LESSON 1
War of the Romantics

6-8 GRADE

colorado symphony

musicurious
2019/20 EDUCATION PROGRAMS OF THE COLORADO SYMPHONY
Bringing the youth concert experience and the story of Beethoven’s life through real-world topics
LESSON 1: War of the Romantics

SUMMARY
In this lesson, students will collaborate with their peers as they hone their research and oral presentation skills through a structured class debate around the controversy between composers from the conservative and progressive circles, several of whom are featured in the Beethoven's Birthday Bash concert. Through an understanding of historical context, students will develop a deeper appreciation for the perspective of both groups.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE
- Students will compare and contrast the artistic controversy — known as the War of the Romantics — from both the perspective of the Classical conservatives and the Romantic progressives.
- Students will conduct research online to inform their argument in defense of either the conservative or progressive circle.
- Students will critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the information gathered from their online research in preparation for the debate.
- Students will methodically follow the outlined steps to prepare for the debate.

LESSON CONNECTIONS
- Colorado Academic Standards
- Learning Objective
- Essential Questions
- Enduring Understandings
- Vocabulary
- Materials & Resources
- Guiding & Extension Questions

INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK (Putting lessons into practice)
- Connection
- Teach
- Demonstration
- Active Engagement
- Independent or Small Group Work
- Share
- Link
- English Language Learner Tips
- Additional Resources
- Home Practice
- Optional Extensions
COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS

GRADE 6
Colorado Academic Standards in Music: Grade Level Expectation
Standard 4. Aesthetic Valuation of Music
Grade Level Expectation:
4. Identify how music has been used in different historical periods.

2020 Colorado Academic Standards / Grade Level Expectation: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Oral Expression and Listening
1. Employ appropriate presentation and collaboration strategies to meet the needs of a given task and purpose.
2. Develop, organize, and present ideas and opinions effectively.

Writing and Composition
1. Write arguments that support claim(s) using clear reasons, relevant evidence, credible sources, and a formal style.
2. Write engaging real or imagined narratives using techniques such as sensory language, dialogue, description, and sequencing to convey experiences and events.
3. Plan, draft, edit, and revise as needed to craft clear and coherent writing that demonstrates a grasp of standard conventions for grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as a style appropriate for purpose and audience.

Research Inquiry and Design
1. Pose research question(s), gather, synthesize, and credit relevant and credible resources, and present findings.

GRADE 7
Colorado Academic Standards in Music: Grade Level Expectation
Standard 4. Aesthetic Valuation of Music
Grade Level Expectation:
4. Identify and describe the ways in which music is used as a historical record.

2020 Colorado Academic Standards / Grade Level Expectation: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Oral Expression and Listening
1. Incorporate language, tools, and techniques appropriate for task and audience during formal presentations.
2. Prepare for formal presentations and use appropriate delivery techniques.

Writing and Composition
1. Write well-organized arguments using logical reasoning, relevant and credible evidence, acknowledgement of opposing claims, clear language, and formal style.
2. Write well-developed informative/explanatory texts using logical organizational strategies, relevant supporting information, domain-specific vocabulary, and formal style.
3. Plan, draft, edit, and revise as needed to ensure that writing is clear and coherent, that it conforms to standard conventions for grammar, usage, and mechanics, and that its style is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research Inquiry and Design
1. Pose research questions, synthesize answers from multiple credible sources, and present conclusions in an appropriate format.
COLORADO ACADEMIC STANDARDS

GRADE 8
Colorado Academic Standards in Music: Grade Level Expectation
Standard 4. Aesthetic Valuation of Music
Grade Level Expectation:
4. Compare and contrast uses for music in historical contexts.

2020 Colorado Academic Standards / Grade Level Expectation: Reading, Writing, and Communicating
Oral Expression and Listening
1. Engage in effective collaborative discussions and analyze information presented.
2. Design organized presentations incorporating key details and claims while tailored for purpose and audience.

Reading for All Purposes
2. Analyze and evaluate an author’s choices to understand informational text.
3. Apply knowledge of word structure, grammar, and context to determine the meaning of new words and phrases in increasingly complex texts.

