

Bach



Life, Music, and Activities



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Bach: Life, Music, and Activities





Life and Accomplishments Summary

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany, in 1685. He came from a large musical family, and many of his relatives were singers, organists, or instrumentalists. From an early age, Bach learned how music could be shared in church, at home, and in the community.

As a young musician, Bach studied violin, keyboard, and organ. He worked in several German cities, including Arnstadt, Mühlhausen, Weimar, and Köthen. In 1723 he became the cantor of St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, where he taught students, led music for worship, and composed many important works.

Bach wrote many kinds of music, including fugues, preludes, chorales, cantatas, concertos, suites, organ works, and keyboard music. Some of his most famous works include the Brandenburg Concertos, The Well-Tempered Clavier, the Mass in B Minor, the St. Matthew Passion, and the Cello Suites.

Bach is especially known for counterpoint, a style in which two or more melodies fit together beautifully. His music shows balance, structure, and deep feeling. He wrote for churches, courts, students, and skilled performers, and his works helped shape the sound of the Baroque era.

Bach had twenty children, and several of them became musicians. During his lifetime he was admired as a brilliant organist and keyboard player. After his death in 1750, later generations recognized him as one of history's greatest composers. Today his music continues to inspire performers, students, and listeners around the world.

Comprehension Questions

Use the summary page to answer each question in complete sentences.

1. Where and when was Johann Sebastian Bach born?

2. What kind of family did Bach grow up in?

3. Which instruments did Bach study as a young musician?

4. Name two jobs Bach held during his career.

5. In which city did Bach become a cantor?

6. Name two kinds of music Bach wrote.

7. What are two famous works named in the summary?

8. What is counterpoint?

9. Why did Bach write much of his music?

10. How many children did Bach have?

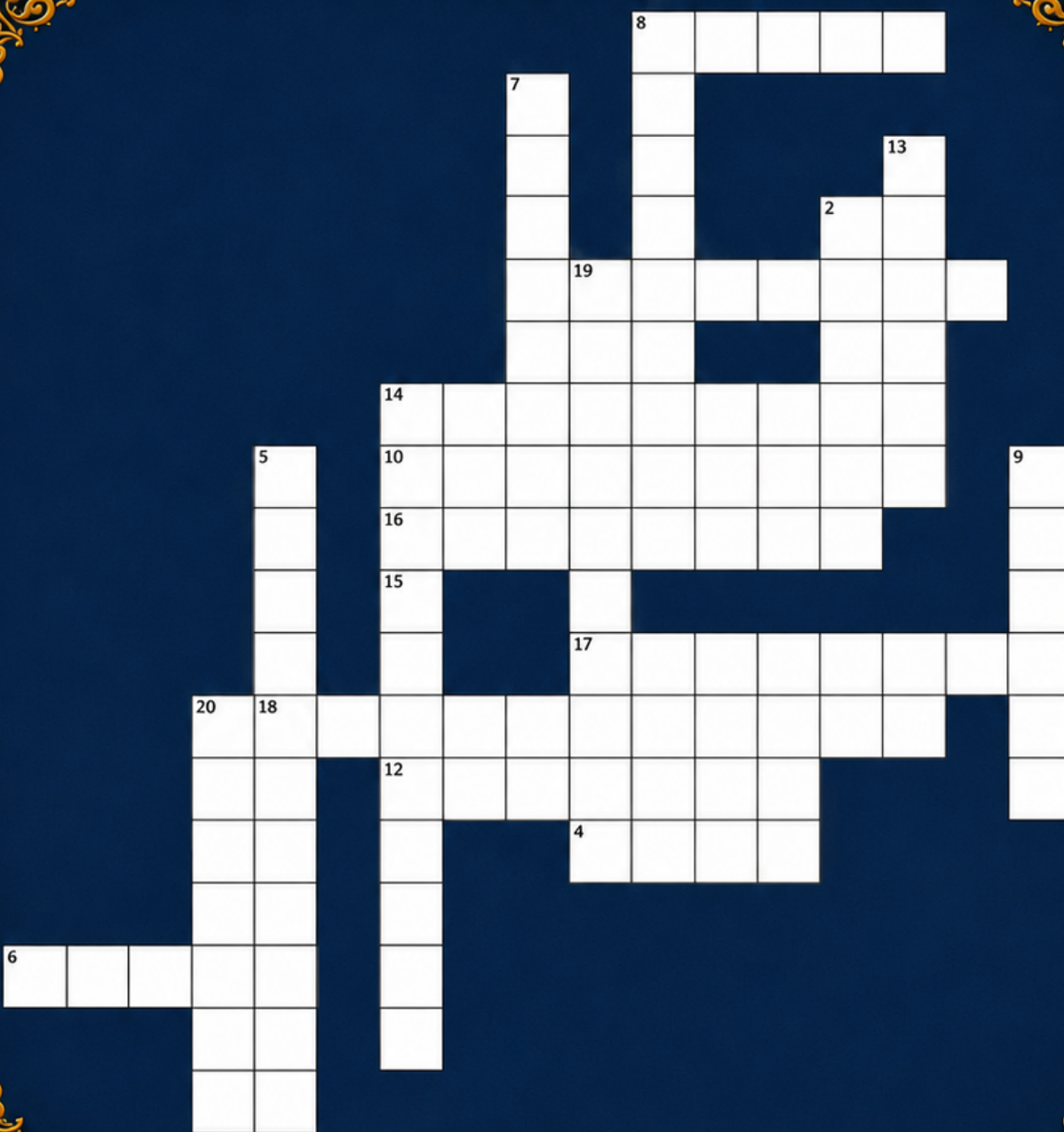
11. For what skill was Bach especially admired during his lifetime?

12. Why is Bach remembered as an important composer today?



Crossword Puzzle: Grid

Use the facts from this workbook to complete the crossword.





Comprehension Answer Key

Use the summary page to review the correct responses.

1. Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany, in 1685.

2. Bach grew up in a large musical family.

3. As a young musician, Bach studied violin, keyboard, and organ.

4. Bach worked as an organist, teacher, court musician, and cantor.

5. Bach became a cantor in Leipzig.

6. Bach wrote many kinds of music, including fugues, chorales, cantatas, concertos, suites, and keyboard works.

7. Two famous works named in the summary are the *Brandenburg Concertos* and *The Well-Tempered Clavier*.

8. Counterpoint is a style in which two or more melodies fit together beautifully.

9. Bach wrote much of his music for churches, courts, students, and skilled performers.

10. Bach had twenty children.

11. During his lifetime, Bach was especially admired as a brilliant organist and keyboard player.

12. Bach is remembered as important because his music shaped the Baroque era and still inspires performers, students, and listeners today.



Crossword Solution Grid





Crossword Answer Key

Across

- 4. BACH
- 6. ORGAN
- 8. FUGUE
- 10. LEIPZIG
- 12. CANTATA
- 14. GERMANY
- 16. BAROQUE
- 17. EISENACH
- 19. CLAVIER
- 20. COUNTERPOINT

Down

- 1. COMPOSER
- 2. VIOLIN
- 3. FAMILY
- 5. CANTOR
- 7. WEIMAR
- 9. KOTHEN
- 11. CHORALE
- 13. TWENTY
- 15. CONCERTO
- 18. ORGANIST