



# Joseph Haydn

Composer of the Week





Born in Rohrau, Austria, in  
March 1732

Died in Vienna, Austria, in May  
1809

Do you know the instruments in a String Quartet?

The most important composer in the **Classical** Period, who really developed the **form** (that's the way the composition is put together) and style of the **Symphony** and many types of **Chamber Music**.

**Chamber Music** is music played by only a few players.

The most famous form is the **String Quartet**.

Can you guess how many players?



violin

violin

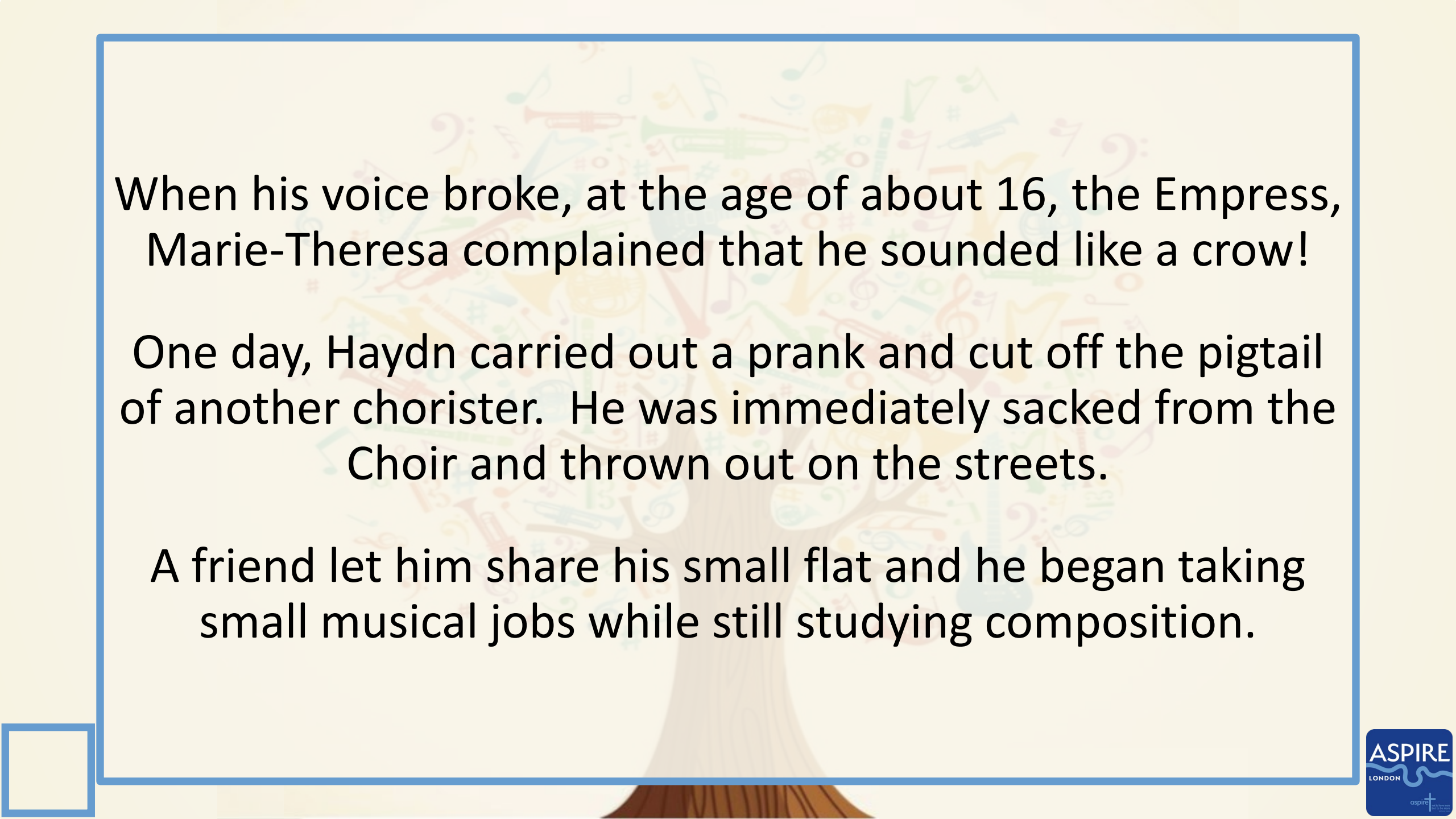
viola

cello



When he was only eight years old Haydn left home to join the choir of St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. This was (and still is) Austria's most important church.