Writing and Composition
1. Write well-organized and cohesive arguments, distinguishing claim(s) from opposing claims and using language to clarify connections among claims, reasons, and evidence.
2. Write well-developed and logically organized informative/explanatory texts, conveying relevant content through precise language, domain-specific vocabulary, and formal style.
3. Produce clear and coherent final drafts that demonstrate a command of the conventions for grammar, usage, and mechanics as well as a style appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research Inquiry and Design
1. Pose important questions; identify, locate, and evaluate sources; extract and synthesize relevant information, and communicate findings appropriately.
**LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

- Students will compare and contrast the artistic controversy — known as the War of the Romantics — from both the perspective of the Classical conservatives and the Romantic progressives.
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**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- What makes a piece of music timeless?
- Is music confined within certain limits?
- How could one's understanding and response to a piece of music be informed by historical context? (Consider Leonardo da Vinci's quote: "Nothing can be loved or hated unless it is first understood."

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS**

- A timeless piece of music may be interpreted in many different ways, from multiple perspectives, offering new discoveries on each encounter, and may be continuously revisited throughout one's lifetime, without exhausting all it has to communicate.
- Breaking externally imposed limits on music, including accepted norms in its structure and function, may result in powerful new forms of artistic expression.
- Historical context informs one's understanding and appreciation of music.

**VOCABULARY**

- Absolute music
- Classical music (defined in terms of history, time spans, characteristics, composers from Beethoven's Birthday Youth Concert program)
- Coherent
- Conservative
- Dynamic
- Empathy
- Globalization
- Musical genre
- Pluralism
- Politicize
- Preserve
- Program music
- Progressive
- Romantic music (defined in terms of history, time spans, characteristics, composers from Beethoven's Birthday Youth Concert program)
- Tradition

**MATERIALS & RESOURCES**

- Devices with Internet access
- Essential Tips for Conducting a Class Debate: [m.busyteacher.org/7245-conducting-class-debate-essential-tips.html](http://m.busyteacher.org/7245-conducting-class-debate-essential-tips.html)
- How to Evaluate Information Sources: Critical Questions for Evaluating Your Sources: [libguides.usask.ca/c.php?g=16390&p=90457](http://libguides.usask.ca/c.php?g=16390&p=90457)
- For Optional Extension: Download free metronome app on your smartphone
GUIDING & EXTENSION QUESTIONS

- What is a revolution?
- What does it mean to be a revolutionary?
- How was Beethoven a revolutionary during his lifetime?
- Would Beethoven be considered a revolutionary if he lived today? Defend your response.
- How did Beethoven’s music not only cross, but also expand the boundaries of the Classical and Romantic genres?
- In what ways did Beethoven both adopt and adapt the Classical style of composition?
- What characteristics of Beethoven’s music served as a catalyst for musical evolution?
- How does one musical style influence another?
- How can one both respect and judge the quality of unfamiliar music?
- How is it possible that in spite of their opposing opinions, both Wagner and Brahms viewed Beethoven as a main source of inspiration?
- How were both the conservatives and the progressives musically innovative?
- Would Beethoven have aligned himself with either the conservative or progressive camp? Defend your response.
- What images or sounds immediately come to mind when you think of Beethoven?
- Do you think that Elgar and Berlioz would have aligned with either the conservative or progressive camp? What do you think John Williams and Kevin Puts’ position would have been if they lived during the War of the Romantics? Provide specific musical examples to justify your answer. (Hint: Refer back to the concert’s program!)
- Why might the progressives have viewed the conservatives’ approach to composition inadequate?
- Do such heated debates over artistic expression continue today? Provide an example.
- How can musical traditions be preserved without stifling progress?
- How can traditional music be preserved in a continuously globalizing world? Is it important to protect musical traditions? Why or why not?
- What makes something culturally sustainable?
- Is there such a thing as “progress” in art? If so, how can it be defined?
- How was music politicized during Beethoven’s lifetime? How is music politicized today?
- Does all music inherently tell a story, whether or not the composer intended to do so? Defend your response.
- Can music ever be truly absolute? Why or why not?
- Should music strive to be absolute? Why or why not?
- Why do humans often feel the need to create stories, or outside references to musical pieces, regardless of the composer’s intent? (Consider leading a discussion about the neuroscience of narratives, i.e. the mind is hardwired to process stories)
- Unpack cellist Yo-Yo Ma’s quote, “Music is powered by ideas. If you don’t have clarity of ideas, you’re just communicating sheer sound.” How does this relate to the absolute versus program music argument?
- How are tolerance, harmonious coexistence, and pluralism connected?
- Are diversity and pluralism synonyms? (Discuss how active engagement, relationship building, and constructive dialogue among diverse, coexisting groups promote cultural pluralism.)
- How might have society’s lack of pluralism in the 19th century contributed to a fiercer, more uncompromising debate between the musical conservatives and progressives?
War of the Romantics

