

Classics for Kids



Classics for Kids® broadcasts are sponsored in part by **The Kroger Co.**

Maple Leaf Rag

Scott Joplin
Born: ? 1867
Died: April 1, 1917

According to the United States census taken in July of 1870, Scott Joplin was probably born in late 1867 or early 1868. No one is really sure where he was born either. It was probably in northeast Texas, although Texas wasn't yet a state at that time.

Joplin was a self-taught musician whose father was a laborer and former slave; his mother cleaned houses. The second of six children, Scott was always surrounded with music. His father played the violin while his mother sang or strummed the banjo. Scott often joined in on the violin, the piano or by singing himself. He first taught himself how to play the piano by practicing in the homes where his mother worked; then he took lessons from a professional teacher who also taught him how music was put together and about different musical forms. In 1882, Mrs. Joplin, having saved enough money, purchased a piano for her son. She knew that he had a very special gift for music.

Unlike many Afro-American children in the 1880s who did not get an education, Scott attended Lincoln High School in Sedalia, Missouri, and later went to George R. Smith College for several years. Throughout his life, Joplin believed in the importance of education and instructed young musicians whenever he could.

Although he composed several marches, some waltzes and an opera called *Treemonisha*, Scott Joplin is best known for his "rags." Ragtime is a style of music that has a syncopated melody in which the accents are on the off beats, on top of a steady, march-like accompaniment. It originated in the Afro-American community and became a dance craze that was enjoyed by dancers of all races. Joplin loved this music, and produced over 40 piano "rags" during his lifetime. Ragtime music helped kick off the American jazz age, growing into Dixieland jazz, the blues, swing, bebop and eventually rock 'n roll.

Although not fully recognized while alive, Joplin was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1976 in recognition of his significant contributions to American music.

Ragtime



Joplin studied many different styles of music, including African American spirituals and ballads. He was called the "King of Ragtime." Ragtime music has a very syncopated melody on top of a steady march-like accompaniment. The accents in the melody are shifted away from the strong beats in the bass line underneath.

Follow the listening map below as you listen to Scott Joplin's most famous piece, "Maple Leaf Rag."





In 1899, Scott Joplin sold his most famous piece, "Maple Leaf Rag," to John Stark and Son Publishing Company. He received a one-cent royalty for each piece of music sold (at 50 cents each) and ten free copies for his own use. It wasn't much, but it was better than what most black composers of that time received. Usually they were given a flat rate of \$10-20 for a song.



Where's the Money?

Composers have more options than ever for sales of their music. They make money from:

- *Printed music
- *Music in movies, TV, and commercials
- *Music in games, computers, and toys
- *Dramatic productions: musicals or ballets
- *CD sales
- *Radio
- *Performances of their music
- *Sheet music

Find the Music

Make today a Music Detective Day. Keep a record of when and how you hear music during one day. Use a small notebook that you can carry with you. Here's a sample chart to help with your detective work:

When	Where	What kind
6am	In Bed	Radio alarm clock * favorite station
7am	TV	Commercial
7:05am	TV	Favorite show

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

Find these Joplin songs in the puzzle above

- Entertainer
- Fig Leaf Rag
- Gladiolus Rag
- Magnetic Rag
- Maple Leaf Rag
- Original Rag
- Paragon Rag
- Pineapple Rag
- Ragtime Dance

- Rosebud March
- Roseleaf Rag
- Scott Joplin
- Searchlight Rag
- Stoptime Rag
- Sugarcane Rag
- Treemonisha
- Wall Street Rag
- Weeping Willow

