



Topical Tidbits

April-June 2021

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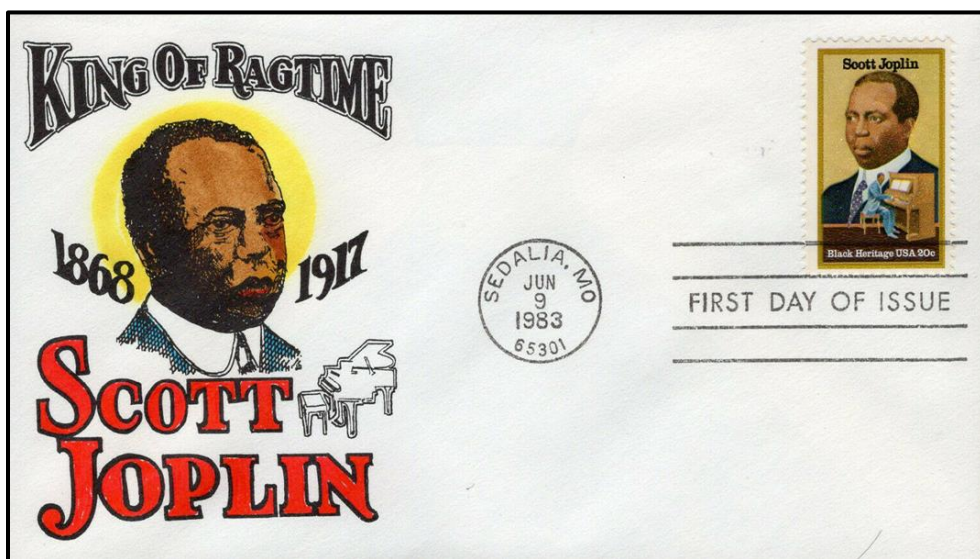
Editor/Creator: Aimée Devine

Scott Joplin

Greetings!



On June 9, 1983, in Sedalia, Missouri, the USPS issued the sixth stamp in the Black Heritage Series. This stamp honors composer Scott Joplin who is known as the “king of ragtime.” Ragtime is a musical style with a syncopated (off-beat) rhythm and was given this name because listeners of the day felt that the rhythm sounded rough, uneven, or “ragged.” It was one of the forerunners of jazz music and was the predominant style of popular music from about 1899 to 1917 in the United States, particularly along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Joplin also wrote a ballet and two operas. Enjoy learning more about this amazing musician and other music-related topics in this issue!

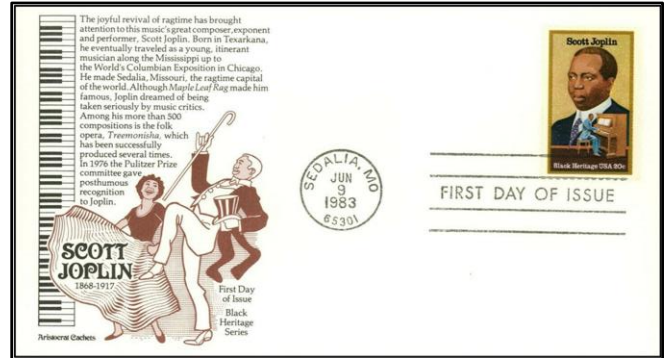
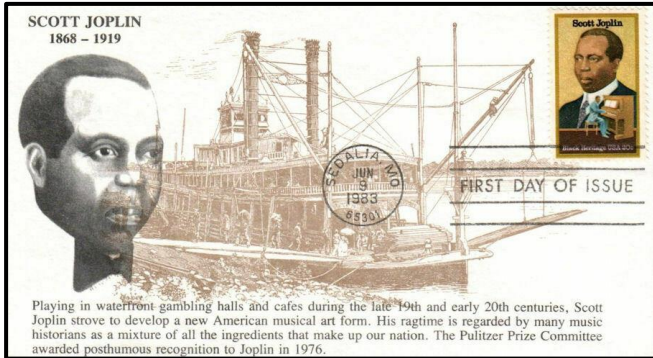


Above left: The 1983 stamp issued by USPS honoring Scott Joplin.
Bottom Left: A Queensbury hand-painted First Day Cover.

Cachet Clues

A cachet is the decorated part of a cover (envelope) that commemorates a postal or philatelic event and should tie-in with the stamp. You can learn a lot from studying cachets.

