

Composers Bach - Handel - Purcell

by Beatrice Wilder

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Johann Sebastian Bach - 1685 - 1750

his early years

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany, on March 21, 1865. He was born into a very musical family which produced many prominent musicians over several generations. Johann Sebastian's father, Johann Ambrosius Bach, was a well known musician. He was actively involved in local music and was a well known violinist and court trumpeter. Johann Sebastian, who was called by his middle name, Sebastian, began to learn about music from his father.

Sadly, by the time Sebastian was ten years old, both of his parents had died. He went to live with his older brother, Johann Christoph, in another town called Ohrdruf. Christoph was an organist at his church and he made sure that his younger brother kept up practicing his music.

While Sebastian was a young boy he began to learn to play the violin, viola, clavier (which was a keyboard instrument) and the organ. He also sang in the choir at the church.

Christoph was able to help Sebastian to develop his keyboard skills a lot because he himself was a fine organist and he had to repair and maintain the church organ as well, which meant that he could teach Sebastian very much about the instrument.

Apart from being a talented musician, Sebastian was deeply religious. While he was living with his brother Christoph, he went to school where music and religion were important parts of his studies. Sebastian stayed with his brother until he was fifteen yeas old. He then went to live in Lüneburg and continued his studies there while earning his own living as a chorister at the Church of Saint Michael. here he learned much more about church music and about music from other countries like France and Italy, which really interested him. He was by now a very accomplished musician and a talented composer.

At the age of eighteen he travelled to Weimar to play the violin in the chamber orchestra of Prince Johann Ernst of Weimar and after that he moved on to Arnstadt, to play the church organ there. Even though he was such a young man he was already getting to be well known and people liked his music very much.

What was the name of the town where Johann Sebastian was born?						
Who was his first music teacher?						
Who took care of him after his parents died?						
What instrument did his brother play?	What instrument did his brother play?					
Name two instruments that he had to practice						
How old was he when he left his brother's house	e?					
What did he learn about when he went to Lüneb	urg?					
True or False	He helped repair the violins at church					
Johann Sebastian's father played the flute He was deeply religious						
He came from a very musical family	His father died when he was 12					
Johann Sebastian sang in the church choir He played organ for Duke Johann Ernst						

Johann Sebastian Bach - 1685 - 1750

Composers Bach - Handel - Purcell

Sheet 2

his later years

When Sebastian was twenty he spent three months studying with a famous German composer and organist, Dietrich Buxtehude. He was only supposed to be there for one month but he was learning so much that he stayed on for another two months just because he wanted to. He used a lot of what he learned in his own compositions and his own playing. Some of his new ideas sounded strange to his listeners but most people liked what they heard.

Two years later he married Maria Barbara Bach, a cousin of his, and they went to live in Mülhausen, where Sebastian played the organ in the Church of Saint Blasius. They didn't stay there long. In the following year, 1708, they decided to go back to Weimar where Sebastian was to work for Duke Wilhelm Ernst again as organist and violinist. He stayed there for nine years. During this time Sebastian wrote about thirty cantatas as well as music for organ and harpsichord. He was made leader of the court orchestra in Weimar in 1714 when he was twenty nine years old.

During this time Sebastian traveled around Germany quite a lot giving concerts. He was getting to be famous. At the same time his own family was growing. Sebastian and Maria had seven children altogether, but in those days many children died, especially when they were still babies. Only four of their children survived.

