

MUSIC



YEAR 5

Activities and learning materials

GREAT COMPOSERS

HELLO!

This time we will learn about some great composers from different historical periods.

This lesson will be about **BAROQUE ERA COMPOSERS**

★ First question – who is a composer?

★ Do you know some famous composers?



So, who is a composer?

A **composer** (Latin *compōnō*; literally "**one who puts together**") is a musician who is an author of music in any form, including vocal music (for a singer or choir), instrumental music, electronic music, and music which combines multiple forms.

And I am sure that you know at least 2 famous composers:

Beethoven and Mozart

What is the BAROQUE ERA of MUSIC?

- The **Baroque period** refers to an **era** that started around 1600 and ended around 1750, and included composers like Bach, Vivaldi and Handel, who pioneered new styles like the concerto and the sonata.
- The **Baroque period** saw an explosion of new **musical** styles with the introduction of the concerto, the sonata and the opera.

What kind of music was popular in the baroque era?

- Baroque music expanded the size, range, and complexity of instrumental performance, and also established **opera**, cantata, oratorio, concerto, and sonata as musical genres. Many musical terms and concepts from this era are still in **use today**.

What is an example of baroque music?

- The rise to prominence of solo sonatas for keyboard instruments begins late in the **baroque period**, including those for organ (Bach) and harpsichord (Handel, Domenico Scarlatti). Other famous **examples** of solo sonatas include Bach's works for unaccompanied violin and cello.

How do you know if music is from the baroque era?

- **Baroque**: counterpoint - listen for one part entering after another, a bit like a **round or canon**. Ornamented melody line (trills and twiddles). Strong **bass line**, often a bit like a second melody.



GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

(1685-1759) German Baroque Era Composer

- George Frideric Handel was born on February 23, 1685 in the North German province of Saxony.
- George's father wanted him to be a lawyer even though music captivated his attention. His mother, in contrast, supported his interest in music and he was allowed to take keyboard and music composition lessons.
- In 1702, Handel followed his father's wishes and began his study of law at the University of Halle. After his father's death in the following year, he returned to music and accepted a position as the organist at the Protestant Cathedral.
- In the next year he moved to Hamburg and accepted a position as a violinist at the opera house. It was there that Handel's first operas were written and produced.
- In 1710, Handel accepted the position of Kapellmeister to George, Elector of Hanover, who was soon to be King George I of Great Britain. In 1712, he settled in **England** where **Queen Anne** gave him a yearly income.
- In the summer of 1717, Handel premiered one of his greatest works, "*Water Music*", in a concert on the River Thames. The concert was performed by 50 musicians playing from a barge positioned closely to the royal barge from which the King listened. It was said that King George I enjoyed it so much that he requested the musicians to play the suite three times during the trip!
- By 1740, Handel completed his most memorable work - the *Messiah*. It is said that when the king first heard the "*Hallelujah Chorus*" he rose to his feet. This tradition continues today.
- On April 6, 1759 Handel conducted his last performance of the *Messiah* and returned home in poor health. He died on April 14, 1759 and was buried in Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey in London, England. More than 3000 people attended his funeral.



Antonio Vivaldi

(1678 – 1741) Italian Baroque Era Composer

- Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice, Italy, which is where he spent most of his life. His father taught him to play the violin, and the two would often perform together.
- Antonio continued to study and practice the violin, even after he became a priest. He was called the "Red Priest" because of his flaming red hair. However, after a while, his bad asthma kept Antonio from saying Mass.
- After that, Vivaldi spent all his time writing music and teaching. He taught at an orphanage for girls, and wrote a lot of music for the girls to play. People came from miles around to hear Vivaldi's talented students perform the beautiful music he had written.
- Many people think Vivaldi was the best Italian composer of his time. He wrote concertos, operas, church music and many other compositions. In all, Antonio wrote over 500 concertos. His most famous set of concertos for violin and orchestra is **The Four Seasons**.

Some useful links

(Copy-paste links into the browser)

George Handel and "Water music"

<https://www.classicsforkids.com/shows/shows.php?id=259>

Antonio Vivaldi and "Four Season"

<https://www.udiscovermusic.com/classical-features/vivaldi-four-seasons/>

Easter homework:

Choose one composer from the Baroque period and find 10 interesting facts of his biography.

Listen to one of the compositions of this composer.