

EPISODE 1: What is classical music?

Western Classical Music, the classical orchestra and ensembles, classical composers

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS:

- Students will read, listen to, and define qualities of western classical music.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of what instruments were used in the classical era orchestra (draw a poster, record a presentation, make a song, make a diagram).
- Students will read, listen and define the composer's intent.
- Students will read about Joseph Bologne's life and demonstrate an understanding of social issues.

ACTIVITY 1: 20-25 MIN

-Play an example recording of classical music while students enter and sit. (play Joseph, Bologne's Overture L'amant Anonyme: II Andante)

- Ask students "When you hear "classical music" what do you think of?" (share orally, record, or write down).
- Explain the term "classical music" refers to a specific genre of music, like rock, jazz, hip-hop, that came from western european countries between 1750 - 1820.

-Ask students, "what makes music from the classical era unique?" (focus on simple melodies, rhythms and song forms similar to modern pop songs, instrumental music became very popular, the modern orchestra became the most powerful tool of musical expression.)

-Explain to students that to understand all the parts of the classical orchestra we need to listen to each instrument group and then hear how they work together.

-Pass out listening guide (Episode 1 worksheet) Teacher plays each example twice and guides students through the listening guide.

- String Quartet: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - string quartet no 2 I. Allegro (play to 2:00)
- Wind Quintet: Jacques Ibert - 3 pieces breves I. Allegro (play to 2:00)
- Brass Quintet: Johann Pezel - Intrade (The chamber brass players) (play to 2:00)
- Classical Orchestra: Mozart - Symphony no. 9 I. Allegro (play till 1:19)

ACTIVITY 2:

-Teacher and students read the following background:

-The three major figures of the Classical period, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, developed orchestral composition to the point where the orchestra became the grandest and most powerful tool of musical expression.

-Joseph Haydn was a sought after composer and teacher during this time, and he was employed as a music director to write new music. Haydn's compositions were unique due to him adding his sense of humor into his compositions. His Symphony No. 94, also known as the "Surprise Symphony", includes a sudden dynamic change that was said to be added to wake up sleeping audience members.

-Play Symphony No. 94 mvt 2 for students.

-Have students work in pairs, or individually and imagine you are presenting an idea to Joseph Haydn to commission a new piece of music. Students will create an ensemble using classical instrumentation and explain how they want their piece to sound. Students can create a poster, record a presentation, make a song, make a diagram, ect.

- Classical Orchestra:** between 30 & 60 members
- Strings: 6 Violin 1, 6 violin 2, 4 violas, 4 cellos, 3 basses
- Woodwinds: 2 Flutes, 2 Oboe, 2 Clarinet, 2 Bassoon
- Brass: 2 Trumpet, Horn
- Percussion: Timpani

- String Quartet:** violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello
- Brass Quintet:** trumpet 1, trumpet 2, trombone, horn, tuba
- Wind Quintet:** Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn

ACTIVITY 3: COMPOSER SPOTLIGHT

-Read Joseph Bologne's bio below and then have a class discussion. Students can share orally, write down responses, or record responses.

-What successes did Joseph Bologne have in his lifetime? Did he qualify to be the orchestra director of the Royal Academy of Music?

-Why was it offensive and unfair for the French journalist to ask the Queen not to hire Joseph?

-Write, record, or share your response to the french journalist as to why Joseph should be hired using qualifications in his biography.

Composer Spotlight: Joseph Bologne Chevalier de Saint Georges (1724 - 1799)

In an age when slavery was legal and common in France and slaves were often starved, beaten, and tortured, Saint-Georges, who was mixed-race, was one of its most celebrated men. Not only was he among the most important musicians in Paris during this period, Boulogne was a master fencer, violin virtuoso, leading conductor, and a composer in the court of Marie Antoinette.

His father, a wealthy white plantation owner, supported his son and his talents and paid for his son to get the best education. By 1775, Boulogne was so well established as a composer, soloist and orchestra director, that he was considered for the post of artistic director of the Royal Academy of Music at the Opéra. A french journalist wrote a racially discriminating letter addressing the Queen not to hire Joseph due to him being a mixed-race person.



Although facing racism, he started his own orchestra and in 1787 directed and debuted six of Joseph Haydn's symphonies. He was an active participant in the French Revolution working hard to forge his troops into a well-trained fighting unit, and still found time for occasional musical activities. Unfortunately, a lot of his music was lost or destroyed during the French Revolution.

Links, Resources, and Recommendations:

Audio:

- String Quartet: [Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - string quartet no. 2, I. Allegro](#) (play to 2:00)
- Wind Quintet: [Jacques Ibert - 3 pieces breves, I. Allegro](#) (play to 2:00)
- Brass Quintet: [Johann Pezel - Four Pieces. Intrade \(The chamber brass players\)](#) (play to 2:00)
- Classical Orchestra: [Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - Symphony no. 9, I. Allegro](#) (play till 1:19)

[Joseph Haydn - Symphony No. 94, II. Andante](#)