



Erasmus+



ODE TO JOY
STUDENT'S BOOKLET
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THE SYMBOLS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Today you will learn about the different symbols of the European Union. Afterwards we will talk about the history of one particular symbol: the European anthem.

Finally, you will be required to roll up your sleeves: you and your class will be writing your own European anthem! You will be working in teams with your classmates. You will have to come to an agreement, discuss and debate. You will be expected to show evidence of hard work and creativity.

The symbols of the European Union

Using your existing knowledge and the help of your teacher, write the name of each symbol shown in the pictures. What do they represent?





When is Europe Day celebrated?



Do you remember the European Union's motto?

Now let's have a look at the last EU symbol: the European anthem! *Ode to Joy* was composed by the great composer Beethoven.

THE HISTORY OF *ODE TO JOY*, THE EUROPEAN ANTHEM

A national anthem is a song that rallies the citizens of a country around a set of shared values.

The aim of the European anthem is therefore to communicate and pass on European values: peace, freedom and solidarity.

Authors of the anthem: Schiller and Beethoven

Friedrich Von Schiller (1759-1805)

Schiller was a famous German poet and author. He wrote the poem *Ode to Joy* in 1785 at the age of 26. The poem was an instant success in Germany, particularly among young people.



Ludwig von Beethoven (1770-1827) and his Ninth Symphony

Beethoven was a leading German composer of classical music. He is particularly well known for his symphonies, which remain famous to this day. He admired Schiller's poem and shared its author's love of freedom, justice and brotherhood. He therefore decided to

compose a symphony based on it. He finished the symphony just three years before his death, though he had wished to compose it ever since he was a young man. As he grew older, Beethoven gradually lost his hearing. Indeed, when he was finishing *Ode to Joy* he was already deaf! The symphony was a great success. It translates the feelings of joy and brotherhood into music and expresses the idealist vision of Schiller's poem.

Adoption and adaptation of the anthem

In 1972 the Council of Europe decided that the ideals of peace, brotherhood and solidarity expressed by Beethoven's symphony matched the values pursued by the founders of the Council of Europe. For this reason, the symphony was adopted as the European anthem.

First, however, the words to the symphony were removed. This meant that every country in Europe, regardless of its language, could identify with the ideals and values expressed by the music. It was a way of respecting Europe's different languages.

Working in small groups, have a go at writing the words of your own European anthem. The words should be based on the values you learnt about in the previous lesson. You can use the 'Fairytale' and 'An island' exercises to help you.

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FEDERATION DE PARIS DE LA LIGUE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT

167, boulevard de la Villette

75010 PARIS

www.ligueparis.org

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