

Music appreciation essay sample

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



1. What was going historically during this era? What was life like? The era began with the disintegration of the Roman Empire and ended with the cultural reawakening of the Renaissance. The era witnessed a fairly unorganized Europe with lots of individual small towns, feudalism, the majority of people are uneducated and illiterate with the exception of the clergy and priests. At the end of the era universities were founded, towns grew and with it gothic cathedrals were built. Feudalism was on its way out and so was the authority of the churches.

2. Who or what had the power?

The Roman Catholic Church had supreme authority

3. Who were learned or literate?

The educated/literate people were the church officials such as monks, clerics, and priests

4. Who were allowed to sing in church?

The priests and the choir

5. Most of the music that was notated during the middle ages was sacred or secular? Sacred

6. Was most medieval music vocal?

Yes

7. What is Gregorian Chant? Discuss its origin, texture, melody, rhythm, text. How did it receive its name? What is its purpose? Official music of the Roman Catholic Church. Monophonic melody set to sacred Latin text, Calm otherworldly quality. Represents voice of the church instead of individual.

Flexible rhythm- improvisational character. Melodies tend to move by step in a narrow range. Named for Pope Gregory 1 (509-604)

8. When chant was notated, was the rhythm notated or just the melody? Just the melody

9. What are church modes?

Scales used in the Middle Ages and Renaissance- the major/minor tonal system had not yet been invented.

10. What is the Mass?

Is a sacred ritual of the Roman Catholic church in which a collection of psalms and prayers are spoken and/or sung.

11. What is the Mass Proper?

Are those items that are special for a particular feast day.

12. What is the Mass Ordinary?

Are those prayer and psalm that remain the same everyday of the church year.

13. Who is Hildegard of Bingen?

Was a German writer, composer, philosopher, christian mystic, benedictine abbess and visionary.

14. What are troubadours and trouveres? What was their social class?

Troubadours were poet-musicians who composed songs for performance in the many small aristocratic courts of southern France Trouveres were musicians from northern France

15. How were the songs of the troubadours and trouveres notated? (melody, rhythm, instruments?) Songs were primarily monophonic, only the melody was notated. so specific interments were specified.

16. What are minstrels?

A medieval european bard who performed songs whose lyrics told stories of distant places or existing or imaginary historical events.

17. What is an Estampie?

Is and medieval dance.

18. When did composers begin to write polyphonic pieces? What was this early polyphony like? Monks began to add a second melodic line to the already existing chant creating organum (early polyphony). One person would sing a chant melody, and another person sang a different melody with the same words.

19. What is organum?

(early polyphony) believed to have moved in strict parallel motion. This means that the two melodies would have had the same exact rhythm.

20. What city became the musical center of Europe during the mid to late Middle Ages? What was the musical center of this city and who worked there?

Paris

Notre Dame Cathedral

Leonin and Perotin

21. What was the School of Notre Dame? What was their new innovation?

(hint: deals with rhythm) A church

The two men came up with a system for notating rhythm

22. Composers began to write polyphonic songs that were not always based on chant, what were they based on instead? Taken or borrowed from some already existing piece of monophonic music. (Cantus Firmus)

23. By the 14th century a new system of music notation had evolved. It allowed a composer to specify almost any rhythmic pattern. Were beats now divided into two or three parts or both? Was syncopation used? Beats were divided by three (b/c of the father, son, and holy spirit)

Renaissance

Dates: 1450-1600

1. What was going historically during this era? What was life like?

The Renaissance was a time of rebirth of human creativity. It was a time in which there was an interest in the writings, philosophy, math, science, music, art, and architecture of the ancient Greek and Romans. People began modeling themselves after the ancient Greek and Romans.

The catholic church was far less powerful during the renaissance than in the middle ages. This was an era of exploration in every sense of the word with an emphasis on humanism.

2. What is humanism?

Humanism: intellectual movement (focus on human life and accomplishments).

3. What effect did the printing press have on music?

The printing press was invented which made books and music far cheaper and easier to come by.

4. Was every educated person expected to be trained in music? Yes

5. Where did musical activity gradually shift to?

Music activity gradually shifted to the courts.

6. Were composers content to remain unknown?

No they wanted to be known for their compositions.

7. Does vocal music continue to be more important than instrumental music?

Yes

9. What is word painting?

Is the musical technique of writing music that reflects for literal meaning of a song. For example, ascending scales would accompany lyrics about going up; slow, dark music would accompany lyrics about death. (eco the meaning of words in music)

10. What is the primary texture of most renaissance music?

Primarily polyphonic, has an average of 4-6 different parts/voices

11. How many different parts are typically found in a renaissance piece? How does this compare to the music in the Middle Ages? has an average of 4-6 different parts/voices

Renaissance music sounds smoother and more homogenous than mediaeval polyphone because of the use of imitation.

12. What is a cappella?

Term to indicate that a piece is to be sung without any type of instrumental accompaniment. Acapella literally means in the chapel.

13. What was the rhythm like in renaissance music?

More smooth flowing rather than having a sharply defined beat, no bar lines (yet)

14. What was the melody like in renaissance music?

Conjunct and still based on church modes.

15. What were to the two main types of sacred music? Define each of them?

1. Mass- Is a sacred ritual of the Roman Catholic church in which a collection of psalms and prayers are spoken and/or sung. 2. Motet- has four voice parts. it is entirely vocal and is usually sung by a small choir rather than by soloists.

16. Who was Josquin Deprez? What type of music did he compose? Was the most versatile and gift composer of the mid-renaissance. Composed Masses, motets, and secular songs.

17. Who was Giovanni Peierluigi da Palestrina?

was an italian renaissance composer of sacred music, has lasting influences on the development of church music, and his work has often been seen as the culmination of renaissance polyphony

18. What was the counter-reformation and the Council of Trent? The counter-reformation was a movement to reform the catholic church from within. The council of trent was a group of cardinals that met over a period of 20 years

to discuss the necessary reforms in the catholic church. 19. List the three complaints with the sacred music of the day? 1. some composers were using secular songs (such as drinking songs) as the basis for sacred compositions 2. the singers were becoming to theatrical. It was becoming more of a performance for them than a means of enhancing the service. 3. polyphony was becoming to complicated and it was obscuring the words of the music.

20. What is a Lutheran chorale?

a Lutheran hymn, or congregational song.

Strophic form (same music for each verse)

probably sung unaccompanied and in unison

21. What is a psalm tune?

Unaccompanied singing, in the vernacular, of psalms. It was translated each of the 150 psalms into metered and rhymed verses and printed them in a psalter.

20. What is a madrigal?

Secular vocal pieces for a small group of singers, usually unaccompanied.

21. Who was Thomas Weelkes?

English organist and composer, one of the most important composers of madrigals Weelkes is noted for his word painting, lively rhythms, and highly developed sense of form and structure.

22. How were instruments categorized in the Renaissance?

They are categorized based on the dynamic level: haut (loud) and bas (soft)

23. Explain how dances are performed together? performed in contrasting pairs