

# [Baroque era assignment](https://assignbuster.com/baroque-era-assignment/)

[](https://assignbuster.com/)[History](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/history/)

In every way Baroque music Is Like a teen-eager. K, maybe not in the pimply-faced- criticize-everything-even-though-you-don’t-pay-for-it kind of way we have come to expect from our modern teen-eager. But what is a teen-eager anyway? Simply put; a teen-eager is no longer a child and not yet an adult. It is that awkward in-between stage when all the rules get broken, nothing ever seems to fit, and emotions fluctuate wildly. This Is exactly how It was with the Baroque Era of Music.

To put this into perspective, try and remember that the Renaissance was a “ re-birth” f good art and music and the Classical era was that birth coming into its maturity. The Baroque Relevance happened to come directly after the Renaissance and before the Classical Revolutionized nicely with those awkward and highly emotional teenage years that everyone goes through on the pathway called growing up. When Was the Baroque Era? The official company line on when the Baroque Era started, which you will find in every book. Encyclopedia, or bubble-gum wrapper on the subject, was the year 1600. The event which earned 1600 this enviable distinction, as far as I can tell, was the impel fact that it has two zeros stuck on the end of It, thus making It fairly easy to remember. In contrast, the end of the Baroque Era was definitively set by Johann Sebastian Bach, the Grand-Baobab of Baroque music, who had the good foresight to die in a year also ending with a zero, thus giving historians another easy to remember date; 1750.

For some Baroque zealots Bach’s death was truly the day that music died at least it gave good closure. The Origins of Baroque Music In the spirit of rebellious teenagers everywhere, I’m going to throw caution (and facts) to the wind and talk about eunuchs. As you may know, eunuchs are guys who–for lack of a better term–are missing an organ. (Bach was a master organ player, but that has absolutely nothing to do with this) Medieval doctors had learned that If the–men, brace jewels” were cut off of boys at an early age, none of the traditional biological changes of puberty would occur.

There would be no facial or body hair, their voices would not change, and all their acne problems would be virtually solved. Now, In my mind, that in NO WAY could compensate for the loss of everything that makes life worth living, but apparently back at the turn of the century the 1 5th Century, I mean) being a eunuch was not as uncommon as one might think. So these Incomplete and unfulfilled men were eking out a meager living primarily playing the women’s roles in theatre (back then, not only was that funny, It was the law! When somebody realized that these guys not only acted like women, they could sing like women in fact, they could sing BETTER than women. It turned out that strong powerful lungs and chest muscles of men (and the anatomy of a Ken doll). Nell, as you might guess, once you build a better mousetrap you’ll soon need a better souse. Composers had to write music that could demonstrate these singer’s remarkable abilities. To Baroque composers, better music simply meant more difficult, with very elaborate, ornamental melody lines.

In addition to the Eunuch singers, there are three other factors that also may have contributed to the rise of Baroque music: ere Reformation and the Counter-Reformation: The entire 17th Century was a great big publicity war put on between the Catholic and protestant churches, each side vying to attract more customers–sort of like Coke and Pepsi do today–by spending ones of money on rock stars and pop-concerts mean on musicians and church- concertgoer’s side was trying to convince the consumers that they were the best and only church to buy salvation from. He Insanely Wealthy Families of Europe: Due to the bustling trade [read: slaughter] of newly discovered foreign countries, money was streaming into Europe at a tremendous rate. Everybody who was anybody wanted to drive in their expensive carriages and show off their expensive clothes and their expensive servants. The Opera House was the hangout of the 17th Century. It was a fad of sorts, the hip place o see and be seen, and sometimes since they were there, some people would even listen to the music. He royal courts of Rupee’s desires to appear cultured and refined: As they oppressed the lower classes and taxed them for every last cent to pay for their grotesquely extravagant lifestyles, the kings, queens and other assorted monarchs decided that they didn’t want to appear entirely barbaric to the peasants. Music became a symbol of sophistication and taste. The thing to do if you were a king was to have your own music group. The general rule of thumb was this; the better the Caucasians performed, the better king you were.

In summary, if you were a composer during the Baroque era and you didn’t work for Church, the Opera, or some Royal Court, you were basically unemployed and starving. Although these three things led to the deluge of money and attention that Nas poured onto the musicians and artists of the time, it is important to remember that the style of Baroque music spread from the simple idea of ornamenting the local lines of the eunuch singers to show off their dynamic range and abilities. Arouse Does Not Mean “ Broke”! Vow may be thinking right now, “ Whatever.

