Music Curriculum

Grades 5 - 7

Handel's Messiah

This curriculum package has been funded from the Eugene A. Dexter Charitable Fund administered by Bank of America, Trustee, through the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts.
Arcadia Players Presents:
Arcadia Reaches Children (ARCH)

Lessons for Understanding and Appreciating

MESSIAH
By George Frideric Handel

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Messiah by George Frideric Handel
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LESSON #1

Introduction

OBJECTIVES

• Through the reading of an illustrated biography of George Frideric Handel, students will be able to discuss with understanding the life and work of this eighteenth-century composer.
• Students will be able to recognize and describe the positive effects of self-motivation and determination in overcoming the obstacles Handel faced in his life and be able to apply those concepts to their own life experiences in writing.
• Students will learn to sing the opening phrase of the “Hallelujah Chorus”.

MATERIALS

• Messiah CD
• Book: Handel, Who Knew What He Liked by M.T. Anderson and Kevin Hawkes
• Student writing project activity sheet
• Song sheet for “Hallelujah Chorus”
• Image from original “Hallelujah” score
• Portraits of Handel

PROCESS

1. Play “Hallelujah Chorus” for students (Disc 2, Track 14).

Guiding questions before first listen:

• Once the music starts, raise your hand if you have heard this piece before. Notice the main word being sung. What is the mood or energy of the piece?
• What is it called? Who wrote it? (show pictures of Handel and original score)
• What does “Hallelujah” mean?
• How did the music make you feel?
**Messiah by George Frideric Handel**

Show portraits of Handel and original score, note quill pen in composer’s hand, and discuss handwritten notation.

Additional discussion may include anything else they might have noticed such as instrumentation, voices, tempo, dynamics, and style.

Play the selection a second time if desired.

**2. Read aloud the picture book (or project on a screen and have students take turns reading).**

Questions for Discussion: (Most of the answers to these questions appear as little informational statements at the bottom of the book pages. They should be read aloud along with the story.)

- Who was G.F. Handel?
- What was remarkable about Handel as a young boy?
- What experiences do you think were the most influential in his early life?
- What is a clavichord? (find a description on the first page of the story)
- How is a clavichord different from a harpsichord?
- Did orchestra conductors in Handel’s time use a baton (conducting stick)?
- What is an opera?
- What are songs in operas called?
- What else did Handel do besides composing and performing operas?
- What problems did Handel encounter when trying to perform operas?
- Why did people like his oratorio called Messiah?
- What are the four voice parts in an opera or oratorio called?
- How is an oratorio different from an opera?
- What is the most famous section of Messiah?

*Note to teacher: The reading of this picture book could be spread over several lessons to allow for discussion and/or interspersed with other activities.*
3. Ask the students to write a short story as outlined on the activity sheet for Lesson #1.

4. Teach students to sing opening phrase of “Hallelujah Chorus” (see song sheet).

5. Watch “Hallelujah Chorus” video created by Kuinerrarmiut Elitnaurviat 5th grade class in Quinhagak, Alaska.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyviyF-N23A
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

LESSON #1 STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET

We learned from the biography of G. F. Handel that he was determined as a child to play the instrument and music he loved in spite of obstacles he encountered along the way. Later in life he was determined to compose and perform the music he was inspired to create in spite of many difficulties.

Write a short story about yourself, a real living character other than yourself, an historical character, or an imaginary character who had a dream and overcame obstacles and difficulties in order to develop their talents and achieve success.
Hallelujah

(Original key: D major)
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#1 Portrait of George Frideric Handel (Messiah Composer)
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#2 Portrait of George Frideric Handel (Messiah Composer)
#3 Hallelujah Chorus - page from original score by Handel
LESSON #2
Understanding the Baroque Period through the Arts

OBJECTIVES

• Students will be able to define “Baroque” and “ornamentation”.
• Students will be able to identify Baroque ornamentation as reflected in aspects of eighteenth-century European culture (music, art, architecture, clothing etc.).
• Students will sing the opening phrases of two arias from Messiah.
• Students will be able to illustrate “ornamentation” in their own art activity (drawing).

MATERIALS

• Music History Timeline
• Song sheets for “Every valley shall be exalted” and “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion”
• First page of score for “Every valley…” and “Rejoice greatly…”
• Messiah CD
• Student Art Project sheet
• Images of Baroque art and architecture, furniture, instruments and clothing
• Colored pencils, thin markers or crayons


Messiah by George Frideric Handel

PROCESS

1. Teacher will relay information about the Baroque period and show examples of highly “decorated” Baroque furniture, architecture and clothing.

Background Information

- We will be studying a piece of music called Messiah, written in the summer of 1741 by a musician and composer named George Frideric Handel. Messiah is a very famous example of a type of musical composition called an oratorio. An oratorium is a musical setting of a religious or spiritual story for solo singers (singers who sing alone with instrumental accompaniment), chorus (a group of singers), and an orchestra (a group of instruments), in a dramatic form. Oratorios are usually performed without scenery or costumes in a concert hall or church.

- Messiah was written toward the end of a time period in Europe called the Baroque Period. In this country, George Washington was 9 years old when Messiah was being composed!

(Show Music History Timeline.)

- The word “baroque” was originally used to describe the excesses in the overly “decorated” art or music which was popular between 1600 and 1750. The term may come from the Portuguese word barrôco, which refers to an irregularly shaped pearl (Harvard Dictionary of Music). Today the word “Baroque” is used to describe music and other art forms during that period in Europe. The arts created during this time are known for their elaborate ornamentation (artistic decoration).

