

Classical Music and the Cosmos

Classical Music · Practice Test · 25 Questions

1. Which English composer wrote the famous orchestral suite titled 'The Planets'?

- A) Gustav Holst
- B) Edward Elgar
- C) Benjamin Britten
- D) Ralph Vaughan Williams

2. How many movements are in Gustav Holst's 'The Planets' suite, each named after a planet?

- A) 5
- B) 7
- C) 9
- D) 12

3. In 'The Planets' by Gustav Holst, which planet is nicknamed 'The Bringer of War'?

- A) Jupiter
- B) Venus
- C) Mars
- D) Saturn

4. Which celestial body is famously absent from Gustav Holst's 'The Planets' suite?

- A) Earth
- B) Mars
- C) Jupiter
- D) Saturn

5. The piece 'Also sprach Zarathustra' by Richard Strauss was famously used in which space-themed film?

- A) Star Wars
- B) 2001: A Space Odyssey
- C) Interstellar
- D) Gravity

6. Which composer wrote 'Also sprach Zarathustra', a tone poem inspired by the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche?

- A) Richard Wagner
- B) Richard Strauss
- C) Johannes Brahms
- D) Gustav Mahler

7. In the suite 'The Planets', which planet is referred to as 'The Bringer of Jollity'?

- A) Mercury
- B) Jupiter
- C) Neptune
- D) Uranus

8. Which planet is depicted as 'The Bringer of Old Age' in Gustav Holst's suite?

- A) Saturn
- B) Mars
- C) Venus
- D) Mercury

9. Gustav Holst's 'Neptune' movement in 'The Planets' is notable for featuring an offstage what?

- A) Solo violin
- B) Female choir
- C) Brass fanfare
- D) Timpani roll

10. Which instrument is prominently featured in the main theme of 'Also sprach Zarathustra' to represent a sunrise?

- A) Trumpet
- B) Flute
- C) Cello
- D) Piano

11. The music 'The Planets' was composed during which decade?

- A) 1860s
- B) 1910s
- C) 1950s
- D) 1990s

12. Which of these planets is represented in Holst's suite with the subtitle 'The Bringer of Peace'?

- A) Venus
- B) Mars
- C) Jupiter
- D) Saturn

13. Which musical term describes a piece of music intended to evoke images or stories, such as the cosmos?

- A) Program music
- B) Absolute music
- C) Atonal music
- D) Minimalism

14. The movement 'Uranus' in Holst's suite is subtitled 'The Magician' and is known for its heavy use of which instrument?

- A) Brass
- B) Harp
- C) Clarinet
- D) Violin

15. Which planet is known as 'The Winged Messenger' in Holst's 'The Planets'?

- A) Mercury
- B) Venus
- C) Earth
- D) Mars

16. Who was the conductor who first performed 'The Planets' in a private concert in 1918?

- A) Adrian Boult
- B) Herbert von Karajan
- C) Leonard Bernstein
- D) Gustav Holst

17. What is the subtitle for the 'Neptune' movement in Holst's 'The Planets'?

- A) The Mystic
- B) The War-bringer
- C) The King
- D) The Traveler

18. Which massive celestial body is represented by the 'Mars' movement in Holst's suite?

- A) Sun
- B) Moon
- C) Mars
- D) Jupiter

19. Richard Strauss composed 'Also sprach Zarathustra' in what year?

- A) 1896
- B) 1920
- C) 1950
- D) 1980

20. 'The Planets' suite was composed by a musician from which country?

- A) United Kingdom
- B) Germany
- C) France
- D) Italy

21. The main theme of 'Also sprach Zarathustra' is called 'Sunrise' and depicts the transition from what to what?

- A) Night to Day
- B) Winter to Spring
- C) Earth to Space
- D) Silence to Sound

22. In 'The Planets', which planet is called 'The Bringer of Jollity'?

- A) Jupiter
- B) Mercury
- C) Venus
- D) Mars

23. Which classical composition is often associated with the 'Big Bang' due to its dramatic opening?

- A) Also sprach Zarathustra
- B) The Planets
- C) The Four Seasons
- D) Symphony No. 5

24. Which movement of 'The Planets' has the subtitle 'The Bringer of Old Age'?

- A) Saturn
- B) Mars
- C) Venus
- D) Jupiter

25. What type of orchestra is required to perform Holst's 'The Planets'?

- A) Full orchestra
- B) String quartet
- C) Solo piano
- D) Jazz band