

The Works of George Frideric Handel

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Text Audio

Who was George Frideric Handel?

George Frideric Handel was born in Halle, Germany, in 1685. He was one of the greatest composers of his time. Today he is known for his operas, oratorios, and organ music. Some of his most famous works include *Messiah* (1741), *Water Music* (1717), and *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (1749).



Fireworks fit for a royal such as a king or queen!

Halle, where Handel was born

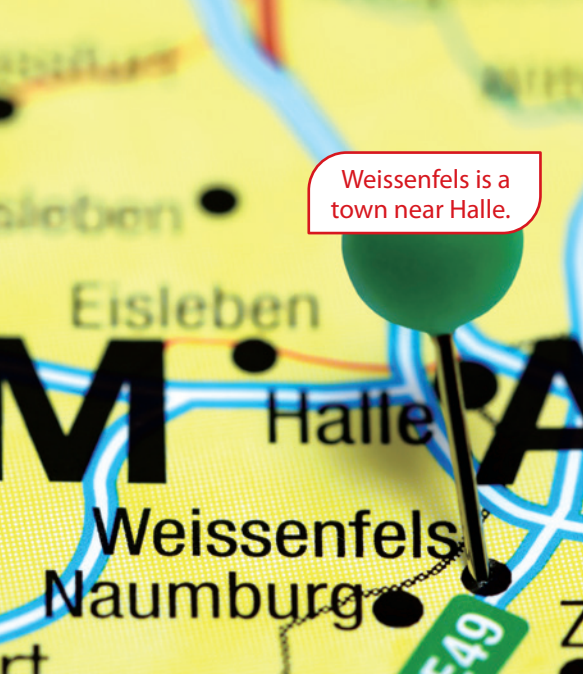




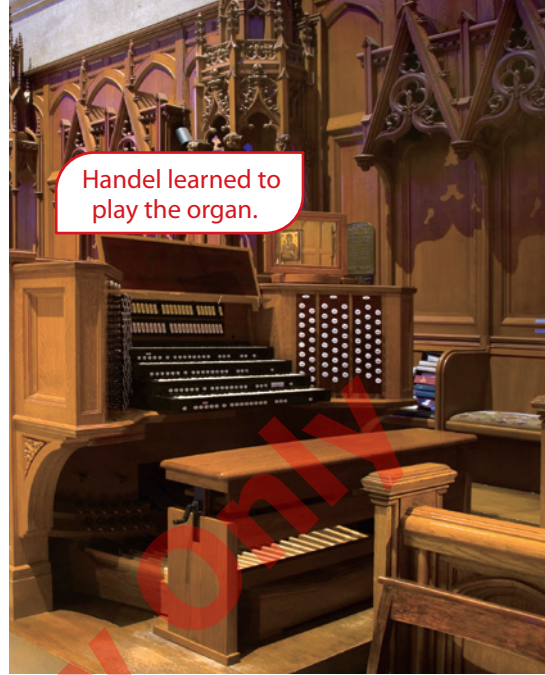
Handel was good at music from a young age. However, his father did not want him to learn music. He would not let his son play music at home. Handel's father wanted his son to be a doctor. He didn't think music was a useful skill. But Handel loved music. He played in secret.

A picture of
Handel





Weissenfels is a town near Halle.



Handel learned to play the organ.

When he was seven or eight, Handel went to Weissenfels with his father. There, an important man heard the boy play the organ. The man told Handel's father to let his son have music lessons. From that time, Handel started to have organ lessons. He also learned to play the harpsichord, violin, and oboe.

Handel could also play the violin, oboe, and harpsichord.



In 1702, Handel started studying at the University of Halle. While he was a student, he got a job as an organist at the Reformed Cathedral in Halle.

