

Stravinsky's Life and Works

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students should be able to define the terms listed on the following page.
2. Students should be able to name at least one piece of music from each of Stravinsky's three creative periods.
3. Students should be able to recognize selected excerpts from works by Stravinsky.
4. Students should be able to discuss the differences between each of Stravinsky's three creative periods.
5. Students should be able to recognize selected geographical locations related to Stravinsky's life.
6. Students should be able to discuss the legacy left behind by Stravinsky.

Materials Used:

1. The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky, Edited by Jonathan Cross
2. Great Composers of the 20th Century, by Jacqueline Wollan Gibbons
3. The New Grove Stravinsky, by Stephen Walsh
4. Music in the 20th Century, from Debussy through Stravinsky, by William W. Austin
5. Stravinsky, by Neil Wenborn

Recordings:

1. The Rite of Spring (London Symphony Orchestra, Naxos)
2. Flight of the Bumblebee (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Legacy International)
3. Pulcinella (Academy of St. Martin in the Fields & Sir Neville Marriner, Deutsche Grammophon)
4. Oedipus Rex (Boston Symphony Orchestra & Leonard Bernstein, Sony Music)
5. Apollo (1947 Revision) (London Symphony Orchestra, Naxos)

Stravinsky Unit Spelling List

1. Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)
2. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
3. Neo-Classicism
4. Serialism
5. Impresario
6. Sergei Diaghilev
7. Firebird Suite
8. Rite of Spring
9. Pulcinella
10. Oedipus Rex
11. Agon
12. The Flood

Listening Examples

1. The Rite of Spring
2. Pulcinella
3. Firebird Suite
4. The Flood
5. Agon
6. Oedipus Rex

Day 1 - Background Information & Russian/Nationalist Period

Topic Information:

- Overview of Stravinsky's Childhood and early influences
- Geographical Information (Stravinsky's birth place and a couple of places of residence)
- Overview of Stravinsky's first creative period.

Objectives:

- The students will know who Igor Stravinsky was as well as his birth and death dates.
- The students will be able to recognize selected geographical locations (Oraniembaum (renamed Lomonosov)/St. Petersburg, Russia – Paris, France – Switzerland – Los Angeles & New York City, USA).
- The students will have a general concept of Stravinsky's early life and first creative period.
- The students will learn the following terms: Impresario, Neo-Classicism, Serialism.

Procedure:

- (Students will enter to the opening of the Rite of Spring being played)
- Informally assess student recognition of Stravinsky, give them his dates (1882-1971)
- Put up map of the world, point out St. Petersburg, Russia (where Stravinsky was raised), go slightly to the west and point out Lomonosov (Stravinsky's birthplace). Point out Switzerland (Resident during WWI) & Paris, France (Post WWI place of residence). Point out LA and NYC, USA (1940 onward places of residence).
- Stravinsky was "born with a silver spoon in his mouth." Father (Fyodor Stravinsky) was a famous opera singer and, by some, considered to be one of the best baritones of his generation. Mother (Anna Kholodovskaya) was the daughter of a high-ranking official in the Ministry of Estates in Kiev, Ukraine.
- His parents wanted him to be a lawyer; he wanted to pursue music (sound familiar?). After his father died, he started private composition lessons with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (Play Flight of the Bumblebee/Something else to be decided)
- Brief summary of Stravinsky's creative periods. Russian period ca. 1908-1919 (works using Russian themes/motifs), Neo-Classical period ca. 1920-1954 (Highly influenced by 18-early 19th century music) and the Serialist period ca. 1954-1968 (Each tone of the chromatic scale gets equal value in a piece of music).
- Nationalist/Russian period: At the premier of *Scherzo Fantastique*, the Impresario (person who organizes plays/concerts/operas/etc) Sergei Diaghilev grew

interested in Stravinsky and hired him to write *Firebird* (based off of a Russian folklore) for his ballet company. He first found his own voice with *Petrushka*, the next ballet he was commissioned to write music for. Writes the Rite of Spring for the next season (that's what you heard at the beginning of class). The music was so unexpected that it caused a riot at the premier.

