

Beethoven Who?

family
fun
with
music



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Introduction

Why Should I Teach My Children Music?

Mrs. Typical Homeschooler writes:

“Why should I teach my children music? Don’t I already have enough other subjects to teach? By the time I cover reading and writing, science and math, not to mention history, geography, and Bible, when will there be time to fit in music, too?

“And besides, I don’t know anything about music myself. I’ve never played an instrument, can’t read a note, and don’t know Bach from Beethoven. How can I teach what I don’t know?”

Welcome to the reality of a homeschool mom’s life—so much to teach, so little time. But is music really an “extra”? An elective? Just for the elite few who are talented or whose parents can afford private music lessons?

No! In this book, you will find dozens of ways to bring music into your family’s life whether you read music or not, whether you sing like a songbird or can’t carry a tune in the shower.

In this book you will learn basic terminology—the vocabulary of music—and we will show you games that teach the terms to your

children. We will explore classical music—for free!—so you can spend your money on music you know you will like.

We will remind you of the great heritage songs—folk, sacred, and patriotic—that every American child should know.

We will teach some basic note reading and play some instruments. We will even show you how to share what you have learned with others.

But first let's examine some of the reasons music should be a part of your family's daily life.

Artistic expression. God created us in His image. He is creative and He has made us creative, too. Music gives us opportunities to express our emotions, blessing both ourselves and others.

Jazz musician Bill Evans said, "When you play music you discover a part of yourself that you never knew existed."

The American author and professor, Oliver Wendell Holmes, wrote, "Most of us go to our grave with our music still inside us, unplayed."

Don't let that happen to your child or to you.

Intellectual benefits. Research exploring the link between music and intelligence reports that music training is far superior to computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills which are necessary for learning math and science.

Reports published by the Music Teachers National Association state that children who play the piano score 34% higher on tests

measuring the spatial-temporal abilities used in math, chess, science, and engineering.¹

In my own piano studio, I have seen intellectual improvement in my students. One student's mother reports that her daughter, who suffers from the effects of fetal alcohol syndrome, cannot do her math problems in their homeschool until she has done her piano practicing that morning. It seems that piano playing unlocks the key to her brain's ability to function for the day by building neural pathways between the left and right sides of the brain.

We won't be teaching you to play the piano in this book, but the foundation will be laid if lessons are a part of your child's future.

Discipline. Making music in a group requires each member to submit to the conductor. Research indicates that musicians and athletes tend to be the most contented students on our college campuses. They have learned to lay aside their personal right of autonomy, working together to create a greater end result, whether a win on the sports field or a successful concert.

As your children learn to make music together, mutually submitting to each other and to the director (you!), they will gain great satisfaction in their work, as well.

Physical coordination. Children who regularly play an instrument, even one of their own making, benefit from the cross-brain requirements of the activity. Likewise, dancing, marching, skipping, and other musical activities improve coordination, not to mention being great exercise.

¹ MTNA Newsletter, Spring/Summer 1997.

Eye-tracking and fine motor coordination are improved while playing a musical instrument, as well.

Emotional release. Music helps us to express many emotions. Music can lighten the spirits or help us to empathize with another's grief. It can calm us when we are frightened. It can bring us into the presence of God.


The Bible tells us that David sang to pass the time in the desert while tending sheep and later while running from Saul. Paul and Silas were noted for singing worship songs while in prison (Acts 16:25).

Albert Schweitzer, noted physician, missionary to Africa, and musician, arranged for a carpenter to make him a table while he was held as a prisoner of war during World War I. Not only could he use the table for writing, but he “played” the table as the keys of an organ, using the floor for the foot pedals, hearing the music inside his head.¹

When our oldest son was preparing to leave home for college, he was required to register for the draft since he was now eighteen-years-old. The realization that our son was no longer a little boy and could be sent into harm's way was already wrenching my emotions. That same spring, I heard “Bring Him Home” from *Les Misérables* for the first time. It is the prayerful plea of a man asking God's protection upon his protégé as he heads into battle. The song brought me to tears, awkward, because I was accompanying a young singer at the time. I will never forget how powerfully that

¹ *Out of My Life and Thought* by Albert Schweitzer (Johns Hopkins University Press: 1990), p. 167.

music expressed my emotions during those difficult days of letting our oldest go. The piece is beautifully played [here](#), by cello and piano.

