

“BACH TO SCHOOL”

MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON PLAN

TARGET AUDIENCE: Middle school music classes in a local school district.

LENGTH OF PRESENTATION: 40 minute class period

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

1. To develop an interest in the music of Johann Sebastian Bach as either a future audience member or participant in the Bach Choir of Bethlehem.
2. To share our experience of Johann Sebastian Bach as members of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem.

INTRODUCTION:

A selection from the *Organ Tocatta in D* will be played for the students. The presenter will follow with some questions, such as:

1. Do you recognize this music?
2. When do you think it was written?
3. How many students know who J.S. Bach is?
4. What do you know about him?

BACH AS A GENIUS:

The presenter will utilize a time line to show students the time period in which Bach lived. Information about the life of Bach will be introduced to the students through a discussion format. The important facts include:

- Bach was born in 1685, almost 100 years before the founding of our country.
- The world was a different place in his time, in that there was no TV, radio or the constant communication we take for granted.
- Many of the instruments used today (such as the piano) were not invented during Bach’s lifetime.
- The world of work was one of trades and apprenticeship. People usually followed a family trade. Music was the trade or work in Bach’s family.
- Bach worked as a performer, composer, teacher and director of church music. He wrote a new cantata for each Sunday service of the year for many years. There are over 200 of these works now available to us.

- Bach's family life was not easy. His parents died when he was ten years old and when he was fifteen he was on his own.

The students will be shown a copy of a Bach cantata to demonstrate the complexity of the music he composed for a Sunday service. In addition, students will listen to a Bach selection in which they will first hear the instrumental parts played, then gradually adding all the voice parts to reinforce the idea of Bach as a musical genius.

THE BACH CHOIR OF BETHLEHEM:

The students will view the Bach Choir video to highlight the history and sounds of the choir. Following the video, the presenter will talk about the kinds of people who are members, i.e. teachers, dentists, artists, nurses, restaurant owners, etc. In addition, the presenter will talk about the family tradition of the choir and the many hours of volunteer service that the choir members give.

There will be time available for questions from the students and an invitation will be made for students to attend a concert and experience a live performance.