



## KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER: KEY COMPOSER 8

### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756—1791



- Mozart was Austrian. He would be 264 years old—and we still talk about him
- Mozart was a child prodigy (which means he had exceptional ability) and was composing music at the age of just 5 years old! He was an excellent pianist and violinist and at the age of 6, he and his sister travelled all over Europe. He even performed in London for our King at the time, King George III
- He could listen to music just once and then go away and write it down without any mistakes!
- Mozart struggled to make money as an adult. His dad sent him to live in Paris for a while to ‘mingle with the greats.’ It was here that Mozart may have met Joseph Bologne
- Sadly, his mum died while he was in Paris. Mozart then moved to Vienna and tried to earn a living as a pianist and composer. It was here that he met his wife, a soprano, Constanze Weber. He had 6 children but only 2 survived
- Mozart is famous for his quirky sense of humour and fancy dress sense. He had a pet starling and when it died he gave it an elaborate funeral!
- He wrote over 600 pieces of music. These included symphonies, sonatas, concertos, operas, dances, oratorios, quartets and much more!
- Mozart was only 35 when he died. When he died, he didn’t have a lot of money. He had a simple funeral and hardly anyone turned up to it. To this day, Mozart’s grave is unknown. He would never know how gifted and wonderful he really was and how famous he would become *after* his death.
- There is a rumour that Mozart may have been poisoned to death and murdered—but there’s no proof

### JOSEPH BOLOGNE, CHEVALIER de SAINT-GEORGES

\*Joseph Bologne, like Mozart, wrote many concertos, operas, symphonies, quartets and sonatas that are still performed more than 200 years after his death.

\*Like Mozart, he was a virtuoso performer. He was of the best violin players of the time.

\*He was also regarded as the best fencer (sword fighter) in Europe and was one of the leading men trying to abolish the slave trade in Britain and France at the time.

\*Joseph Bologne was born in the Caribbean and his mum was an African slave. This meant, in the 18th Century, he would have had to struggle more than most. People at the time would have made judgements about him because of the colour of his skin

\*He was the first Classical composer of African ancestry—and he became really famous. People LOVED him! He was super popular like a film star. You never know, maybe Mozart was even jealous of him—after all, Mozart was struggling to be popular and make money—Joseph wasn’t



### MOZART’S MOST SIGNIFICANT WORKS

Wow! There are so many but these are my favourite.

**EINE KLEINE NACHTMUSIK**—This is for a small string group and literally means ‘a little night music’

**ALLA TURCA** - Played on the piano. Mozart thought this sounded Turkish. It is also referred to as the Turkish Rondo

**ANDANTE from PIANO CONCERTO No 21** - utterly beautiful and has been used in films

**OVERTURE of THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO**—this is a comedy opera and the opening really sets the scene—it’s cheeky and makes you smile

**QUEEN OF THE NIGHT ARIA from THE MAGIC FLUTE**—another opera. The queen is in a rage in the story. She is a soprano. Her voice range is incredible!

Oratorio	Music for orchestra and voices performed without costume
Quartet	A group of 4 people playing music together. A string quartet would usually include a violin, a viola, a cello and a double bass
Virtuoso	A person with outstanding ability in a particular art such as music
Aria	A song for a solo voice in an opera or oratorio
Comedy Opera	This is also known as <i>opera buffa</i> . Mozart wrote 3 comedy operas