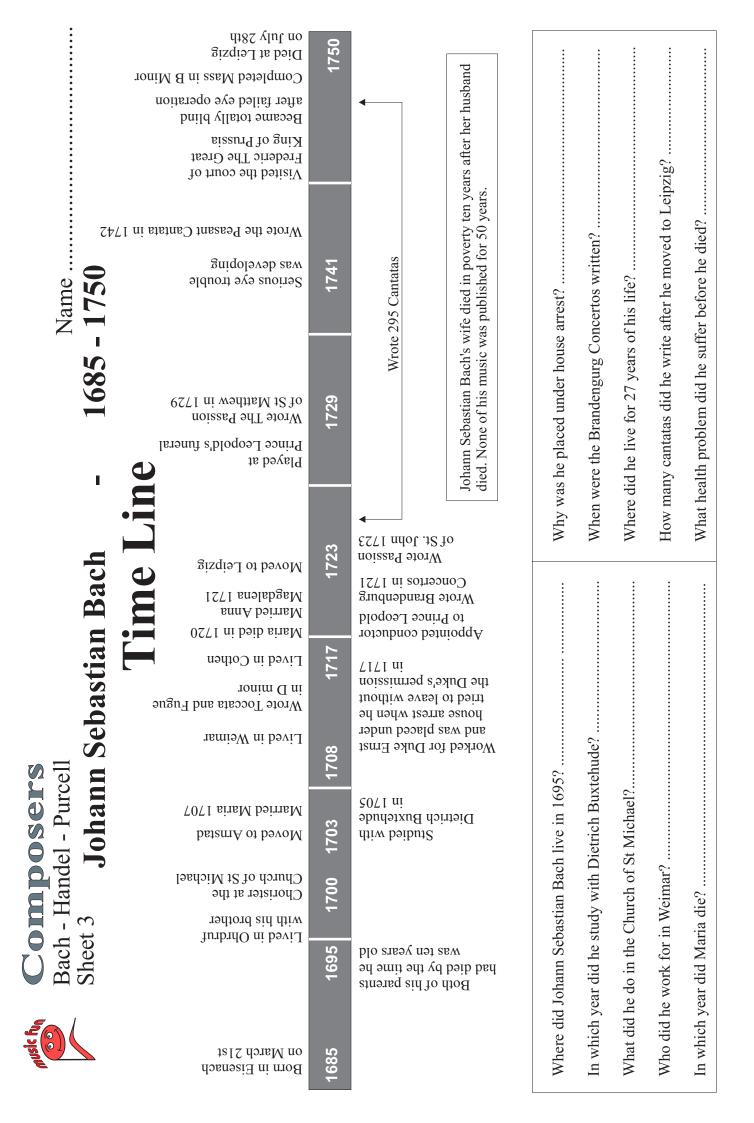
In 1717 Sebastian took his family and moved to Köthen to become the conductor of the orchestra for Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen. In between writing musically professionally, which he did a great deal of, he also managed to write music books for his wife and children, to help them advance musically as well. He wrote the 'Well Tempered Clavier," the "Inventions," and the "Little Organ Book" for them.

Suddenly, in 1720, his wife Maria died. This left him very sad and with four young children to care for. It must have been a very difficult time for him.

About a year later he married Anna Magdalena Wilcken, who was a singer and the daughter of a musician. She took over the care of his children and helped him to get on with his work. They had thirteen more children but only six of them survived.

The Bach family stayed in Köthen until 1723 when when they moved to Leipzig. Sebastian was appointed musical director and choirmaster of Saint Thomas' church. He stayed in Leipzig for the rest of his life and wrote the greatest of all his music there.

Which great organist and composer did he study with?					
Who was Johann Sebastian Bach's first wife?					
What work did he do soon after his first marriage?					
How many of his children survived altogether?					
Who did he go to work for in 1708?					
What music books did he write for his family					
Where did he move to from Köthen					
True or False	His second wife, Anna, was a pianist				
He taught Dietrich Buxtehude	He moved to Weimar in 1708				
He wrote 13 cantatas in Weimar	He became a conductor for Prince Leopold				
Sebastian wrote 'Inventions' for his family He stayed in Leipzig for nine years					





George Frideric Handel - 1685 - 1759

his early years

George Frideric Handel was born about a month before Johann Sebastian Bach and would have been playing children's games around his home in Halle, Germany at the same time that Sebastian was playing in his home town, Eisenach, which was not all that far away. There were a lot of musicians in Halle, so it would not have been uncommon for a young boy to take an interest in music. George loved to watch the musicians play. He especially liked to watch the horn players on the bridges over the rivers.

His father, however, did not want him to grow up to be a musician and insisted on him studying law instead. George's family were hard workers and had little time for music. George's father, also called George Handel, was a surgeon and because of this he knew the Duke of Saxony. At one meeting the Duke heard George playing the organ and said that he would provide him with lessons. His father gave his permission and George became so good at playing the organ that he became the assistant organist at the church when he was just twelve years old.

Sadly, at this time George's father died. In his grief George wrote a poem to remember him by. Because he was very concerned about obeying his father's wishes George decided to go to school and study law. However, his heart was not in it. He was so much drawn to music that he did not finish his studies. At that time a position became vacant as organist at a Cathedral. He applied for it and was accepted. When George turned eighteen he moved to Hamburg, which is a big city. In Hamburg George became a violinist at the German Opera House. By now he had learned to play the organ, the harpsichord, the violin and the oboe. He was drawn to the horn players and of these George liked the oboe the best. He was hard working and ambitious, always looking for ways to improve his music and interested in meeting people who could help him in his career. He also began to think about travelling to other countries.