I. CONNECTION

"Watch this lad. Some day he will force the world to talk about him."

Mozart's prophecy was correct. Beethoven revolutionized the musical world, influencing every subsequent generation of composers. He expanded upon the Classical genre's structure, harmony, melodic development, and orchestration, radically shifting the musical terrain in ways that no other composer before him had. Beethoven not only changed the way in which composers wrote music, but he also changed how we listen to and understand music.

Beethoven was able to gain financial self-sufficiency through his compositions alone – a tremendous accomplishment at that time. "What I am," he wrote, "I am through myself." Beethoven brought orchestral music from the aristocratic salons to the concert halls. After 1815, he composed mostly for publishers, rather than patrons, which provided greater public access to his music. Beethoven was a revolutionary in that he was not always writing for the musicians and audience of his day, but for the musicians and audience of the future.

No composer's work has been so methodically and thoroughly scrutinized in terms of musical structure and content as Beethoven's work. Beethoven may be viewed as the ultimate fusion composer, taking the best of the Classical and Baroque eras and elevating them to new emotional and instrumental extremes that would later shape the Romantic era of music. Beethoven's grit and resilience enabled him to channel his difficult circumstances into the creation of some of the greatest works of art ever to be produced to this day.

But, how did Beethoven become "Beethoven"? And why is it so difficult to define him as either a Classical or Romantic composer? Time and place certainly had significant influence. Beethoven not only suffered serious personal struggles - an abusive father, family turmoil, mental illness, and numerous physical illnesses, including his loss of hearing, but he was also born into a world steeped in political unrest. The French Revolution of 1787 greatly affected Beethoven, as he held deep convictions about the importance of equality and brotherhood. The ideals of the French Revolution – liberty, equality, fraternity, popular sovereignty, constitutionalism, and the concept of natural rights demanded new forms of artistic expression.

In many ways, Beethoven's world parallels the world in which we live today. Numerous countries around the world are currently in transition, engaged in revolutions and counter-revolutions to fight for freedom. (Consider the refugees from over 60 countries who seek asylum in the United States, many of whom come to Colorado.)

Beethoven was uniquely positioned in history, as he straddled both the Classical and Romantic periods. Two famous German composers, Richard Wagner, known for his epic operas, and Johannes Brahms, often referred to as the "Father of the Symphony and String Quartet," were engaged in a heated philosophical battle about music known as the War of the Romantics. Interestingly, composers on both sides revered Beethoven as their artistic hero and were convinced that Beethoven was exclusively a member of their musical camp. Although Beethoven could not be pigeonholed or clearly defined, both sides of this "war" tried to do just that -- define the indefinable.

The principle point of contention in the War of the Romantics was whether music could represent something outside of itself. The progressive Wagnerians believed that music could be programmatic, or a direct response to something, such as a story, image, or character.

On the other side of the spectrum were the conservative Brahmsians. They believed that music was absolute. This meant that music was not about anything outside of itself; it was purely sound. Despite their opposing convictions, both Wagner and Brahms had a reluctant respect for each other.

This deeply seated resentment stemmed from the belief that the other party was corrupting and degrading what they considered to be "True Art." It was a tension between "old school" and "new school." Although this war was not one of violence, there were animated insults and caustic criticisms at performances and in print.

Although neither Wagner nor Brahms proclaimed himself to be the leader of his respective camp, they were co-opted by the opposing factions. In actuality, both composers were pioneers. Wagner created new genres, whereas Brahms created novel ways to expound upon the Classical genre.

