1850-1920  The Dissolution of Tonality

1890-1910  Impressionism - coloristic harmony, static melody, focus on instrumental timbre, in order to convey an specific image.
[Debussy, Ravel]

1910  (1) Atonality - Music that displays an absence of a pitch center.
[Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, Alban Berg]
(2) New ways of creating pitch centricity.
[Igor Stravinsky, Bela Bartok]
(3) Mixing of different musical styles.
[Charles Ives]
(4) Futurism - All sounds (musical, natural, industrial, etc.) may be used as musical material.
[Luigi Russolo (1913) - painter, George Antheil, Henry Cowell, Edgard Varese]

World War I (1914-1918)

[Stravinsky, Bartok, Prokofiev, Hindemith, Copland, Schoenberg]
(2) Experimentation in the U.S. - followed the legacy of Ives.
[Cowell, Harry Partch, Lou Harrison, Varese]

1923  Twelve-tone music - The serial ordering of all twelve chromatic pitches.
[Schoenberg, Webern, Berg]

World War II (1939-1945)

1949  (1) Total Serialism - Highly conscious approach to musical composition. Any musical parameter (pitch duration, articulation, etc.) may be ordered to form a series. Normally, pitch and one other musical element is ordered for a work to be considered serial.
[Boulez, Stockhausen, Babbitt]
(2) Aleatory - Intuitive approach to musical composition that involves indeterminancy in either the composition or performance of a work.
[John Cage, Morton Feldman, Earle Brown]

(1) Texture and Color as the primary compositional focus.
[ Gyorgy Ligeti, Krzysztof Penderecki]
(2) Quotation of earlier music.
[ Luciano Berio, Lukas Foss, Davies]
(3) Microtonal Music - The semitone is divided into quarter-tones.
[ John Eaton, Ben Johnston]
(4) Music Theater - Drama and music in new forms other than opera.
[ Cage, Mauricio Kagel, Davies, Crumb]
(5) Electro-Acoustic Music - Music that is produced through electronic means such as a tape recorder.
[ Pierre Schaeffer, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Varese, Berio]
(6) Minimalism (c.1962) - A reduction of musical material.
[ Terry Riley, Steve Reich, Philip Glass]