See if you can answer the questions below using these two covers. They are blown-up on the next two pages so that you can read them more easily.

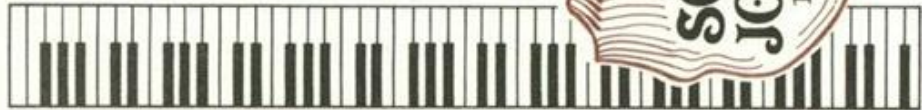


Scott Joplin was born in _____, Texas in the year _____. When he was older, he travelled along the _____ River playing in _____ halls and cafes. He visited the World's Columbian Exposition held in _____ in 1893 where he allegedly played the cornet in a band for a sideshow near the fairgrounds. When not traveling, Joplin worked in Sedalia, _____ as a pianist playing at various events. He also played at a social club for black men called, the Maple Leaf. His song "Maple Leaf Rag" is the one that made him _____. When he wasn't playing music, he was teaching several young musicians. Joplin wanted to be taken as a serious musician, so in 1911 he published a _____ opera about a girl named Treemonisha who is the only educated person in her community. She leads the people in her town out of the bondage of ignorance and superstition. The story is an allegory of how Joplin viewed the problems of the African-American community of his time. He proposed the view that racial equality would come with education. Joplin died on April 1, _____, at the age of 48. In the year _____ he was posthumously (after death) awarded the _____ Prize for his contributions to American music.

Cachet Clues, continued

The joyful revival of ragtime has brought attention to this music's great composer, exponent and performer, Scott Joplin. Born in Texarkana, he eventually traveled as a young, itinerant musician along the Mississippi up to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. He made Sedalia, Missouri, the ragtime capital of the world. Although *Maple Leaf Rag* made him famous, Joplin dreamed of being taken seriously by music critics.

Among his more than 500 compositions is the folk opera, *Treemonisha*, which has been successfully produced several times. In 1976 the Pulitzer Prize committee gave posthumous recognition to Joplin.



