

## **Music History Cover Sheet**

Distance learning packet

Concert Choir, Women's Ensemble, A Cappella Choir, Chamber Singers,  
Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Jazz Bands, Music Theory & Technology

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Directions:**

Read each music history unit packet and highlight important information. At the end of each music history unit there are questions to answer and complete. Please complete those questions on a separate piece of paper and attach it to this cover sheet.

# Romantic Period

1820–1900

After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- Explain the impact of the Industrial Revolution on other developments of the Romantic period.
- Describe the most important characteristics of Romantic music.
- Identify at least four important composers of the Romantic period.
- Discuss the most important characteristics of Romantic choral music.

The restraint of the Renaissance was followed by the more extravagant and emotional Baroque period. After the Baroque period came another time of restraint and balance, the Classical period. Not surprisingly, the Classical period was, in turn, followed by a time of greater emotion and exaggeration: the Romantic period.

## Changes During the Romantic Period

One of the most important developments of the Romantic period was the Industrial Revolution. This radical change in manufacturing resulted in many new nonagricultural jobs and contributed to the rapid growth of cities. It also contributed to the growth of the middle class and to a rise in middle-class confidence and influence.

The Industrial Revolution also had a direct impact on changes in music. New techniques resulted in greatly improved musical instruments that could be mass produced. This meant that more musicians were available to perform with better instruments. These changes encouraged composers to exercise their creativity and to take new and more challenging approaches to their work.

The visual artists of the period reflected the era's attitudes with bolder, more colorful works. Landscapes by such Romantic painters as William Turner and John Constable conveyed the movements and feelings of nature. Later, Impressionist painters such as Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, and Pierre Auguste Renoir employed revolutionary techniques to bring the sense of the natural world alive.

## Romantic Music

Although Romantic composers continued, in large part, to work with musical forms developed in the past, they used original treatments to create new musical statements. Romantic compositions focused on emotional extremes and were characterized by complexity, exploration, and excitement. The interests of the period were expressed in larger, more complex vocal melodies and more colorful harmonies. In addition, instrumentation was expanded to enhance the overall possibilities of tone color in the music, and rhythms became freer and more flexible.

Many Romantic compositions reflect the period's spirit of **nationalism**, pride in a country's historical and legendary past. Composers based both instrumental and vocal works on traditional legends or on

### COMPOSERS

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)  
Franz Schubert (1797–1828)  
Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)  
Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)  
Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849)  
Robert Schumann (1810–1856)  
Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884)  
Franz Liszt (1811–1886)  
Richard Wagner (1813–1883)  
Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)  
Clara Schumann (1819–1896)  
Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884)  
Johann Strauss (1825–1899)  
Stephen Foster (1826–1864)  
Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)  
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)  
Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

### ARTISTS

Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun (1755–1842)  
Joseph Mallard William Turner (1775–1851)  
John Constable (1776–1837)  
Rosa Bonheur (1822–1899)  
Edouard Manet (1832–1883)  
James A. McNeill Whistler (1834–1903)  
Edgar Degas (1834–1917)  
Paul Cezanne (1839–1906)  
Claude Monet (1840–1926)  
Berthe Morisot (1841–1895)  
Pierre Auguste Renoir (1841–1919)  
Mary Cassatt (1845–1926)  
Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890)  
Georges Seurat (1859–1891)

### AUTHORS

Noah Webster (1758–1843)  
Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832)  
Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797–1851)  
Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)  
Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861)

### CHORAL MUSIC TERMS

art song  
nationalism



**Hay Wain** by John Constable (1776–1837) focuses on the natural effect of the sky, including the ever-changing sun, clouds, and wind. These features correlate to an interest in orchestral color, with the symphony orchestra serving as a magnificent palette.

1821. *Hay Wain*. John Constable. Oil on canvas. 1.28 x 1.85 m (4' 2½" x 6' 1"). National Gallery, London, England.

Louisiana Purchase  
transacted

1803

Abraham Lincoln

1809–1865

Frederick Douglass

c. 1817–1895

Mary Baker Eddy

1821–1910

1804

Napoleon crowned Emperor

1812–1814

War of 1812

1821

Jean Champollion deciphers Egyptian  
hieroglyphics using the Rosetta Stone

1823

Monroe Doctrine created



Although the Belamy Mansion was built during the years designated as the Romantic period, architect Rufus G. Bunnell chose the Classical revival style. The Corinthian columns uphold a monumental cornice and pediment, making a dramatic statement. Similarly, music of the Romantic period was often monumental and dramatic.

1859. The Belamy Mansion, Wilmington, North Carolina. Rufus G. Bunnell.

nationalistic dramas and novels. Operas, particularly the works of Richard Wagner and Giuseppe Verdi, were the most notable musical vehicles of nationalism. Dance music also grew in popularity. Some of these dance compositions reflected the period's nationalism, imitating and echoing traditional folk tunes.

