



LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN: MASTER MUSICIAN

Explore the fascinating history of one of the world's most famous classical music composers. Learn about Beethoven's childhood and the influence of the city of Vienna on his career. Then read his own words about the music he composed.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What factors contributed to Ludwig von Beethoven's musical success?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about Ludwig von Beethoven
- Students will learn about the history of classical music
- Students will explain how the human characteristics of places are connected to human identities
- Students will classify a series of historical developments as examples of historical change and/or continuity
- Students will infer the intended audience and purpose of a historical source from information within the source
- Students will use details from a text to write a historical fiction narrative
- Students will conduct research
- Students will write a poem



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

- **The Need for a Patron**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1150L
- **The World About Him**
Expository Nonfiction, ~850L
- **In His Own Words**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1050L

The Need for a Patron

pp. 8–11, Expository Nonfiction

Learn how Beethoven benefited from aristocratic patronage of the arts.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article
- Students will learn about Ludwig von Beethoven
- Students will explain how the human characteristics of places are connected to human identities
- Students will use details from a text to write a historical fiction narrative

KEY VOCABULARY

- **commission (p. 8)** request something be made or done
- **aristocrats (p. 9)** members of a privileged social class
- **patron (p. 9)** a person who gives money and support to an artist or organization

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What factors contributed to Ludwig von Beethoven’s musical success?

Ask students if they’ve ever felt like they had a natural talent at something. Then ask them to imagine losing a physical or mental ability that is in large part responsible for their natural talent. Tell students that Beethoven—even after losing his hearing—continued to compose music that would become famous through time.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Together, review the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Then ask students to make predictions about the topic of the text using the vocabulary words. If necessary, help students guess the topic by revealing the title of the article.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- How did Beethoven identify with the Age of Enlightenment?
- Who did Beethoven attempt to secure as patrons? Why?
- How did the social characteristics of Vienna impact Beethoven’s identity as a composer?

SKILL FOCUS: Human Characteristics of Place

INSTRUCT: Explain to students that human characteristics of place include things such as language, religion, political systems, economic systems, social systems, and population distribution. Have students reread the article to find details describing these phenomena.

ASSESS: Arrange students in pairs. Ask each pair to come up with hypotheses explaining how Beethoven’s identity was affected by at least two different human characteristics of place in Vienna.

EXTEND

English Language Arts Explain that historical fiction is a genre of literature that dramatizes people and events from history by creating made-up, yet realistic stories about them. Ask students to write a one-page historical fiction narrative about any part of Beethoven’s life, using the text as a source of information about Beethoven and the time period and place he lived in.

The World About Him

pp. 32–34, Expository Nonfiction

Learn about the culture of Vienna and how it provided the perfect place for composers like Beethoven to thrive.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article
- Students will learn about the history of classical music
- Students will classify a series of historical developments as examples of historical change and/or continuity
- Students will conduct research

KEY VOCABULARY

- **precise (p. 34)** very accurate and exact
- **expression (p. 34)** the act of making known one's thoughts or feelings
- **contrasts (p. 34)** differences between things that are compared

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What factors contributed to Ludwig von Beethoven's musical success?

Ask students to provide an example of a place that is known for a certain profession, skill, or talent. Discuss what often happens to a place when it becomes known for a profession, skill, or talent. (Hint: People with an interest in that profession, skill, or talent gather there.) Then tell students that Vienna became known for its classical music and, as a result, attracted musicians such as Beethoven.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Together, review the vocabulary words and read them aloud. Then ask students to choose two or more words from the vocabulary list and write a sentence about classical music using them.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- Why was Vienna attractive to musicians during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?
- What jobs existed for musicians in Vienna during Beethoven's era?
- How did Beethoven's style of classical music differ from the Classical style of Haydn and Mozart?

SKILL FOCUS: Classify Events

INSTRUCT: Tell students that different events in history can be considered examples of historical change or continuity. Explain that historical change occurs when events represent a shift away from a historical trend or tradition. Then explain that historical continuity occurs when events represent a continuation of a historical trend or tradition.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to reread the article and identify one example of historical continuity and one example of historical change. Have students share their examples.

EXTEND

Social Studies Have students conduct online and library research to gather information about important centers of music in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, other than Vienna. Tell students to choose one of these centers and write a short essay comparing the role of music there and in Vienna.

In His Own Words

pp. 31–33, Expository Nonfiction

Learn how Beethoven's style of classical music began a new musical era.



RESOURCES

- Analyzing Primary Sources

OBJECTIVES

- Students will read and analyze a nonfiction article
- Students will learn about Ludwig von Beethoven
- Students will infer the intended audience and purpose of a historical source from information within the source
- Students will write a poem

KEY VOCABULARY

- haywire** (p. 47) not working properly
- modulations** (p. 47) in music, changes from one key to another
- tumultuous** (p. 47) excited, loud, and emotional

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What factors contributed to Ludwig von Beethoven's musical success?

Invite students to imagine a calm, peaceful piece of classical music. Then ask them to imagine its opposite. Ask them how they would describe it. Then tell them that Beethoven's own writings reveal how his style of classical music began a new musical era.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Write the following sentences on the board. Then ask students to decide which two words from the vocabulary list should be used to complete the sentences.

- Unlike other composers whose music was ordered and controlled, Beethoven's compositions were _____.
- Beethoven's _____ music was marked by frequent _____.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article with a partner. Then use these prompts for discussion:

- What is Beethoven describing in the primary source on page 47?
- What do you think Beethoven meant by stating that “[ideas] come unsummoned”?
- Why do you think Beethoven wrote the primary source on page 47?

SKILL FOCUS: Analyze Primary Sources

INSTRUCT: Tell students that when analyzing a primary source, they should think about the audience, the period in which the source was written, and the creator's purpose for making the source. Explain that understanding these factors can help them understand a primary source's style and content.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to complete the *Analyzing Primary Sources* organizer. After all students have finished, have them share their inferences about the intended audience and creator's purpose.

EXTEND

English Language Arts Ask students to pretend they are Beethoven to compose a short poem about his works. Tell students to locate two quotes from Beethoven in the article to include in their poems. Remind them to use the pronoun *I*.

Analyzing Primary Sources

When historians analyze a primary source, they try to determine the intended audience for the source and the creator’s purpose for making the source. Examine the primary source on magazine page 47. Use details in the text and your own knowledge to infer the audience and the creator’s purpose.

	Text Details	My Inferences
Who was the intended audience?		
What was the creator’s purpose for making the source?		