SCOTT JOPLIN
1868-1917

First Day
of Issue
Black
Heritage
Series

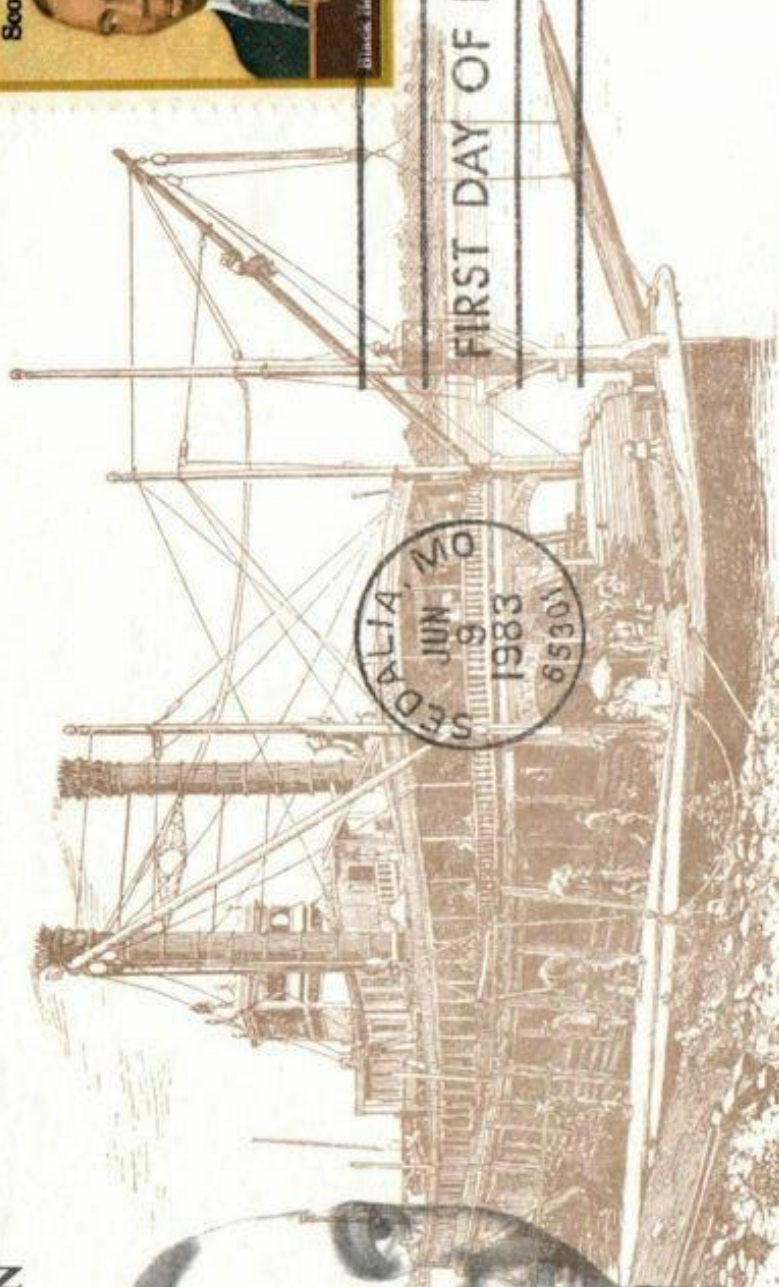
Artistic Cachets



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Cachet Clues, continued

SCOTT JOPLIN
1868 – 1919







FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Playing in waterfront-gambling halls and cafes during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Scott Joplin strove to develop a new American musical art form. His ragtime is regarded by many music historians as a mixture of all the ingredients that make up our nation. The Pulitzer Prize Committee awarded posthumous recognition to Joplin in 1976.

Name That Tune

Scott Joplin wrote many ragtime tunes during his life. Solve the musical math problems using the chart. Then find the stamp that has the same number as your answer. Then, write the image on the stamp on the song title lines.

 whole note 4 beats	 half note 2 beats	 quarter note 1 beat	 eighth note $\frac{1}{2}$ beat
--	---	---	--

1. $\text{quarter note} + \text{whole note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Maple Rag
2. $\text{eighth note} + \text{quarter note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Swipesy walk
3. $\text{quarter note} + \text{half note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow erine Rag
4. $\text{whole note} + \text{whole note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Slow Drag
5. $\text{half note} + \text{whole note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Weeping
6. $\text{quarter note} + \text{quarter note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Leaf Rag
7. $\text{half note} + \text{half note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow The bud March
8. $\text{quarter note} + \text{half note} + \text{whole note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Rag
9. $\text{whole note} + \text{whole note} + \text{quarter note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Silver Rag
10. $\text{eighth note} + \text{quarter note} + \text{half note} = \underline{\quad}$ beats \rightarrow Pretty Rag



 1 beat	 2 beats	 3 beats	 3 ½ beats	 4 beats
 5 beats	 6 beats	 7 beats	 8 beats	 9 beats

Answers: #1. 5 beats, Leaf. #2. 1 beat, Cake. #3. 3 beats, Peach.
 #4. 8 beats, Sunflower. #5. 6 beats, Willow. #6. 2 beats, Palm.
 #7. 4 beats, Rose. #8. 7 beats, Pineapple. #9. 9 beats, Swan.
 #10. 3 ½ beats, Pansy.

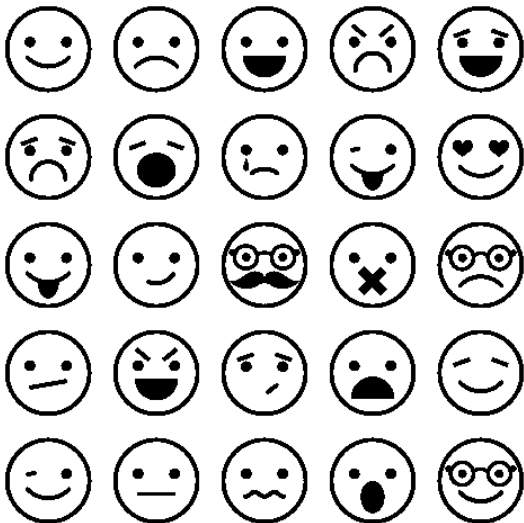
Listening Activity

With the help of an adult find a piece of Scott Joplin's music to listen to. When you're ready to start, close your eyes, listen, and enjoy. When it's over, listen to it again and then record your answers in the boxes below.

