

The classical and romantic eras english literature essay

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Audrey RollingsMus105-55Research ProjectLudwig van Beethoven is widely known to be the greatest composer to ever live. He was an important figure in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras. Beethoven composed some of his most important works during the last decade of his life; it was a time in which he was quite unable to hear. His wonderful music is still played worldwide, and will continue to remain popular for many more years to come. Beethoven's family was originally from Brabant, Belgium. He was born approximately on December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Germany. His birth was estimated to be on this date because of laws and customs, all babies were baptized within 24 hours of birth. He mistakenly believed that he was born in 1772. Even after he was presented with papers that were official about his birth year, he still insisted that 1772 was the correct year.

Beethoven was born to Johann van Beethoven, a mediocre court singer, and Maria Magdalena van Beethoven, a respectable, and moralistic lady.

Kapellmeister Ludwig van Beethoven, Ludwig's grandfather, who was an eminent, and prosperous musician, was a great influence in his life. He was the second of seven children born to his parents, but only one of the three that survived infancy. He grew up with two younger brothers, Kaspar, whom was born in 1774, and Johann, whom was born in 1776. It was sometime between their births that Beethoven's father, Johann, began teaching him music; he often beat him for even small mistakes. He was very cruel to his son, and left Ludwig with emotional scars that he carried into his adult life. Punishment also included being locked in the cellar almost every day for many hours at a time. Johann wanted young Beethoven to be a musical prodigy. At the age of seven, he had his first public recital that he played

impressively but received no real press at all. (Ludwig Biography, 2013) Beethoven attended Tirocinium, a Latin grade school. He was at the best an average student who struggled with spelling, and sums all his life. He once said, " Music comes to me more readily than words." Beethoven dropped school to study music full time with the newly appointed Court Organist, Christian Gottlob Neefe, in 1781. Neefe introduced him to Bach during this period. In 1792, before the age of twelve, Beethoven published his first composition, 9 Variations in C Minor for piano, themed by Earnst Christoph Dressler. In the magazine of music in 1783, Neefe wrote about Beethoven, his student, saying, " If he continues like this, he will be without a doubt, the new Mozart." In June, 1784, at 14 years old, under Neefes recommendations, he was appointed organist of the court of Maximillian Franz, the Elector of Cologne. During this same year, Beethoven's fathers condition with alcoholism got much worse, and he was no longer able to support his family. Beethoven took on the role of caring for his two younger brothers. (Davies, 2001) In 1787, Beethoven went to Vienna to meet Mozart, and further his musical education. This was all made possible when Prince Maximillian Franz was aware of his music. During the meet with Beethoven, it is thought that Mozart said of him, " Don't forget his name—you will hear if spoken often." Later in the year, he went back to Bonn after receiving a letter. His mother was dying. Being the only person within his family that he had a strong relationship with, was his mother of course, she passed away on July 17th, 1787. He fell into a heavy depression for several years, and remained in Bonn. (Clive, 2001) In 1790, at 19 years old, Beethoven received the honor of composing a musical memorial for Joseph II, Holy Roman

Emperor, who died that year. His work was never performed for reasons that remain unknown. Johannes Brahms made the discovery a century later that Beethoven had actually composed, "Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II"; this was considered his earliest masterpiece. In 1792, Beethoven traveled back to Vienna. It had been five years since he was there last, but he was back again to pursue his musical education. He never travelled back to Bonn anymore. In Vienna, he took lessons with Joseph Haydyn, Johann Albrechtsberger, and Antonio Salieri. With Haydyn, he studied piano, with Salieri, vocal composition, and with Albrechtsberger, counterpoint. Joseph Haydn was known at this time as the greatest composer alive because Mozart died a year earlier. Count Waldstein, Beethoven's friend, and patron, wrote in a letter to him, "Mozart's genius mourns and weeps over the death of his disciple. I found refuge, but now release with the inexhaustible Haydyn, through him, now, it seeks to unite with another. By means of assiduous labor you will receive the spirit of Mozart from the hands of Haydyn." (Clive, 2001) In 1794, Opus 1, the "Trios for Piano," were composed. Beethoven established a great reputation and quickly won over lots of patrons, who provided him with lodging and funds. He made a public debut in Vienna on March 29, 1795. He was believed to have played his "first" piano concerto in C Major. Not long after, Beethoven finally published the "Opus 1," and had much success, financial, and critically. In 1799, Beethoven began writing No. 1, Op. 21, C Major Symphony, and premiered it April 2nd, 1800, in Vienna. He also began working on Symphony No. 2, Op. 36, D Major around 1800, but completed in 1802. At this time, Beethoven began having an increasingly difficult time because his hearing was quickly diminishing. As

