

push themselves mentally as well.

(Boys singing, voice of music teacher, music classroom)

Without this kind of discipline and concentration, going through the hard training and living up to the high standards of a choir of world renown would be impossible.

Highly qualified conductors, often former choirboys themselves, work with the boys' musical talents and carefully **cultivate** excellence.

(Voices of boys singing, choir walking to mass)

Every Sunday for 500 years, this has been a standing ritual—Holy Mass in the chapel of the former Imperial Palace.

The performance of church music was the main purpose for which the former Royal and Imperial Boys' Choir was founded. Today, it still plays a very important role in the choir's **repertory**.

Self-assured even on the stage of the great concert halls of the world, they work with the best conductors.

(Voices of boys singing continues)

The *St. Matthew Passion* by Johann Sebastian Bach is performed in the renowned Vienna Concert Hall.

Nature brings an end to the career of every choirboy when his voice deepens with **puberty**. The boy will then leave the choir, but stay at the Augarten Palace to complete his high school studies. After the short career as a Vienna choirboy, many will become musicians, composers, and conductors like the long line of famous musicians before them.

(Voices of boys singing)

The Vienna Boys' Choir has established a musical **legacy** that, for 500 years, has made Austria a center for the world's great music.

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The Vienna Boys' Choir



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The Vienna Boys' Choir

(Running Time: 27:00)

For your convenience, this program has been closed captioned.

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Intended for Middle School and Junior High School Students

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the world. It is located in Vienna, former capital of the Austrian empire and once the mecca of world music.

(Voices of boys singing)

Expectations of exotic countries and capital cities to visit make feeling homesick fade away.

(Voices of boys singing, rehearsal of Mozart's opera)

The spirit of opera is presented in a mixture of youthful charm and musical precision.

(Voices of boys singing)

The Vienna Boys' Choir was founded in 1498 by the Habsburg emperor Maximilian the First. Austrian musical geniuses like Franz Schubert started musical careers in the Vienna Boys' Choir.

After the fall of the **Austro-Hungarian Empire**, a priest, Father Joseph Schnitt, became choir director and guided them into the twentieth century. After World War II, a new director, Mr. Hauftrat Touchnig, set the choir's course for the rest of the century.

(Voices of boys singing)

Drawing from the experience of his predecessor, Father Schnitt, Hauftrat Touchnig ensured the continuation of this unique musical tradition with his keen appreciation of music, and by organizing tours all over the world.

(Voices of the boys singing)

A lighthearted mixture of playful elegance and professional accuracy is the charm of the Vienna Boys' Choir and radiates even on the stage of the greatest opera houses in the world.

(Voices of boys singing)

The three **juvenile** character parts in Mozart's *Magic Flute* have long been the choirboys' favorites.

(Voices of boys singing throughout)

During leisure time, the boards of the stage are exchanged for skateboards that demand no less skill. Sports are emphasized for the boys almost as much as their musical training. If you can make a high "C," then you can make a basket. Whether outdoors in the spacious park, or inside the well-equipped gymnasium, physical training is of vital importance in the boys' education.

It's been proven that working hard physically will train the boys to



next one.” There are always about eighty choirboys who form three choirs. While one choir is studying, the other two may be recording or touring.

(Boys singing)

The choir emphasizes performing as a unit, even though soloists of great talent often take center stage.

(Voice of choirboy singing)

They make a very complicated composition like Mozart’s *Laudate* sound easy.

(Voice of teacher, addressing students in classroom)

Just ten boys in each class allows the teacher concentrated work with each one. Schooling is centered around voice training, musical theory, and mastery of one musical instrument. However, academic subjects they would normally study in school are all offered, even English. When **Franz Schubert** was a choirboy, even the musical genius was held back because he failed math and Latin.

Teacher: What would you like to see along the river?

Student: The Tower of London is my favorite sight, so I would like to see it.

Teacher: That’s a good idea. Now, what do we know about the Tower of London?

Student: The Tower of London houses the crown jewels and the biggest diamond in the world is from Africa. And... the oldest part of the Tower is called the White Tower. And...

Teacher: Well, that’s a lot.

(Voices of boys during rehearsal)

First Boy: Listen, why don’t you tell the Kaliph the animal has died? I’ll provide you with a dead goose and everything will be fine.

Second Boy: Excellent! I knew you would help me out. *(begins singing)*

Narration: Mozart’s opera *The Kaliph’s Goose* has been rehearsed over and over by the choir. Now they’re ready for the dress rehearsal before their Asian tour.

