

“BACH TO SCHOOL”

Elementary School Lesson Plan

(Grades 3 – 6)

- I. **Introduction** - Represent Bach Choir of Bethlehem
- A. Historical data on Choir
 1. When founded – 1898
 2. Commitment to Bach’s music over 100 years; Centennial in 1998
 3. Commitment to high musical standards
 4. Community choir – number of directors – 6
 - B. Present day data
 1. Size – 110
 2. Types of people who sing in choir (all walks of life)
 3. Concert traditions in Bethlehem
 - a. May Festival
 - b. Christmas concerts
 - c. Spring concert
 - d. Family Concert
 - e. Bach ant Noon
 4. Recordings – listened to worldwide – Many CDs
 5. Show Bach Choir video

II. **Who is Johann Sebastian Bach?**

- A. Picture from Poster
 1. Discuss appearance – intensity, wig
 2. 1685-1750
 3. Pennsylvania was founded in 1689, Bethlehem in 1742
- B. Use timeline (*see booklet*)
 1. All music was copied by hand – family job
 2. As data is read on each year of timeline – students figure out his age and add one key word to the specific year

1685 - Born – in Eisenach, Germany

1695 – Orphan – both parents had died by the time he was 10; lived with older brothers and learned to play the organ, violin, harpsichord as well as to sing

1700 – Student – studied music at St. Michael’s School in Germany

1703 – Organist – took a job as organist and choirmaster at Arnstadt

1705 – Nannygoat – called some of his students that because they weren't very good; he walked 260 miles just to hear a concert

1707 – Married Maria – had 7 children before she died 13 years later

1708 – Duke – worked for the Duke of Weimar as a court musician – he had to compose music for all the parties and grand occasions; wrote *Tocatta* (play excerpt from *Phantom of the Opera*); started to become famous

1714 – Director – became the director of the Duke's orchestra – had to compose one cantata per month (explain what a cantata is – listen to excerpt of your choice)

1717 – Wins hands down – wins a big harpsichord contest – other guy “chickens out” when he hears JSB practicing; **Prince** – JSB gets thrown in jail by the Duke because he wants to go to work for the Prince; composed all of the *Brandenburgs* for the Prince (play excerpt)

1720 – Widower – Maria dies – 7 children – ages 1 to 12; he was away, came back for funeral, but she was already buried (no phones!)

1721 – Marries Anna – they had 13 children! $7 + 13 = 20$ children – Bach had 20 children, 11 died as babies, no hospitals or medicine, no shots or vaccines

1723 – Cantor – moves to Leipzig to take a job at a big church; stayed there until he died. Bach composed one cantata per week; had to take care of the boys at the school, began to lose his sight towards the end of his life (play excerpt *Gloria* from the *Mass*)

1750 – Died – operation on eyes failed – died from infection; three of his sons became composers and musicians; his wife was left poor and died in poverty

1830 – 80 years later – Mendelssohn rediscovered Bach's music and Bach became very famous

III. Closing

- A. Review Bach's life
- B. Discuss excerpts from video and CDs
- C. Discuss the concert manners
- D. Discuss booklet
 - 1. Bach Choir Logo – Entrance to Packer Church at Lehigh University
 - 2. Word Search
 - 3. Bach's portrait (which students can color) and musical handwriting
 - 4. St. Thomas Church and School in Leipzig
 - 5. Corporate sponsorships
- E. Discuss upcoming concert / assembly program which they will be invited to attend. Hand out the ticket offer flyer and discuss it
- F. Answer any questions / Thank You!!!