

## Musical Style Periods: The Baroque Period (1600–1750)

*Baroque* means “irregularly shaped pearl.” The word *Baroque* was first used to describe the ornate architecture of the period, which had many swirls and other decorations. Much of the music from the same period had ornate sounds created by embellishments or ornaments such as trills (see Theory Book, page 8).

### During the Baroque Period:

- ✓ Much music was composed for popular dances of the time, such as minuets and gavottes.
- ✓ The main keyboard instruments were the harpsichord with its plucked strings, the clavichord with its delicately struck strings, and the organ.
- ✓ Three important keyboard composers were Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) and Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757). All three composers were born in the same year.

**1607** The British settled in North America in Jamestown, Virginia.

**1638** King Louis XIV (14th) of France was born. He ruled for over 70 years and had a great impact on music and dance of the period.

**1725** Johann Sebastian Bach compiled the *Notebook for Anna Magdalena Bach*, dedicated to his wife.

**1741** George Frideric Handel composed the *Messiah* for chorus and orchestra. Even today it is performed frequently, especially at Christmas.

### Sight-Reading

Play these melodies from the Baroque period. Count aloud.

#### 1. Hallelujah Chorus (from *Messiah*)

George Frideric Handel



#### 2. Minuet (from *Sonata in C Major*)

Domenico Scarlatti  
K. 73b; L. 217