Discussion questions:

- How do these Baroque examples differ from the architecture, furniture and clothing being designed and created today?

- What do all these examples have in common?

- Do you think these examples of Baroque artistic expression represent the value of beauty or practicality?

- What techniques were used to ornament (decorate) these examples?
2. Study two musical examples of highly decorative, fast-moving, intricate note patterns.

1. “Every valley shall be exalted” (tenor solo) - teach students to sing m. 10-13 (from song sheet), look at m. 14-19 (in score), listen to excerpt and discuss (Disc 1, Track 2 – begin at 2:53).

Guiding question:

• What musical techniques or qualities make this example sound “Baroque”?

2. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion” (soprano solo) - teach students to sing m. 9-11 (from song sheet), look at m. 12-23 (in score), listen to excerpt and discuss (Disc 1, Track 11).

Guiding question:

• How does the decorative style help to express the words of this piece?

3. Art Activity

• Invite students to decorate a line drawing of a simple chair so it looks “baroque” (distribute Student Art Project sheet.) Teacher may play the above musical examples in the background.
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
### SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

#### Music History Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500-1400</td>
<td>Medieval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1400-1600</td>
<td>Renaissance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600-1750</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
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<tr>
<td>1750-1800</td>
<td>Classical</td>
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<td>1800-1900</td>
<td>Romantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>1900-2000</td>
<td>20th Century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-present</td>
<td>21st Century</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Every valley shall be exalted

(Original key: E major)
Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion

(Original key: Bb major)
Andante (d=89)

Ev’ry valley, ev’ry valley shall be exalted, shall be exalted, shall be exalted.

N1057
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
STUDENT ART PROJECT SHEET FOR LESSON #2

Decorate this chair in the highly ornamented "Baroque" style
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#4 Apse of the Church of St Ignatius (San Ignazio), Rome, Italy
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#5 Nave, Steingaden Abbey, Bavaria, Germany
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#6 Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, France
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#7 Pagodenburg Pavillion Interior, Nympenburg Palace, Munich, Germany
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#8 Hall of Mirrors ballroom, Nymphenburg Palace, Munich, Germany
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#9 Ceiling of the Hall of Mirrors ballroom, Nymphenburg Palace, Munich, Germany
"Lit polonaise" bed, Dauphine’s apartment, Versailles, France
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#11 Baroque armchair, mid 18th century, Russia
#12 Table in Amalienburg pavilion, Nymphenburg Palace, Munich, Germany
"Messiah" by George Frideric Handel

#13 “Passement Clock”, Versailles, France
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#14 Carved English violin
“Messiah” by George Frideric Handel

#15 Baroque pipe organ of the 18th century
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#16 Portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Atherton, ca. 1743
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#17 Portrait of Charles Jennens, 1743 (Messiah Librettist)
#18 Portrait of King Louis XV, King of France and Navarre (1710-1774)
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#19 Portrait of Mary Edwards, 1742
*Messiah* by George Frideric Handel
**MESSIAH** by George Frideric Handel

**LESSON #3**

*Handel’s Last Chance (DVD)*

**OBJECTIVES:**

- Students will be introduced to many of the musical selections from *Messiah*.
- Students will gain understanding of Handel’s historical period and music through engaging historical fiction.
- Students will be introduced to an example of excellent soprano singing by the young boy in the starring role of the film.

**MATERIALS:**

- *Handel’s Last Chance* DVD from The Composers’ Specials Series
- TV or projector and screen

**PROCESS:**

1. **Show the DVD Handel’s Last Chance.**

The viewing of the video will take an entire class period (51 min.) and could include some follow-up discussion at the beginning of the subsequent lesson. The film contains many selections from Messiah and further illustrates the theme of believing in oneself to achieve success in life introduced in Lesson #1. It may be interesting to notice that in the film the young boy (Jamie) sings the same excerpt from the chorus “For Unto Us A Child Is Born” that the students will be asked to learn in Lesson #6 of this curriculum. One possible follow-up question for discussion or a writing assignment could be: What was the “other voice” that Handel said Jamie possessed? Why did Mr. Handel want to point it out to Jamie?

*Note to teacher: The viewing of this DVD could be spread over several lessons to allow for discussion and/or interspersed with other activities.*
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
LESSON #4
Baroque Instrumentation – Part I

Baroque orchestra, strings, trumpet, oboe, and bassoon

OBJECTIVES:

• Students will be able to recognize and identify, by sound and sight, the instruments of the Baroque orchestra listed above, illustrated by both the audio examples from Handel’s Messiah and images of instruments.
• Students will be able to accurately explain how the sound is produced for each instrument.

MATERIALS:

• Messiah CD
• Baroque Orchestra Information Sheet
• Instrument Description Outline
• Images of Baroque instruments, Baroque orchestra and their players

PROCESS:

1. Show the students all the pictures of Baroque instruments and their players. Ask which look familiar and which “modern” instruments they resemble.

• Explain that the instruments used in Handel’s time were Baroque instruments. They were made in “families”, much like the human voice ranges from high to low (soprano, alto, tenor, bass), with some pitches extending beyond the human voice range. Ask the students to describe what they see and guess how the sounds are produced. (Refer to the Instrument Description Outline.)

2. Read and discuss Baroque Orchestra Information Sheet. Show images of Baroque orchestra.
3. Show images and play selections designated for each instrument or instrument section and follow up with a short discussion about sound production.