Who cares what the origin was. I Just want to know what the heck the word baroque’ means? ” Well, you’ll be happy to know that historians can’t even agree on this one. There are two separate yet equally bronco, meaning bizarre or strange. Others have proposed the idea that it is really from the Portuguese barroom, which means a distorted or irregularly shaped pearl. In either case, the 18th Century French were the first to use the term to describe the art and music of the previous generation, and what they meant by it was, “ It sucked! Granted that may seem a bit overly critical, but honestly now, what do you think bout the music your parents listen to? Regardless of the original intent, the name stuck and so too did the concept: remember the Portuguese definition of the irregular shaped pearl? The barroom was considered more beautiful because of it’s Irregularity, or uniqueness. A great example of this is Cindy Crawford. She is more beautiful specifically because of that disgusting black mole on her face. Without it she’d be Just another plain, ordinary, supermodel.

It’s her mole her flaw her beautiful disfigurement that moves her up that last rung from mediocre greatness into the realm of super(facial) greatness. Sir Francis Bacon foreshadowed the entire Arouse phenomenon with the phrase, “ There is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. [Essays; of Beauty, 1 597]” So what exactly was this “ strangeness in the proportion” that defined the entire Baroque Era and offended the French so much? (Like that’s a hard thing to do. Going back to our teen-eager analogy, one distinctly adolescent characteristic is that Impressive ability to turn everything into a full-blown, end-of-the-world, emotional roller-coaster style melodrama. Well, Baroque musicians thought that this extreme excess of emotion was a great thing. Any artificial method they could contrive to manipulate audiences into having a genuine emotional reaction was what they deliberately strove for, and they found many innovative ways to do it. Advertising executives take note: Sharp Contrasts 0 can anyone say “ Manic Depressive”?

Conflict is one of the easier ways to create a high emotional response. Try this: Imagine the most beautiful person you know. Now the ugliest. Now imagine them kissing. Feeling any emotions? Arouse music is full of these same conflicts, contrasts, and overblown distinctions. It entrants everything with everything. A Baroque concerto is typically in three movements or sections that traditionally go fast, then slow, and then fast again. It contrasts solo instruments or small groups with large orchestras–think of Dueling Banjos, with a single kazoo player against an entire philharmonic orchestra.

It even contrasts volume. First it is loud, then it goes soft, then it goes loud again. Of course, En do a lot of these things with music today, but back then this was kind of a novelty, an emotional tempest of Biblical proportions. You’re probably thinking, “ Emotional maelstrom? This hardly sounds like an emotional summer breeze! ” (or words to that effect). I would like to agree with you except that somehow these guys pulled it off. Ninth some basic ideas on what creates strong feelings they have managed to write some of the most emotionally compelling music ever written.

One of the great things to come out of the Baroque Era is the concept of the Basso Continuous, or the continuing base. Stated simply, this is a steady and not-too-lavish base line that contrasts sharply with the overly ornamental and wildly fluctuating melody line (In case you missed it: another contrast! . I like to compare this musical style to a banana split. It doesn’t matter how much or how many different toppings [o put on it as long as you’ve got the banana and three scoops of ice cream underneath. Renaissance music (Remember, it came before Baroque. Was more like bowlful of toppings without banana or ice cream, Just a bowlful of assorted nuts, syrups, sprinkles, cherries and cream all congealing together into a puddle of overstep ooze. It was in the Baroque era that they learned this first and fundamental rule to music and banana splits. A masterpiece will always hold soother nicely, even with all the ornamentation piled on top, as long as your foundation is sound. Improvisational 0 Spontaneous Combustion Like teen-eager who always want to do things " their way,” another important characteristic of Baroque music was the improvisational technique.

To show how DOD they (thought they) were, many singers and musicians embellished, improvised, or Just plain ad-libber their music during a performance. Far from being offended, the composers who wrote this music actually encouraged this free thinking behavior. Fewer notes to write, I guess. So these fantastic musicians, commonly known as oratorios, were given music with instructions that said, more or less, " Play the song something like this, and have FUN with it. Then a few guiding notes or a simple melody line would follow. No two performances were ever alike, and every performance was exciting for everyone, because no one knew exactly what was going to happen next. Sometimes this ended with disastrous results, everything coming to crashing discordant halt. When it failed, it failed miserably. But mostly these unplanned performances triumphed beautifully and were the spectacle of the show and the talk of the town for weeks on end.