What was the name of the town where George was born?					
Which other composer was born in the same year?					
What did George's father want him to study?					
Who organised music lessons for George?					
What major decision did George make when he	was 18?				
How old was he when his father died?					
Name three instruments that he could play?					
True or False	He liked watching the horn players				
George Handel was born in Hamburg	His father wanted him to be a musician				
He studied law Handel played a violin at church					
He was taught to play the organ	He was offered a job as an organist				

Bach - Handel - Purcell Sheet 5

George Frideric Handel - 1685 - 1759

his later years

George Handel wanted to travel and expand his musical career. In When he was 22 he decided to visit Italy, where he learnt a lot about their style, which he liked and used in his own music as well. He spent time at Florence, Rome and Naples and while he was there he wrote a lot of music, including operas, oratorios and cantatas. The last opera that he wrote in Italy was 'Agrippina,' which he wrote in 1709 in Venice. It was a huge success.

The following year he returned to Germany to become the court composer and conductor for the Elector of Hanover, but he soon wanted to travel again and by the end of the year he left for London, where he found more success with his new opera, 'Rinaldo.'

When he went back to Germany, he asked permission for a short trip back to London, which was granted. He never returned from that trip but made his home in London permanently.

London was an exciting place, which had just been rebuilt after the disastrous Fire of London, which lasted for five days and burnt down most of the old buildings.

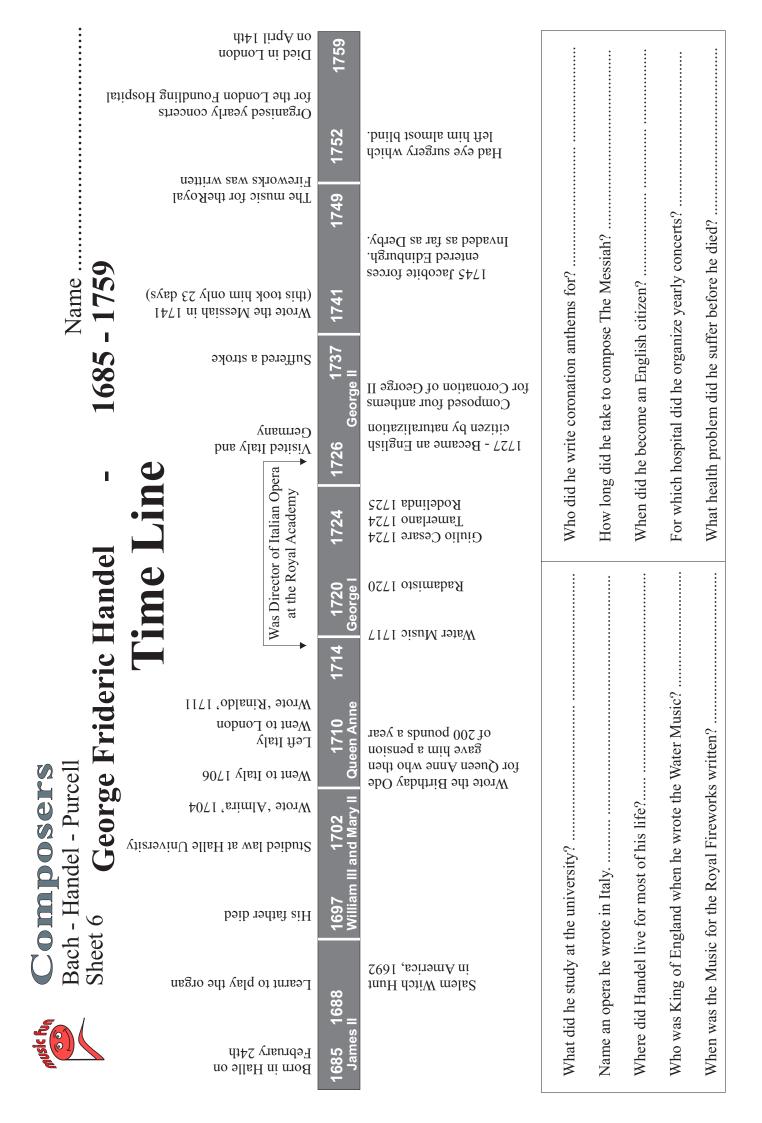
Handel became very popular in England. Queen Anne, the Queen of England at the time, liked him very much. After he wrote a piece of music called 'Birthday Ode' for her she was so happy she said she would pay him two hundred pounds a year for the rest of his life.

