

Classical Period Study Sheet (1750-1825, ca.)
Praxis Workshop

- ❖ Key Social Points: THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT
 - Inventive spirit, scientific inquiry, encyclopedic movement, optimistic world view
 - AGAINST: formality, authority, privilege, metaphysics, supernatural religion
 - FOR: naturalness, freedom, equal rights, universal education, practical morality, common sense
 - APPROACH: secular, skeptical, empirical, equalitarian, progressive
 - TIME OF: eclectic, large and powerful middle class, popularization of art and learning, public concerts for mixed audiences, increased music printing, method books, music magazines, and music histories

- ♣ Key Musical Characteristics, terms, composers, etc.
 - Music was supposed to be simple, straight-forward, rational, balanced, noble, natural, expressive, and pleasing, Not supposed to be surprise, astonish, puzzle, or use contrapuntal devices (although some were retained in church music compositions).
 - Symmetrical melody in balanced phrases and cadences; tuneful, diatonic, with narrow leaps.
 - Dance rhythms were favored; regularly recurring accents in rhythm/measures.
 - Harmony was diatonic with major being preferred; I-V relationship expanded, becomes basis for large-scale form.
 - Homophonic texture; vertical (chordal) dimension of music
 - Genres: symphony (four movement structure of Sonata-Allegro; slow; minuet; fast—sonata or rondo); solo concerto (3 mvt. Fast-slow-fast with improvised cadenzas); solo sonata; string quartet; chamber music evolves more
 - Genres continued: opera (reformed in the period by Gluck), mass, oratorio continued from Baroque
 - Ternary form becomes important, sonata-allegro form developed out of binary
 - Emergence of clarinet, trombone and piano literature; winds become part of the orchestra, and limited use of brass in orchestra
 - BIGGEST COMPOSERS:
 - ♣ Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
 - ♣ Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) do not believe anything from the movie *Amadeus* for factual information about his life
 - ♣ Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), really a transitional composer from Classical to Romantic