

## Composer Study, April 8-9, 2020

Narrate what you know about Rodgers and Hammerstein and three musicals we have studied—*Oklahoma*, *South Pacific*, and *The King and I*.

We are going to jump to the last work of the musical team because it is not to be missed. Traveling west from Thailand, the Rodgers and Hammerstein take us to Austria, the country where Joseph Haydn lived. Like *South Pacific*, this musical is set during World War II. It was based on the [memoirs](#) written by [Maria von Trapp](#) but altered a little to make the story more dramatic.

The 1959 musical opens with Maria, a young novice singing in the Austrian hills. She is late for her duties at the convent where she and the nuns live. Her friends doubt she will make a very good nun because of her wild ways. The abbess, the abbey's leader, suggests a different line of work. She becomes a governess of seven children of a retired submarine captain.

We are going to watch three songs from the [1965 film The Sound of Music](#). The opening shows Maria on a nature walk, singing about the beauty of the hills and the joy of music in the song, [“The Sound of Music.”](#)

Church bells ring and Maria is snapped back into the orderly life at

the convent. Before she arrives, the abbess and the nuns sing about the pros and cons of life with Maria in a song called, [“How Do You Solve a Problem like Maria?”](#)

Maria trusts the advice of the abbess and agrees to be the governess for Georg von Trapp. His wife died four years earlier and the children have a habit of running off perfectly good teachers. Maria is a little nervous and she sings about her butterflies in [“I Have Confidence.”](#)

Listen to all three songs and pick your favorite. Narrate why it is your favorite and, if you can, tell about its mood (feeling), tempo (speed), and other musical elements.