



BEAUTIFUL FEET BOOKS MUSIC

# Music Appreciation

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A Family Study

TEACHER GUIDE

BY REBECCA MANOR

# Music Appreciation

A Family Study

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*Music Appreciation: A Family Study*  
by Rebecca Manor © 2024

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Cover image is *That Haunting Melody* by Hookway Cowles, 1930.

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# Introduction

Today we are almost always surrounded by sound and that sound is often music. It can be hard to imagine a time when music was only heard in concert halls, at church, or when you were playing an instrument yourself. The abundance of music available at our fingertips is unprecedented, and it can lead to a disconnection between the music we hear and the composers who created it.

This study is designed to rejoin story and song. Connecting the greatest works of the classical tradition with the men and women who wrote them gives us the ability to understand the works, to see their complexity through a new lens, and to enjoy them more. In researching this course, I've been endeared to so many of the people featured in this study, and the knowledge of their lives, struggles, and triumphs makes their music even more meaningful to me.

As a Christian, I believe music is a gift from a good Creator who delights in beauty, creativity, expression, and is intimately acquainted with the joys and sorrows of life. The Christian tradition states that all creativity reflects our Creator God, and in writing this course I came to a deep appreciation of God's goodness in giving us the ability to create and enjoy music. As

you progress through this study, you'll see that many of the composers in this study were inspired by their own faith and that the first centuries of classical composition were centered around the church. Regardless of whether you have a faith tradition or not, the music in this study speaks to our deepest selves and gives us the gift of beauty, while connecting us through time and space to the men and women who wrote the pieces that move us.

I hope the months you spend learning about music and the people who wrote it will be enjoyable and give you a desire to learn more!

Happy listening,

*Rebecca Manor*

# Start Here

Welcome! Scan the QR code on the next page to access an introductory video with the author and specific tips on how to best use this teacher's guide. For those of you who prefer to read through instructions, we've summarized most of the information from the video here.

**Music Appreciation** This study is designed to introduce your student to a breadth of music, ranging from ancient to contemporary classical. The focus is Western classical music, but once the study reaches the twentieth century it branches into ragtime, jazz, the blues, musical theater, and rock and roll. *Book of Composers* provides biographical information on eighty composers as well as curated Spotify playlists. Listen to the playlists while reading about the composers. Linking their sounds with their biographies will help students train their ears to hear each composer's unique voice. And feel free to move beyond the playlists. Clicking on the composer's name in Spotify will give you access to a wealth of their music.

**The Resource Packet** This is a required download that includes composer portraits, instrument diagrams, notebooking pages for Listening Notes, and more. It is available for purchase at [bfbooks.com](http://bfbooks.com). Download it and print as many copies as you need for your family, keeping on hand for easy access. (Note: To use the Resource Packet images, be sure to print at "actual size" or 100% scale, not "scale to fit." This will insure the pictures are the correct size for placement in a standard composition notebook.) Listening Notes are designed to be pasted in a composition notebook, and students will need approximately one per lesson. Students will also be adding composer portraits, instrument diagrams, and more to the notebook. Many students enjoy coloring the portraits as they listen to the reading and listening assignments. Portraits are provided for many, but not all, of the composers covered in this study. Feel free to have students draw their own portraits or print out a picture from the Internet if they want to include more.

**Lessons and Pace** There are fifty-four lessons in this study, which is designed to cover two years, with one lesson completed each week. Spending a week listening to one composer's work is the minimum amount needed to begin developing an appreciation for each musician's unique style.

The lessons contain color-coded categories to make it easy to incorporate as many or as few elements as you want. The categories are Read and Listen, Discuss, Record, Do, Explore, and Rabbit Trails. We have curated a feast of musical resources, so use what works for you! Begin each week with the Read and Listen sections and play the featured composer's music at home and in the car that week. Over the week, complete the various sections as desired.

**Teaching Multiple Levels** If you have children at a range of levels, the whole family can enjoy the "Read and Listen" and "Discuss" sections. For the youngest students the goal is exposure, not mastery. So, focus on introducing the composers and listening to the music, discussing what the student likes and dislikes. This will build a foundation for future musical education. If your students are all younger than fourth grade, it is highly recommended that you focus on the "Read and Listen" and "Discuss" parts of each lesson. When you have completed the study, you can repeat the study in a year or two and dig in deeper. Older students who are doing this for credit will need to complete most assignments.

