

Simply Charlotte Mason presents

Music Study With the Masters

by Sonya Shafer



J. S. Bach

*“Let the young people hear good music as often as possible,
... let them study occasionally the works of a single great master
until they have received some of his teaching, and know his style.”*

—Charlotte Mason

With **Music Study with the Masters** you have everything you need to teach music appreciation successfully. Just a few minutes once a week and the simple guidance in this book will influence and enrich your children more than you can imagine.

In this book you will find

- Step-by-step instructions for doing music study with the included audio recordings.
- Listen and Learn ideas that will add to your understanding of the music.
- A Day in the Life biography of the composer that the whole family will enjoy.
- An additional longer biography for older students to read on their own.
- Extra recommended books, DVDs, and CDs that you can use to learn more about the composer and his works.

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Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)

by Sonya Shafer

Music Study with the Masters: J. S. Bach

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See complete track listing on the back page of this book.

Charlotte Mason on Music Study

“Let the young people hear good music as often as possible, and that *under instruction*. It is a pity we like our music, as our pictures and our poetry, mixed, so that there are few opportunities of going through, as a listener, a course of the works of a single composer. But this is to be aimed at for the young people; let them study occasionally the works of a single great master until they have received some of his teaching, and know his style” (*Vol. 5, p. 235*).

How to Use Music Study with the Masters

1. Play the music recordings often and mention the composer's name when you do. You can play them as background music during a meal, while running errands in the car, at nap time or bedtime, or while the students work on some handwork. (Try not to keep them playing all day or during noisy times when other sounds or conversation would distract.) Encourage students to describe what the various pieces make them think of, to "draw the music" with art, or to move to the music. Allow them to form their own relations with it.
2. Read the *A Day in the Life* biography to the students and ask them to narrate. Enter this composer in your Book of Centuries. You can assign the *The Story of* . . . expanded biography to older students for independent reading during the weeks you linger with this composer. Other *For Further Study* resources are listed if you would like to learn more.
3. Once every week or so, give focused listening to a particular piece. Use the Listen and Learn ideas in the back of this book to guide your listening and discussion.

As opportunity presents itself, go to a concert that features the music of this composer so students can listen to a live performance.

A Day in the Life of J. S. Bach

from *The Private Life of the Great Composers*
by John Frederick Rowbotham, edited by Sonya Shafer

It is a glorious summer evening. The sun is just sinking to rest in the midst of a rosy sunset, and the candles are being lighted in the city of Leipsic. Window after window is illuminated, and in the twilight, groups of people are assembled at the doors of the houses for the gossip on the events of the past day. Proceeding along the streets of the city we come in a short time to the School of St. Thomas, an institution for the cultivation of music. Judging from the appearance of the building, this music school is not particularly blessed with generous endowments or wealthy revenue. One small portion of the building is set aside for a dwelling-house, with its principal window being on the ground floor, looking into the street.

As we thread the twilight avenues, approaching it, we see that the window is lighted, and pealing from the room come the sounds of an ancient Lutheran hymn, sung with such surprising beauty and depth of feeling that the most unmusical wayfarer would be constrained to stop and listen to the unusual concert within.

If we enter the room we shall find it full of people, most of them youths and maidens of varying ages from early manhood and womanhood down almost to infancy. At the harpsichord round which they are clustering sits a noble and majestic man, wearing one of the wigs which were the fashion of the time and dressed in the frogged coat and knee-breeches which are the garb of all the older male members of that assembly. He seems completely abstracted from earth as he gazes upward while sitting at the harpsichord playing the notes of the chorale and joining in the general chorus with deep and sonorous voice. His face is somewhat large and heavy but possessing an expression of supreme intellectual power. He has a broad and expansive

forehead, eyes that are weak and timid, a ponderous nose, and a vast double chin. This is Johann Sebastian Bach, the father of musicians, and himself the descendant of generations of musicians.

Round him in the room are his numerous sons and daughters, all singing in the chorale. His wife, too, is there, her melodious voice blending with the rest, as—like the other female members of the assembly—she sits on a stool and knits while she sings.

The hymn over, Bach calls for his son Philip Emmanuel to extemporize on the harpsichord; and at once a bright intelligent boy comes forward out of the throng. Seating himself before the instrument, he begins to improvise in a very free and unfettered style, while his brothers and sisters cluster round to listen and his father looks on with paternal pride. With Philip Emmanuel he had encouraged freedom and fostered the boy's natural genius for pouring forth impromptu melody.

Next Wilhelm Friedemann is called forward to exhibit his powers; and then a completely different style is demonstrated. The most knotty intricacies of fugue are laid down and unravelled by this performer; the strictest harmonies only are used. Bach claps his hands when Wilhelm has finished. He lays one hand on Philip Emmanuel's head, and says, "Here is my musical experiment!" The other he places on Wilhelm Friedemann's head with the words, "But here is the heir of my science!"

