

Music History Review Bullet Points

Middle Ages: 400 – 1430

- The **Roman Catholic** church dominated religious life in Europe.
- Early music from the Middle Ages was composed in **unison**.
- The most important use of music in the Middle Ages was for **accompanying religious activities**.

The Renaissance Era: 1430 – 1600

- The Renaissance is also known as the **cultural rebirth**
- It was a period of exploration and adventure.
- Art and music were influenced by the beauty, history, and mythology of the ancient **Greece and Rome**.
- The invention of the **printing press** made music for accessible for everyone.
- For the first time since the middle ages, Europeans decided they wanted to have music for entertainment, not just for the church.
- **Sacred Music** – for the church.
- **Secular Music** – Music for entertainment.

The Baroque Era: 1600 – 1750

- **Definition of Baroque** – Bizarre and elaborately ornamented.
- Composers started writing for solo instruments. The most important solo instruments were the violin, harpsichord and the organ.
- Baroque music is often ornamented (decorated) and can include sections of improvisation. Performers were expected to add to what the composer had written.
- J.S. Bach laid the music-writing rules on what he had done.
- Opera was first introduced during the Baroque Era.
- Chamber music was alive and well.
- **Galileo and Isaac Newton** were discovering new ways to explain the universe.

The Classical Era: 1750 - 1827

- **Age of Enlightenment** – a movement that recognized that all people are equal and education should be equal.
- The love for learning and art became widespread across Europe.
- Most instrumental music was written in three or four movements.
- Classical music was simple, balanced and non-emotional.
- Straight forward names : Symphony No. 1, Symphony No. 104
- The “father of the symphony” was Franz Joseph Haydn.
- For the first time instrumental music was more important than vocal music.
- The symphony orchestra was born : Strings, woodwinds and a few non-valved horns.
- **Vienna**, was considered the musical center for all composers and musicians.

The Romantic Era: 1827 – 1900

- The Classical and Romantic Eras are very similar. The main difference was in the composers' motivation. **Composers wanted to express extreme emotions through their music.**
- Some considered instrumental music the best Romantic art because, having no words, it could express pure emotion.
- The symphony orchestra nearly doubled in size: string, woodwinds, brass of all kinds and full percussion. Some symphonies required a choir be added to the instrumentation as well.
- Key genres of music were: symphony orchestra, solo piano pieces, music drama (opera) and program music.
- **Program Music** – Tells a story
- **Nationalistic Music** – inspired composers to incorporate native folk songs and styles into their music. Russia was the leader of the nationalistic movement.

20th Century Music: 1900 – present

- Cannot be categorized into a general idea or style. All over the world, new ideas and styles appeared every few years. These are a few of the most important ones:
 - **Nationalism** – The world wars played a large role in composers writing music for their country.
 - **Atonal Music** – A major movement during the 20th century characterized by music with no tonal center or home.
 - **Neo-Classicism** – A reaction to the atonal movement. This was the revival and renewed interest in Baroque and Classical music. Composers began writing in these styles again with some changes.
- **World War I and World War II** contributed to nationalism.
- **Electronics** – In the 1950's, composers began to use electronics in their music. This type of music influenced pop music from the 1980's to the present. The inventions of TV, radio, and movies opened up new opportunities for composers to write.

Terms you need to know:

Renaissance – Cultural Rebirth

Sacred Music – Religious Music

Secular Music – Music for entertainment

Ornamentation – Decorations in the music.

Chamber Music – A small group of performers, one person on a part.

Improvisation – Made up on the spot.

Orchestral Music – Music played by strings, brass, woodwinds and percussion.

Enlightenment – A movement that recognized all people are equal and education should be equal.

Diverse – Of a different kind or form.

Movement – Sections of a piece of music with contrasting tempos (speeds) and moods.

Program Music – Instrumental Music that tells a story.

Nationalism – Showing pride in one's country.

Atonal – Music with no tonal center or home.

Neo-Classical Music – Renewed interest in classical music several centuries later.