String Section: Violin, Viola, Cello and Violone

- Play “Pifa” from Messiah (Disc 1, Track 9)
- Guiding questions for first listen: What instruments do you hear? What is the sound quality like? What is the mood of the piece?
- Show images of baroque string instruments and their players.
- Follow-up questions: What does this music remind you of or make you think of?
- Background: This piece depicts the story of the shepherds who were guarding the sheep at night in the countryside, before the star appeared that announced the birth of baby Jesus. “Pifa” refers to piffari (bagpipes or shepherd’s pipes).
- Refer to Instrument Description Outline for details about the string instruments.
- Play “Pifa” again. Ask the students to notice what qualities of the music create the desired effect of peasant folk music played on shepherd’s pipes. (Note the use of 12/8 meter, repeated dotted rhythm patterns, trills and drones to create the feeling of a traditional folk dance.)

Baroque Trumpet

- Play “The Trumpet Shall Sound” (Disc 3, Track 3, 0:29) for strings and trumpet with bass solo voice.
- Guiding questions for first listen: What instrument do you hear most prominently? What is the mood and energy of this piece?
- Show images of Baroque trumpet and trumpet player.
- Follow-up questions: Did the trumpet sound different from the trumpets you are used to hearing? Why do you think Handel chose to score the piece this way?
- Refer to Instrument Description Document for details about the Baroque trumpet.
- Play “The Trumpet Shall Sound” again. Ask the students to notice the relationship between the solo trumpet part and the solo singer’s part. Do they sing/play at the same time? Are their melodies similar or different? How so?
Baroque Oboe and Bassoon

- Play “Sinfonia” (Disc 1, Track 1) for strings and winds.
- Guiding questions for first listen: Can you pick out the sound of the oboe and bassoon in contrast to the strings? Which one plays the higher notes with the violins, and which one plays the lower parts with the cellos and bass? What is the mood of this piece?
- Show images of Baroque oboe and Baroque bassoon and their players.
- Follow-up questions: What purpose do these two woodwind instruments serve as they play with the strings?
- Refer to Instrument Description Outline for details about the Baroque oboe and bassoon.
- Play “Sinfonia” again, asking the students to notice when the mood of the piece changes. A discussion of how that is achieved may follow the listening exercise.
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
Lesson #4 Baroque Orchestra Information Sheet

How is a Baroque orchestra different from a modern orchestra?

The Arcadia Players and their music director are dedicated to trying to create something called “historically informed performances.”

In the recording we have suggested for these listening lessons, the music director and musicians have also attempted to recreate the sound that may have been heard when Messiah was first performed in the eighteenth century.

The orchestra in George Frideric Handel’s time was different from the modern day symphony orchestra. Eighteenth-century musicians performed in small spaces, such as chapels or large living rooms in palaces. The timbre of the gut strung violins and other baroque instruments suited these spaces perfectly. As the size of concert halls increased, the instruments changed to suit the needs for greater volume and brilliance.

The development of each orchestral instrument from century to century reflects these changes in performance venue, changing performance practice styles of the time, changes in technology, availability of materials and of the creative output of composers who were always needing new sounds for their compositions.

In order for modern players to approximate the sound of the music of Handel’s time, they must have special instruments made by makers who have researched and studied eighteenth-century instruments. These modern instrument makers must study paintings depicting early instruments, and look at existing historical instruments in museums so they can build copies of instruments that are as authentic to the ones played at the time of Handel as possible.

Choosing to use instruments that were either built during an earlier time period or fashioned in the style of those instruments is one important factor in achieving an “historically informed” performance.

Because it was written in 1740, Handel used Baroque style, eighteenth-century instruments in his performances of Messiah. Many of these instruments were built in “families” of various sizes to cover a wide range of pitches. The ranges of the various instrument sizes are similar to human voice ranges (soprano, alto, tenor, bass), but with some pitches at the high and low end extending beyond comfortable vocal ranges.
Lessons #4 - #5 Instrument Description Outline

INSTRUMENTS USED IN MESSIAH

Baroque violin (bowed string instrument family)

Characteristics:

- Highest pitched of the string family (tuned in 5ths - GDAE)
- Four strings made of sheep gut and light bracing inside the sound box, creating a gentle, soft sound
- Lower string tension than modern violins
- Held on the shoulder without a chin rest
- Lighter bow and less horsehair than modern violin bow, with tapered tip, capable of producing clear articulations and rapid notes
- Italians fell in love with the violin, which could play lots of fast notes in succession; the rest of Europe followed this trend

Sound Production:

- The bow is drawn across the string, creating a vibration, which is transmitted through the bridge to the instrument
- Pitches are altered by pressing the strings down to the fingerboard, thus changing the vibrating string length
- Wooden instrument “box” functions as amplifier.
- Gentler, softer sound than modern violin, due to light bracing and gut strings

Baroque viola (bowed string instrument family)

Characteristics:

- Larger (longer, wider and lower) than the violin
- Characteristics similar to the violin
- Lower pitched than the violin (tuned in 5ths – CGDA)

Sound production: see violin
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

Baroque cello (bowed string instrument family, continuo section)

Characteristics:

- Part of the violin family, with similar characteristics
- Pitched one octave lower than the viola (tuned in 5ths - CGDA)
- Played sitting down with cello off the floor and the legs “hugging” the instrument
- No endpin (modern invention) to support cello on floor
- In Messiah the cello plays the bass line in all selections as part of the continuo section and accompanies the solo recitatives and arias