Title:

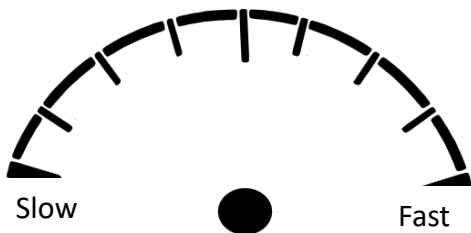


This music made me feel:



Words I would use to describe this song:

The tempo (speed) of this song was:



Out of 4 stars, I would give this piece:

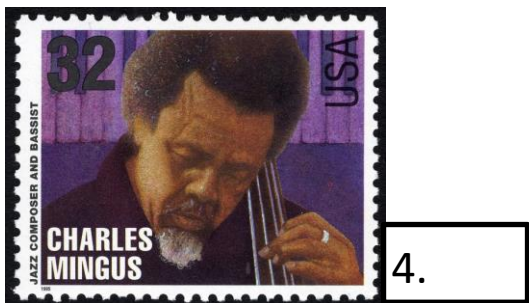
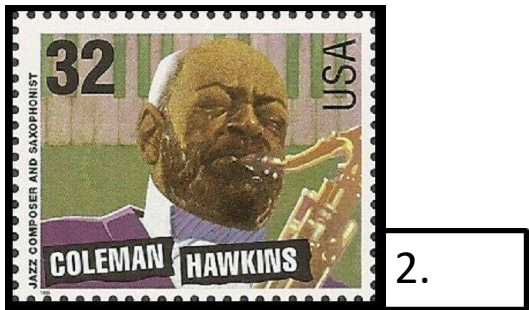


I would like to listen to more music by Scott Joplin:



Musician Match-up

Match up the musician with the correct instrument. Use clues on the stamps to help you. Answers are at the bottom of the page.



Answers: 1. E, 2. B, 3. C, 4. A, 5. D

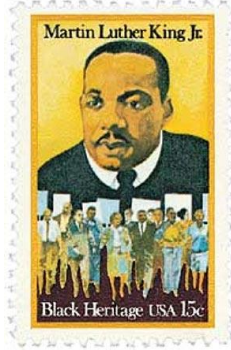
Black Heritage Series

In 1978, the United States Postal Service began the Black Heritage stamp series which pays tribute to African-American leaders, inventors, educators, scientists, entrepreneurs, entertainers, and athletes. You will find images of these stamps on this page and on the following two pages. These can be printed out on card stock, cut apart, and used for various games. The date the stamp was issued is at the top of each card. This could be used to arrange the cards in chronological order. The cards could also be put in ABC using each person's last name. Another idea is to print two sets that could be turned into a matching game. Or, print four sets for Go Fish!

1978



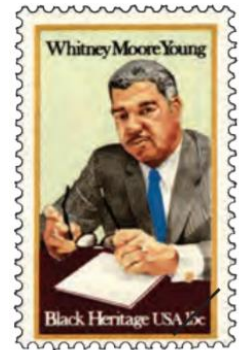
1979



1980



1981



1982



1983



1984



1985



1986



1987



1988



1989



1990



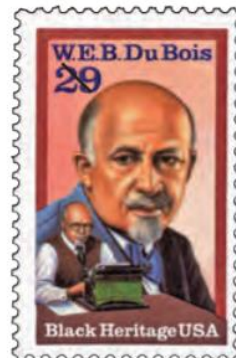
1991



1992



1993



1994



1995



1996



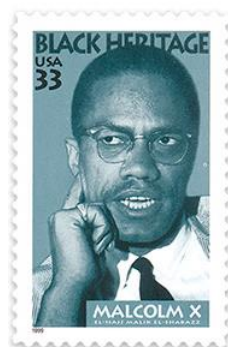
1997



1998



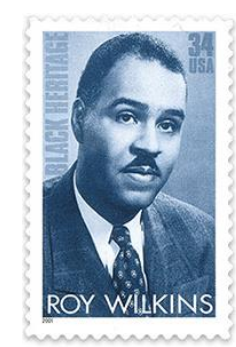
1999



2000



2001



2002



2003



2004



2005



2006



2007



2008



2009



2010



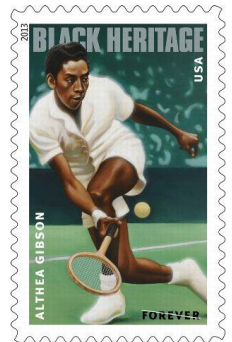
2011



2012



2013



2014



2015



2016



2017



2018



2019



2020



2021



Pianos





Black Heritage