



MEET THE COMPOSER: **Wynton Marsalis**

Age Range:	Elementary, Middle School, High School
Introduction:	Composers write music, just like authors write books. In the Class Notes “Meet the Composer” series, we will learn a little bit about the achievements, backstory, and influences of a variety of composers. Get ready to learn about these influential composers and listen to some of their music.
Total Video Time:	13:56
Total Lesson Time:	Approximately 25–30 minutes

BACKGROUND on Wynton Marsalis

Wynton Marsalis was born in 1961 in New Orleans. He was born into a musical family—his father was a pianist and a music teacher and three of his five brothers also became professional musicians. He began playing the trumpet as a child and started his career as a performer, playing both classical and jazz music. He moved to New York City to continue studies and helped Jazz at Lincoln Center, a performing arts organization with a jazz orchestra. He also began composing major jazz and classical works, sometimes blending the lines between the two genres.

MUSIC of Wynton Marsalis

1. Wynton Marsalis began his musical career as a performer. Watch and listen to him play the very fast final movement of the Hummel trumpet concerto.

[Hummel Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra – III. Rondeau](#). Composed 1803. Video approx. 3.5 minutes.

2. In 1999, Wynton Marsalis composed his first symphony, a large multi-movement piece called *All Rise*. The piece blends jazz, blues, African chant, symphonic and much more. Here is one movement, or section of that piece:

[Movement 12: I Am \(Don't You Run From Me\) from All Rise](#). Composed 1999. Video approx. 2.5 minutes.

3. Wynton Marsalis composed an oratorio, or a large-scale work for orchestra, choir, and soloists. His oratorio was a story about slavery and freedom called *Blood on the Fields*. Watch and listen to one section of the piece, conducted by Wynton Marsalis.

[Work Song – Blood on the Fields](#). Composed 1994. Video approx. 7.5 minutes.



MEET THE COMPOSER:

Wynton Marsalis, cont.

CREATE, CONNECT, & RESPOND to Marsalis's music

1. In addition to composing, Wynton Marsalis is a famous trumpeter. Learn more about his instrument in the Class Notes lesson [Instrument Exploration: Trumpet](#)
2. Wynton Marsalis is a jazz musician. One of the key characteristics of jazz music is improvisation. Learn more about the art of improvisation in the Class Notes lesson [What is IMPROVISATION?](#)

Wynton Marsalis

FAST FACTS

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