Sound production: see violin

Violone (bowed string instrument family, continuo section)

Characteristics:

- Direct ancestor of the modern double bass
- Member of the viola da gamba family
- Six strings and frets, tuned in 4ths and one 3rd
- Bow held “underhand” similar to modern “German style”

Sound production: see violin

Baroque natural trumpet (brass wind instrument)

Characteristics:

- Made of 8 feet of brass tubing
- No valves (modern trumpets have three)
- Wide, deep bowl-shaped mouthpiece
- Small bell diameter compared to modern trumpet
- Historically used to celebrate triumphant, important, happy occasions
- Often paired with timpani

Sound production:

- Lower pitched than the violin (tuned in 5ths – CGDA)
- Player “buzzes” lips against mouthpiece while blowing air through horn.
- Air moves through brass tubing (ending in a bell shape)
- Pitches altered by changing shape of inner mouth cavity, causing different overtones to sound
 Messiah by George Frideric Handel

**Baroque oboe (hautbois, wind instrument)**

Characteristics:

- Double reed instrument
- Developed from the Renaissance shawm
- Highest pitched double reed in this ensemble
- Often made of boxwood
- Wider inside bore than modern oboe
- In Messiah the oboe often plays with the violins
- Player “overblows” to create upper octave
- Open finger holes plus three keys for altering pitches (modern oboes have many keys)

Sound production:

- Player vibrates double reed (made of two tiny bamboo canes set in mouthpiece) between the lips while blowing air through the instrument
- Sound travels through the hollow bore tubing within the instrument
- Pitches are altered by pressing finger holes and keys on top while vibrating the attached reed between the lips

**Baroque bassoon (wind instrument, continuo section)**

Characteristics:

- Double reed instrument
- Made of wood
- Over 8 feet of tubing
- Lowest-pitched double reed instrument in this ensemble
- Only 4-5 keys during 18th century
- In Messiah it is used in the continuo section to play the bass line, with the cello or violone

Sound production: see oboe
**Messiah by George Frideric Handel**

*Baroque timpani (kettle drums, percussion family)*

Characteristics:

- Large circular tunable drum
- Drumhead is made of animal skin stretched across top of a large copper kettle-shaped bowl
- Played with large mallet

Sound production:

- Player hits the drumhead with a mallet, and the drumhead vibrates
- Drumheads are tuned by means of devices attached to sides of the drumhead to tighten and loosen it

*Harpsichord (keyboard, plucked string family, continuo section)*

Characteristics:

- Delicate instrument with light, soft sound
- Blends well with other Baroque instruments and voices
- Used to accompany both soloists and the entire orchestral/choral ensemble
- Must be tuned often, especially when moved
- Preceded the invention of the modern piano
- Strings are plucked with a plectrum made of quill
- Wooden cases often highly decorated (painted, with murals on inside of lid, gold leaf, etc.)
- Conductor often leads the ensemble “from the harpsichord”

Sound production:

- Player presses keys, with each attached to a quill plectrum
- Quills pluck strings of different lengths and thicknesses to create different pitches
Organ (keyboard wind instrument, continuo section)

Characteristics:

- Dates back to 3rd century BC in Greece
- Often used to accompany soloists as well as to support the entire ensemble
- Baroque chamber organs were small, and built within a large transportable wooden box case
- Delicate instrument, needs frequent tuning
- Important pitch guide for singers and instrumentalists
- Over time organs grew in size and were built into churches

Sound production:

- Sound created by flow of air through different size pipes
- Air supplied by bellows
- Player presses keys, causing different pipes to sound
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#20 Baroque orchestra Messiah rehearsal
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#21 Baroque orchestra Messiah rehearsal
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#22 Baroque orchestra Messiah rehearsal
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#23 Baroque orchestra Messiah performance
#24 Baroque style violin of modern manufacture
*Messiah* by George Frideric Handel

#25 Baroque violinist
#26 Painting - “The Violinist”
#27 English Baroque violin bow, 17th century, (snakewood)
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#28 Baroque violist
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#30 Baroque cello in Portrait of a member of the Van der Mersch Family
#31 Baroque cello in Portrait of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and his sisters
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
*Messiah* by George Frideric Handel

#33 *Baroque cellists and violone player*
 Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#34 Ernst Busch violone in Berlin, Germany
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#35 Baroque violone player
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#36 Baroque violone player – close-up of frets on fingerboard
#37 Three double reed instruments: Renaissance shawm, Baroque oboe (Hautbois) and modern oboe
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#38 Baroque oboist
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#40 Baroque, Classical and modern bassoons
**Messiah** by George Frideric Handel

#41 Baroque bassoonists
#42 Two Baroque trompettes
(17th century)
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#43 Baroque trumpet players and Baroque timpanist
#44 Baroque timpani (Kettledrum in Church of St Peter and St Paul, Vilnius, Lithuania)


Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#45 Baroque timpanist and Baroque trumpet players
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#46 Continuo organ by New England Organ Builders
#47 Early Baroque German chamber organ
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#48 Continuo organ (with organist, baroque cellist, and violone)
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#49 Baroque orchestra with chamber organ in Messiah performance
#50 Baroque harpsichord
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#51 Baroque harpsichord, Fernandez Santos. Madrid 1728-1754
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#52 Baroque harpsichordist, and Baroque cellist in concert
LESSON #5
Baroque Instrumentation – Part II
Timpani, organ, harpsichord, Baroque chorus of voices

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will be able to recognize and identify, by sound and sight, the instruments of the Baroque orchestra listed above, and the four voice parts of a Baroque chorus, as illustrated by both the audio examples from Handel’s Messiah and images of instruments.
- Students will be able to accurately explain how the sound is produced for each instrument.