**Internet Links** Many Internet links are referenced in this study, but for ease of use, none are printed in this guide. They are all accessed through a QR code printed on each page. Simply scan with your smartphone and save the links page, as you will be accessing it regularly throughout this course.

**Parental Warning** Sometimes Internet links, books, or videos contain material we'd like you to preview. This is a recognition that not all material may be appropriate for every student. Please access this information before your student. We have selected resources that focus mainly on the composers' music but have added notes when the included biographical information should be previewed to determine if it is appropriate for your students. These notes allow you to skip those resources if you are teaching very young children, while providing an opportunity to talk about your family's values and ethics with older children, helping them process moral quandaries and questions.

**Vocabulary** Musical terms will be referenced throughout the study, and students will be instructed to define and record them in a glossary in their notebook. Use the glossary in *Book of Composers*.

**Rabbit Trails and Supplements** Many lessons in this study include suggested books for those who want to dig deeper or expand the study. None of these books is required. They are simply there for anyone who would like to use them to learn more.

**The Gift of Flexibility** Flexibility and freedom are two of the great gifts of homeschooling. We have built adaptability into this course to allow time for exploration. Please don't feel bound by a preset schedule. You might also wonder, "Do I have to do every assignment, embark on every activity, read every library book?" No, not at all. We provide you with a feast of options from which you choose.

**Evaluation** To the question "How do I know if my student is learning?" remember the key indicators:

1. Are they asking good questions? Are they having lively discussions? Do they bring up composers or music they've listened to at dinner and share what they've discovered?

Do they randomly ask to listen to specific composers on car rides?

2. Are they willing and able to share their thoughts and ideas about the characters and events in the stories they are reading? Can they apply some of those aspects to their own life experiences?

3. Are they showing up eager for the next composer?

We hope you enjoy the adventure of learning about the musical world! Share your work with us [@beautifulfeetbooks](#). We love to see how you make our studies your own.



# Required Literature & Resources

## *Book of Composers* by Rebecca Manor

Explore the lives of eighty composers from ancient Persian composer Ziryab to today's Hans Zimmer. Narrative and biographical facts give readers an understanding of the lives of these men and women who were both ordinary and extraordinary.

## Resource Packet

Available at [bfbooks.com](http://bfbooks.com)

## Composition Notebook

### **ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:**

These books are not required and will not be referenced in any lessons. They are listed here for anyone who wants to dig deeper in their cultivation of music appreciation.

#### *Music and How It Works:*

##### *The Complete Guide for Kids* by DK

This book provides a historical and technical overview of music for anyone who wants to dig into mechanics and technical theory at an introductory level.