The background features a large, stylized tree with a brown trunk and branches. The foliage is composed of various musical notes, clefs, and instruments like trumpets and saxophones in soft colors. The entire scene is framed by a blue border.

When his voice broke, at the age of about 16, the Empress, Marie-Theresa complained that he sounded like a crow!

One day, Haydn carried out a prank and cut off the pigtail of another chorister. He was immediately sacked from the Choir and thrown out on the streets.

A friend let him share his small flat and he began taking small musical jobs while still studying composition.

Eventually, he was employed by Prince Esterházy, one of the wealthiest men in the Austrian Empire. The Prince had his own orchestra and a theatre at his palace in Eisenstadt. He and his family employed Haydn for the rest of his life.

This meant that unlike other composers, Haydn could really concentrate on writing music, rather than worrying about earning money to feed his family.







Haydn wrote:

**106 Symphonies**  
**68 String Quartets**  
**47 Piano Sonatas**  
**20 Operas**  
**6 Oratorios**  
**2 Cello Concertos**

Haydn was good friends with Mozart and also taught the young Beethoven. He first met Beethoven when they were both in London, and later, took him back with him to Vienna.



Haydn travelled to London several times, he was very popular and people flocked to his concerts.

He composed his **London Symphonies** for performance here.

While in London he became friends with Admiral Lord Nelson and re-named one of his masses in his honour.

The **Nelson Mass** is considered one of his best works. Listen to how dramatic it is and how the soprano soloist soars above all the other performers.



Haydn had a good sense of humour and this came across in his music.

Haydn wanted to let his employer, Prince Esterházy, know that he might be overworking his musicians.

Therefore, at the end of his **Farewell Symphony**, he wrote the music so that the players stopped playing, one by one, blew out the candles on their music stands and left the stage until only two violins were left.



Many of Haydn's Symphonies have nick-names which represent the music.

This symphony is called '**The Surprise**'.

Can you guess what the surprise is?



This symphony is called '**The Toy**'.

Can you see the children playing the toy instruments?





Symphony No. 96 is called **The Miracle Symphony** because, during its first performance a large chandelier fell from the ceiling into the hall...and no-one was hurt.

While he was in London, Haydn had to listen to the British **National Anthem** many times.

He thought that having a National Anthem was such a good idea that, when he returned to Austria, he wrote a patriotic song which was used for many years, first as the Austrian National Anthem and later the German National Anthem. Indeed, the tune is still used today as the German Anthem.

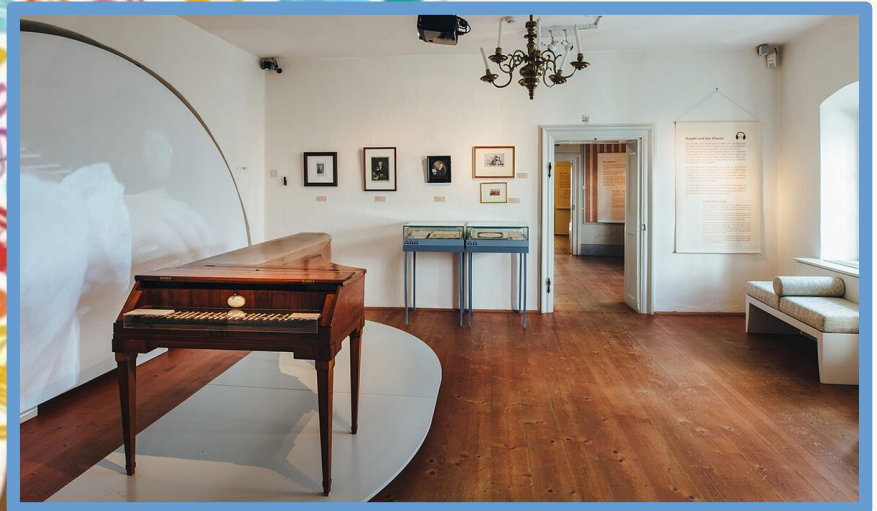


Do you know which flag is which?





This is Haydn's house in Vienna where he spent his last years.



He kept a grey, red-tailed parrot that greeted visitors by squawking, "Papa Haydn".





Joseph Haydn



It is the melody which is the charm of music, and it is that which is most difficult to produce. The invention of a fine melody is a work of genius.

AZ QUOTES