(Voices of boys singing)

The choirboys’ headquarters in Vienna, the Augarten Palace, is a solid base from which to travel and conquer the musical hearts of

Introduction

In the 1490s, Columbus discovered the New World, Copernicus made observations that led to a radical theory that the Earth revolves around the Sun, and Emperor Maximilian I founded the Vienna Boys’ Choir. Today, half a millenium later, people fly to foreign lands on jets and communicate across the globe through the Internet; the Hubble space probe hovers hundreds of miles above our planet; and the Vienna Boys’ Choir retains its vitality and unique value as a musical institution. How has this choir thrived throughout dozens of generations? What is it like to be one of its members? Which great composers have personal histories with this choir? These are among the many questions explored by this fascinating program.

Learning Objectives

After viewing, the audience will be able to:

- Describe a typical day for the Vienna Boys’ Choir;
- Cite composers who participated in the Vienna Boys’ Choir; and
- Discuss how choirboys’ roles with the choir evolve as they gain initial musical proficiency; develop that proficiency with the choir; and then, with the onset of puberty, lessen participation in choir performance.

Intended Audience

This program is intended for middle school and junior high school audiences who are studying music or European culture and history.

Presenting the Program

You may wish to follow this procedure in presenting the program:

1. Familiarize yourself with the video and this Teacher’s Guide. Take time to review the vocabulary list, as well as the “Before Viewing” and “After Viewing” suggestions.
2. Next, introduce students to the video, using one or more of the “Before Viewing” Activities to relate the upcoming information



to what they already know. Finally, list the vocabulary words on the board or overhead projector, and discuss those words with which your students may not be familiar.

3. Have students view the video in its entirety and without interruption.
4. Check for understanding by discussing and reviewing the information, vocabulary, and concepts presented in the video by using the “After Viewing” suggestions in this booklet.
5. Have students view the program a second time. You may want to pause after certain parts for discussion.
6. Follow up the lesson with a writing and/or research project on program-related individuals, events, or countries that meet your lesson objectives.

Vocabulary (bold type in narration script)

Austro-Hungarian Empire	prerequisites
cultivate	puberty
facade	radiates
juvenile	repertory
legacy	royalties
mecca	Franz Schubert
metropolis	spacious
Mozart	token
palatial	Tower of London
predecessor	

Narration Script

(Vienna Boys' Choir, singing)

Springtime in the Vienna woods.

(Boys singing)

Vienna: acknowledged music capital of the world; a **metropolis** made famous by **Mozart**, Beethoven, Schubert, Strauss, and the Vienna Boys' Choir. A musical institution founded almost 500 years ago, it's encouraged the musical genius of Austrian youths. Let us go behind the **facade** of the Vienna Boys' Choir that's well known on the concert stages of the world and see the choir members during a typical day—both at work and play.

(Voices of boys waking up)

A new day begins early for members of the legendary Vienna Boys' Choir.

(Voice of one of the boys singing)

A beautiful voice, a good ear, and Austrian citizenship are the “**pre-requisites**” for joining the Vienna Boys' Choir. At age eight boys may audition and, if accepted, begin musical training as outside students. Then on their tenth birthday, they leave home to become choir members and live and study here at the Augarten Palace in Vienna.

(Voice of boy singing)

This is an important day for the boys. The director, Dr. Walter Touchnig, presents the new members with sailor suits, the unmistakable **token** of each boy's membership in the choir. Austria has no sea coast or Navy, but in 1924 sailor suits were the fashion for boys of this age. They have been the choir's uniform ever since.

The boys go about their daily routine in high spirits, yet with discipline and motivation through the love of music they all share.

(Voices of the boys singing)

The **palatial** Augarten Palace in Vienna is the choir's residence, school, and center for all its activities.

(Voices of boys singing, recording session)

Recording sessions are a regular routine for the choirboys. **Royalties** are used to pay at least part of the boys' costly musical education.

The motto is, “Every generation of choirboys raises funds for the



15. Some members of the Vienna Boys' Choir are considered child prodigies. What does this mean? What particular challenges do child prodigies face? Research and report on a child prodigy, and examine how his or her great promise developed into adulthood.
16. The choirboys are shown performing in operas such as *The Caliph's Goose* and *The Magic Flute*. What is opera? How is it different from a play and a musical? What talents are required of its performers? Have groups of students write and perform their own short operas based on fairy tales or other familiar stories.

