

**An Introduction to Western Classical
Music:
Discerning Between Renaissance and
Baroque Music**

Stacey Eger
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Materials

The lesson will take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

Materials Needed:

- Blackboard/chalk
- CD with selections of music (45 seconds of each selection)
- CD player with connection to outlet
- Copies of comparison chart handout (Appendix 1)

Welcome

Upon entering the class, students will hear musical selections from both the Renaissance and Baroque periods playing softly in the background.

- Dufay's "Missa L'Homme Arme"
- Busnois' "Ballo de love"
- Handel's "Hallelujah"
- Bach's "Prelude 5"

*Have CD player set up. Use CD previously prepared to play a select 45 seconds of each track listed, allowing for a variety of musical selections to be played.

Welcome

Today students will be introduced to two historical periods in music
– Renaissance and Baroque.

Goals:

- 1) Know that there are different time periods and influences on musical development.
- 2) Understand two components of musical style for Renaissance music.
- 3) Understand two components of musical style for Baroque music.
- 4) Use these components to determine what time period a selection belongs to.

Rationale: Stock & Cervone, 1990.

Lesson 1a - Goals

Know that there are different time periods and influences on musical development.

- Establish time periods for Renaissance and Baroque music.
- Define secular.
- Understand the difference between religious and secular music.

Lesson 1a

There have been different time periods in musical development – Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern, to just name a few. Today, however, we are going to be looking specifically at two periods: Renaissance & Baroque.

Renaissance: 1400 – 1600 A.D.

Baroque: 1600 – 1750 A.D.

Lesson 1a



Within the history of music, there has also been two types of music: religious and secular.

Lesson 1a

What is secular?

Ask:

Has anyone heard the term secular before?

If we're going to be comparing religious and secular music today, what can you infer that secular means?

Provide definition (if necessary): worldly; not overtly or specifically religious

Lesson 1a

What is religious?

Ask:

Have you heard the term religious before?

What does it mean?

Provide definition (if necessary): affiliated with the church in some manner

Lesson 1a - Renaissance

Certain events that occurred within history influenced music, sometimes religious, sometimes secular.

Ask: Would you consider these events occurring during the Renaissance period to have more of an influence on religious or secular music?

- Henry VII separates from the Roman Catholic Church to begin the Church of England (religious)
- Feudal system/hierarchy of classes in existence throughout many areas of world. (secular)
- Gutenberg invents the printing press. (secular)
- Martin Luther begins the Protestant Reformation. (religious)

Lesson 1a - Renaissance

Based on these answers, do you think the Renaissance period would have had music that was more religious or secular?

If incorrect, provide correct answer:

If correct, provide feedback and ask why this would have been the case. If students cannot answer, provide explanation below:

Answer: Religious

Heavy influence of the class system = a distinct separation in the music people listened to.

Heavy influence of the Roman Catholic Church & Protestant Reformation with printing press = large amounts of religious music produced and distributed.

Secular music = lower classes, though sometimes patronized by the nobility

Lesson 1b - Goals

Understand two components of musical style for Renaissance music.

- Primary Instruments
- Arrangement of voices

Lesson 1b

The events just discussed had an impact on the kind of music developed and performed during the Renaissance period. But religious and secular music during the Renaissance period can also be differentiated between by two components of their musical style.

Lesson 1b - Activity

If a religious Renaissance music piece was played, what kind of instruments do you think you would hear? Did they have the kind of instruments we work with today?

Answer: Voice was primary instrument. Not usually considered to be an instrument, but they formatted many voices to create melodies.

Fill out Box 1a of worksheet.

Play Dufay's "Missa L'Homme Arme" for students – instruct them to listen to composition of instruments.

Lesson 1b - Activity

If a secular Renaissance music piece was played, what kind of instruments do you think you would hear? Did they have the kind of instruments we work with today?

Answer: Voices (for melody)
Lute
Percussion
Dulcimer



Play Busnois' "Ballo de love" for students – instruct them to listen to composition of instruments.

Fill out Box 1b on worksheet.

Lesson 1b - Activity

In religious Renaissance music, voices were the primary instrument. How were voices arranged in the religious piece we just listened to? Replay Dufay's "Missa L'Homme Arme" for 30 seconds.

Answer:

Voice = all melody and harmony. Often times, imitative polyphony was used. What is imitative polyphony?

Imitative – copying/following

Poly – many

phony - voices

**Where one group of voices sing a line of melody and another group immediately follows with the same melody a certain amount of time later. (ex. A round of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")

Fill out box 2a of worksheet.

Lesson 1b - Activity

We also determined the primary instruments in secular Renaissance music – what were they?

Wait for answers: Voice
 Lute
 Percussion
 Dulcimer

How were voices arranged in the secular Renaissance piece we listened to?

Replay 30 seconds of Busnois' "Ballo de love" .

Answer (if students don't provide): Voices were usually solo voices singing the line of melody along with instruments.

Fill out box 2b on workheet.

Lesson 1c - Goals

Know that certain historical influences affected musical development during the Baroque period as well.

Understand two components of musical style for Baroque music.

- Primary Instruments
- Arrangement of voices

Lesson 1c - Baroque

Certain events that occurred within history influenced music, sometimes religious, sometimes secular.

Ask: Would you consider these events occurring during the Baroque period (1600 – 1750) to have more of an influence on religious or secular music?