#### *The Science of Song:*

##### *How and Why We Make Music*

by Alan Cross, Emme Cross,  
and Nicole Mortillaro

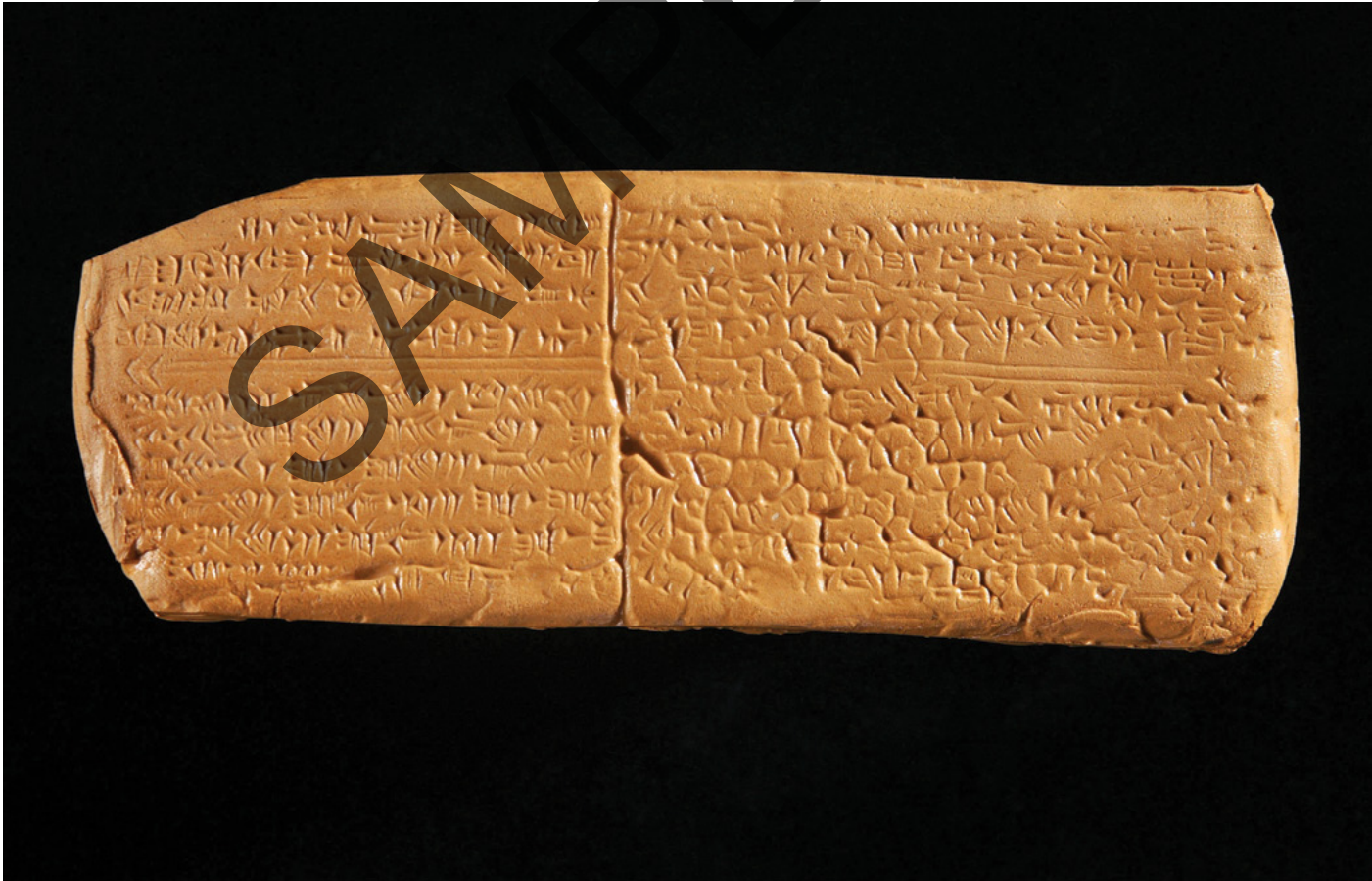
For young readers with a scientific outlook this is a great book for connecting music with its scientific explanations. Learn about how instruments create the sounds they do as well as about recording and preserving music in this book for middle school and older.

#### *The Batsford Book of Music for Children* by Rebecca Rumens-Syratt

This book has practical information on how to begin making music and playing an instrument. A valuable resource for families looking to build a varied library of titles related to music.

“Music is the universal  
language of mankind.”

— HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW



Musical score inscribed on a tablet from Ugarit, Syria, c. 400 BC.

PART ONE

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# Ancient Music

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Illustration from the *Hadith Bayād wa Riyāḍ* manuscript, Vatican City, Vatican Library, one of three surviving illustrated manuscripts from medieval al-Andalus, c. 13th century.

# Rabbit Trails



*Before Music: Where Instruments Come From*  
by Annette Bay Pimentel, illustrated by Madison Safer

How did people first begin creating music? This book attempts to answer this important question and traces the roots of instruments back in time. It's a great resource for families.

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# Lesson 1

If you have not scanned the QR code on page 3, please scan it here to access a welcome video from the author, tips, playlist links, and more.

## READ AND LISTEN

Introduce *Book of Composers* by Rebecca Manor. Read the Foreword and Introduction on pages 1–3.

## DISCUSS

As we begin our study, it's important that we define our terms. Before doing any research, how would you define music? Discuss the question posed at the beginning of *Book of Composers*: what would the world be like if there was no music? How would your life be different?