Songs (in order of performance)

1. „G'schichten sus dem Wienerwald“ - Stories from the Vienna Woods
2. Schubert, „Die Forelle“ - “The Trout”
3. Strauß Polka, „Wie geht's wie steht's“
4. Mozart, „Laudate Gloria“
5. from „Die Gans des Kalifen“ - *The Kalif's Goose*, a songplay by Mozart
6. Strauß Waltz, “Blue Danube”
7. „Das Wandern ist des Muellers Lust“ - “Travelling Is the Miller's Pleasure,” a children's song
8. another song from Mozart's songplay *The Kalif's Goose*
9. „Heute gehts hinaus ins Gruene“ - “Today We Will Get out into Green Nature,” a children's song
10. Mozart opera „Die Zauberflöte“ - *The Magic Flute*
11. „Laßt uns fröhlich sein“ - “Let's Be Cheerful”
12. song from Saint Matthew's Passion (Bach)
13. „Weisst Du wieviel Sternlein stehen?“ - “Do You Know How Many Stars There Are on the Wide Span of Heaven?” a children's song

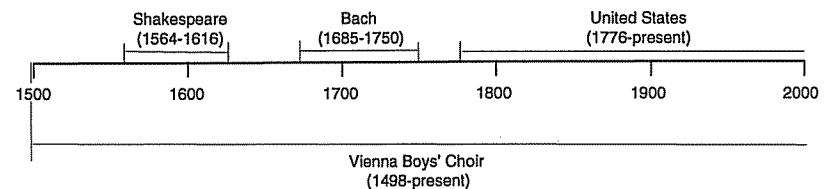


Before Viewing

1. Without identifying the Vienna Boys' Choir, play some of their music for your class. Have your students try to identify the group. After several suggestions have been made, supply the answer. How does the sound of this choir differ from that of mixed-gender, more mature choirs? Why?
2. As your class listens to the Vienna Boys' Choir, ask your students to characterize the choir's sound with adjectives. Make a chalkboard list of adjectives suggested by your students, and, after the program, return to the list and add to it.
3. Have your students locate Vienna, Austria, on a world map. Which other great musicians and composers have lived in this city? (Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Strauss, and Mahler)
4. On the chalkboard, make a time line like the one below.



Ask your students to identify spots on the time line for 1) Bach's life span; 2) Shakespeare's life span; 3) the founding of the United States; and 4) the founding of the Vienna Boys' Choir. When correctly filled out, the time line should look like this.



Your students may be surprised to learn that the Vienna Boys' Choir is the “oldest” element of the time line. As they watch the program, have your students note how the daily routine and training of members of the Vienna Boys' Choir help to build a tradition of musical prowess and durability.



5. As a class, imagine a typical day for the Vienna Boys' Choir, and make a chalkboard "schedule" of it. After viewing the program, return to this list and revise it.

After Viewing

Use these discussion topics, activities, and questions to review the program material.

1. In addition to being the home of the Vienna Boys' Choir, Vienna was home to several famous composers, including Strauss, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, and Mahler. Research and report on this city, and try to find reasons why musicians have been drawn to it.
2. The program describes the fame that the Vienna Boys' Choir enjoy. What are the benefits and drawbacks of fame for artists? If this group was less celebrated, might it expand its repertory with more experimental pieces? Does an established group like the Vienna Boys' Choir have a responsibility to perform the work of contemporary composers? Why or why not?
3. How would coursework in Vienna enhance the development of a classical musician? Have each student choose an artistic, literary, or cultural figure that he or she admires. Have them research and report on the ideal location for a course of study on this figure.
4. The Vienna Boys' Choir performs in a variety of operas. How does opera combine elements from the other arts? Why does it require from the audience a "suspension of disbelief"? What challenges face someone who is writing an opera? What can opera achieve that no other art form can?
5. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of belonging to the Vienna Boys' Choir. How would it limit you? How would it expand your horizons?
6. As a creative writing topic, write a story about a choirboy who, due to puberty, must take a less active role in the choir.
7. Haydn and Schubert participated in the Vienna Boys' Choir. Choose one of these composers and research his life and general temperament. Then, based on this information, write a fictional story about an episode in the composer's life as a choirboy.
8. Imagine that you are a ten-year-old boy who will be leaving home for the Vienna Boys' Choir's Augarten Palace the next day. Write a journal entry that captures your hopes, fears, and expectations.
9. The program shows the choirboys in an English class. Why is learning a foreign language particularly useful for singers? If you were to study a foreign language, which one would it be? Why?
10. As the program shows, the Vienna Boys' Choir tours all over the world. What would the benefits and drawbacks of touring be? Would the novelty and excitement wear off after awhile, or would the variety of sights and sounds keep the experience stimulating for months on end?
11. Sports play a prominent role in the Vienna Boys' Choir's training. Why? How does physical health promote intellectual and artistic development?
12. The Vienna Boys' Choir was founded to perform church music. Examine the influence of the church on classical music during the 1500s. Today, does the church exert a stronger or weaker influence on musical composition and performance?
13. The program shows the Vienna Boys' Choir in rehearsal. What are the elements of a good rehearsal? What habits or behaviors weaken rehearsals?
14. When Franz Schubert was a choirboy, he was held back because he failed math and Latin. If somebody is particularly gifted in one field, is it fair to hold them back because they are deficient in others? Why or why not?