Handel's first job was as an organist. ➔



The University of Halle



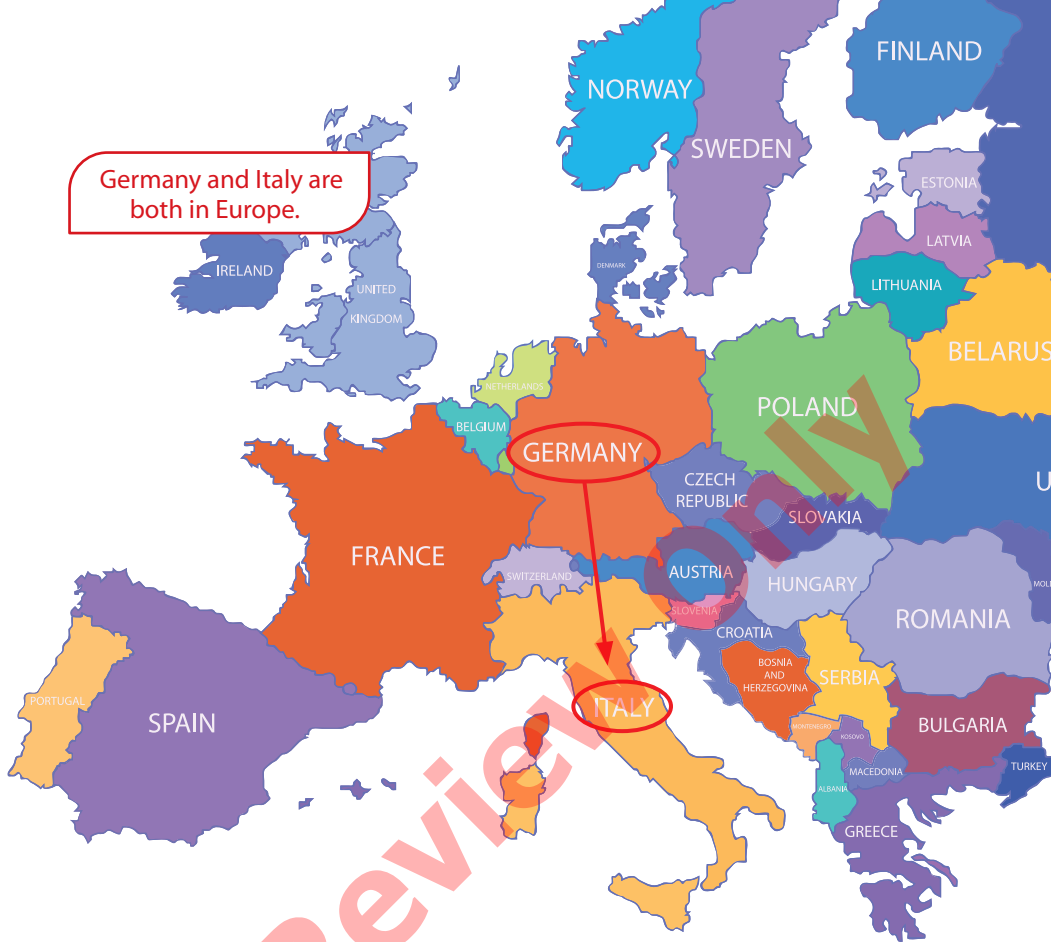


An orchestra is a group of musicians who play classical music.

Handel did not enjoy his studies, so he stopped them and followed his love of music. He moved to Hamburg and joined an orchestra. In 1705, his first opera, *Almira*, was performed.

Hamburg is the second-largest city in Germany.





Handel did not stay in Germany. In 1706, he went to Italy, where he stayed until 1710. In Italy, he met many great Italian musicians. Italian music influenced Handel's work. He wrote several operas and soon became known in many countries.

Handel was strongly influenced by Italian music such as opera. ➔





A famous view
in England



King George I and many
other English kings came
from Hanover.



The flag of England

In 1710, Handel got a job writing music for Prince George Louis in Hanover, who later became the King of England. Handel moved to England, where his music was well received. Handel spent the rest of his life in England.