

Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 “From the New World”

Teacher Guide

1. What different voices or perspectives are included in this article?

(For example: the composer, historians, musicians, or music critics.)

- The composer came from a different country and heard something different than what he heard back in Europe. He was surprised to hear that the roots of American music was from African Americans, not Europeans.
- JoAnn Falletta says the composer was highly criticized for thinking that Black and Native American music was good.
- White composers rejected him and thought his music was not good because of its roots.
- "Dvorak chose a black person to be his assistant. How likely is that?" says Joe Horowitz, author of the book *Classical Music in America*, noting that this was, after all, America in the 1890s.

2. How do these different opinions work together to help you understand the New World Symphony? Do some opinions agree with each other, add new ideas, or explain the music in different ways? *Hint:* The article shares more than one person’s point of view—pay attention to **who is speaking** and **what they are saying**.

- Some of the people agreed with each other but not the white composers.

3. What are the most important ideas or messages the author is trying to share about the New World Symphony? Write one or two main points in your own words.

- The roots of American music - African or Native - has been accepted as as a rich part of America's musical life
- Don't think that music that is sometimes taken as “unused”, “trash”, or even boring is worth listening to. Don't be “blind” to the music around you.

4. After reading and learning about the New World Symphony, what do you notice when you listen that you might not have noticed before? (Think about instruments, melodies, rhythms, mood, or cultural influences.)

- This answer will be personal but they may say that it's calm, peaceful, energetic, interesting, etc.

5. How does learning about the New World Symphony change the way you think about other music you hear—at school, at home, or in movies and games? Does it help you listen more carefully or notice new details?

- This is also personal, but they may take the time to now notice music in places they didn't realize music was present. Ask them to listen to the music in the video games they will be playing next time.

6. How does the article show what has stayed the same and what has changed in America since the country was founded (250 years ago)?

- Some people will prefer to stick to their ideas and won't change. Others see beyond what others see and make a masterpiece out of it. The ones who decide to change will be able to grow.