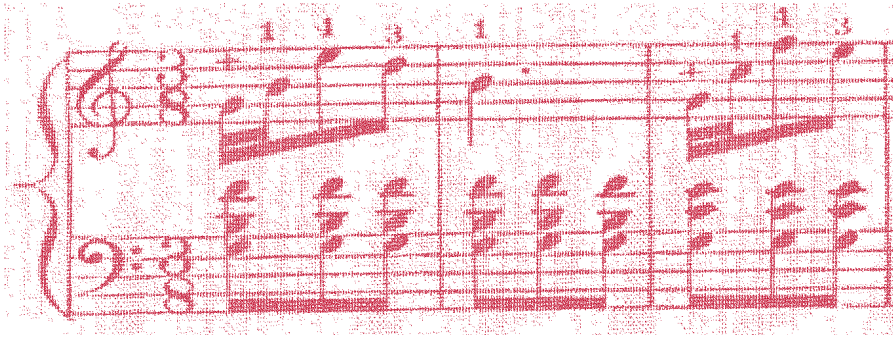
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JBfjPO7B8o>

- Does the music in any way suggest a question to you?
- Describe the mood of this piece.
- How is this orchestral piece different from those you have heard earlier in the course?

# *Reproducibles*



# Composer Info Card



---

**Composer Name**

---

**Musical Period**

Paste  
Picture  
Here

# Composer Info Card

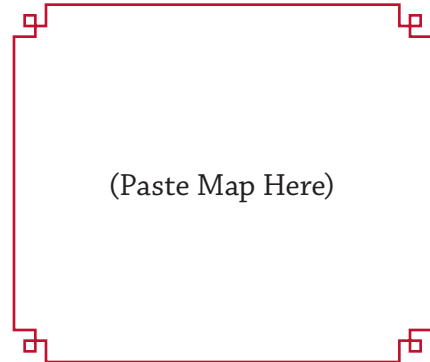
**Composer's Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Lived from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

In what country was he born?

\_\_\_\_\_



List 3 facts you learned about him:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name at least two of his compositions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

What evidence do we have that he was or was not a Christian?

List as much as you can find.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Maps

---

<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Composer</b>	<b>Birthplace</b>
4	Antonio Vivaldi	Europe — Italy
5	George Frideric Handel	Europe — Germany
6	Johann Sebastian Bach	Europe — Germany
8	Franz Joseph Hayden	Europe — Austria
9	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	Europe — Austria
10	Ludwig van Beethoven	Europe — Germany
11	Franz Schubert	Europe — Austria
13	Felix Mendelsshon	Europe — Germany
14	Fryderyk Chopin	Europe — Poland
15	Robert Schumann	Europe — Germany
16	Franz Liszt	Europe — Austria
17	Gisuseppe Verdi	Europe — Italy
18	Anton Brucker	Europe — Austria
19	Stephen Foster	U.S. — Pennsylvania
20	Johannes Brahms	Europe — Germany
21	Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky	Europe — Russia
22	Antonin Dvorak	Europe — Czech Republic
23	Gabriel Urbain Faure	Europe — France
24	Sir Edward Elgar	Europe — United Kingdom
25	Claude Debussy	Europe — France
26	Richard Strauss	Europe — Germany
28	Scott Joplin	U.S. — Texas
29	Charles Ives	U.S. — Connecticut
30	George Gershwin	U.S. — New York
31	Aaron Copland	U.S. — New York
32	John Williams	U.S. — New York

# American Composers - Contemporary Period

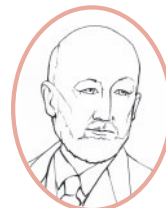
Draw a line from the composer's portrait to the state in which he was born. Use the same color-coding system for musical periods on the map as you used on the timeline.