a new century started, on April 2, 1800 at the Royal Imperial Theater in Vienna, Beethoven debuted his Symphony No. 1 in C Major. Published in 1801, was his "Six String Quartets," and in the same year he composed, "The Creatures of Prometheus," that received 27 performances. During this year, he also made a confession to friends in Bonn, that he was going deaf, slowly. It had been hard for him to come to terms with this, and he tried hard to conceal it. In a letter to his friend, Franz Wegeler, he wrote, "I must confess that I lead a miserable life. For almost two years I have ceased to attend any social functions, just because I find it impossible to say to people: I am deaf. If I had any other profession I might be able to cope with my infirmity, but in my profession it is a terrible handicap." (Salter, 2013) As his handicap got worse, he composed some of his greatest music. The famous "Moonlight Sonata," was composed by Beethoven in 1801. The original title of this was "Quasi una fantasia" (It. Almost a fantasy). The popular name "Moonlight Sonata" didn't come out until several years after Beethoven died. After he composed it, he then dedicated it to Countess Giulietta Guicciardi. She was a student of Beethoven's. They fell in love after a few lessons. It is widely believed that he proposed to her after dedicating the Sonata to her. She was prevented from accepting any proposal from Beethoven because one of her parents forbided it. The moonlight Sonata is divided into three separate parts: Adagio Sostenuto, Allegretto, and Presto Agitato. Adagio Sostenuto is well known. This part is dark and whisper like, and more a "condensed" sonata. Allegretto is in the form of a scherzo and in D flat major. The Presto Agitato was a completely different from the other movements. This very powerful and marked by piano. (Green, 2013) From 1803-1812, "

The Heroic Period," he composed an opera, six symphonies, four solo concerti, five string quartets, six string sonatas, seven piano variations, four overtures, four trios, two sextets, and 72 songs. The most widely known were symphonies No. 3-8, the "Moonlight Sonata," the "Kreutzer," Violin Sonata, and Fidelio, his only Opera. In 1804, in honor of Bonaparte, he wrote the third symphony. The symphony was later renamed the "Eroica Symphony." On April 7th, 1805, it was played for the first time. In 1809, at the invitation of Jerome Bonaparte, Beethoven wanted to leave Vienna. Anna Marie Erdody, the Countess, and a long-time friend helped keep him in Vienna with help from some of his most wealthiest admirers: the Archbishop Rudolph, the Prince Lobkowitz, and the Prince Kinsky. He was given 4,000 florins annually by the men, and this helped him live without financial burden. He could live like this but under one condition, that he would not leave Vienna. Beethoven accepted under those circumstances and became the world's first independent composer. Usually, before this time composers and musicians were servants for wealthy aristocratic families. Beethoven was free to do as he pleased. In 1809, Beethoven fell in love with another student named Therese Malfatti. She was only eighteen years old and Beethoven was forty years old. Beethoven requested that his close friend, Wegeler send him his birth certificate from Bonn. He wanted this because he needed it to get married. In the spring of 1810, Beethoven was invited to go to a party for the Malfatti household hosted by Therese's father. Beethoven planned to propose to Therese but got terribly drunk. He also wanted to lay a bagatelle that he composed for her but he couldn't do that either. He was able to write Therese's name that night. He wrote: "Für Therese." When the manuscript

