

Johann Sebastian Bach was born in Eisenach, Germany in 1685. He spent most of his life in Weimar (1708-1717) and Leipzig (1723-1750) before his death in 1750. Bach's parents both died when he was just 9; Johann was left with 4 surviving siblings. As a child, Bach was an excellent soprano vocalist, but later gained fame as an organist. Bach began composing cantatas and organ works. He also wrote music books for his wife and children, in order to teach them keyboard technique and musicianship. These books include the Well-Tempered Clavier, the Inventions, and the Little Organ Book. Eventually, Bach composed music for all instruments. Bach's music is considered Baroque Style music. (This is the type of music that was written at that time in history - Vivaldi and Telemann were other composers of that time, and they also wrote Baroque music.) Bach's first wife died in 1720, and the next year he married Anna Magdalena Wilcken, a fine singer and daughter of a court musician. He had 13 children with her, in addition to the 7 he had had by his first wife, and she helped him in his work by copying his music for the performers. Some of Bach's 20 children went on to become accomplished musicians and composers. Towards the end of his life, Bach was unsuccessfully treated for cataracts and then suffered a stroke. Scientists think that Bach finally died from diabetes.

During Bach's Lifetime

Panini and Goya were famous artists during Bach's lifetime. The German Parliament began rule of Germany in 1663. French troops fought on German soil during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), and France was a threat to Germany during this time. The Ottoman Empire also posed a threat, but the Germans defeated them.

Name _____

Date _____

Please complete the sentences.

- 1) J.S. Bach was born in the year _____ and died in the year _____.
- 2) J.S. Bach was born in the country of _____ .
- 3) The _____ is the instrument that made Bach become famous by playing.
- 4) Bach's music is considered _____ Style music.
- 5) _____ also composed that same style of music.
- 6) Bach's second wife was _____ Wilcken.
- 7) Altogether, Bach had _____ children.
- 8) Scientists think that Bach finally died from _____.
- 9) _____ was a famous artist during Bach's lifetime.
- 10) The country of _____ was a threat to Germany during Bach's time.