

# BEETHOVEN



## SYMPHONY No 5

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERT SPRING 2002  
TEACHER BACKGROUND MATERIALS  
AND ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS



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These materials for teachers are to be used in conjunction with a docent presentation designed to prepare students in grades K-8 for the Young People's Concert, created by the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, to help students understand and appreciate Beethoven's Symphony No. 5.

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Overview

This guide is provided to help teachers prepare their students to better understand the Young People's Concert Series, *Beethoven: Symphony No. 5*, presented by the Chattanooga Symphony on February 12 and 13, 2002. Teachers are encouraged to use these activities after the Symphony Docent has presented the introductory lesson, and at least once BEFORE and once AFTER the concert. A variety of activities are included so that teachers can tailor lessons to the needs of their particular students.

## Main Ideas

Beethoven is one of history's most famous composers. His symphonies are among his most significant works. We will study the first movement of his famous 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony to learn how Beethoven used a tiny four-note motive as the essence of the entire work, and to investigate his use of sonata form.

## Questions to be answered:

What is a motive, and how has Beethoven developed it throughout this work?  
What is sonata form?

## The four disciplines and how they contribute to musical understanding

This study guide is prepared with a discipline-based approach in mind, in that the content and questions provided for students focus on four areas of inquiry: **history** (we place music in its historical and social context); **production** (we make music as composers or performers); **aesthetics** (we consider the nature and philosophy of the music); **criticism** (we make informed judgments about the music).

The historical, social, and cultural context contribute to a better comprehension of why the work was written and what it is about. Through an exploration of the main ideas, students will become acquainted with the time period, the traditions and beliefs of the people as exhibited in the music, the role and stature of their music in society, the musical choices available to the composer, and the descriptions of the actual circumstances and background involved in the composition of it.

Developing musical skills like composing, arranging, improvising, and singing, are production (performance) activities which provide students a direct experience with the music and make possible a fuller, more intimate understanding of it.

Aesthetics are involved in the conception and creation of the music, in the learning of the music as musicians practice it, in the performance of the music as it is presented

Criticism is made possible through the synthesis of the information gained about the history, aesthetics, the production activities, and the actual performance of the music. Through this means of scrutiny the meaning, value, and significance of the music reveal themselves more completely and students become more than listeners and participants. They become individual owners of the music, capable of moving forward intelligently and independently.

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### **Goals and Objectives**

Students will engage in critical listening and analysis in order to become familiar with sonata form.

Students will engage in the analysis of the work, expanding their musical knowledge and vocabulary.

Students will practice critical thinking and group collaboration as they work together to create a four-note motive and a composition that reflects sonata form.

Students will recognize the four-note motive throughout the first movement of the work by aurally identifying it.

Students will create a musical composition that accurately reflects sonata form.

Students will use new musical vocabulary accurately in group discussion.

### **Content Standards in Music Education met within the activities and questions for students**

(Taken from the National Standards for Arts Education.)

3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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## Vocabulary

**Motive** - A short rhythmic and/or melodic idea that is sufficiently well defined to retain its identity when elaborated or transformed and combined with other material and that thus lends itself to serving as the basic element from which a complex texture or even a whole composition is created.

**Sequence** - The repetition of a phrase of melody (melodic sequence) and/or a harmonic progression (harmonic sequence) at different pitch levels, the succession of pitch levels rising or falling by the same or similar intervals.

**Symphony** - A work for orchestra in multiple movements (or occasionally one movement with multiple sections).

**Articulation** - In performance, the characteristics of attack and decay of single tones or groups of tones and the means by which these characteristics are produced. Thus, for example, *staccato* and *legato* are types of articulation.

**Staccato** - Detached. Notes played in this fashion are shortened in duration and clearly separated from the note following.

**Legato** - Played smoothly with no separation between successive notes; the opposite of *staccato*.

**Dynamics** - The aspect of music relating to degrees of loudness.

**Crescendo, decrescendo** - As performance marks, increasing and decreasing loudness, respectively; sometimes indicated with “greater than/less than” signs.

