

Military Polonaise

Frederic Chopin

Born: March 1, 1810

Died: October 17, 1849

Frederic Chopin was one of the greatest composers of music for the piano. He was born in a town just outside of Warsaw, Poland. His mother introduced him to the piano, giving him lessons at a very early age. Chopin played extremely well and gave his first concert at the age of eight. He also enjoyed writing music; by the time he was seven, he had composed two polonaises.

Chopin's music included traditional piano pieces of his time such as concertos, sonatas, waltzes and preludes. However, he also introduced some non-traditional forms that included the etude, nocturne and ballade as well as the mazurka and polonaise, which are dances from Poland that feature rich,

energetic rhythms and harmonies. The polonaise was one of Chopin's favorites, and the *Military Polonaise*, written in 1838, is one of his most famous works in this genre. Technically, a polonaise is not a dance but rather a promenade or procession that was often played as couples entered a ballroom.

Unlike many child prodigies, Chopin grew in popularity throughout his career as a pianist, teacher and composer. Although his early fame came while he was in Poland as a youth, at age 20 he began to travel in Europe after graduating from high school and eventually settled permanently in Paris.

Chopin never returned to his native land, but he also never forgot it. He was never healthy, and was only 39 when he died of tuberculosis. When he was buried in France, a special box of earth was brought from Poland to sprinkle on his grave.



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The polonaise is a stately Polish dance in 3/4 time, originally performed for court processions and ceremonies. It was often used as a processional for military men or military couples upon entering a ballroom. This was one of Chopin's favorite musical forms. He wrote his first polonaise when he was 7 years old and continued to write polonaises throughout his life. The *Military Polonaise* was composed in October 1838 and published in December 1840.

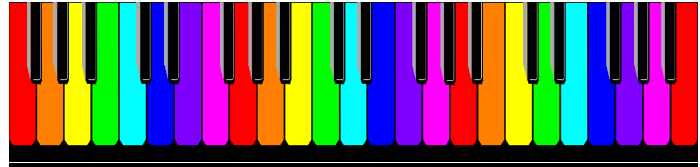
Follow the listening map below as you listen to Chopin's *Military Polonaise*. Can you picture yourself in this grand procession?



P O L I S H D A N C E I O U O
B E W T W R N I O Z S E A W V
F D N A L O P M I L I T A R Y
K X R V R O V F S L A K A K P
B B L A H S K G S M N A F I C
C G K C Y M A R E Y O H A Y P
J C R C W P O W C E L N S I S
J R O J M J Z O O F O H O T E
P P U Q A J N G R M P G D U K
D X G M I M G E P L F Z P Q T
G W A F U F D M R W L F J W I
L B N B N E V J B R S A K G S
I W L N R Q E P R K K H B E B
O M L I W R Y I K Z Q O U C E
S O C I X B A S Y T P Q A W N

Chopin List

A Major Ballroom
Chopin Dance
Frederic Military
Piano Poland
Polish Dance Polonaise
Procession Warsaw



Cross-Connections

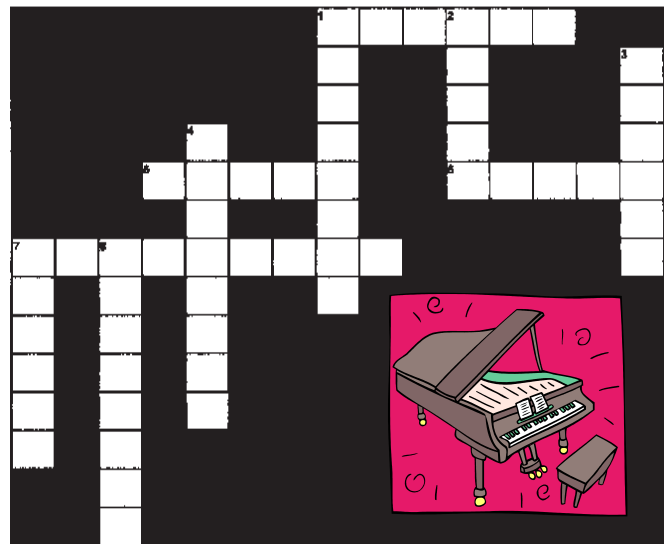
Find the answers to the questions in the Chopin biography and music information.

Across:

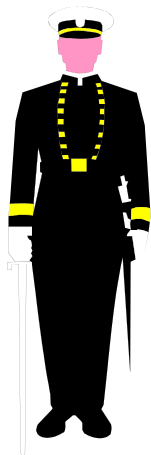
- Frederic _____
- The instrument for *Military Polonaise*.
- The age when Chopin first wrote a polonaise.
- Military Polonaise* was _____ in 1840.

Down:

- Military Polonaise* was _____ in 1838.
- Chopin lived in _____ after leaving Poland.
- Chopin left Poland at age _____.
- _____ *Polonaise* is in A major.
- Chopin's friends gave him some _____ soil.
- This Polonaise was used as a processional when Military couples entered a _____



Were You Listening?



- | | | |
|--|----------|-----------|
| 1. The instrument playing this music is the | a. Piano | b. Violin |
| 2. This music sounds | a. Proud | b. Shy |
| 3. This music has five different sections | a. True | b. False |
| 4. This music has a steady beat. | a. True | b. False |
| 5. Are there any sections which repeat? | a. Yes | b. No |
| 6. How many beats are in each measure? | a. Three | b. Four |
| 7. What is the time signature of this song? | a. 3/4 | b. 4/4 |
| 8. Does the tempo (speed) of the piece change? | a. Yes | b. No |
| 9. The beginning of the music is | a. Quiet | b. Strong |
| 10. Chopin used both short and long notes | a. True | b. False |