MATERIALS:

- Messiah CD
- Instrument Description Outline (see Lesson #4)
- Instrument Game
- “For unto us a Child is born” song sheet
- Images of Baroque instruments and their players (see Lesson #4)

PROCESS:

1. Show images and play selections designated for each instrument and follow up with discussion about sound production.

Timpani

- Play “Hallelujah Chorus” (Disc 2, Track 16) and the final minute of “Amen” (Disc 3, Track 8).
- Guiding questions for first listen: Notice when you hear the big drums play in each selection. (Have students raise their hands when they hear them).
- Show images of Baroque timpani and their player.
- Follow-up questions: What role do the timpani play in these pieces? What mood do they create?
- Refer to Instrument Description Outline for details about the Baroque timpani.
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

Baroque Organ and Harpsichord

- Play the recitative “Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened” (Disc 1, Track 12, play up to 0:25), also “Behold, a virgin shall conceive (Disc 1, Track 6, play up to 0:25).
- Guiding questions for the first listen: Notice the role of the keyboard instruments in this piece. Describe the harpsichord sound.
- Play the organ introduction to “And He shall purify” (Disc 1, Track 5).
- Play the organ introduction to “Since by man came death” (Disc 3, Track 2).
- Guiding questions for the above listening examples: Notice the role of this keyboard instrument. Describe the organ sound. How is it different from the harpsichord?
- Show images of the Baroque organ and harpsichord and their players.
- Follow-up questions: What purpose do these instruments serve? How are they different? How do they set the mood for the singers? How else do they support or help the singers?
- Refer to Instrument Description Outline for details about the Baroque organ and harpsichord.

Baroque Choral Singing

- Play “For unto us a child is born” (Disc 1, Track 8).
- Guiding questions for first listen: How many voice parts do you hear? Listen for times when the voice parts are singing individually by entering at different times (polyphony) and when they are all singing the same words/rhythms at the same time (homophony).
- Listening activity: On this first listen, ask students to raise their hands when all parts are singing together in chordal style (homophony). Note what words they sing in this section.
- Review the four voice parts of a chorus – soprano, alto, tenor, bass.

Discussion: Baroque singing is generally lighter than modern choral vocal production. The vocal parts are often written in an “instrumental” style; the singer must have the ability to blend with the Baroque instruments and the agility to execute the fast runs and melismas (multiple notes sung on one syllable).

- Teach students to sing the opening of “For unto us a child is born”, using the song sheet.
- Show students the score for the first melismatic section on the word “born” to demonstrate that vocal technique. Note that the melodic melismas create a sequence – each pattern of 16 notes starts a step higher than the previous one.
- Follow-up activity for second listen: Divide the class into four groups. Have each group represent a different voice part, and ask them to raise their hands when they hear their voice part singing the melisma on “born”. Ask them all to stand up every time they hear the homophonic section on “Wonderful, Counsellor”. Note number of times that occurs (4X).

2. Instrument Review Classroom Activity: Instrument Game
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Lesson #5 Instrument Game

This game is intended to follow lessons # 4 and #5 to help students to get to know the instruments used in Messiah. It may also be used as a quiz after learning about the instruments.

Baroque Instruments played in Handel’s Messiah: Matching Game

- Display the images of instruments.
- Have students answer the questions below with the correct instrument name and/or find the picture of the instrument that matches the description.
- Students may also like to create their own descriptive statements of each instrument, asking the question “What’s my name”?

Follow each question with “What’s my name”?

- I am the largest bowed string instrument in this ensemble. (violone)
- I am the highest-pitched woodwind instrument in the ensemble. (oboe)
- I am the smallest bowed string instrument in this ensemble. (violin)
- I am the lowest and longest double reed instrument. (bassoon)
- I am a keyboard instrument powered by air. (organ)
- I have four strings and often play with the keyboard instruments during recitatives. (cello)
- I am a tunable percussion instrument made of copper. (timpani)
- I am a string instrument but I am a member of the viola da gamba family. (violone)
- My pitches are altered by the player changing the shape of his/her mouth cavity. (trumpet)
- I have four strings and always play the highest part of my section. (violin)
I am a relative of the oboe and often play with the cello. (bassoon)

The conductor often directs the ensemble while playing me. (harpsichord)

I am a string instrument held under the chin, but larger than a violin. (viola)

I am often paired with trumpets at the end of celebratory pieces. (timpani)

I am made of brass and played with a bowl-shaped mouthpiece. (trumpet)

I am a wind instrument with many keys and pipes. (organ)

My wooden sound box acts as an amplifier and I am held between the knees and played with a bow. (cello)

I am played with a bow and my pitch range is in between the cello and violin. (viola)

I am a plucked string instrument, but I have a keyboard. (harpsichord)

I am a double reed instrument. I often play with violins. (oboe)
For unto us a Child is born

(Original key: G major)
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
LESSON #6

Vocal Music in Messiah

OBJECTIVES:

• Students will be able to define and identify a variety of musical elements, such as dynamics, melody, rhythm and word painting through listening to vocal excerpts from Messiah.
• Students will be able to identify connections between text and music in selections from Messiah through listening, reading of texts, guided inquiry and discussion.
• Students will be able to define and distinguish between four types of vocal music: aria, recitative, arioso and chorus.

