



Meet the Composer: Zoltán Kodály

Age Range: Elementary

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.

BACKGROUND

Zoltán Kodály [ZOHL-tahn koh-DYE] was born in 1882 in Hungary. Watch [this video](#) to learn a little bit about Zoltán Kodály’s life and work. (3.5 minutes)

MUSIC

1. This is an excerpt, or section, from the piece talked about in the video, *Dances of Galánta*. Remember that *verbunkos*, the folk tunes Kodály used in this piece, change *tempo*, or speed. There will be one big change in tempo in this excerpt- see if you notice when it happens.

[Kodály: Dances of Galánta](#). Composed 1933. Video approx. 3 minutes.

2. Zoltán Kodály composed a piece for solo cello that requires the player to perform with *virtuosity*, or advanced skill. Learn about the special skills and techniques required to play this piece in this video.

[Sonata for Solo Cello, Op. 8: III. Allegro molto vivace](#). Composed 1915. Video approx. 5 minutes.

3. Zoltán Kodály developed a music education program based on singing. Listen to a piece he wrote for voices.

[“Esti dal \(Evening song\)”](#). Composed 1938. Video approx. 4 minutes.

CREATE, CONNECT, & RESPOND

1. To learn more about how music is affected by where it comes from, try our [Music & Geography: Around the World](#) lesson.
2. Zoltán Kodály’s pieces that draw from folk tunes often change tempo. Learn more about tempo with our [What is TEMPO?](#) lesson.

Zoltán Kodály

Fast Facts

Zoltán Kodály was born in 1882 in Hungary.

Several important inventions were invented leading up to the time he lived, including the steam engine, the telephone, and the phonograph.

These inventions had an influence on Zoltán Kodály and the music he wrote.

He liked to mix genres, or different styles of music, in the music he composed.

Zoltán Kodály died in 1967 in Hungary.