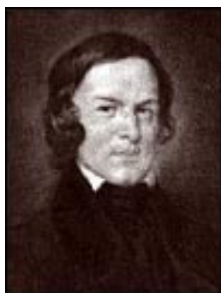


# Classics for Kids



Robert Schumann

## "The Happy Farmer" from Album for the Young

**Robert Schumann**  
**Born: June 10, 1810**  
**Died: July 29, 1856**

Robert Schumann's father was an author and book dealer in Zwickau, the German town where Schumann was born. Robert grew up with books all around him, so he fell in love with books and writing. Robert also fell in love with music. As a kid, he took piano, flute and cello lessons, and also started composing.

When he was a teenager, Schumann still wasn't sure whether he wanted to be a writer or a composer when he grew up. But after heading off to the University of Leipzig to study law, he knew he didn't want to be a lawyer. In Leipzig, Schumann took piano lessons with a teacher named Friedrich Wieck, whose star pupil was his daughter Clara. In spite of the fact that she was nine years younger than he was, Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck fell in love. Clara's father absolutely refused to let them get married. It took years — and a court battle with Clara's

father — before Robert and Clara Schumann could finally get married.

The whole year following their wedding, Schumann was so in love that he couldn't stop composing songs. That became known as Schumann's Year of Song. Schumann then went off on a couple of other year-long binges. The next year, he worked on three out of his four numbered symphonies, and the following year was Schumann's year for chamber music — pieces written for small groups of instruments.

Even though a hand injury kept Schumann from becoming a concert pianist, there was still a famous pianist in the house — his wife Clara. She gave the first performance of many of his pieces, including his piano concerto. When Robert wanted to teach his children how to play the piano, he found the music available to be either too hard or too boring. So, he composed his own pieces for them and created the *Album for the Young*.

## "The Happy Farmer"



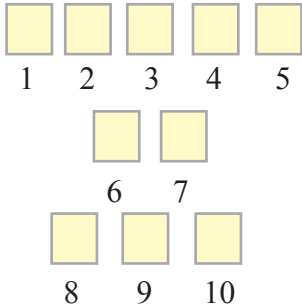
Do you take piano lessons? If you have, you may recognize "The Happy Farmer," one of the pieces from Robert Schumann's "Album for the Young." Schumann and his wife, Clara, had seven very good reasons to write music for children. They were parents to three daughters and four sons. Their house was full of children, laughter, and music.

The first pieces in this piano album were intended as a present for Schumann's eldest daughter, Marie, on her seventh birthday. Each piece added a new skill. None of them was very long so that the young musician would be successful quickly and not tire of practicing. Schumann also included his own teaching ideas such as "Don't just tinkle at the keys!" and "Play rhythmically!"

Schumann's "Album for the Young" is divided into two parts. The first set of eighteen pieces are written for young children and the later pieces are for "more grown-up" players. Listen for the musical pattern in "The Happy Farmer." Why do you think the farmer sounds happy?

## Decode the Hidden Message

Answer the questions below. Then, fill in the correct letter to decode the secret message.



- Robert Schumann was a musician and an \_\_\_\_\_.  
Z. Book dealer    A. Actor    M. Author
- The strings on the piano are struck by \_\_\_\_\_.  
U. Hammers    K. Fingers    L. Pumpkins
- The piano keys are pushed down by \_\_\_\_\_.  
G. Toes    S. Fingers
- The \_\_\_\_\_ of the piano are stretched over the sounding-board.    I. Strings    J. Pedals
- The standard size piano has \_\_\_\_\_ keys.  
V. 100    D. 999    C. 88
- Robert Schumann's eldest daughter's name was \_\_\_\_\_.  
I. Marie    F. Rebecca    T. Carrie
- Robert and Clara Schumann had \_\_\_\_\_ daughters.  
D. 7    S. 3    R. 12
- Robert Schumann wrote the Album for the \_\_\_\_\_.  
R. Old    W. Silly    F. Young
- There are \_\_\_\_\_ pieces for young children in the "Album for the Young."    O. 10    C. 8    U. 18
- Schumann wrote these songs for his daughter's \_\_\_\_\_ birthday.    N. Seventh    A. Tenth    O. Fourth

## Musical ABCs

There are only 7 letters in the musical alphabet. After you reach G - you begin again at A. The higher you go in the staff, the higher the note will sound. Below is a list of letters going up as if they were on a staff.

A  
G  
F  
E  
D  
C  
B  
A  
G

Some of the other pieces for children in the "Album for the Young" are:

Soldier's March

The Wild Horseman

Reaper's Song

Do you know anyone who has played these pieces on the piano?



## Games We Play



Kids like to play games. Schumann knew this when he wrote *Album for the Young*.



Sometimes we play games together on teams. When one team plays against another team, we call the game a sport. Can you name the sports that each of these children are playing?



Write your answer on the line below each picture.