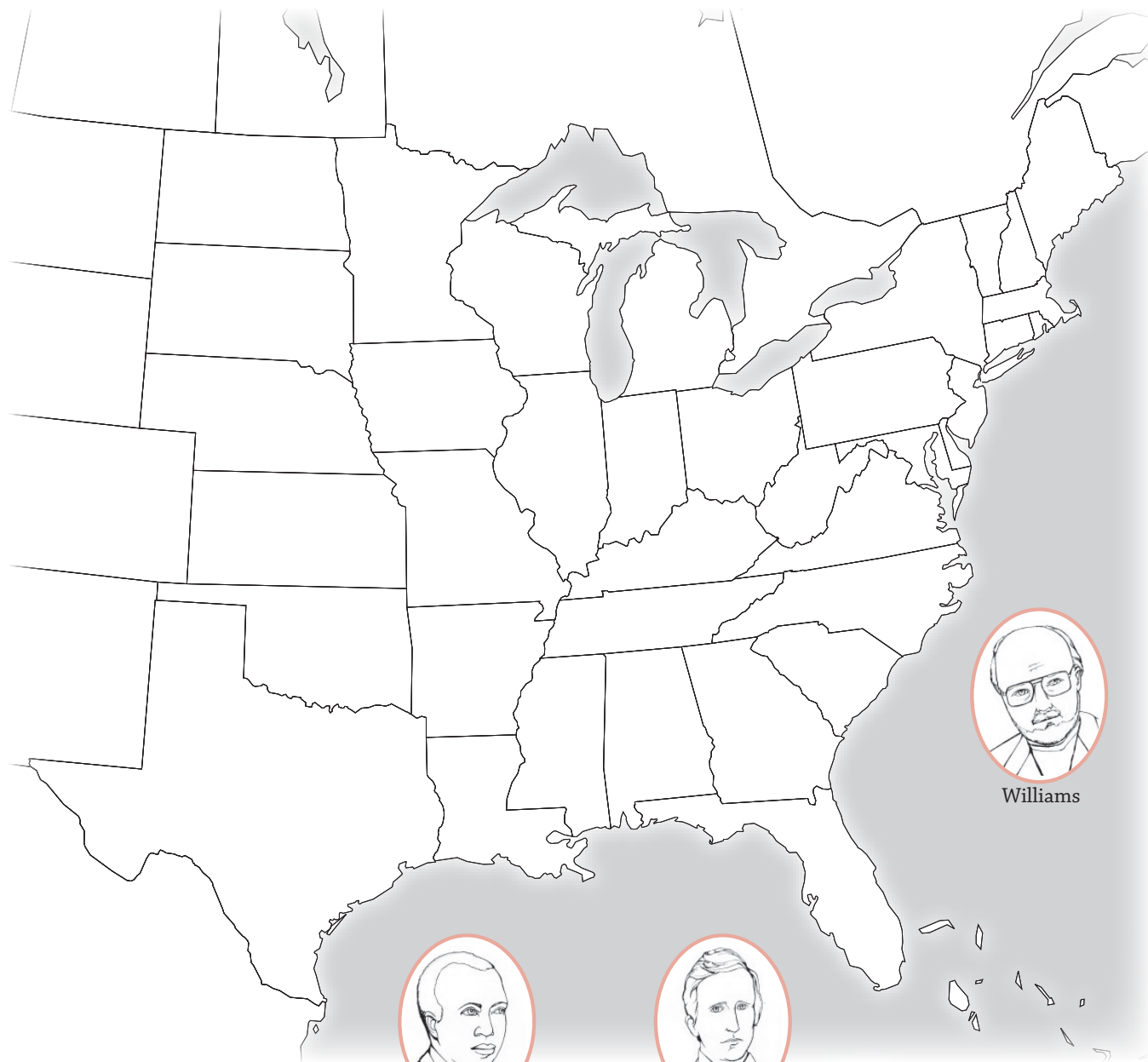
Gershwin



Copland



Ives



Williams



Joplin



Foster

# Composer Bingo Game Form

---

Print a copy of this page for each player. Game directions are in the introduction of the book.


# Composer Peril Game Forms

---

For a premade game board, print this page and cut out the board. If you'd prefer to use different categories, cut off the words from the top row and replace them with your own. Game directions are in the introduction of the book.

Baroque	Classical	Early Romantic	Late Romantic	Contemporary
<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>\$200</b>	<b>\$200</b>	<b>\$200</b>	<b>\$200</b>	<b>\$200</b>
<b>\$300</b>	<b>\$300</b>	<b>\$300</b>	<b>\$300</b>	<b>\$300</b>
<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$400</b>
<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$500</b>	<b>\$500</b>