 *Note: If you need help learning to use links, please go [Appendix A](#) for a tutorial.*

Alice Sommer-Herz, a 107-year-old Holocaust survivor, still practices the classics two to three hours daily. She believes boredom is dangerous. Click [here](#) to view an interview and to hear her play. Click [here](#) for an additional interview, describing how music ministered to prisoners in the concentration camp where they were imprisoned. At 1:05 she comments “Music was our food.” Music brought her comfort in the camp and continues to bless her in her old age. Not many pastimes can be enjoyed equally by the youngest and the oldest—music is one of them.

Social benefits. We sometimes forget that music is not just isolating ourselves in a practice room, or tuning out of society and tuning into our iPods. People are drawn together by singing, playing, and listening to music. Sharing music with others can build poise and be a blessing to lonely people who crave companionship. The music lingers long after the messengers have departed.

Scripture commands us to make music. Many passages in the Bible command us to make music. Here are a few:

♪ Psalm 100:1-2—“Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.”

- ♪ Psalm 98:1, 4-6—“O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. . . . Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King.”
- ♪ Ephesians 5:18-20—“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Martin Luther wrote, “I truly desire that all Christians would love and regard as worthy the lovely gift of music, which is a precious, worthy, and costly treasure given mankind by God. . . . Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in this world. . . . This precious gift has been given to man alone that he might thereby remind himself of the fact that God has created man for the express purpose of praising and extolling God.”

Music touches us in every area of our lives—body, soul, mind, and spirit. Nothing has quite the same power over us, other than the Holy Spirit Himself. It is a gift that we can take to heaven with us. Let’s get started learning more about this wonderful gift from our Heavenly Father—music!

Introduction

How to Use this Book

This book is designed as a music appreciation course for beginners. Beginners may be young children, or they may be older children or adults who know little about music.

Although this book can be used as a course for one student, it is more fun to go through the materials in this book together as a family. Part of the enjoyment of music is discussing it with others who are sharing your experience.

Some families may decide to work through the book with others in their homeschool support group. It could be used as a separate co-op class, or one family may share an activity or listening lesson at each regular meeting.¹

As you explore the options in *Beethoven Who?* you will:

- ♪ Listen to appealing classical, traditional, folk, patriotic, and sacred music.
- ♪ Unlock the mysteries of musical notation.
- ♪ Grow comfortable using the vocabulary of music.

¹ Remember that it is both illegal and unethical to duplicate copyrighted material. Write to marcia@marciawashburn.com for quantity discount pricing on *Beethoven Who?* for your group.

- ♪ Learn many fun hands-on activities to enjoy with your children as you explore music together.
- ♪ Learn to tie in music with other subjects and interests.
- ♪ Learn ways to share your music with others.

You may proceed through the book in the order it is written or jump around, finding chapters of interest. In fact it will be the most fun if you mix in listening lessons from [Sections I](#) and [III](#) with the hands-on activities in [Section II](#). [Chapters 1](#) and [8](#) are more instructional in nature and are designed to support other chapters.

I do suggest, however, that you read through the information below first to be sure that you get the most from *Beethoven Who?*.

ABOUT CHAPTER 1: THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

This chapter can be a bit challenging for those with little or no musical background. Don't panic! Read through it yourself and teach it to your children as well as you can. But don't give up on yourself or on this book if it doesn't make sense to you right away.

Anytime you learn about a new subject, it takes awhile to understand and remember the vocabulary of that subject. Music is no different. Be patient with yourself.

