



Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) was born to a musical family, and by the time he was 15 he was playing the violin in an orchestra. But it was for his organ playing that Bach became famous all over his native Germany. When he was complimented on his playing, he said modestly: "There is nothing remarkable about it. All you have to do is hit the right notes at the

right time and the instrument plays itself."

A deeply religious man, Johann Sebastian Bach wrote a great many works expressing his faith. At the center of his religious music were more than two hundred cantatas — vocal music based on the Bible. Other famous Bach religious works include the *St. Matthew Passion* and the *B Minor Mass*. He is also remembered for the *Brandenburg Concertos* and *The Well-Tempered Clavier*.

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759) was, like Bach, a German and a master of the organ. But the two great composers never met, and their lives were very different. Handel spent most of his life in England, writing operas and other large-scale works. He invented a new musical form, the oratorio, which is a musical drama but without scenery or action. His most famous oratorio is *The Messiah*, with its resounding Hallelujah Chorus. Although many of his works had religious themes, Handel was not a composer of religious music the way Bach was. Handel wrote to entertain, and he did so with great power and beauty. Beethoven later said of Handel: "He was the greatest of us all."

Directions: If a statement is true, circle the letter in the "True" column. If a statement is false, circle the letter in the "False" column.

	True	False
1. Bach was a German composer.	C	O
2. Bach composed much of his music in England.	R	A
3. Handel was a German composer.	N	A
4. Handel did not write music to entertain.	T	T
5. Bach and Handel were born in the same year.	A	O
6. Bach was a famous organ player.	T	R
7. Handel spent most of his life in Germany.	I	A
8. Handel wrote operas.	S	O

Use the circled letters, in order, to complete this definition.

Bach wrote hundreds of 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8, vocal music based on the Bible.

Use the letters you did **not** circle, in order, to complete this definition.

Handel invented the 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8, a musical drama without scenery or action.