

[The Lark Ascending](#) – by Ralph Vaughan Williams [1]

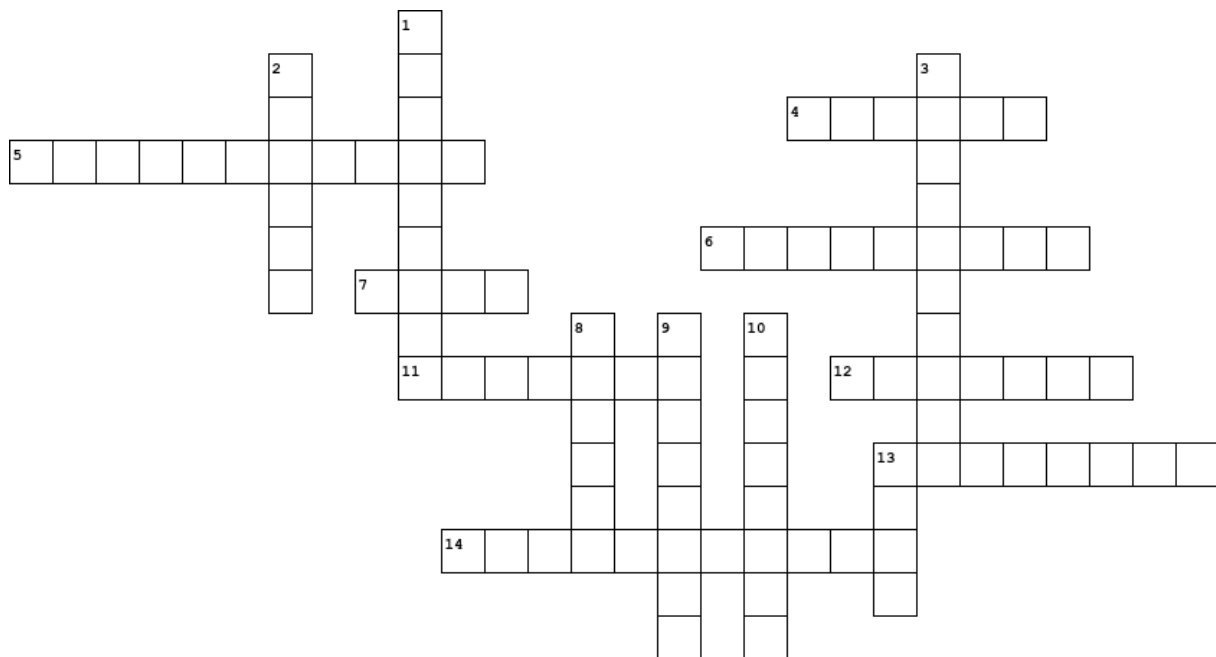
The Lark Ascending is one of the most famous pieces of English classical music. It is short, in one movement of about 15 minutes, and was written by the composer [Ralph Vaughan Williams](#) in 1914, just before the First World War. Vaughan Williams was inspired by a [poem](#) of the same name by [George Meredith](#). The poem describes a [lark](#) — a small bird — flying high into the sky and singing beautifully as it rises. Vaughan Williams wanted to capture that feeling of freedom, peace, and connection with nature in his music. Williams liked the violin a lot and uses this instrument to give life to the lark.

The piece begins very quietly, with the solo violin playing soft, high notes that sound like the bird's song. The orchestra joins gently, creating a calm and open atmosphere, like the English countryside on a summer morning. The music rises and falls, just as the lark flies up and down in the air. There is no sudden drama or strong rhythm — instead, the sound is peaceful, flowing, and full of emotion.

Today, *The Lark Ascending* is one of the most loved pieces of music in England. It is often played on the radio, especially on classical music stations, and is regularly voted one of the nation's favourites. Many people say it reminds them of the beauty of the English landscape and the simple joys of nature. For listeners, it feels like a moment of calm and hope — a lark singing above a quiet world.

This [YouTube video](#) reproduces the picture [The Cornfield](#) by one of England's greatest landscape artists, John Constable. Completed in March 1826, it is typical of the idealised rural images painted by Constable, at a time when England was rapidly industrialising.

The following crossword puzzle uses 15 words from the text. It is also available [here](#).



Across

Down

4. Soft and kind in sound, touch, or movement.
5. Land outside towns and cities, often with fields and farms.
6. A large group of musicians who play together on different instruments.
7. A small bird known for singing while flying high in the sky.
11. A strong feeling such as happiness, sadness, or love.
12. The state of being free to act or think as you want.
13. Calm and quiet, without noise or worry.
14. Land with fields and nature, not in a town or city.
1. A view or picture of the natural features of an area.
2. The regular beat or pattern of sounds in music.
3. The mood or feeling created by a place or piece of music.
8. A string instrument played with a bow.
9. Filled with creative ideas or motivation.
10. A person who writes music.
13. A piece of writing in which words are chosen for their sound and rhythm.