was discovered on Therese's death, it was published as "Für Elise." This was because his writing was not very clear. (Beethoven Artistic, 2013) Even though he had beautiful music, Beethoven was miserable. He often had feuds with his brothers, and many, many more people because of his short temper, greed, and suspicious. He never married, nor had any children most likely because of his physical appearance, and shyness. He did once fall in love with Antonie Bretano, a married woman. Beethoven was famous for writing a long, love letter was thought to be meant for Antonie Bretano, and was found in a secret drawer in 1812. Around this time, Beethoven began having financial trouble. This trouble arose when the Prince Lobkowitz, one of his benefactors, fell into financial difficulty; therefore unable to help him. The Prince Kinski, another benefactor, died from falling off his horse. With all the circumstances at hand, this started the first of many attempts to save his financial independence. Also in 1812, a life mask was created by a man named, Franz Klein. Beethoven had to put cotton wads over his eyes as Klein attempted to create the mask. In the process of this, Beethoven grew frustrated, and tore the mask off, which in turn broke into pieces. Klein managed to put the pieces back together. This mask was so good that it revealed exceptional details of scars, skin pores, and lines on his lips. (Green, 2013) Starting in 1815, Beethoven's music became less dramatic, and more introspective. Some of the first works in this new, late style included the song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte*, op. 98 (To the distant Beloved, 1816); the piano sonata, op. 101 (1816); and the two sonatas for cello and piano, op. 102 (1815). Beethoven favored looser musical structures, variation, and fugal procedures in these works, and in a larger group of late

sonatas, op. 127, 130, 131, 132, and 135 (1824-26). (Clive, 2001) Beethoven's brother, Kasper, passed away on the 15th of November, 1815. He wrote a letter wishing that the guardianship of his 9 year old son, Karl, be with Ludwig, and his wife. This started a custody battle that carried on for seven years. Beethoven eventually won Karl's custody. Deaf, 45 years old, and no wife, he had a hard time trying to understand, and live with a child who eventually grew into a young man. The greatest music composed for Ludwig van Beethoven, was in the last years of his life. Debuted in 1824, a mass, "Missa Solemnis," and String Quartet No. 14, was just two of his late, great works. In 1824, Beethoven finished his most towering achievement, the Ninth Symphony. This would be his final symphony. (Ludwig Biography, 2013) Beethoven spent the last days of his life in a shabby room with friends whom stood by his side. He was in a lamentable, physical state; he suffered from insomnia, and was very unhappy. Beethoven often denied himself basic items that he needed, because he did not want to touch the stock that he intended to leave as inheritance to his nephew, Karl. Right before he died, the London Philharmonic Society at the invention of his student Moscheles, gave him a large sum of money. He used this to buy some of his favorite foods, and more. Beethoven signed his last will, and testament on March 24th, 1827; he left everything he owned to his nephew, Karl. (Ludwig Biography, 2013) On March 26th, 1827, Ludwig van Beethoven passed away at the young age of 56. His funeral took place on March 29th, 1827, at the church of the Holy Trinity. Approximately 20,000 or more people attended his funeral. Beethoven's funeral records that are kept in the archives of the Vienna Supreme Court. His body was laid in an oak coffin that

was polished. In his hands were a wax cross, and a lily. His head was rested on a white silky pillow, with a wreath of white roses adorned to his head. Lilies were laid around his body in the casket, while eight candles burned on either side. At the foot, on a table, laid a crucifix, ears of corn, and a bowl of holy water for blessing. His coffin bearers consisted of some musicians, with one being Franz Schubert. Schubert passed away the following year and was buried next to Beethoven. The funeral prayer was written by Franz Grillparzer, a great writer. Heinrich Anschutz, the actor, read the funeral prayer at the Währing Cemetery, now known as Schubert Park. Thousands of people watched as the great composers casket was lowered into the ground. (Davies, 2001)The autopsy that was performed on Beethoven revealed that the cause of his death was post-hepatic cirrhosis of the liver. Not long ago, many scientist hypothesized that lead poison could have been a potential cause of death, after analyzing a fragment of his skull. This theory is largely discredited. Beethoven himself had once expressed a wish to find the true nature of his deafness, and other illnesses that made his life often miserable. After Beethoven's, death many of his belongings were stolen, lost, destroyed, and auctioned off cheaply. It's very sad that this happened because everyone could have more information to gain knowledge of a Genius! Josef Danhauser, a young artist was very fond of Beethoven. Danhauser contacted Stephan von Breuning, a friend of Beethoven's, to ask for permission to make a death mask of Beethoven's face. On March 27, he was granted permission to create the mask, which was made of wax, or plaster cast. Ludwig van Beethoven was an extraordinary man. He composed some of the world's greatest music, amazingly he it as a deaf man. To sum

up his life and death in his last days, Beethoven stated, " Plaudite amici comoedi a finite est." In English this means, " Applaud friends, the comedy is over." He will be forever remembered as the greatest composer to ever live. (Ludwig Biography, 2013)