In 1719 Handel started the Royal Academy of Music where he presented some of his greatest operas over the next ten years. He had many successes and a few failures but he was a popular person and was happy in London. Handel became a naturalized British subject in 1727.

As well as operas, Handel wrote music for national celebrations. One of his most famous pieces was the 'Water Music' which he wrote for the King to listen to as he sailed down the Thames River.

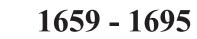
He was later appointed composer to the Chapel Royal by the King. It was around this time that he composed one of his greatest and most well known oratorios, 'The Messiah.' This work is performed by many choirs today at Christmas time.

Name two places that Handel visited in Italy.					
Name an opera that he wrote while in Italy.					
How long did he stay in Italy?					
Where was he when he wrote 'Rinaldo'?					
What major project did he undertake in 1719?					
Who did he write 'Birthday Ode' for?					
Name two other pieces that he wrote					
True or False	Queen Anne liked his music				
Handel wrote 'Agrippina' in Italy	He wrote music for celebrations.				
He lived in Hamburg most of his life	He became composer to the Chapel Royal				
He was in the Fire of London He died in Germany					





Henry Purcell



his early years

When Henry Purcell was a little boy, he would have played in the cobble-stone lanes around his home in London with his little brother, Daniel, who was only one year younger than Henry. He grew up to be a composer as well. Some sad things happened during their childhood years. Henry was only about six years old when the Great Plague spread to London. This was a terrible disease that killed about a hundred thousand people in only one year. When Henry was seven years old he lived through the great fire of London as well. It lasted for five days and destroyed most of the city because most of the buildings were made of wood.

After that, Henry saw the city being rebuilt, but this time the buildings were made out of brick and stone so they were much safer and better looking.

Henry had a fine singing voice. This was not surprising because both his father and uncle Thomas were musicians and Gentlemen of the Royal Chapel, where musicians who played for the king were trained. When he was about nine years old, Henry became one of the Children in the Chapel Royal and was taught to sing properly by a man named Henry Cooke. Mr Cooke used to be a captain in the army and he disciplined the boys in his care and made sure that they practiced as much as they needed to and studied all the subjects that they had to learn.

The boys didn't only learn to sing. They had to work at all their usual school subjects as well, and they also had to learn how to read and write music and to play all sorts of musical instruments like the violin and the lute and the organ and the harpsichord. Henry Purcell was a very good student and learned faster than many of the older boys. He was particularly good at writing music.

When Henry was only thirteen years old, his teacher, Henry Cooke, died. Mr Cooke's son-in-law, Pelham Humphrey, who was a very clever musician, took his place and taught Henry a lot about writing different styles of music. Mr Humphrey had been to the continent of Europe and had learned about the French and Italian styles of music and he taught Henry as much as he could.

Henry had to leave the choir when his voice broke, but he then became an apprentice to the keeper of the royal instruments and also had the job of tuning the organ in Westminster Abbey while he continued his studies and began seriously writing music.

What was the name of the city where Henry Purcell was born?				
Name one terrible thing that happened when he was a boy?				
Who was Henry's first teacher?				
What subject was Henry particularly good at?				
Who taught Henry after Mr Cooke died?				
Which two styles of music did Henry learn about	t?			
What job did Henry have in Westminster Abbey	?			
True or False Henry learned music in France				
Henry had a fine singing voice He was good at writing music				
His father and uncle were musicians He tuned the piano in Westminster Abbey				
He taught Henry Cooke to sing His first teacher was Mr Humphrey				



Henry Purcell

1659 - 1695

his later years

When Henry Purcell was eighteen years old, Matthew Locke, who was the composer for Court Violins, died. Henry was appointed to take over this role. This was the real beginning of his work as a composer. He became composer to the Kings Band two years later and soon after that he began writing music for the stage as well. He also wrote a lot of music for the church.

It was an interesting time to be a composer in London because so much had changed in a short space of time. All the great buildings in London had to be planned and rebuilt after the great fire of 1666. All the houses and shops had to be rebuilt. Also when Charles II became the king of England there had been no king before him for eleven years. The previous king (Charles I) was beheaded in 1649. Charles II intended to bring music and joy back to England and he certainly achieved this goal. London became a bright, merry place that was alive with music and theatre.

