



- Bernstein was born in Massachusetts.
- He began piano lessons at age 10.
- His birth name was actually Louis, because his grandmother loved it so much. Everyone else called him Lenny or Leonard. He changed his name legally as a teenager.
- After studying music at Harvard and the Curtis Institute of Music, he got a job as a conductor of the New York Philharmonic.
- Bernstein was famous as a composer, pianist, conductor and teacher. He was one of the first American-born conductors to lead world-class orchestras.
- One of his most well-known pieces is the music to the musical and movie West Side Story.
- Over his lifetime, Bernstein composed 2 ballets, 3 operas, 7 musicals, 5 other theater works, 3 film scores, 8 orchestral works, 3 choral pieces, 3 pieces for chamber ensemble, 2 vocal pieces, and 4 piano works.



Listen to the Overture to West Side Story  
What does it remind you of?