# Timeline

---

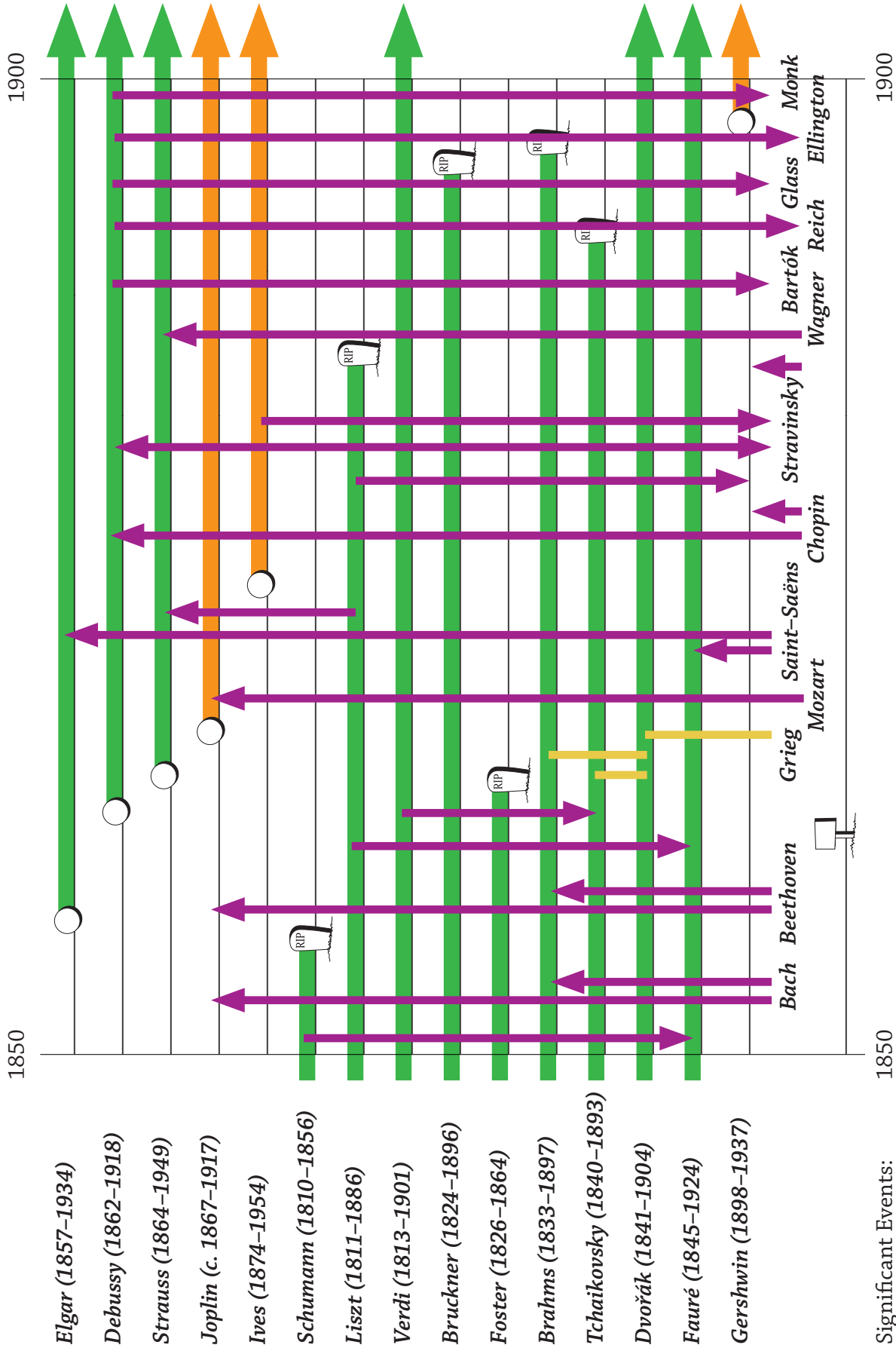
The *Companion Guide* includes a timeline for every 50-year period, beginning with Vivaldi, the earliest composer in our study who has been given his own lesson. We have provided the birth and death dates for each composer and a shaded line connecting these two dates. Students should use a colored marker or highlighter to draw over this shaded line for each composer. This simple method enables students to see at a glance which composers composed in which period and who preceded whom, visually reinforcing what they are learning in the lessons. They should use a different color for each musical period: red for Baroque, blue for Classical, green for Romantic, and orange for Contemporary.

We also want students to recognize the relationships among the composers. In this study students will learn that some composers influenced other composers and some composers were friends. Students should mark influence with purple and friendship with gold. If one composer influenced another, draw a purple vertical line from the influencer to the one who was influenced. Put an arrow at the end of the line so that the direction of the influence is clear. If two composers were friends, draw a vertical gold line from one friend to the other. Some relationships may be difficult to draw because the related composers may not have lifelines on the same page. In this case, students can write the missing composer's name on the page and draw the vertical line to it.

A Significant Events line is provided at the bottom of the timeline. Some significant events have already been labeled. You may want your older students to fill in a few additional historical events on each page as they complete the timeline. This is a quick visual tool to show where each composer fit into world events. These timeline pages illustrate that these composers did not live in isolation but were influenced by the people and events around them.

Following the blank timeline page is a Timeline Reference Key. It shows influences (in purple) and friendships (in gold). The purple and gold lines are intended to show connections but are not chronologically precise. This serves as an answer key for the timeline activities and shows both explicit and implied relationships from the lessons. Do not expect your students to find all of the relationships on these charts. However, the relationships your students find should be on them. You can check the Timeline Reference Key to make sure the relationships your students found are correct.