During the Romantic period, instrumental music became more elaborate and overtly expressive. Symphonies gained in popularity. Ludwig van Beethoven—often considered the world's greatest musical genius—expanded the symphony in both length and content. Each of Beethoven's nine symphonies is unique, and all are challenging to the performing musicians. Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* even includes a chorus and four vocal soloists.

Of the Romantic vocal forms, the most important was the **art song**, an expressive song about life, love, and human relationships for solo voice and piano. The German name for these works is *lieder*, and their most famous composers were German-speakers. Austrian Franz Schubert wrote more than 600 songs, as well as symphonies, string quartets, and other works, before his death at the age of 31. German composers Robert Schumann and Johannes Brahms are also known for their *lieder*. The choral music of the Romantic period was characterized by exaggeration and emotion. The flamboyance of these works was expressed in their meter and stress, tempo, dynamics, texture, expressive aspects, and tone quality.

Romantic choral works exhibited contemporary musicians' particular interest in rhythm. Many of these creations were marked by intricate rhythmic patterns and unusual rhythmic surprises. Unlike the choral works of earlier periods, Romantic works

Mary Mason Lyon founds Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary

1837

American Civil War

1861–1865

Wireless telegraph developed by Guglielmo Marconi

1895

1835–1910

Mark Twain

1844–1900

Friedrich Nietzsche

1889

Jane Addams and Ellen Starr found Hull House

1898

Motion picture camera patented by Thomas Edison; sound recording developed

employed extremes in meter tempo, and stress. The changes of tempo within compositions typically reflected changes in mood; often these tempo and mood changes were quite abrupt.

The dynamics of Romantic choral works evidenced extremes as well. Crescendo and decrescendo were widely and expressively used. In many instances, crescendo was combined with a gradual quickening of tempo and decrescendo with a gradual slowing; these combinations heightened the excitement created by choral works. The climax of a work was more likely to be sudden, and accents were employed more frequently. The combination of a large choir and a large orchestra often contributed to a sense of dynamic opulence. The texture of Romantic choral works was often thick, with an emphasis on rich sound. Most works emphasized harmony rather than counterpoint, and there was a new use of chromatic harmony.

In response to the formality and tradition of Classical works, the expressive aspects of Romantic choral works displayed the domination of expression over form. Individual and personal emotion were given free expression, and unusual harmonic, rhythmic, and dynamic effects were frequently used. Composers focused on the use of tone color and the presentation of “singable” melodies. The tone quality of Romantic works also showed the period’s reaction against the standards of Classical compositions. There was a return of vibrato to add warmth and emotion to the tone. Tones were varied in response to the mood of the music; in general, however, fullness of tone was emphasized and beauty of tone was considered essential.

## Check Your Understanding

### Recall

1. How did the Industrial Revolution affect composers of the Romantic period?
2. List at least three adjectives you might use to describe Romantic music.
3. What is nationalism? How was it expressed in Romantic music?
4. What changes did Beethoven make in the composition of symphonies?
5. What is an art song? Name at least two Romantic composers of these works.
6. How did the meter and stress of Romantic choral works differ from those used in Classical choral music?
7. What one quality was typical of Romantic choral works?

### Thinking It Through

1. Compare Romantic choral music with Baroque choral music. Discuss the similarities and differences you can identify.
2. To what extent do you think the Romantic period was simply a reaction against the constraints of the Classical period? Which Romantic changes would you consider “action” rather than “reaction”? Explain your ideas.





# ROMANTIC CONNECTIONS

*Listening to . . .*

## Romantic Music

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### CHORAL SELECTION

#### **Brahms — *A German Requiem*, Fourth Movement**

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897) lived most of his life in Hamburg, Germany. He composed almost every kind of music, except opera, and composed during the Romantic period when music began to move from the more traditional forms as represented by Beethoven to more “discordant” and unusual material as represented by Wagner. Not a religious man, he was moved nonetheless to compose a special work, or *German Requiem*, containing seven movements after the death of his teacher, Robert Schumann, and then of his own mother. The requiem was one of the main genres of choral music during the nineteenth century. Brahms intended to portray death as a time of peace and rest and this “Fourth Movement” was the centerpiece of his beautiful compositional effort. Psalm 84 is the text used for this piece.

### INSTRUMENTAL SELECTION

#### **Smetana — “The Moldau”**

Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884) was a leading composer of Bohemia (later called Czechoslovakia). Smetana had a passion for music and composed in spite of his father’s desire for him to become a lawyer. His musical efforts were mainly focused on trying to produce a Bohemian national music based on the folk songs and dances which already existed. Smetana, awoke one morning to find himself totally deaf, which created a depression that stayed with him through the remainder of his life. “The Moldau” represents Smetana’s deep feeling about the beauty and significance of the river that flows through the city of Prague.