**Texture** - The general pattern of sound created by the elements of a work or passage.

**Sonata Form** - A term that designates the form of single movements in sonatas, symphonies, quartets, overtures, etc. - most often the first movement. Sonata form developed in the mid-eighteenth century, consisting of an opening section called the **exposition** in which major themes are presented, a middle section called the **development** in which thematic material undergoes a variety of alterations, and a third section called the **recapitulation** in which the material of the exposition is restated.

## Ludwig Van Beethoven (1770-1827)



Ludwig Van Beethoven's impact on the world of music and on western culture is hard to overestimate. Every composer who came after Beethoven, be it Brahms, Wagner, or Stravinsky, was in some way indebted to this great master.

Born in Bonn, Germany, in 1770, Beethoven grew up during the so-called Viennese Classical Era with the music of Haydn (1732-1809) and Mozart (1756-1791). At his death in 1827, the European world was fully engaged in the music of the Romantic Period (1820-1900) and it was Beethoven, more than any other composer who had brought it about.

Beethoven took the traditional classical forms (symphony, sonata, concerto, etc.) and expanded their dimensions. He wrote longer pieces, louder pieces. He added more instruments to the orchestra, demanded that piano-makers produce instruments that could play with more power, and above all, he injected an expressive quality into music that had never been heard before.

Beethoven viewed himself as an "artist." Previous composers considered themselves highly skilled craftsmen who composed music to suit the requirements of their wealthy patrons. They thought very little about composing for "posterity" or for "art's sake."

For Beethoven, the artist was a hero. His lifetime saw the revolutions in America and France, and rallying cries of "Liberty, Brotherhood, and Equality." One of Beethoven's heroes was Napoleon. Beethoven's Third Symphony, *The Eroica*, ("Heroic") was originally dedicated to Napoleon, but the dedication was violently withdrawn when Beethoven learned that Napoleon had proclaimed himself Emperor of France.

Pictures of Beethoven, with his unkempt hair and menacing gaze, reveal much of his tempestuous and defiant personality. There are many vivid accounts of Beethoven's eccentric lifestyle. He was described as disheveled and arrogant. His apartments were always cluttered. A famous cartoon shows Beethoven sitting among papers, dirty dishes, etc., deeply absorbed in composing.

His favorite food was "bread soup," bread dunked in gravy and eaten with the fingers, and his favorite beverage was 60-bean coffee, prepared from exactly sixty coffee beans ground up in one cup! One of Beethoven's most dramatic portraits is said to have been taken while he was drinking his strong coffee.

Beethoven deferred to no one. One time, a member of the nobility passed Beethoven on the street. Beethoven refused to bow, as was the expected custom. He explained to his companion, "God made many kings and queens, but He only made one Beethoven." Whether this is true or not we don't know, but it sums up one impression we have of Beethoven's character.

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During his twenties, Beethoven began to lose his hearing. By the end of his life, he was completely deaf. It may be difficult to understand how Beethoven could continue to compose and even perform without being able to hear all but the loudest sounds. There are embarrassing stories about Beethoven conducting after the musicians had stopped playing, and how he was unable to hear the applause behind him.

Beethoven's musical genius emerged from within. He acutely developed the use of his "inner ear." Some have suggested that his deafness may have been a blessing in disguise, in that it enabled him to withdraw from the every-day world, and totally devote himself to the music that he heard inside his mind.

### **Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67**

The opening of Symphony No. 5 is one of the most recognizable musical signatures ever written. Many unfounded stories of Beethoven's choice of those four famous notes as the motive of the first movement have been a subject of discussion for years. Some say that it has connotations of Fate (Beethoven himself is alleged to have said it represented Fate knocking on the door), Victory (the short-short-short-long pattern, Morse code for the letter V, for Victory), power, rhythmic drive, inevitability.

It is important to emphasize that despite the many external associations which this music elicits, and the many innovative and bold ideas it contains, Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 was composed along the traditional classical formulas for symphonic structure that were developed by Haydn, Mozart and other composers of the 18th century. The classical sonata form, in which themes are introduced, developed and then restated in orderly fashion is an important part of this symphony.