[Section II](#) includes activities to reinforce what [Chapter 1](#) introduces. Before long, you will be tossing out musical terms like a trained musician.


ABOUT YOUTUBE

You will find many music links throughout the book, particularly in [Section I: Listening to Music](#) and [Section III: Making Music](#). These links are one of the strengths of *Beethoven Who?*. They permit you to hear wonderful music in the comfort of your own home without purchasing a ticket or a CD—truly a YouTube Music Education!

Some of the descriptions have references such as 3:12. This refers to three minutes, twelve seconds from the beginning of the piece.

You can see that time reference if you hover your cursor over the

red line at the bottom of the screen as you watch the video. You can listen to a section again by clicking on the circle that moves along the red line; hold your finger down on the left click button and move the circle back to the left to listen to the section you wish to hear over again.

 *Confession: Since I am a musician and not a technician, I have had to learn how to get around on my computer and how to use the Internet. So be brave! You can do this, too, with a little practice.*

Some of you are quite comfortable using Internet links. Others may need a helping hand. You may need to ask a friend to get you started, but it is worth the trouble—both to get the most from this book, and to understand the 21st century way of communicating information.

Chapter 3: Baroque Period

- ♪ A five-part series [here](#) follows a man as he reassembles a pipe organ stored in his barn.



Organ at Methuen Memorial Music Hall, NYC.

“Hoedown” from *Rodeo* by Aaron Copland (1900–1990)

This music was composed for a ballet in 1942 by the American composer, Aaron Copland. It portrays a Saturday afternoon rodeo with roping, riding, branding, and throwing, followed in the evening by dances at the ranch house. There are four **movements**: “Buckaroo Holiday,” “Corral Nocturne,” “Saturday Night Waltz,” and “Hoe-Down.”




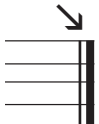














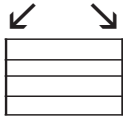


“Hoe-down” sounds like it could be music written for a square dance. You might recognize this piece from the beef commercials on TV in recent years. The opening theme sounds like fiddles tuning up. How many times does Copland return to this **theme**?



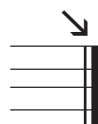









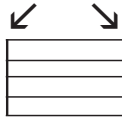







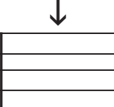

















Listen for the trumpet when a cowboy shows off his dancing. Then a lady dances, followed by the cowboy again. Finally everyone joins in. Can you hear when the dancers sit down for a rest?






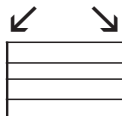








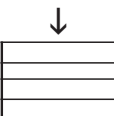




♪ There are several good links for this popular piece. This one is an audio link only. Click [here](#).


♪ This is an excellent version played by an Australian high school with wonderful views of the

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<i>M</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>C</i>
	<i>mp</i>			
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Crescendo (krě-SHĚN-doh): Gradually get louder. 

Development: The second section in the sonata-allegro form. The themes introduced in the Exposition are interwoven in the development. In a story, one would say that the development is where “the plot thickens.”

Diminuendo (dĭ-mĭn-yoo-ĚN-doh): Gradually get softer. 

Dissonant: Musical notes that have a harsh, grating, or sometimes unpleasant sound when played or sung together. Sometimes composers will set up a deliberate dissonance to create tension in the music, and then resolve the tension with consonant harmonies. See also: [Interval](#).

Double bar line: The pair of vertical lines placed on the staff that indicate the end of a composition.

Duet (doo-ĚT): Music written to be played or sung by two people performing together.

Dynamics: How loudly or softly the music is to be played or sung. For a more in-depth discussion of dynamics, click [here](#).

E (ā): The Italian word for “and.” Often found in tempo or dynamic instructions on a musical score.

Eighth note: An eighth note is played for one-eighth of the duration of a whole note. A single eighth note has a flag; two or more eighth notes may be attached by a beam.

