



Georg Frederic Handel
(1685 - 1759)

COMPOSER: **GEORG FREDERIC HANDEL** (1685 - 1759)
(GAY.org FREED.rick HAN.del)

COMPOSITION: No. 6 “*Minuet*” from the **Water Music**

FEATURES:

1. **Minuet** – Moderate tempo 3/4 rhythm – a courtly dance
2. **Fanfare** with French horn in the beginning
3. **Minuet form** – ABA – Minuet and Trio.
4. **Major/minor** – Major in the A part, minor in the B part.

BACKGROUND:

The Composer: Georg Frederic Handel was born in Germany in 1685. He became well known in his country as perhaps the greatest organist of his time. He went to England, where he quickly became a favorite of the Hapsburg King, George I, and he composed much music for the court as well as becoming a successful operatic composer. He was a superstar in his time.

The Composition: The Water Music was written for the King of England to be played for a barge party on the river Thames in 1717. The grand sound of the horn at the beginning of the Minuet sets the royal tone for the Water Music and is called a fanfare. Compare it with the fanfare at a hockey game or other sporting event. There is a second section featuring strings before the horns return. The Minuet was the “Dance of Kings,” the most popular dance in the courts of the time. A minuet has a beat pattern of 3. Try having the children silently count **1 2 3, 1 2 3, 1 2 3**, by silently touching knees (patsching) once and silently clapping twice: Patsch-clap-clap/ Patsch-clap-clap/...etc.

QUESTIONS: What instrument do you hear at the beginning of the music? [French horn]?
Can you hear when the music changes character? Why do you think Handel wrote a second part that is so different? How many words can you think of to describe the difference? (*See above*)

SOME POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

1. Draw a picture of the King’s barge party.
2. Conduct the Minuet in 3.
3. Dance the minuet. *See <http://www.stratfordhall.org/ed-music.html>*
4. Listen for the contrasting B part. How is it different? Raise your hand when you hear it
5. Show a picture of the French horn when you hear it play.
6. Learn the opening Fanfare:

3
4

d s₁ s₁ s₁ s₁ s₁ m₁ d₁ d r m m m m f s s s d f m f r

7. Compare with “Fanfare for the Common Man” by Aaron Copland, page 58.