One reason why this symphony is so remarkable and so powerful is that Beethoven uses the smallest possible melodic and rhythmic elements to develop and sustain a massive composition.

The entire first movement, in fact the entire symphony, grows out of the opening four notes (short-short-short-long). This MOTIVE, or musical germ, generates the opening THEME and the rhythmic momentum for the entire work.

### **Timed Listening Guide for Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, Mvt. #1**

#### **00:00 – 01:26      Exposition**

00:00-00:18      opening **motive**

00:18-00:46      **first theme** grows from overlapping basic motive; imitated in inversion followed by strong cadence and a pause.

00:46-00:47      **bridge:** horns play fanfare based on opening motive

- 00:48-1:07 **second theme** begins with lyrical phrase; accompanied by motive in low strings; phrase played by violins, clarinet, and a flute with violin
- 1:08-1:26 **closing theme** in violins begins with descending scale; theme is repeated
- 1:26-2:52 Exposition is repeated
- 2:52-2:56 **bridge**: horns play fanfare again to get us to the **Development**
- 2:53-4:45 Development**
- 2:53-3:06 **opening motive** played by horns and clarinets
- 3:07-3:37 **first theme** being developed and dispersed to various instrument families; imitation, sequence, changing instrumentation, changing keys; rhythmic motive prominent
- 3:38-3:45 **horn fanfare** motive occurs three times
- 3:46-3:59 rhythmic motion slows, motive disappears, dynamics become quiet
- 4:00-4:31 **first theme** returns and is further developed
- 4:32-4:45 oboe solo announces the **Recapitulation**
- 4:46-5:50 Recapitulation**
- 4:46-5:06 **first theme** recurs, **opening motive** returns and builds to climax
- 5:06-5:08 **bridge**; horn fanfare
- 5:09-6:04 **second theme** fragmented and played imitatively; growing complexity builds to climax
- closing theme** recurs and is repeated, strong cadence and leads to **Coda**
- 6:04-7:15 Coda**
- 6:04-6:50 **new theme** introduced and quickly developed using techniques previously explored in the development section of the work
- 6:50-7:15 **opening motive** brought back to close the movement

# PRE- AND POST-PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS

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## **Pre-Performance Studies**

### **Aesthetics**

#### **Definitions of music:**

What is special or unique about this piece?

#### **Musician-centered issues:**

Do we have to know what a composer intends in order to understand or evaluate this music?

#### **Audience-centered issues:**

Do we have to have a particular attitude or mind set to understand this music?  
If yes, what features of the music should we focus on? Why?

#### **Cultural context:**

What is the role of tradition related to this work?  
How does this affect our judgment?

#### **Criticism and interpretation:**

How is the use of motive in this work unusual for this period?  
What creative devices does Beethoven use to develop the two themes in the development section?  
How effectively does Beethoven use sonata-allegro form in the first movement of the symphony?

#### **Values in music:**

What value is this work? Is its value in its reference to something outside of the music?  
Being absolute music, does this work have just as much value as program music?

### **History**

What other music was composed at this time in Europe? The United States?  
Why is Beethoven's music valued more today than in the period in which he lived?

### Criticism

What is the musical device that Beethoven uses in this work?  
How does he use this motive to create excitement and interest in the first movement?

### Production

Have students think about what kind of music they would compose, improvise or perform if they were to write a short piece in using motive development.

### Post-Performance Studies

#### Be a Composer

1. Break-out into groups of 4-5 students.
2. Think of how Beethoven used the elements of music to develop the motive in *Symphony No. 5*. Remember also how he chose a very simple four note motive and how he made them different. Remember that he also used sonata form and that there was a second theme that was different than the first one.
3. Your task is to compose another “four note” motive. You may either compose it as a rhythmic motive and use non-pitched percussion instruments or body percussion, or as a melodic motive and use pitched instruments or voice.

Once your group has composed the “four note” motive, place it in the framework of sonata-allegro form, using Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 5* as a guide.

- Exposition (two themes)
- Development (develop the two themes and vary them in interesting ways)
- Recapitulation (bring back the two themes in a creative way and also add a coda.)