MATERIALS:

• Messiah CD
• Text Sheet

PROCESS:

1. Discuss ways a composer might use musical elements to tell a story.

An oratorio tells a story, but without costumes, scenery or acting. A composer might use the following elements to convey mood or emotion:
• dynamics (loud/soft)
• tempo (fast/slow)
• mode (major/minor)
• articulations – accents, slurs, staccato/legato
• rhythms/note values
• instrumentation
**Messiah** by George Frideric Handel

2. **Listen to “All we like sheep” (Disc 2, Track 2).**

This piece is written for a four-part chorus (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) with orchestral accompaniment. Ask the students to read the text and think about how the music paints a picture of the words, a technique called “word painting”.

For example:
- disjunct melody and contrary motion on “gone astray”
- sixteenth-note “turning” figure on “turned”
- change of tempo, mood and mode at the Adagio, with a more solemn text

3. **Listen to “Why do the nations so furiously rage together?” (Disc 2, Track 12).**

These selections are recitatives and ariosos (followed by a chorus). A recitative is a kind of sung speech, used for narrative and dialogue. Recitatives use ordinary speech rhythms to advance the action. An arioso is more lyrical and expressive, midway between a recitative and an aria (Harvard Dictionary of Music).

These passages are sung by a soprano. Listen for ways in which the music supports the words she is singing. Listen for the instruments accompanying her and the techniques they are using.

Questions:

- How are the notes (melodies) of these sections different from the aria and chorus tunes we heard earlier?
- How do the instrumental parts help to set the scene and the mood?
- Did you notice any vocal techniques (ways of singing the notes) that were used to help narrate the story clearly and expressively?
- How does the music change when the chorus enters?
- What happens to the music when they sing “and peace on earth”?

*Students may need to hear each selection more than once to begin to make the connections between words and music. Multiple hearings are recommended!*
1. CHORUS
   All we like sheep have gone astray;
   we have turned every one to his own way;
   and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

2. ARIA
   Why do the nations so furiously rage together,
   why do the people imagine a vain thing?
   The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel together,
   against the Lord, and against his anointed.

3. RECITATIVE
   There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

ARIOSO
   And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,
   and the glory of the Lord shone round about them:
   and they were sore afraid.

RECITATIVE
   And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold,
   I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
   For unto you is born this day in the city of David
   a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

ARIOSO
   And suddenly, there was with the angel
   a multitude of the heavenly host
   Praising God and saying,

CHORUS
   Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth,
   good will towards men.
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
IDEAS FOR FURTHER LISTENING AND STUDY

• “But who may abide the day of His coming?” (soprano solo) (Disc 1, Track 4, begin at 1:16)
  Changes of tempo – larghetto, prestissimo, larghetto, prestissimo, adagio, prestissimo

• “The people that walked in darkness” (bass solo) (Disc 1, Track 11)
  Minor mode, sinuous melody, vocal line doubled by bass instruments, chromaticism,
  word painting on “light” (major mode) and “death” (held notes)

• View “Hallelujah Chorus” flash mob in food court:
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE

• Students could create their own version of “Hallelujah Chorus” with flip cards, as per the
  Alaskan YouTube clip in Lesson #1.

• Read the picture book George Handel (Getting to Know the World’s Famous Composers)
  by Mike Venezia.

• Extend the study of Handel with Water Music or Music for the Royal Fireworks.

• Listen to alternative interpretations of selections from Messiah, such as: Too Hot to
  Handel: The Gospel Messiah or Gabriela Montero’s Baroque improvisations.
Messiah by George Frideric Handel
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

IMAGE LIST AND ATTRIBUTIONS

LESSON #1

#1 Portrait of George Frideric Handel, (Messiah Composer)
Philip Mercier (circa 1689-1760) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#2 Portrait of George Frideric Handel, 1741 (Messiah Composer)
Painted in 1741 By Thomas Hudson (1701-1779) (Unknown) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#3 “Hallelujah Chorus” – page from original score by Handel
By George Frideric Handel 1685–1759.Brianboulton at en.wikipedia [Public domain], from Wikimedia Commons

LESSON #2

Baroque art and architecture

#4 Apse of the Church of St. Ignatius (San Ignazio), Rome, Italy
by Orazio Grassi, Finished in1650 / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#5 Nave, Steingaden Abbey, Bavaria, Germany
interior by Johann Georg Bergmüller, ca. 1740 / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#6 Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, France
by Charles Le Brun for Louis XIV, ca. 1680 / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#7 Pagodenburg Pavilion Interior, Nymphenburg Palace, Munich, Germany
by Effner, 1716-1719 / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#8 Hall of Mirrors ballroom, Nymphenburg Palace, Munich, Germany
by François Cuvilliés, 1734-39, Amalienburg pavilion / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#9 Ceiling of the Hall of Mirrors ballroom, Nymphenburg Palace, Munich, Germany
by François Cuvilliés, 1734-39, Amalienburg pavilion / Photograph by Walter B. Denny
Baroque furniture

#10 “Lit polonaise” bed, Dauphine’s apartment, Versailles, France
by Nicolas Hertaut, ca. 1740 / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#11 Baroque armchair, mid 18th century, Russia
By Andrey Korzun (Own work) [CC BY-SA 4.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

