

Keyboard Kids' Companion

Created by Teachers & Approved by Kids

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Meet the Composer Franz Josef Haydn

Born: March 31, 1732, Rohrau, Austria

Died: May 31, 1809, Vienna, Austria

Franz Josef Haydn (called Josef) was born in Rohrau, Austria, on March 31, 1732—the same year as George Washington. Josef's father was a wagon wheel maker and his mother, a cook. They were peasants who loved music, but neither could read music. Josef was the second oldest of twelve children, but only six lived to grow up. He had three sisters and two brothers. His younger brothers, Michael and Johann, also became professional musicians.



First taught by a relative, Josef was sent to Vienna as a choirboy at St. Steven's Cathedral when he was eight. He stayed until he was seventeen. He had lessons in voice, harpsichord, piano, and violin. Josef married, but it was not a happy marriage. He fell in love, but the girl's father pushed him to marry the girl's older sister instead. Josef's wife was mean, a poor housekeeper, wasted money, and hated music.

After struggling for many years, Haydn got an excellent job at age 29. He was hired by the Esterházy family to work at one of the grandest palaces in Europe. The family's new castle, in Hungary, had a marionette puppet theater and a 400-seat theater for opera. Haydn was in charge of all musical activities—directing the orchestra, operas, composing, teaching, and more. He had a good salary, a maid, a coachman, a carriage, and horses. He was so cheerful, kind, and helpful that the musicians who worked for him at the Esterházy Palace called him "Papa" Haydn. Haydn later made two long trips to London, where he had a good time and earned a lot of money.



Haydn was the most popular composer of his time. He composed a lot of pieces, but we don't know *exactly* how many—publishers in the 1700s knew that Haydn's name was a "big seller," so they cheated by placing his name on pieces that he did not write. Haydn is considered to have perfected certain musical forms, such as sonata form, and he is often

referred to as father of the string quartet and the modern symphony. He taught Beethoven, and Haydn and Mozart were good friends who learned from each other.

Haydn loved the outdoors, and he enjoyed fishing and hunting. The famous author, E.T.A. Hoffmann wrote that "listening to Haydn is like taking a walk in the country." Haydn enjoyed wearing fine clothing such as silk jackets and big silver buckles on his shoes. He was curious, cheerful, and had a good sense of humor. He sometimes wrote musical jokes into his compositions!

In 1809, Napoleon's army attacked Vienna. Even Napoleon showed respect for Haydn by ordering an Honor Guard as the great composer lay on his deathbed. Haydn died on May 31, 1809, at the age of 77.

Some famous compositions by Franz Josef Haydn

The Creation, <https://youtu.be/98S7NUnnP4c>, Haydn tells the story of creation as described in the Bible—the formation of the stars, planets, animals, and Adam and Eve.

"Farewell" Symphony, <https://youtu.be/kjFeDk6Kr3U>, is one of Haydn's famous musical jokes. Each musician finishes his or her part, switches off the music stand light, and walks out until only two are left.

"Surprise" Symphony (No. 94), <https://youtu.be/VOLy6JxEDLw>, is another of Haydn's musical jokes. A gentle melody is interrupted by a sudden loud chord, waking up any sleeping audience members.

Double Puzzler

- Using the clues, unscramble the letters to spell names of people and places from Haydn's life story.
- Place the numbered letters in the matching boxes to reveal the final phrase.

TUIRASA: Haydn's birthplace

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APPA: Nickname given to Haydn because he was so kind and helpful

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AUNYHGR: Country where Haydn worked at the Esterházy Palace

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FAWLELRE: Nickname of symphony: musicians leave stage one by one when their parts are finished

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CALMIHE: Nickname of Haydn's brother who was also a composer

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HEBNEOVET: Famous composer who studied with Haydn

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Franz Josef Haydn is known as:
"Father of the..."

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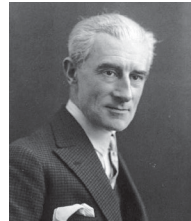
Composer BIRTHDAYS



March

1 Frédéric Chopin (1810) Poland
Romantic

LISTEN: Piano Concerto No. 1
in E Minor, Op. 1
<https://youtu.be/MkrwU5Pd93c>



7 Maurice Ravel (1875) France
Impressionistic

LISTEN: Bolero
<https://youtu.be/NIODBWUj8-s>



21 J.S. Bach (1685) Germany
Baroque

LISTEN: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3
in G Major
<https://youtu.be/Ehbar90jHz8>



April

1 Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873) Russia/USA
Romantic

LISTEN: Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor
<https://youtu.be/PbIX8zY17Z4>



10 Claude Bolling (1930) France
Contemporary

LISTEN: Flute and Jazz Piano Trio:
Baroque and Blue
https://youtu.be/6r_2GqI4Qq8



23 Sergei Prokofiev (1891) Russia
Contemporary

LISTEN: Piano Concerto No. 3
https://youtu.be/In_vkFnZrd0