

# Everything Beethoven!

Celebrating Beethoven's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2020

## Beethoven's Timeline (1770-1827)

1. In small groups, have students read and discuss **Beethoven's Timeline**. Notice the middle column has inventions, government happenings, and other general information from the years Beethoven lived. The right column has events or milestones in Beethoven's life.
  - What do students notice in either category?
  - What are the types of events taking place in America compared to Europe? How was daily life in America different from life in Europe?

Choose one of these two options for your class, or let students choose which way they want to interact with the timeline:

2. Use a selected event or information to create a **birthday card** for Ludwig van Beethoven.
  - Have each student (or group) select one event on the timeline that they find interesting.
  - Supplies needed: paper and various markers, crayons, colored pencils, or other materials
  - The birthday card should reflect what happened in history during that year. For example: 1778 – Explorer James Cook discovers the islands we now know as Hawaii. Students would include in their greeting something like “Mr. Beethoven, perhaps you could enjoy a trip to Hawaii for your birthday!”
  - Display greeting cards in chronological order and have students do a “walk by” viewing of them. Discuss the meanings that are hidden in the cards.

*Or...*

3. If your school uses Google, have students work in small groups to create a **meme**.
  - Have each group select one event on the timeline that they find interesting.
  - Open meme template link: **[Beethoven Meme Template](#)**
  - Choose File > Make a copy. Replace “Copy of” with your name and click OK.
  - From the right side of the template, choose a picture that in some way matches the mood or feeling of the event chosen.
  - Drag the picture onto the canvas and stretch it to fill the canvas.
  - Now think of words that relate the mood or feeling of the picture to the selected event. Change the text by double clicking on the text boxes and typing in new words.
  - When finished, choose File > Download As > .png to download your image. Print.
  - Display the memes in chronological order and have students do a “walk by” viewing. Discuss the meanings that are hidden in the memes.



## Beethoven's Timeline (1770-1827)

### Events During His Lifetime

Year	Events in the U.S. or Europe	Events in Beethoven's Life
1770	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first public restaurant opens in Paris.</li> <li>• The rubber eraser is invented in Paris.</li> <li>• William Billings, America's first professional composer, publishes <i>the New England Psalm-Singer</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig van Beethoven is born in Bonn, Germany and baptized Dec 17.</li> </ul>
1771	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first edition of the <i>Encyclopedia Britannica</i> is published.</li> </ul>	
1772	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoelaces are invented in England.</li> </ul>	
1773	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The waltz is a very popular dance in Vienna.</li> </ul>	
1774	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minute Men are organized in the American colonies.</li> </ul>	
1775	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paul Revere makes his famous midnight ride.</li> <li>• First piano-forte manufactured in Philadelphia.</li> </ul>	
1776	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Declaration of Independence is signed.</li> <li>• The swivel chair is invented by Thomas Jefferson.</li> </ul>	
1777	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Stars and Stripes created by Betsy Ross is adopted as the national flag of the United States.</li> </ul>	
1778	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English explorer James Cook discovers a group of islands in the Pacific Ocean that he named the Sandwich Islands—now known as Hawaii.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young Ludwig gives his first public performance, although his father claims he was only 6 years old.</li> </ul>
1779		
1780	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first modern piano is made.</li> <li>• William Billings died in Boston at the age of 54.</li> </ul>	
1781	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The planet Uranus is discovered.</li> </ul>	
1782	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The eagle is declared the national bird in the United States. Benjamin Franklin is disappointed because he thinks the national bird should be the turkey.</li> </ul>	
1783		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig's first piano pieces are published.</li> </ul>
1784	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The idea of daylight savings time is suggested by Benjamin Franklin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig takes the job of assistant court organist for Elector Maximilian Franz and continues this through 1792.</li> </ul>
1785	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two men cross the English Channel in a hot air balloon.</li> </ul>	
1786	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Stoughton Musical Society was founded in Stoughton, Massachusetts. It is the oldest choral society in the United States.</li> </ul>	