Then he sits down to the harpsichord himself and improvises in a divine and masterly manner, amid rapt attention from his family circle. All the attention which they could give him was highly deserved, for there was no player in Europe who could surpass their father in extemporizing (with the exception of Handel, who was his equal). He breaks off into a jig, and then into a gavotte, which makes everybody present feel inclined to dance about the room; and then as unexpectedly he gives them an imitation of the cat running over the keys of the harpsichord, which causes everyone to laugh.

[Continued in the full version of the book.]

The Story of J. S. Bach

from *The Great Composers, or Stories of the Lives of Eminent Musicians*
by C. E. Bourne, edited by Sonya Shafer

Part 1: "To him music owes almost as great a debt as a religion owes to its founder."—Schumann

The Bach family, for several generations before the birth of this most illustrious member of it, had been a musical one, and, being very numerous, had supplied clever organists to many of the towns of Germany. In Sebastian's lifetime there are said to have been from twenty-five to thirty Bachs, all related to each other, holding such posts.

Johann Sebastian Bach was born at Eisenach on May 16th, 1685. His father died when he was only ten years of age, and, as his mother was dead some time before, the boy went to live with his elder brother Johann Christoph, who, following the family profession, was established at Ohrdruff as an organist. Here Sebastian received from his brother his first lesson in singing and playing the harpsichord. He had soon mastered the dry exercises that were given him and wanted to play the grander pieces that his brother performed, but for some reason or other his request was always refused. At that time music was not as generally printed as it is now, and it is possible that the elder brother did not wish the manuscript book of his own favourite pieces to be made use of by any one else, even by the orphan brother under his charge. But like young Handel, Sebastian was only made more eager to learn by the opposition he encountered. The precious book was kept locked up in a cupboard, but one of the sides of this cupboard consisted of rails with open spaces between them, and the boy could just manage to squeeze his hand through one of these spaces and draw out the book. At night, [Continued in the full version of the book.]

Listen and Learn

(Use these notes in any order.)

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047

(Disc 1, Tracks 1–3; approx. 10 minutes)

In 1719 Bach traveled to Berlin to acquire a new harpsichord for the Cothen court, where he was employed. While on this trip, he was introduced to and had an opportunity to play for an important family—that of Margrave Christian Ludwig of Brandenburg. When he returned from the trip, Bach composed six concerti (plural for *concerto*) and sent them to the margrave as a kind of musical resumé, showcasing his skill as a court composer. But the six concerti were evidently filed and forgotten, and Bach was not offered a position in Brandenburg. About 150 years later, the music scores were rediscovered and scholars gave them the nickname, The Brandenburg Concertos.

This concerto has three movements, or sections. Can you tell when one movement ends and another begins? How?

How many solo instruments do you hear, each in its turn, in the First Movement? Can you name them?

Why, do you suppose, does the trumpet not play in the Second Movement?

[The sample file includes the first 30 seconds of this piece.]

Track Listing

Disc 1

Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major, BWV 1047 (10:27)

1. I. Allegro (4:30)
2. II. Andante (3:13)
3. III. Allegro assai (2:24)

Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major, BWV 1007 (17:59)

4. I. Prelude (2:32)
5. II. Allemande (4:56)
6. III. Courante (2:33)
7. IV. Sarabande (2:30)
8. V. Menuet I and II (3:48)
9. VI. Gigue (1:40)

Concerto for 2 Violins in D Minor, BWV 1043 (14:43)

10. I. Vivace (3:36)
11. II. Largo ma non tanto (6:24)
12. III. Allegro (4:43)

Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565 (10:07)

13. I. Toccata (2:52)
14. II. Fugue (7:15)

Disc 2

1. Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G Major, BWV 1048: III. Allegro (5:02)
2. Anna Magdalena Notenbuch: Minuet in G Major, BWV Anh 114 (1:33)
3. Mass in B Minor, BWV 232: Agnus dei (5:48)
4. Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645 (4:31)
5. St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244: Erbarme dich, mein Gott (7:09)

6. St. Matthew Passion, BWV 244: O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden (2:30)
7. Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I: Prelude and Fugue No. 1 in C Major, BWV 846 (4:22)
8. Overture (suite) No. 3 in D Major, BWV 1068: II. Air, “Air on a G String” (5:40)
9. Goldberg Variations, BWV 988: I. Aria (3:57)
10. Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147: Chorale: Jesus bleibet meine Freude (Jesu, joy of man’s desiring) (3:25)
11. Violin Concerto in A Minor, BWV 1041: III. Allegro assai (3:48)
12. Invention No. 4 in D Minor, BWV 775 (0:50)
13. 18 Chorales, BWV 651–668, “Leipziger Chorale”: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659 (4:44)
14. Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D Major, BWV 1050: III. Allegro (4:59)
15. Magnificat in D Major, BWV 243: Magnificat (3:13)