- French Revolution leads to breakdown of social class system (secular)
- Galileo espouses Copernican theory (religious)
- End of the Protestant Reformation (religious)
- Louis XIV and Versaille Palace (secular)

Lesson 1c - Baroque

Though the Renaissance period had music that was more religious in nature, the Baroque musical period actually had a pretty even distribution of both religious and secular music. Why do you think this was the case?

If unable to answer, provide:

If correct, affirm by repeating. If students cannot answer, provide explanation below:

The Baroque period still held a lot of remnants of sacred music, with many requiems and masses being composed. People were not becoming any less religious.

However, music gained an entertainment value for members of all classes in society. As such, secular music became more widespread, so that there was more of a balance between the two types of music.

Lesson 1c

The events just discussed had an impact on the kind of music developed and performed during the Baroque period. But even though there was a lot of both religious and secular music during the Baroque period, each can also be differentiated between by two components of their musical style.

Lesson 1c - Activity

If a religious Baroque music piece was played, what kind of instruments do you think you would hear? Did they have the kind of instruments we work with today?

Answer: Harpsichord/clavichord
Organ
Violin
Oboe

The formation of the modern day orchestra began to take hold as an accompaniment to the voice, or as the primary point of the melody.

Fill out Box 1c of worksheet.

Play Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 5" for students – instruct them to listen to composition of instruments.

Rationale: Thomas & Rohwer, 1993

Lesson 1c - Activity

If a secular Baroque music piece was played, what kind of instruments do you think you would hear? Did they have the kind of instruments we work with today?

Answer: Harpsichord/clavichord
Organ
Violin
Oboe

Both religious and secular Baroque music utilized the same instruments.

Play Bach's "Prelude 5" for students – instruct them to listen to composition of instruments.

Fill out Box 1d on worksheet.

Lesson 1c - Activity

In religious Baroque music, voices were not the primary instrument; rather, they were either the primary melody or assisted other instruments in creating a line of melody. How were voices arranged in the religious piece we just listened to? Replay Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 5" for 30 seconds.

Ask: How were voices arranged in this piece? (*There were no voices within this piece.)

Answer: Many musical compositions in the Baroque period didn't use voices, but there was a growth in the genre of opera music, which called for a solo voice. The voice was also used in combination with instruments more frequently to evoke emotion within the listener. A contrast in vocal texture was also emphasized (loud vs. soft, high vs. low etc.). The recitative was also introduced, which is a line of melody where performer half sings and half recites the words with an instrumental bass line accompanying underneath.

Play "(need recitative – from Marriage of Figaro)" for 1 minute so students can comprehend the difference between voices in an operatic piece and other Baroque pieces, to be discussed.

Fill out box 2c of worksheet.

Lesson 1c - Activity

In secular Baroque music, voices also added to the line of melody or created it, similar to religious Baroque music. How are the voices arranged in this secular Baroque piece? Play Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" for 1 minute.

Answer:

Harmony was introduced – four part harmony was common at this point in time. The fugue was also implemented into vocal arrangements. A fugue is similar to imitative polyphony, where a line of melody is sung by one group of voices and followed by a different group of voices and another, and so on.

Fill out box 2d of worksheet.

Review of Lessons 1a, 1b & 1c

Now, before we begin our next activity, let's review what we have discussed so far today.

Ask:

-What musical period is identified with opera as a popular genre?

Answer: Baroque

-Which musical period utilized the voice as its primary instrument of melodic composition?

Answer: Renaissance

-The harpsichord is of significance to what musical period?

Answer: Baroque

-Which period consists of mostly sacred music?

Answer: Renaissance

-Which period brought about the beginning development of the modern day orchestra?

Answer: Baroque

-Which musical period saw music as having a strong entertainment value?

Answer: Baroque

Rationale: Graesser, Person, & Huber, 1993

Novel Analysis Activity

Divide students into groups of 3-4 students each.

Listen to this selection of music. Using your comparison charts and each other as resources, determine whether this piece is from either the Renaissance or Baroque period.

Play 1 minute of Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier." Answer: Baroque

Allow 2-3 minutes for students to analyze the piece in their respective groups.

Discuss: What period is this selection from? How did your group determine the answer?

Play Dufay's "Missa L'Homme Arme" and repeat. (review) Answer: Renaissance

Play Vivaldi's "Four Seasons" and repeat. Answer: Baroque

Play Handel's "Hallelujah" from *Messiah* and repeat. (review) Answer: Baroque

Play Palestrina's "Miserere from Gregorio Allegri" and repeat.

Answer: Renaissance

Assignment

Tonight, you are going to take the skills of musical analysis that you have learned in today's class and apply them to a real world context.

Analyze a modern selection of music of your choice and compare the components of Baroque musical style and format that were discussed in today's class (specifically, Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier") to a piece of music you select.

List 5 factors that make the two pieces either similar or different to one another.

*You should be using the questions of analyses discussed in class to analyze the two pieces. Any other information you can add is welcome, but these are the relevant parts that we will be discussing tomorrow.

Rationale: Cervone, 1993

Appendix 1

	Renaissance Religious	Renaissance Secular	Baroque Religious	Baroque Secular
Instruments Used	1a	1b	1c	1d
Vocal Arrangements	2a	2b	2c	2d