Year	Events in the U.S. or Europe	Events in Beethoven's Life
1787	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey become states.</li> <li>• The first left and right shoes are made.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig travels to Vienna, Austria but returns home abruptly when his mother becomes ill. She died shortly thereafter.</li> <li>• Ludwig takes care of his two younger brothers and contributes to the family income by teaching piano lessons.</li> </ul>
1788	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, and New York become states.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig plays viola in various theater orchestras, and continues through 1792.</li> </ul>
1789	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• George Washington is inaugurated the 1<sup>st</sup> President of the United States.</li> <li>• French fries are sold by street vendors in Paris.</li> </ul>	
1790	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Washington, D.C. is founded.</li> <li>• The U.S. Copyright Act of 1790 gives authors, artists, and scientists the sole right to publish and sell their works for 14 years plus the option to renew the copyright.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig is introduced to Franz Joseph Haydn when the famous composer visits Bonn.</li> </ul>
1791	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vermont becomes the 14<sup>th</sup> state of the U.S.</li> <li>• The first bank of the United States opens for business.</li> <li>• Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart dies in Vienna.</li> </ul>	
1792	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kentucky becomes the 15<sup>th</sup> state of the U.S.</li> <li>• Crackers are made in Massachusetts and become an immediate favorite of sailors.</li> <li>• The United States Post Office is established.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig goes to Vienna and begins to study composition with Haydn.</li> </ul>
1793		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beethoven's reputation in Vienna as a piano virtuoso is established.</li> </ul>
1794	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The song "Auld Lange Syne" is published.</li> <li>• The first American silver dollar is minted.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beethoven studies with other composers, too.</li> </ul>
1795	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The metric system is adopted in France.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beethoven makes his first public appearance in Vienna as soloist in one of his piano concertos.</li> </ul>
1796	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Adams is elected the 2<sup>nd</sup> President of the U.S.</li> <li>• Tennessee becomes the 16<sup>th</sup> state of the U.S.</li> <li>• Cupcakes, cake baked in small cups, are first described in a cookbook.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beethoven performs concerts in Prague, Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin.</li> <li>• He experiences the beginning of hearing loss.</li> </ul>
1797	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first copper pennies are minted in England.</li> </ul>	
1798	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The U.S. Marine Band was formed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ludwig's first six string quartets are composed, commissioned by Prince Lobkowitz.</li> </ul>
1799		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Symphony No. 1 is completed.</li> <li>• Piano sonata No. 8 <i>Pathétique</i> is published, dedicated to Prince Lichnowsky.</li> </ul>

Year	Events in the U.S. or Europe	Events in Beethoven's Life
1800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Washington, D.C. becomes the new capital city of the United States.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ludwig secures a generous patron, Prince Lichnowsky, and dedicates several more pieces to the Prince.</li> <li>Beethoven's first phase in composing—similar to Haydn's formal style—ends.</li> </ul>
1801	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first fire hydrants appear in Philadelphia.</li> <li>The first edition of the <i>New York Post</i> is published.</li> <li>Thomas Jefferson is elected the 3<sup>rd</sup> President of the United States.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beethoven's second phase in composing begins through 1814—sounding more personal and Romantic.</li> <li>Piano Sonata No. 14 in c# minor is completed and becomes one of his most popular pieces for piano. It's not until 1832 that it is given the nickname <i>Moonlight Sonata</i>.</li> </ul>
1802		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symphony No. 2 is completed.</li> <li>Growing deafness becomes distressing and the doctor recommends rest in the village of Heiligenstadt.</li> <li>"Heiligenstadt Testament" is written to his brothers, but not found until after his death.</li> </ul>
1803	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Louisiana Purchase is negotiated with France, nearly doubling the size of the United States.</li> <li>Ohio becomes the 17<sup>th</sup> state of the U.S.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ludwig plays the piano part for his Violin Sonata, Op 47 with virtuoso violinist George Bridgetower.</li> </ul>
1804	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explorers Lewis and Clark begin their expedition to map the northwest United States.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determined to compose despite his deafness, Symphony No. 3 <i>Eroica</i> is completed and dedicated to his patron Prince Lobkowitz instead of Napoleon.</li> </ul>
1805	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An amphibious vehicle, one that can be used on land or water, is demonstrated in Philadelphia.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beethoven's only opera, <i>Fidelio</i>, premieres just a few days after France invades Vienna. Critical and financial failure.</li> </ul>
1806	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The coffee percolator is invented, complete with a metal basket to strain away the coffee grounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symphony No. 4 is completed.</li> </ul>
1807		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Coriolan Overture</i> premieres.</li> </ul>
1808	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is no longer fashionable for men to wear their hair in pigtails.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symphonies No. 5 and No. 6 <i>Pastoral</i>, both dedicated to Prince Lobkowitz and Ambassador Razumovsky, premiere on the same concert.</li> </ul>
1809	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>James Madison becomes the 4<sup>th</sup> President of the United States.</li> <li>Abraham Lincoln is born in Kentucky.</li> <li>Composer Franz Joseph Haydn dies in Vienna.</li> </ul>	
1810		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Für Elise" is completed.</li> </ul>
1811		
1812	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Louisiana becomes the 18<sup>th</sup> state of the United States.</li> <li>The first recipe for making ketchup from tomatoes is published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symphonies No. 7 and No. 8 are completed, along with many other pieces.</li> </ul>