Keep in mind that 19th century Europe was not a predominantly pluralistic society. In fact, during the Romantic period, music took on a more nationalistic or patriotic purpose.
PUTTING THE LESSON INTO PRACTICE

Define nationalism and patriotism.

You may choose to open a discussion about the differences between diversity and pluralism. To expand the dialogue, highlight the relationship between pluralism and empathy.

Display the provided map of Germany during the Romantic era, highlighting the conservative circle of composers from Berlin and Leipzig and the progressives from Weimar.

Draw a Venn diagram. Label the left circle “Conservatives.” Label the right circle “Progressives.” Include Brahms in the conservative circle, Wagner in the progressive circle, and Beethoven in the space where both circles overlap. As students conduct their research in preparation for the debate, they may add composers to the diagram.
II. TEACH

Introduce students to the structure of a debate and the requisite preparatory steps.

Refer to this Web site for an outline of one approach to structuring a class debate:

- Essential Tips for Conducting a Class Debate
  https://m.busyteacher.org/7245-conducting-class-debate-essential-tips.html

Review the analytic rubric that will be used to score the debate. You may use the sample below, or create an analytic rubric with student input.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>4 = Compelling Debater</th>
<th>3 = Skillful Debater</th>
<th>2 = Novice Debater</th>
<th>1 = Debater-in-Training</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect for other Team</td>
<td>All statements, body language, and responses were respectful and used appropriate language</td>
<td>Most statements, body language, and responses were respectful and used appropriate language</td>
<td>Some statements, body language, and responses were respectful and used appropriate language</td>
<td>Statements, body language, and/or responses were consistently disrespectful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factual Information</td>
<td>All information presented was clear, accurate, and thorough</td>
<td>Most information presented was clear, accurate, and thorough</td>
<td>Some information presented was clear and accurate, but it was not thorough</td>
<td>There were major informational inaccuracies and/or lack of clarity and thoroughness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Demonstrated thorough understanding of information</td>
<td>Demonstrated understanding of most information</td>
<td>Demonstrated limited understanding of information</td>
<td>Demonstrated misunderstanding of information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasiveness</td>
<td>All arguments were logical and convincing</td>
<td>Most arguments were logical and convincing</td>
<td>Some arguments were logical and convincing</td>
<td>None of the arguments were logical and/or convincing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>Communicated with clarity and confidence, maintained eye contact, excellent projection and inflection of voice, well-timed delivery</td>
<td>Communicated clearly, frequent eye contact, good projection and inflection of voice, acceptable timed delivery</td>
<td>Seldom communicated clearly, minimal eye contact, poor projection and inflection of voice, inconsistent delivery rate</td>
<td>Did not communicate clearly, no eye contact, monotone delivery, inconsistent delivery rate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebuttal</td>
<td>Addressed all opponent arguments with counter-evidence</td>
<td>Addressed the majority of opponent's arguments with counter-evidence</td>
<td>Addressed some of opponent's arguments with counter-evidence</td>
<td>Did not address opponent's arguments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT

Have students write a tweet to advertise the debate to the public. Although students will record their tweet on paper, they may not exceed the 280-character limit set by Twitter.

Alternatively, students could write a reflective post-debate tweet.

Define hashtag for students who may have no prior experience with Twitter. A hashtag is a keyword or phrase used to describe a particular topic, issue, event, idea, or theme. It is directly preceded by the pound sign (#) without any spaces or punctuation. Explain how Twitter users place hashtags in their tweets to categorize them in a way that makes it simple for other users to find and follow tweets about specific topics, issues, events, ideas, or themes.

Examples of Twitter hashtags are:
#beethovenbirthadaybash
#beethovenrocks
III. DEMONSTRATION

Select and share a contentious debate (or an excerpt from a debate) from YouTube. It may be one in which students are engaged in a debate, or a presidential debate, to give students a clearer understanding of what a debate looks and sounds like. Consider choosing a sample debate that connects to a unit of study in social studies, or to a current event (e.g. climate change, social justice, immigration, refugee crisis, gun control). Point out specific examples from the sample debate to highlight what makes it a compelling argument.