4. Have each group play their completed compositions for the entire class. Allow group discussion to follow. Guide comments on why they thought the group made good choices in picking instruments, using tempo, dynamics, form, expression, etc., to compose their work.

### Research and Writing

Research the life of a musician from the Romantic period and report your findings. Who were some other famous composers at that time and what kinds of music did they compose? Beethoven was considered to be part of the Classical period, which was the last half of the 18th and early 19th centuries, and also the Romantic period, which went through the remainder of the 19th century.

Do more research on the life of Beethoven. What were his major contributions to the world of music? What instruments did he write for? Did he compose music for the voice?

What was going on in the world of art and theatre at the time of Beethoven? Did it have any influence on his writings?

Write a script about Beethoven's frustrations about his deafness. Question: If Beethoven were not deaf would he have composed even greater musical works? Or did his deafness and frustration add to the creativity in his music.

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# RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

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**Order from Music In Motion**  
**P. O. Box 833814**  
**Richardson, TX 75083-3814**  
**1-800-445-0649**  
**www.musicmotion.com**

**Classical and Romantic Time Line.** This colorful poster places the composers in the context of other historic world events to help students connect with the past. Over 4 ft. long. **2655 \$8.95**

**Composer Posters.** Set of 8, with biographical notes on the back about the composer and his works, and suggested activities relating to the composer. Vivaldi, Handel, Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky. 8 1/2 x 11". **5912 \$9.95**

**Stories of Famous Composers Video Collection.** This series of video biographies features portraits, music, commentary, rare archival material, and film. Each program concludes with an informative outline of the key works of the featured composer. Background excerpts are performed by the Elysian Ensemble. A great introduction to classical music for ages 12 and up. **\$19.95 ea. 5162 Beethoven**

**Beethoven: Sound and Fury.** This A & E biography explores the life, work and legacy of the musical giant through extensive interviews with Beethoven scholars Issac Stern and Kurt Masur. Hear extended performances of his greatest works from some of the world's most acclaimed orchestras. 50 min. **2319 \$21.95**

**Beethoven Lives Upstairs.** This Emmy Award-winning video, from the Classical Kids series is a favorite with kids! When Beethoven moves upstairs, 10-year-old Christoph resents the grumpy new boarder. But he slowly comes to appreciate the genius of the man, the torment of his deafness, and the beauty of his music. With 25 excerpts of Beethoven's most famous works. **Video. 55 min. 5008 \$19.95; Hardback Book 8962 \$15.95; CD 4084 \$19.95**

**Introducing the Composers** by Roland Vernon. Through period art, photos, historical events and influences, we learn about each of these great composers. Each spread is one chapter and is easy to use in a classroom. Ages 8 and up. 32 pp. **Hardback \$16.95 ea. Beethoven 7008**

**Gustav Mole and Friends by Kathryn Meyrick.**

**The Musical Life of Gustav Mole.** Lucky is the mole born into a musical family! Gustav learns about instruments, singing, dancing, practicing, composing, even serenading! **Hardback 6908 \$13.95; Paperback 9448 \$6.95; Cassette 5439 \$8.95**

**The Lost Music.** Gustav is waging war on noise by seeking out music throughout the world with his family. **Hardback 7066 \$13.95; \$6.95; Cassette 5751 \$8.95**

**Happy Hedgehog Band** by Martin Waddell and Jill Barton. Join the animals on a toe-tapping tail-snapping, good time! **Paperback Q544 \$5.95**

**Moses Goes to a Concert** by Isaac Millman. Moses' deaf class goes to a concert of a deaf percussionist. Children discover how the music is felt and interpreted and the fact that being deaf does not prevent music-making. **Hardback 9850 \$16.00**

**Recordings**

*Beethoven: Symphonien Nos. 5 & 7*/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductor: Carlos Kleiber. Uni/Deutsche Grammophon - #47400

*Ludwig van Beethoven: Symphonien Nos. 5 & 6 (Pastorale)*/Berliner Philharmoniker. Conductor: Herbert von Karajan. Deutsche Grammophon - #439 004-2

