Johannes Brahms was a German composer. He learned music from his father, who played the double bass. When Brahms was young, he played the piano at inns and dance halls to pay for his music lessons and to help support his family.

When Johannes was older, he toured as an accompanist, playing piano for a Hungarian violinist. That music—and the gypsy bands Brahms heard later on when he traveled to Hungary—inspired his Hungarian dances, which were a hit with the public. He wrote 21 dances, the most famous of which is the “Hungarian Dance No. 5.”

As a composer, Brahms followed in the footsteps of Beethoven—although for a long time he didn’t want to write a symphony because he was afraid his work would not be as good as Beethoven’s.

Brahms did end up writing four symphonies, plus works in every musical style except opera. You may know another one of his most famous pieces, the Lullaby.

In fact, Brahms became so famous, he is now known as one of the 3 B’s—Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms—of classical music.

Follow along with this map as you listen to Brahms’ Hungarian Dance No. 5.
Can you get the trumpet to the band in time for the concert?

Gotta Dance!
Unscramble the kind of dancing done in the pictures.

Where in Time?
1833: Johannes Brahms was born
1843: Skiing became a sport in the country of Norway
1862: Jean Foucault measures the speed of light
1865: The American Civil War ends with the surrender of the Confederate States of America to the Union
1884: Mark Twain writes *Huckleberry Finn*
1866: The Statue of Liberty is dedicated
1888: The “Kodak” box camera is invented by George Eastman
1892: Van Gogh paints *The Starry Night*
1897: Johannes Brahms dies

Here’s your chance to create your own piece of art for “Hungarian Dance #5.”

Draw or write your own story about this piece.

Send yours to:
Classics for Kids
c/o WGUC
1223 Central Parkway
Cincinnati, OH 45214

Or E-mail us at mail@classicsforkids.com.

by Elizabeth King and Mary Ann Laing