Assessments:

Informal:

Ask students if they had prior knowledge of Stravinsky

Ask students about what they know of the time period

Day 2 – Neo-Classical/Serialist Periods

Topic Information:

- Stravinsky's last two creative periods.
- Stravinsky's legacy.

Objectives:

- The students will have at least a basic understanding of Stravinsky's last two creative periods.
- The students will be able to recognize basic differences between pieces of music from all three different periods.
- The students will be able to recognize some of the important things Stravinsky's legacy has left behind.

Procedure:

- (Pulcinella is playing while students enter class)
- Break the news that this is the same composer we were talking about yesterday. Watch students react. Laugh.
- Pulcinella and the Octet for Wind Instruments are considered the starting point of his Neo-Classicism period.
- Moved to Paris, France, shortly after the premier of Pulcinella.
- Neo-Classical period was a reevaluation of Bach, Mozart and their contemporaries. That's why Pulcinella sounds so classical.
- During this period, Stravinsky continued writing plenty of music for the theatre, ranging from works such as the oratorio Oedipus Rex (based off of the Greek play) to the ballet Apollo (Play recording of the first scene from Oedipus Rex and the Prologue from Apollo).
- I like to think of Stravinsky's three creative cycles like the Force from Star Wars. His first creative period was Neutral with a tendency to lean to the Dark Side. His second period was definitive Light Side. His third period was so Dark Side that you wouldn't be able to see your hand in front of your face.
- Stravinsky's third and final creative period involved Serialism. First started experimenting with Serialism in works such as the Cantata, Septet and Three Songs from Shakespeare.
- As he started to get more into it, Stravinsky began to totally abandon the tonal structure all together.
- Stravinsky did many things for music, including, but not limited to: advanced rhythms and harmonies, ability to retain a distinct self-identity in his music even through all of his changes.
- Handout worksheet and make sure they understand it.

Assessments:

Informal:

Ask students what they thought about Stravinsky's drastic period changes.

Formal:

Worksheet

NAME _____

DATE _____

Directions:

Find a work from each of Stravinsky's three creative periods discussed in class. Write down some of the differences (no maximum limit, at least one thing) that strike you. Feel free to look on Wikipedia for a complete list of his works and their dates.

Russian Period:

Name of Piece: _____

At least one thing I noticed about this piece as compared to the other two:

Neo-Classical Period:

Name of Piece: _____

At least one thing I noticed about this piece as compared to the other two:

Serialist Period:

Name of Piece: _____

At least one thing I noticed about this piece as compared to the other two:

Day 3 – Quiz Assessment

Topic Information:

- QUIZ.

Objectives:

- The students will demonstrate their knowledge of Stravinsky in a Quiz.

Procedure:

- Hand out Quiz to students.
- Make sure they understand it.
- Give them 15 minutes to do most of it.
- Play listening examples.
- Collect exam.
- Start next lesson/give them the rest of the class to do other stuff.

Assessments:

Formal:

Quiz

Name _____

Date _____

Two excerpts will be played. Write down the name of the pieces and their composers (this part shouldn't be too hard.)

1.

2.

Answer the following short answer questions:

1. What is the full name of the composer we spent the past two days learning about and what are his dates?

2. Mark on this map at least three places Igor lived in his life. Approximate markings will be accepted.



3. Who was the impresario that first commissioned Igor?

4. Name at least one piece of music from each of the three creative periods we discussed in class, as well as at least one difference you noticed between each period.

5. List at least one thing that Igor left behind in his legacy to music.

Name _____

Date _____

Two excerpts will be played. Write down the name of the pieces and their composers (this part shouldn't be too hard.)

1.

2.

Answer the following short answer questions:

1. What is the full name of the composer we spent the past two days learning about and what are his dates?

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)

2. Mark on this map at least three places Igor lived in his life. Approximate markings will be accepted.



3. Who was the impresario that first commissioned Igor?

Sergei Diaghilev

4. Name at least one piece of music from each of the three creative periods we discussed in class, as well as at least one difference you noticed between each period.

Basically pick three different works from

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_compositions_by_Igor_Stravinsky

The second part of this question is kind of open ended. Will accept many different things, so long as they're right.

5. List at least one thing that Igor left behind in his legacy to music.

Advanced rhythms and harmonies, ability to retain a distinct self-identity in his music even through all of his changes.