Year	Events in the U.S. or Europe	Events in Beethoven's Life
1813		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johann Mälzel persuades Ludwig to write a piece commemorating the invention of his new mechanical instrument, the panharmonicon.</li> </ul>
1814	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frances Scott Key writes the poem, "Defense of Fort McHenry," which is later set to music and becomes "The Star-Spangled Banner."</li> <li>Valves are first added to the trumpet, making it much easier to play different pitches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beethoven's third phase of composing begins—his most unconventional-, innovative-sounding music.</li> <li>A greatly revised <i>Fidelio</i> is presented to acclaim.</li> </ul>
1815	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dental floss is invented by a dentist in New Orleans.</li> </ul>	
1816	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The kaleidoscope is invented.</li> <li>The stethoscope is invented.</li> <li>Johann Mälzel patents the wind-up metronome.</li> <li>Indiana becomes the 19<sup>th</sup> state of the United States.</li> </ul>	
1817	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>James Monroe becomes the 5<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S.</li> <li>Mississippi becomes the 20<sup>th</sup> state of the U.S.</li> <li>The ophicleide, a low-sounding brass instrument, is invented in France.</li> </ul>	
1818	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The border between Canada and the United States is agreed upon.</li> <li>Illinois becomes the 21<sup>st</sup> state of the U.S.</li> <li>Professional horse racing begins in the United States.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ludwig relies on "conversation books" to communicate with friends.</li> </ul>
1819	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The United States purchases Florida from Spain.</li> <li>Alabama becomes the 22<sup>nd</sup> state of the U.S.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In hopes of finding a remedy for his hearing loss, Ludwig is treated by a physician with "sulphur vapor" and a vibration machine. Not successful.</li> </ul>
1820	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maine becomes the 23<sup>rd</sup> state of the U.S.</li> </ul>	
1821	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Missouri becomes the 24<sup>th</sup> state of the U.S.</li> <li>The harmonica is made in Europe and becomes quite popular.</li> </ul>	
1822		
1823		
1824	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The U.S. House of Representatives elects John Quincy Adams as president when none of the four candidates wins a majority in the national election.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symphony No. 9 <i>Choral</i> premieres in Vienna.</li> <li><i>Missa Solmenis</i> premieres in St. Petersburg.</li> </ul>
1825	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Minnesota, Fort Snelling is established where the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers come together.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Symphony No. 9 <i>Choral</i> is first performed in England.</li> </ul>
1826		
1827		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beethoven's funeral procession in Vienna includes thousands of mourners.</li> </ul>



In addition to the nine symphonies, an opera, a mass, and a few piano pieces that are named in the timeline, Beethoven composed hundreds more pieces for voice, piano, orchestra, chamber ensembles—for concerts, church, and theater.