This is a clip of students sharing why debate is a great way to push their thinking and deepen their learning experience:
youtube.com/watch?v=u787IOfyzzw

Here is an example of a class debate about whether or not homework should be banned:
youtube.com/watch?v=JEw8lDo-a8I

Another example addresses whether or not television is a negative influence:
youtube.com/watch?v=Wv159QPhvl0

IV. ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Have students work with a partner to discuss specific aspects of the debate that they found most powerful or persuasive. Memorialize effective debater strategies on chart paper for students to refer to later in the lesson. Possible items to include: word choice, body language, composure, confidence, clearly articulated position, logical presentation of argument, and respectful of the opponent.

Provide an example of what being respectful and fair might look and sound like in a formal debate. Provide an example of what is disrespectful during a debate, such as insulting or interrupting the opponent. A strong debater attacks the arguments and ideas of their opponent – not the person he or she debates (ad hominem).

Refer to the vocabulary section for additional debate-specific vocabulary.

V. INDEPENDENT OR SMALL GROUP WORK

Ideally, the class is divided into four groups, with a minimum of three students per group. Two of the groups will represent the conservative perspective, while the other two groups will defend the progressives' position. During the first round of the debate, one of the two groups representing the conservatives and one of the two groups representing the progressives will present their argument. The other two groups will serve as judges and determine which side presented a stronger case at the conclusion of the debate. Then the presenting teams serve as the judges and the judges become the presenters for the second round of debate.

Provide students with Internet access to research their assigned position.

The link below provides students with critical questions to guide them through the process of judiciously evaluating information sources:
libguides.usask.ca/c.php?g=16390&p=90457

VI. SHARE

This is when the debate will take place.

VII. LINK

The ability to research, structure, and deliver a coherent argument develops invaluable critical thinking and listening skills that may be applied to present and future endeavors, including the ability to question and evaluate information, make important decisions, and relate to others’ perspectives.

Debates can address any contentious or controversial topic. Today, we had the opportunity to sharpen our research, writing, and presentation skills, all while learning more about musical history.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER TIPS

- Class debates can help ELLs improve their listening, speaking, and critical thinking skills, while learning content about an important issue.
- Offer ELL students preview charts, pre-lesson readings, and/or vocabulary lists for upcoming lessons to provide extra support and to improve learning readiness.
- Create progress charts for students to shift the focus toward progress over time rather than scores. This strategy will help students evaluate and reflect upon their growth and how to continue on that trajectory.
- Provide students with graphic organizers, such as KWHL charts to organize their thinking. A KWHL requires students to codify:
  - What I Know
  - What I Wonder/Want to Know
  - How I Can Learn More
  - What I Have Learned
- Developing Questioning Skills is an excellent resource for teachers to sharpen their questioning techniques, including the ability to strike a balance between factual and thought-provoking questions:
  1.udel.edu/chem/white/U460/Devel-question-skills-UTx.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Enrichment Resources: Harvard University, The Pluralism Project
  a. pluralism.org/what-is-pluralism/
  b. pluralism.org/encounter/todays-challenges/from-diversity-to-pluralism/
- From Diversity to Pluralism
  pluralism.org/encounter/todays-challenges/from-diversity-to-pluralism/
- 12 Ways Debating Will Help You for the Rest of Your Life
  studyinternational.com/news/12-ways-debating-will-help-you-for-the-rest-of-your-life/
- Conducting a Debate
- How to Evaluate Information Sources: Critical Questions for Evaluating Your Sources
  libguides.usask.ca/c.php?q=16390&p=90457
HOME PRACTICE
Have students prepare a written response to Beethoven’s contemporary, French moralist and essayist, Joseph Joubert’s assertion, “It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it.”

8TH GRADE EXTENSION #1
Pluralism and diversity are often used interchangeably, but there is an important difference; Pluralism requires interest in, understanding of, and engagement with diversity. Pluralism is one possible response to diversity. Other possible responses include exclusion and assimilation.
Discuss the differences between the exclusionist, assimilationist, and pluralist responses to diversity. Include how fear and uncertainty contribute to individual and societal reactions to newcomers in a community.
Extend the dialogue to consider how tolerance is different from pluralism, which requires knowledge of others to create understanding.
Refer to Harvard University’s Pluralism Project article prior to leading this discussion to help guide the class dialogue:
pluralism.org/encounter/todays-challenges/from-diversity-to-pluralism/