## RECORD

In your music notebook write a paragraph or two expressing what music means to you. It may not mean a lot at this point in your life, so there is no pressure to express something profound. This is a starting point to mark a journey into a deeper understanding and appreciation of *music*. Younger students can draw a picture showing how their favorite song makes them feel.

## EXPLORE

First, let's see what it is like to watch a movie without a soundtrack. If you're a fan of *Star Wars*, you know it has an epic soundtrack. What would the movie be like without that soundtrack? Access the video links mentioned below on the Music Appreciation Links Page via the QR code below. All links for this course will appear on that page, so be sure to bookmark it for easy access.

- *Star Wars* Opening (NOTE: Scene contains violence)
- *Star Wars* Opening (No Music)

How was the experience of the scene different? Which do you prefer?

Next, watch the remaining videos for Lesson 1 on the links page, which attempt to answer the seemingly simple question "What is music?" through several different lenses: philosophic, scientific, and personal.

# Lesson 2

## READ AND LISTEN

Read about Ancient Music and Ancient Instruments on pages 4–7 of *Book of Composers*.

In your reading, you learned that very little music has survived from the ancient world. Even the fragments that we have today are incomplete and of little use. That does not mean that people have not tried to interpret the snippets we do have. Check out the image on page 5. This is the most complete ancient musical notation that archaeologists have found. Dating to around 1400 BC and found in present-day Syria, it records a hymn of worship to an ancient pagan god. No one knows for sure what this music originally sounded like, but musicians have tried to piece together clues from this fragment to recreate the tune. If desired, listen to “Ancient Lute Music” on the links page to hear the piece performed on an ancient-style lute. (NOTE: All ancient music in these sections is pagan and records worship to ancient Middle Eastern deities.)

Learn more about how a group of Oxford historians, classicists, and musicians are working together to bring the music of ancient Greece back to life via the links page.

## DISCUSS

Describe the examples of ancient music you listened to. What did you like and dislike about them? How did they make you feel?

## RECORD

In the music notebook, create a section titled “Ancient Music.” At the back of the Resource Packet, you will find music journaling pages. These are designed to be pasted into your notebook as you go through the course. Each page has space to record the title and composer of the songs you listened to in each lesson, a place to rate the song on a five-star scale, and lines to record your thoughts about the song. You will need to print out more of these pages as you progress through the course, adding them to the notebook as needed.

Check out the Listening Notes resources on page 5 of the Resource Packet for helpful terms to describe the music. You will be recording these experiences in your music notebook throughout the course and at the end of the study, you will have notes on over two hundred pieces of music!

## DO

Let’s make an instrument. The bolang gu, or Chinese pellet drum, originated in the Shang Dynasty around 3,500 years ago and is still widely used in music and as a children’s toy. You will need the following supplies for each student:

- 2 paper plates
- 1 wooden dowel
- 2 small jingle bells
- String
- Stapler
- Paint, stickers, or other decorations

Follow the instructions provided on the links page.

## RABBIT TRAILS

- *Before Music: Where Instruments Come From* by Annette Bay Pimentel, illustrated by Madison Safer

# Lesson 3

## READ AND LISTEN

Read about Ziryab on pages 8–9 of *Book of Composers*.

To learn more about Ziryab, watch the documentary provided on the links page. (NOTE: 8:20-9:11 quotes an historical document that relates the legend of Ziryab being inspired by a jinn—an Arabic conception of a spirit or fairy—while inebriated.)

Listen to an example of the music that developed following Ziryab’s influence in Andalusia via the links page.

## DISCUSS

Is Andalusian or Arabic music familiar to you? What words would you use to describe it?

## RECORD

Study the picture of the oud on page 2 of the Resource Packet, memorizing its different parts. Once you have memorized the parts, paste the unlabeled image of the oud on page 6 from the Resource Packet in the notebook, label and color it, using the parts list below. Younger students may simply color the picture and memorize the name of the instrument.

pegs  
pegbox  
nut  
neck  
soundhole  
soundboard  
bridge

If desired, draw a picture of what you think Ziryab looked like and add it to the notebook. Color if desired.

Use the music journal pages from the Resource Packet to record the names of the songs you listened to as well as your thoughts. Add to the notebook.