Purcell's first attempt at writing music for the theatre was the music to a play called 'Theodosius,' which was written by Nathaniel Lee. After this he was asked to write the music for many other plays. A well known man called John Dryden wrote a play called 'King Arthur' in 1691 and he asked Henry Purcell to write music for it. Henry wrote a great deal of music for public entertainment.

When he was twenty two years old, Purcell married his wife, Frances. They had six children but three of these died. One of his children, a son named Edward, also grew up to be a musician. During his life, Purcell produced over one hundred songs. He became very well known for his song writing. He also continued to write music for special occasions like coronations, funerals and Saints Days.

In 1689 he wrote his only true opera, which was called 'Dido and Aeneas.' It was a miniature opera that was intended to be performed at a girls' school in Chelsea. It was a great success.

He was writing music for a semi-opera called 'The Indian Queen' but he suddenly became so ill that he couldn't complete it. His brother Daniel had to take over for him.

Henry Purcell died at his home in London on November 21, 1695.

Who did Purcell take over from when he was 18?					
Name a play that Purcell wrote the music for?					
At least how many songs did Purcell write?					
Name his only true opera.					
Name a special occasion he might have written	music for				
Which of his children grew up to be a musician?	,				
What was his final work (completed by his broth	ner)?				
True or False	His first opera was called 'King Arthur'				
Henry wrote music for the stage	He wrote no church music				
He wrote coronation music	He wrote music for John Dryden				
He wrote over 1000 songs	His completed 'Indian Queen' and then died				

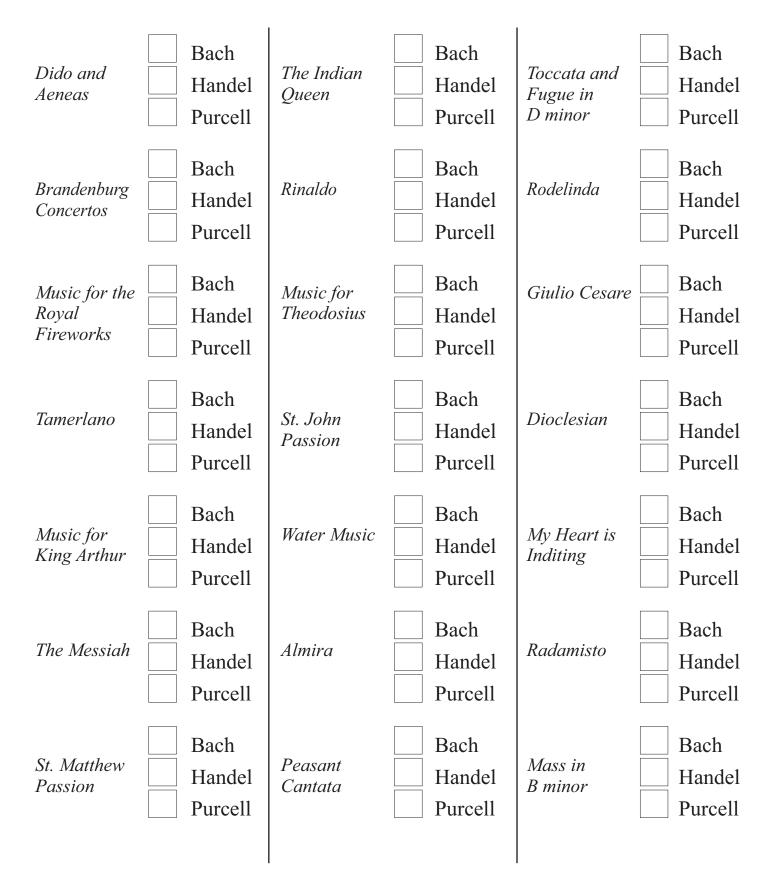
- 1659 - 1695	Appointed composer for the court violins. Became composer in ordinaty to the Kings Band Mrote Wy Heart is Inditing' bido and Aeneas' (1683) Wrote his only opera 'Dido and Aeneas' (1689) Wrote Vo and Aeneas' (1689) (1000 and Aeneas' (1689) (1000 and Aeneas' (1689) (1000 and Aeneas' (1690) Dido and Aeneas' (1690) for St Cecilia's Day (1694) for St Cecilia's Day (1694) for St Cecilia's Day (1694)	5 1677 1679 1680 1682 1685 1690 1695 1695 1690 1695	Matthew Locke dies Began to work for the stage as well as for Court and Church Married Frances (1681) Sonatas of III Parts (1683) replaced James II (1683)	When did he tune the organ at Westminster Abbey?	For whom did he write 'My Heart is Inditing'?	When did he write Dido and Aeneas?	What did he write for St Cecilia's Day?	When was Dioclesian written?
Bach - Handel - Purcell Sheet 9 Henry Purcell	Henry Purcell was born. Henry Purcell was born. He was Daniel was born. He was also a composer. Purcell's father died (according to some sources) when Purcell was about 4 or 5 His uncle Thomas took over raising him. He was also a musician. Became Chorister of the Children of the Chapel Royal Children of the Chapel Royal musician.	1659 1660 1675 1666 1670 1673 1675 Charles II	King Charles II restored to throne. Bubonic Plague kills thousands of people of London of London Tuned organ at Westminster Abbey.	Where did Purcell live?	When was the great fire of London	What historic event did the fire follow?	Where was he a chorister?	How did he assist John Hingston?