#12 Table in Amalienburg pavilion, Nymphenburg palace, Munich, Germany
by François Cuvilliés, 1734-39, / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#13 “Passement Clock”, Versailles, France
clock with orrery (model of the solar system) designed by Claude-Siméon Passement and enclosed in an elaborate case by Jean-Jacques Caffieri, ca. 1753 / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

Baroque instruments

#14 Carved English violin
ca. 1680 at Victoria & Albert Museum, London, England
By Alkivar at en.wikipedia [Public domain], from Wikimedia Commons

#15 Baroque pipe organ of the 18th Century
by the Spanish Gomez Herrera, Monastery of Santa Cruz, Coimbria, By Jebulon [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

Baroque clothing

#16 Portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Atherton, ca. 1743
Painted in approx. 1743 by Arthur Devis [Public domain or Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#17 Portrait of Charles Jennens in 1745 (Messiah Librettist)
By uploaded by Jack Wills It at en.wikipedia
Painted in 1745 by Thomas Hudson (1701–79) [Public domain, Public domain or Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#18 Portrait of King Louis XV, King of France and Navarre (1710-1774)
Jean-Baptiste van Loo 1723 [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons
#19 Portrait of Mary Edwards, 1742
by William Hogarth in 1742.
[Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

**LESSON #4**

Baroque orchestra

#20 Baroque orchestra Messiah rehearsal
Arcadia Players @ St. Mary’s Church, Northampton, MA, December, 2009, Allan Taylor conducting / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#21 Baroque orchestra Messiah rehearsal
Arcadia Players @ Abbey Chapel, Mt Holyoke College, December, 2014, director Ian Watson conducting “from the harpsichord” / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#22 Baroque orchestra Messiah rehearsal
Arcadia Players @ Abbey Chapel, Mt Holyoke College, December, 2014, with director Ian Watson conducting “from the harpsichord” / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

# 23 Baroque orchestra Messiah performance
Arcadia Players @ Abby Chapel, Mt Holyoke College, December, 2014 with conductor Ian Watson, conducting “from the harpsichord” / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

**String Instruments**

Baroque violin

#24 Baroque style violin of modern manufacture
By Frinck51 (Own work) [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html), CC-BY-SA-3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/) or CC BY-SA 2.5-2.0-1.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5-2.0-1.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

#25 Baroque violinist
Sarah Darling of Arcadia Players / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#26 Painting – “The Violinist”
Painted by: by Mattheus Wymans, Dutch, Walters Gallery, Baltimore ca. 1660-1669
Photograph by Walter B. Denny
Messiah by George Frideric Handel

#27 English Baroque violin bow, 17th century, (snakewood)
By Anoixe (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

Baroque viola
#28 Baroque violist
Laurie Rabut of Arcadia Players  /  Photo by Walter B. Denny

Baroque cello

#29 Baroque cello
The “Batta-Piatigorsky” Cello, Stradivari, 1714
Metropolitan Museum of Art Collection  /  Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#30 Baroque cello in portrait of a member of the Van der Mersch Family
Painting by Cornelis Troost in 1736 [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#31 Baroque cello in portrait of Frederick, Prince of Wales, and his sisters
Painted in 1733 by Philip Mercier (circa 1689-1760) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#32 Baroque cellist
Alice Robbins of Arcadia Players  /  Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#33 Baroque cellists and violone player
Alice Robbins, Guy Fishman, Andrew Arceci of Arcadia Players
Photograph by Walter B. Denny

Violone

#34 Ernst Busch violone in Berlin, Germany
By Mortonjo (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

#35 Baroque violone player
Jane Hershey of Arcadia Players  /  Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#36 Baroque violone player – close-up of frets on fingerboard
Andrew Arceci of Arcadia Players  /  Photograph by Walter B./ Denny
Baroque oboe (hautbois)

#37 Three double reed instruments: Renaissance shawm, Baroque oboe (hautbois) and modern oboe
By OboeCrack (Own work) [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC BY-SA 4.0-3.0-2.5-2.0-1.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0-3.0-2.5-2.0-1.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

#38 Baroque oboist - close-up of double reed in mouthpiece
David Nielsen of Arcadia Players / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#39 Baroque oboists
Robert Howe and David Nielsen of Arcadia Players / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

Baroque bassoon

#40 Baroque, Classical and modern bassoons
Picture taken by Alexander Golde, cropped and uploaded to creative commons by permission [CC BY-SA 2.5 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5)], via Wikimedia Commons

#41 Baroque bassoonists
Anna Marsh and Marc Vallon of Opera Lafayette, Versailles, France, 2012
Photograph by Walter B. Denny

Baroque (natural) trumpet

#42 Two Baroque trompettes (17th century)
By hautbois (scan perso) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#43 Baroque trumpet players and Baroque timpanist
Evan Lattimore, Vincent Monaco and Fred Holmgren of Arcadia Players
Photograph by Walter B. Denny

LESSON #5

Baroque timpani

#44 Baroque timpani (Kettledrum in Church of St Peter and St Paul, Vilnius, Lithuania)
By Alma Pater (Own work) [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons
**Messiah by George Frideric Handel**

#45 Baroque timpanist and Baroque trumpet players
Fred Holmgren, Vincent Monaco and Evan Lattimore of Arcadia Players, St Mary’s Church, Northampton, MA / Photograph by Walter B. Denny

Baroque continuo organ

#46 Continuo organ by New England Organ Builders
By Nutmegiw (Own work) [CC BY 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

#47 Early Baroque German chamber organ
By Daderot (I took this photograph.) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

