

Reading - Summer 2 Week 1 - Home Learning

Session 1

Today, you are going to read all about the great composer, Ludwig van Beethoven. When you have finished reading the text, match up the words and their definitions and then make a list of the key facts you learned from the text. You can type your answers directly onto the sheet or print it off, or write your ideas in your exercise book.

How to share your work:

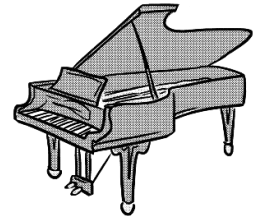
- Write your answers into your exercise book and take a picture of your work.
- Type your answers directly into the boxes on this page or use Google Docs to edit.

Once you've completed the work, submit your work to Google Classroom following this set of instructions:

1. Go to classroom.google.com
2. Click the class - Classwork - the assignment.
3. To attach an item, click 'Add or create' and select 'Google Drive', 'Link' or 'File' depending on what type of file you have created.
4. The status of your work will change to 'Turned in'.

There is a popular saying that you have to suffer for your art. Perhaps in Beethoven's case, the greater the art, the greater the suffering.

Ludwig van Beethoven is widely acknowledged to be one of the greatest musical composers of all time. Even if you could not name any of his works, you would undoubtedly recognise at least one if it were played to you. His Moonlight Sonata and Fifth Symphony are prime examples. It is perhaps amazing that someone could create so many works of great joy and beauty when you contemplate how much pain and ugliness there was in his life.



Early years

Born in Bonn, Germany, in 1770, he was one of seven children, although only three of them survived childhood. From an early age, Ludwig was seen as having a rare gift for music and his talent was developed by a succession of local tutors. Most of them were not very kind, however, and often treated him so badly they made him cry. One of them even had problems sleeping and would drag the poor little boy out of bed in order to practise.

Despite these hardships, he was soon writing his own music and his first collection of compositions was published when he was only thirteen years old. Not long after that, he travelled to Vienna – the capital of Austria and a major centre of the arts at that time – in order to continue his education. Within a year, however, he had to return to Bonn as his mother had died and his father was unable to look after his brothers, so that responsibility fell to Ludwig for the next five years.

Along with his family tragedies, his love-life was causing him a great deal of heartache. His musical ability and reputation meant that he was often asked to give lessons to members of upper-class families. He fell in love with at least two of the young women he was tutoring but was unable to marry them as he had not been born into wealth and privilege, which meant he was not seen as being good enough for them.

Loss of hearing

Of all your senses, which would be cruellest to lose if you were a musician? Perhaps the greatest tragedy to befall Beethoven was when he started losing his hearing in his late twenties. It is not clear what caused it, but we do know that he suffered from a severe form of tinnitus – a condition which makes you hear noises which are not there, such as buzzing or bells ringing. By the time he was 44 years

old, he was totally deaf. Amazingly, he continued composing wonderful music but when one of his works was performed for the first time, he had to be turned around to see the audience clapping because he couldn't hear the thunderous applause.

It also didn't help that much of Europe was at war while he was composing. The famous French general and emperor Napoleon was rampaging all over the continent and, in 1809, he attacked Vienna. The noise of the bombardment was so loud that Beethoven was worried it would ruin what was left of his hearing. In order to protect himself, he hid underground during the assault and covered his head with pillows.

Bad behaviour

Given all his problems, it is perhaps not surprising that Beethoven was known to be rather rude. If he noticed people in the audience talking while he was performing, he would just stop. He also refused to show much respect for the ruling classes. One archduke decided that the normal rules of polite society should not apply to Ludwig, presumably because there was no point in hoping he would follow them!

His health deteriorated and he eventually died in 1827 at the age of 56. Some 20,000 people turned out to show their respects at his funeral procession. For all his faults and misfortunes, he had still managed to produce an enormous collection of outstanding music. He may have suffered terribly but we have all benefited from his genius, whether we know it or not.

Definition Match Activity

Try to match the words from the word bank with the correct definition.

Word Bank

deteriorated

genius

thunderous

acknowledged

composition

presumably

bombardment

A vigorous and persistent attack	Click or tap here to enter text.
To become worse in quality, value or character; depreciate	Click or tap here to enter text.
A person of exceptional ability especially of a highly original kind	Click or tap here to enter text.
Resembling thunder, especially in terms of being loud	Click or tap here to enter text.
(adverb) one presumes or supposes that	Click or tap here to enter text.
Recognised or admitted; indicated recognition or acceptance of something	Click or tap here to enter text.
A work of art, music or literature; the harmonious arrangement of the parts of a work of art	Click or tap here to enter text.

Key Facts Activity

In the table below, try to make a list of some of the key facts you have learned about Beethoven. Include things like dates and major events in his life.

[illegible]