Bach - Handel - Purcell Sheet 10

Name

QUIZ

Name the Composer - tick the correct answer



Wordsearch

Find the answers to the questions on these composers reading across, up, down or diagonally. Draw circles around them and write the answers on the dotted lines.

WSYERHPMUHLPLHL EEUYCCPCPCLEASE IBSLHHICTAILGGP ΜΑΚΤSΟΝΟGΝLΝΙΕΑ ASRTMRDUAEOZDSH RTONIIEDNSPUAAC FIWADSNNSIH Т INN DAESNTASEEASBOI NNRASEELTTSLEDL WAIEERLXNEIGNNO UGFPCZUAMNRAKOI ERYQNBCVDULVMLV COCHARLESGITALY HRBERNMRNSAMOHT MGMOFIREARIMLAV

Composers

Bach - Handel - Purcell

Sheet 11

George Frideric Handel.

Wrote(opera) in 1704
Wrote Birthday Ode for Queen
Lived most of his life in
Music for Royal (1749)
Was born in
Went to in 1706
Went to in 1710
Wrote the in 1741
Was fond of this instrument
First instrument he learnt
His father was a

Johann Sebastian Bach.

Was born in
His middle name
An instrument he played
at Church of St Michael
Studied with Dietrich
Married Anna
Lived here for 9 years
Wrote 295 at Leipzig
Lived in for 27 years
Wrote Cantata in 1742
Went before he died

Henry Purcell.

•
Joined the Children of theRoyal
KingII reigned in 1659
His brother's name was
Only opera wasand Aeneas
He saw the Greatof London
His wife's name was
Taught by Pelham
He lived through the Bubonic
Wrote more than 100
He had an uncle named
Was buried inAbbey

Name	 14. Handel spent most of his life in this city 15. Short for Henry Purcell's brother's first name 18. The town where Bach was born 19. Purcell was taught by Mr Pelham 21. Purcell spent his entire life in this country 22. The name of Purcell's uncle 22. The name of Purcell's uncle 11. Which two composers were buried in Westminster Abbey? 	during the Fire of London?	3. Which composer wrote the Peasant Cantata?	3. Which composer lived in Weimar?	3. Which composer went to Italy?
Crosswo	 20. Bach studied with Dietrichin 1705 23. Handel was born here 24. Handel's father was one 24. Handel's father was one 25. Plainsong, GregorianRoyal 26. Purcell was one of the 26. Purcell was one of the 27. Handel wrote this opera in 1704 28. Bach lived here for 27 years 	 King II was on the throne when Purcell was born 	 In a choir Purcell was required to sing in An instrument that Bach was 	able to play 6. Purcell's only true opera, and Aeneas	8. The first instrument that Handel learnt to play 10. JohannBach
olsers ol - Purcell	7 8 11 13 14 13 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 14 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 16 1		 11. Purcell wrote more than 100 of these. 12. In 1749 Handel wrote this 	13. Both Bach and Handel lost their eyesight and went	 16. While he was at Leipzig Bach wrote 295 17. Handel wrote the Birthday Ode for Queen
Bach - Handel - Purcell Sheet 12	0 0 10 0	ACROSS	1. Bach was aat the Church of St Michael 3. Handel wrote this famous oratorio	5. Purcell saw the of London in 1666	 This was at one time Handel's favourite instrument. A country Handel visited in 1706