



## From Ink to Sound: Decoding Musical Manuscripts

### Video Transcript

#### Open your eyes

[Angelika Moths] Imagine you are a music teacher and you would like to talk with your class about the First Symphony by Ludwig van Beethoven. But before you start to analyse the harmonies or identify the recapitulation, you could also take into consideration that there are many signs that have all their history. Let's start with this: 80% of asked persons would spontaneously say this is a G because they do not think in this very moment that to understand this sign, of course they need another one. And then this sign changes the situation completely. Not only that G becomes B, but now we have instead of a whole step, a half step. Many more aspects could be considered. Staff: an invention by Guido D'Arezzo in the 11th century. Tempo words, articulation signs, metronome indications. But not only the notes have their history, but also the silences. Performance hints as pizzicato, dynamics. Here they are very important and not self-evident at all because Beethoven wants the orchestra to start distinctively in forte on a dominant 7th chord to F. Also, the piece is in C major. As we consider the dynamics, it becomes obvious that not only the context is important but also the relativity. Try to explain to a person in medieval times how loud a rock concert is. But the sheer fact that we have a printed score here is something very extraordinary. Beethoven finished the score in the beginning of the year 1800. In the first performance, the musicians played from manuscripts. In 1801, the music of the symphony was printed but only in part books. The first score edition was in England in the year 1809. However, as there were no trade relations between England and Europe at that time, Beethoven probably never saw this specific score. On the continent though, the first score appeared in 1822, more than 20 years later than the first performance. And the editor, Simrock, was very concerned about explaining that this was a big sacrifice for him as he could earn no money with it. Looking at the score we can learn a lot about the history of music, about the history of musical practice. And we can learn about the way how we read music.