

Classical vs. new age music essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

There are almost as many different types of music as there are people. From the simple harmonies chanted in monasteries before even the five-lined staff was invented to songs of modern pop culture and everything in between, music has been a huge part of life for as long as people can remember.

There's music for church, music for parties, music for every occasion.

Western Art Music is the oldest form still listened to and performed today.

The literature most well-known across continents and generations such as Beethoven's "Für Elise" or Mozart's infamous "Waltz" – gives its common name – classical music. Classical music is the most traditional music and gives a good foundation for musicians of every level to learn on. The musical genre known as New Age is perhaps the classification which differs the most – and yet can still remain the most similar to classical music. Like our generation, New Age is very eclectic. It often mixes classical elements with modern sounds.

You'll soon see why this genre is the epitome of thinking outside of the box.

The most apparent parallel between the two is when an all-time classic is given a modern twist. In "Canon Rock" takes Pachelbel's work and changes the rhythm, style, and instrumentation to form a modern rock hit from one of the most traditional and sedate pieces. As you will notice, in some places, the electric guitarist even adds some ornamentation. But overall, it's clear where the artist got his inspiration as the well-known melody line is still the basis for this tune.

Many classical pieces as well as New Age works share the same mood. The soothing tones of classical pieces such as "April Morning" and the

worshipping attitude of “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” can be compared to the relaxed, meditative approach or the spiritual sensation that New Age can have. Being a modern composer of classical music, Debussy’s “Claire de Lune” has the tone and instrumentation of a Western Art work yet uses intervals and sequences of a more meditative, New Age-like feel.

Instrumentation is both a similarity and a difference between classical and new Age music in that their relation is like a Venn diagram – there are instruments shared by the two and ones which are unique to each respectively. The piano as well as string and woodwind instruments are used in both genres of music. But while the classical branches out to include older instruments such as the organ and the harp which New Age does not incorporate, the latter stop at what have traditionally been considered musical instruments.

Steven Halpern, a major composer of New Age music creates pieces which typically consist of a piano or flute as well as the music of nature: a bird’s chirp, a waterfall, an owl’s hoot, and the ocean’s waves. However, the backgrounds of composers of classical music differ greatly from those of the New Age genre. Western Art musicians often studied long and hard at musical conservatories in hopes of composing for royalty and nobility to make a living.

In contrast, anyone with a love for rhythm and sound can make New Age music. While nowadays, composing New Age music would hardly even put gas in your car, unlike the composers of classical work, there’s no pressure to please or to compete. New Age music is made to enjoy music, life, and the

diversity throughout all peoples and their tastes for sound. Works Cited www.
dartmouth.edu/~music33/Mus33projects www. classicalarchives. com en.
wikipedia. org/wiki/New_Age_music www. newagemusic. com