

For the Love of Music



William C. Handy

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For William C. Handy, following his love of music was never easy. Being a young black man in America in the 1800's was hard enough. His family was deeply religious and his father viewed musical instruments and music as evil. As a young boy William saved every penny he could to buy himself a guitar. His father was furious and made him exchange it for a book. William was devastated. He yearned to learn to play the guitar.

At school William followed as many music courses as he could. He became skilled at many instruments. He was also a talented singer. This talent his father allowed, as he was a core member of the church choir.

When he left school William joined a singing group in the hope that he would carve out his name in the music industry and be able to support himself in the process. The group sang in clubs, churches all over the United States. Although he loved this job, William could not support himself so he left the group.

After searching for a job, not an easy thing to do for a black man in 1896, William decided to go back into music. He knew this was his last chance to make a success of what he loved. He got a job playing a cornet in a band. While playing in a club one night he started to ponder about all the sad things that had happened in his life. His music reflected his sadness. The audience loved this sad music and labeled it "the blues." He began to write music called the St. Louis Blues. It did not take long for his music to become popular internationally.

Today William C. Hardy's music is still enjoyed all over the world. Had it not been for his determination and love for music, the music industry would be a poorer place.

Read "For the love of music" again and then answer the following questions".

1. Give two reasons why it was so difficult for William to pursue his love for music.
2. How did he get his very first guitar?
3. How did his father react?
4. Which aspect of his musical talent did his father encourage and why.
5. What was his first job after school?
6. Why did he have to leave it?
7. What did William realise when he joined a musical group again?
8. Describe how "the blues" started.
9. How did audiences react to this new form of music?
10. Do you think that William was successful? Motivate your answer.



Cut out the words and paste it on the instruments or write the names.

piano : saxophone : cello : harp
flute : guitar : drum : violin

Answers to questions.

A series of horizontal dashed lines for writing answers.

VOCABULARY

***Cut out these words and arrange it into alphabetical order:
Paste it on the space provided.***

religious

musical

instruments

guitar

furious

exchange

devastated

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Back of cut out page.

Paste the words in alphabetical order.