

## **Franz Joseph Haydn Reading Comprehension**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

In the mid-1700s, there was a shift in the arts and in politics. The Age of Enlightenment (or just the Enlightenment) had taken shape in Europe, with more people supporting ideals such as tolerance and individual liberties. There was increased separation of church and state and opposition to absolute monarchy. In the arts, architects, designers, and painters favored symmetry over dramatic proportions and ornate details.

The same change was taking place in the music world – the pioneers of what we now call the Classical period (ca. 1750-1800) composed in stricter, more balanced forms. Franz Joseph Haydn was the perfect example of this. In contrast to the music of the Baroque era, music in the classical era featured a more specific compositional structure. A symphony, which is a piece written for orchestra, would be broken down into four movements (large sections with different tempos and contrasting moods or emotions). Each movement would be broken down into discrete sections, demarcated by pauses, or musical cadences. Each section would be broken down further into smaller sections, called phrases, which are short passages that evoke the same pacing and feeling as a spoken sentence.

So, generally speaking, each piece Haydn wrote can be viewed as a collection of phrases – “musical sentences” – strung together into larger structures. That is not to say that his music was uninteresting – it was in the details that Haydn created interest. Perhaps he repeated a phrase twice in a row, for emphasis; maybe one movement was in a different key than the one that came before.

The Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, stating that all men have the right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” This major historical event occurred during Haydn’s lifetime – we must remember he and the founding fathers lived in the same world. Just as white settlers in America wanted independence from England, composers like Haydn established themselves as artistic individuals who did not need the approval of nobility to be successful. He famously lived in London at the end of his life, writing music for the sake of creating art – not for the prince – and effectively changed the role of composers and musicians in European society.

Haydn wrote 106 symphonies and 68 string quartets (pieces for two violins, viola, and cello). Music written for these ensembles was essentially invented by Haydn, and this is one of many examples of Haydn’s adherence to structure as a man of the Enlightenment, but also his simplistic and playful personality as an artist.

- 1. Which of the following best expresses the conditions in the mid-1700s?**
  - A. The monarchies were growing in power and influence
  - B. Separation of church and state was coming to an end
  - C. Major changes were taking place across society and culture
  - D. The Age of Enlightenment was ending
  
- 2. Based on the information in the passage, which best describes the Age of Enlightenment?**
  - A. A time in history where people began to value individual liberties and began to oppose the monarchies
  - B. A time in history where people began to listen to music
  - C. A time in history where people began to value the monarchy and oppose individual liberties
  - D. A time of major change for architects, musicians, and painters
  
- 3. What is implied in the second paragraph?**
  - A. Haydn was reluctant to adopt the new forms of music pioneered in the Classical era
  - B. Haydn was a pioneer in Classical era music
  - C. Changes occurring in culture and society were less likely to occur in music and composition
  - D. Haydn's musical techniques were more suited to the Baroque era
  
- 4. Which question is NOT answered in the second paragraph?**
  - A. How did Haydn create interest in his music?
  - B. What is a movement in a symphony?
  - C. How was music in the Classical era different from that in the Baroque era?
  - D. What is a symphony?
  
- 5. Which of the following does the author compare?**
  - A. Symphonies and movements
  - B. The Declaration of Independence and life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness
  - C. Composers such as Haydn and the monarchies of Europe
  - D. Composers such as Haydn and White settlers in America fighting for independence
  
- 6. What is implied in the fourth paragraph?**
  - A. Haydn composed music based on the desires of the noble family
  - B. Many musicians were forced to create music for nobility
  - C. The American Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776
  - D. Composers such as Haydn and America's founding fathers essentially lived in different worlds

**7. The final paragraph...**

- A. reveals information about Haydn's style as a composer.
- B. gives detailed information about Haydn's symphonies.
- C. gives biographical information about Haydn's life outside of music.
- D. gives information about the causes and effects of the Enlightenment