#48 Continuo organ (with organist, baroque cellist, and violone)
Alice Robbins and Greg Hayes of Arcadia Players
Photograph by Walter B. Denny

#49 Baroque orchestra with chamber organ in Messiah performance
Arcadia Players, Academy of Music, Northampton, MA, Ian Watson, conductor
Photograph by Walter B. Denny

Baroque harpsichord

#50 Baroque harpsichord
By FREYmanagement (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0) or GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html)], via Wikimedia Commons

#51 Baroque harpsichord, Fernandez Santos. Madrid 1728-1754
By Enfo (Own work) [CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

#52 Baroque harpsichordist, and Baroque cellist in concert
Ian Watson and Alice Robbins of Arcadia Players
Unitarian Society, Northampton, MA / Photograph by Walter B. Denny
**Messiah** by George Frideric Handel

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**SOURCES CONSULTED**

**Books**


**Article**


**Dictionary**


**Website**


**Musical Scores**


**Recording**


**Images**

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ARCH MESSIAH CURRICULUM: ALIGNMENT WITH MASSACHUSETTS ARTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework
Concepts and objectives in the ARCH Messiah Curriculum align with the following Learning Standards for the end of Grade 8 or Grades 9-12:

1.8 Sing with expression and technical accuracy a repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 2, on a scale of 1 to 6 (level 3 for choral ensemble), including some songs performed by memory*

2.5 Read whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, and dotted notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, 3/8, 9/8, and alla breve meter signatures

2.7 Identify, define, and use standard notation symbols for pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, articulation, and expression

5.7 Analyze the uses of elements in aural examples representing diverse genres and cultures

5.8 Describe specific music occurrences in a given aural example, using appropriate terminology

5.12 Demonstrate an understanding of how musical elements interact to create expressiveness in music

6.3 Interpret the meanings of artistic works by explaining how the subject matter and/or form reflect the events, ideas, religions, and customs of people living at a particular time in history

6.8 Compare examples of works from several arts domains within a period or culture and explain the extent to which each reflects function, customs, religious beliefs, social philosophies, aesthetic theories, economic conditions, and/or historical or political events
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7.2 Describe the roles of artists in specific cultures and periods, and compare similarities and differences in these roles, considering aspects such as:

• the conditions under which artists created, performed, and/or exhibited work and the status of artists;
• the sources of support for the arts; and
• the ways, such as apprenticeship or training, in which students learned the skills and knowledge that qualified them to produce or perform artistic work

8.6 Classify works from the United States and world cultures by genre, style, and historical period; explain why the works exemplify a particular genre, style, or period

9.9 Identify and describe how some contemporary artists concentrate on the use of technologies and inventions of the past to achieve specific artistic effects


**Messiah** by George Frideric Handel

## ABOUT OUR CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS

**K.C. Conlan** is the founding director of the Hampshire Young People’s Chorus. She holds degrees from The Boston Conservatory and the University of Massachusetts and has advanced training in the Orff and Kodály methods. She teaches vocal music at The Common School in Amherst, and has also taught in the Brookline, Amherst and Northampton public schools, as well as at UMass. She has directed the children’s program for the Western Wind Vocal Ensemble Workshops at Smith College and has served as Repertoire & Standards Chair for Children’s Choirs for the Eastern Division of the American Choral Directors Association. K.C. is active as a choral singer in the Pioneer Valley, currently singing with Iluminati Vocal Arts Ensemble, Novi Cantori and Pioneer Valley Cappella.

**Laurie Rabut** enjoys playing Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical repertoire on period string instruments at every opportunity! Having received her formal music training (BMus) at the Boston University School of Fine and Applied Arts, she launched her teaching career while pursuing early music performance studies in many venues, including the Baroque Performance Institute at Oberlin and viol and classical orchestral performance with John Hsu at Cornell. Since then Laurie has played viola da gamba and Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical violin and viola with numerous ensembles in the New York and New England region. Laurie taught strings in the Amherst (MA) public schools for over 32 years and currently teaches strings privately and coaches ensembles for the Five College Early Music Program.

**Jane Hershey** studied at the Longy School of Music with Gian Silbiger, and later at the Royal Conservatory of Music in The Hague with Wieland Kuijken. She has spent her professional life in Boston, performing with the Boston Camerata and appearing as a guest with many Boston area musical institutions such as Emmanuel Music and Boston Baroque. Playing both violone and viola da gamba, she has performed with Monadnock Music, the Smithsonian Chamber Orchestra, the Aston Magna Festival, Hesperus and Arcadia Players of Western Mass. She has been a member of several viol ensembles: with Arcadia Viols, she has performed around New England and at the Boston Early Music Festival, and with the Carthage Consort she was part of the cast as an on-stage musician in American Repertory Theater’s “Dido, Queen of Carthage” by Christopher Marlowe in 2005. The Carthage Consort was also featured by the Cambridge Society for Early Music in its 2010 season. A specialist in French music, she performed for many years at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts with Laura Jeppesen as ‘Trio Charivary.’ In 2005, she recorded works of Elisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre with Frances Fitch and friends on the Centaur label. An active teacher, Ms. Hershey is a faculty member at the Longy School of Music of Bard College, where she teaches in the Masters of Music Early Music program. At the Powers Music School, she works with students of all ages and teaches several viol consort classes. Since 1995, she has directed the Tufts University Early Music Ensemble. She is also active in the Viola da Gamba Society of America, organizing frequent workshops and concerts for its local New England chapter, coaching in workshops around the US, and serving on the VdGSA Board of Directors.