1861–1865 – American Civil War



Lively sheet music composed by Joplin.

# Certificate of Completion

*awarded to*

---

*for completion of*  
**“A Young Scholar’s Guide to Composers”**

*Signed*

*Date*

*A Young Scholar’s Guide to*

# Composers



**Bright  
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*The Mystery of History* unfolds vibrant stories of heroes and heroines, victories and defeats, discovery and invention around the world through the ages. Each lesson illuminates the tapestry of mankind and helps students identify the unifying threads that run from era to era — from the beginning of the world to this moment, one side of the globe to the other.

*The Mystery of History* series provides a historically accurate, Christ-centered approach to world history for all ages. By incorporating hands-on activities along with reading, writing, and research projects, *The Mystery of History* offers something for all learning styles and supports all methods of education.



# The Mystery of History

## Chronological

Beginning with Creation, *The Mystery of History* four-volume series presents world history in chronological order, covering every corner of the globe.

**Volume I:** Creation to the Resurrection (c. 4004 B.C. – c. A.D. 33)

**Volume II:** The Early Church and the Middle Ages (c. A.D. 33 – 1456)

**Volume III:** The Renaissance, Reformation, and Growth of Nations (1455 – 1707)

**Volume IV:** Wars of Independence to Modern Times (1708 – 2014)

## Christian

*The Mystery of History* is distinctively written from a Christian worldview.

Creation-based and standing on the authoritative Word of God, lessons in *The Mystery of History* are like pieces of a mosaic that reveal a much bigger picture and tell a much larger story. Together, they point toward God's redemptive plan for mankind through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Complete

*The Mystery of History Student Readers* can stand alone for all ages to enjoy. For those who wish to delve deeper, the user-friendly *Companion Guides* bring lessons to life with multi-age activities, timeline directions, mapping exercises, Memory Card ideas, pretests, quizzes, games, worksheets, tests, film and literature suggestions, and more. It's easy to use for one student at home, ten in a co-op, or hundreds in a school.

For more details and to view our catalog, visit [brightideaspress.com](http://brightideaspress.com) or call our team at 877.492.8081.



## NORTH STAR GEOGRAPHY

by Tyler H. Hogan

Geography is more than just place names and outline maps—it's understanding how the world around us works! *North Star Geography* gives students a deep understanding of how geography impacts all of us every day—with real-life applications for college, career, citizenship, and ministry.

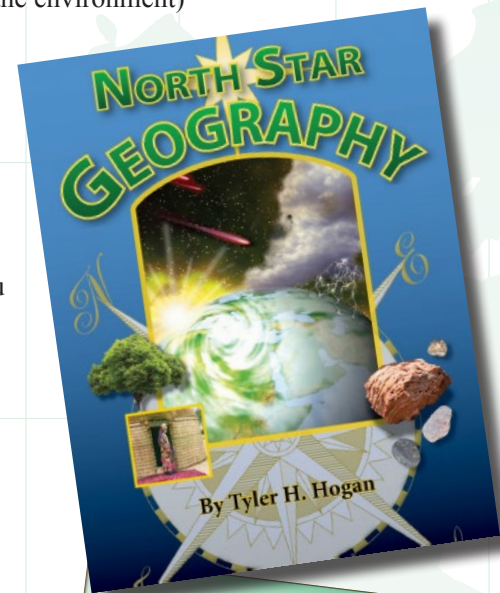
Written from a distinctly Christian perspective by a homeschool grad (now a homeschool dad), *North Star Geography* is a full high school credit. It covers:

- Geography skills (such as reading maps and navigation)
- Physical geography (the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and biosphere)
- Human geography (social structures, culture and heritage, and how people interact with the environment)

The *Companion Guide* (included on CD) contains:

- Hands-on activities and projects
- Map work, memorization, and geographic research questions (with answers!)
- Quizzes, a final exam, answer keys, and a grading rubric
- Reproducible outline and reference maps, note-taking pages, and graphic organizers
- Detailed yet flexible schedules

If you want your students to understand our world, this could be the most important class you teach this year!



## Geography Your Student's Key to Understanding How the World Works

### WONDERMAPS

by Tyler Hogan

Geography and map skills add richness to any lesson. Whether it's history, literature, science, current events, or Bible, maps play an integral role in thoroughly understanding the topic at hand. *WonderMaps* is a customizable collection of over 300 different maps. With nearly endless possibilities, *WonderMaps* makes it easy to regularly integrate map study into a variety of lessons and make the most of every learning opportunity.

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- 150+ historical maps, including 30 biblical maps
- The complete map sets from *The Mystery of History* vols. I–IV and *All American History* vols. I–II



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