

# Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart



## Information and Activity Booklet for General Studies

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (born in Salzburg, Austria, on January 27, 1756 - died in Vienna, Austria, on December 5, 1791 at the age of 35) was a great composer. Mozart composed some of the most beautiful pieces of music ever written.

## Mozart's Early Life:

Mozart's father, Leopold, was a musician. Wolfgang was a child prodigy; at the age of five he composed a minuet, and played both the harpsichord and the violin. He performed for the Viennese Royal court when he was six years old. From the age of 7 to 10, Wolfgang and his older sister toured Europe, playing for kings, emperors, and other royalty. Mozart wrote his first symphony at nine years old.

## A Life of Composing:

During his short but very productive life, Mozart wrote over 600 pieces, including symphonies, sonatas, concertos, operas, dance music and masses. Some of his most famous pieces are Eine Kleine Nachtmusik (A Little Night Music, 1787) and the operas Le Nozze di Figaro (The Marriage of Figaro, 1786), Don Giovanni (1787) and Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute, 1791).

Mozart married Constanze Weber in 1781; they had six children but only two survived to become adults. Mozart's popularity with the public went up and down, and he had continuous financial problems.

## Mozart's Death:

Mozart was only 35 years old when he died on December 5, 1791. He had been ill for some time, often with rheumatic fever. Because he was penniless when he died, Mozart was buried in a pauper's grave in Vienna, Austria.

1756	Born in Salzburg, Austria
1762-1765	Goes on European concert tour, performs for Queen Marie Antoinette of France, and King George III of England.
1779	Becomes court and church organist for the Archbishop of Salzburg
1781	Moves to Vienna, marries Constanze Weber
1791	Dies in Vienna, at age 35

## Fun facts about Mozart: Did you know ....?

- ⤴ Mozart's full name was Johannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus Mozart. His family called him Wolffi!
- ⤴ Legend has it that Mozart, at the age of two, recognised a pig's squeal as a G sharp!
- ⤴ Mozart actually learned how to write musical notes before he learned how to write words. He also later became very interested in mathematics. When he wasn't studying music, Mozart loved math, and used chalk to write numbers all over the walls and furniture of his room!
- ⤴ Because of his constant travels, Mozart eventually learned to speak **fifteen** different languages.
- ⤴ It would take over 8 days to play all of his music, one piece after the next, without stopping.
- ⤴ In 1769, on a visit to Rome, Mozart went to hear the famous Sistine choir sing; and, after returning home, he put the entire work on paper from memory.
- ⤴ When Mozart and his sister Nannerl (Maria Anna) were on tour as children, they were asked to play at the palace in Vienna for the Empress Maria Theresa. Mozart shocked everyone by climbing up on to the Empress' lap and giving her a kiss!
- ⤴ Mozart may be one of the greatest composers of all time, but that doesn't mean he was always serious. In fact, many people thought even the grown-up Mozart was childish and silly. Once, while performing at a friend's house, Mozart suddenly jumped up, turned somersaults, and leaped over tables and chairs while meowing like a cat! Another time, he snuck up on a singer and grabbed her by surprise to get her to scream just right for an opera performance. While playing one of his tricky piano pieces, Mozart once bent over and used his nose to play an especially difficult note!
- ⤴ Some time after Mozart's death a man called Köchel studied all Mozart's music, tried to put them in chronological order, and gave them a number. The number helps us to know exactly which work is meant, for example *Symphony in G minor K183* is not the same piece as *Symphony in G minor K550*. K stands for Köchel. Sometimes it is written "KV550" standing for "Köchel Verzeichnis" i.e. "Köchel Catalogue"). The highest Köchel number is 626, his requiem mass.
- ⤴ The **Mozarthaus Vienna** was Mozart's residence from 1784 to 1787. This building in Vienna's Old Town, in Domgasse, not far from St. Stephen's Cathedral, is his only surviving Viennese residence and is now a museum.
- ⤴ The **Mozartkugel** (English: Mozart ball), originally known as the "Mozartbonbon", was created by the Salzburg confectioner, Paul Fürst, in 1890 and named after Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.



**Artist** Anonymous, possibly by **Pietro Antonio Lorenzoni** (1721-1782)

**Title** *The Boy Mozart*

**Description** **English:** Painting commissioned by **Leopold Mozart**. Mozart is six years old. Both children are in court costumes given to them in 1762 at the Imperial Court in Vienna. The painter executed these by first painting the surroundings and clothing, and only then having the children pose.

**Date** 1763

Image sourced from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Wolfgang-amadeus-mozart\\_2.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Wolfgang-amadeus-mozart_2.jpg)

**Current location** Mozarteum, Salzburg



Image sourced from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Wolfgang-amadeus-mozart\\_1.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Wolfgang-amadeus-mozart_1.jpg)

**Artist**

**Barbara Krafft (1764–1825)**

**Description** This posthumous portrait of **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** was painted by Barbara Krafft at the request of Joseph Sonnleithner in 1819, long after Mozart died. Sonnleithner, who was making a "collection of portraits in oils of well-known composers" (Deutsch) wrote to Mozart's still-living sister Maria Anna ("Nannerl"), asking her to lend a picture to Krafft (a well-known artist working in Salzburg).



This Mozart memorial statue can be seen in the Burggarten.

There are also memorials to Mozart in the Zentralfriedhof [Central Cemetery] in Simmering, and in St. Marx's Cemetery in the Landstraße district [Third District] of Vienna.



Many tourists visit St Marx's Cemetery [Sankt Marxer Friedhof] to visit the grave of Mozart. No-one knows if he is really buried here. The memorial stands in approximate place where he was buried.

## HOW MUCH DO YOU REMEMBER?

### *Multiple choice Mozart Quiz*

1. Mozart was born in \_\_\_\_\_ in 1756.
2. Mozart was a composer during the \_\_\_\_\_ Period of music.
3. Mozart's father Leopold was a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. He first performed for the Viennese Royal Court at the age of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Between the ages of seven and ten, Mozart and his sister \_\_\_\_\_ travelled around Europe, playing in many royal courts.
6. Mozart composed over \_\_\_\_\_ musical pieces during his 35 years of life.
7. Mozart learned to speak \_\_\_\_\_ different languages!
8. Some of the instruments that Mozart played include the harpsichord, the klavier [piano] and the \_\_\_\_\_.
9. It would take over \_\_\_\_\_ days to play all of his music, one piece after the next, without stopping!
10. The famous Austrian sweets, called \_\_\_\_\_, are named after him.
11. At the age of twelve, Mozart played around with the tune that we know as " \_\_\_\_\_ ", creating his own version of it.
12. When Mozart died, he was very \_\_\_\_\_.

Salzburg	Classical	600	musician	six	fifteen
Vienna	Baroque	6 000	prince	ten	three
eight	Mozart Kugeln	Nannerl	violin	Twinkle Twinkle Little Star	rich
two	Manner Schnitten	Mimi	guitar	Frère Jacques	poor

**Extra task:** Listen to your favourite piece of music by Mozart, and draw or paint your interpretation of the music.