



Social Studies: Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach

Students Will

- Discuss vocabulary listed in a glossary;
- Read Offenbach’s biography
- Review facts of Offenbach’s life listed on timetables;
- Gain insight to Offenbach’s life by calculating his age at time of a specific event;
- Review world events during Offenbach’s life as listed on timetables;
- Gain historical perspective through reading and recording events from timetables.

Copies for Each Student

- “Glossary”
- “The Composer”
- “Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach Activity Worksheet”
- “Time Table for 1819 – 1881”

Copies for the Teacher

- “Glossary”
- “The Composer”
- **ANSWER KEY** “Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach Activity Worksheet”
- “Time Table for 1819 – 1881”

Getting Ready

Prepare internet access for possible research, guided practice, or group work if needed. Gather pens, pencils, and additional writing paper as needed for your group.

Introduction

Begin by asking the students to define the term *historical events*. Read the following definitions:

Historical - relating to the past

Event - an occurrence that is important or exciting, significant, or unusual

Then, have students read “The Composer”.

Guided Practice

Provide each student with the following: “Glossary”, “Time Table for 1819 – 1881”, “Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach Activity Worksheet”. Read over these materials with the students and answer any questions they may have. The first question of the Activity Worksheet can be answered as a class.

Independent Practice

Students will work with partners or small groups to complete “Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach Activity Worksheet”.

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Evaluation

- Did students complete “Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach Activity Worksheet”?
- Were students able to explain why they chose particular events?
- Do students have any new observations regarding historical events?

For Further Study

Students may conduct independent research in the library or online, choosing any one topic within the Timetable. Have students share findings with the class.

TEKS

Grade 3

(17) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. (B), (D), (E), (F)

Grade 4

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. (C)

Grade 5

(24) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. (C), (E)

Grade 6

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. (C), (E), (F)

Correlates

Literature, History, Math, Music, Visual Arts, Science

Gardner’s Intelligences

Verbal-Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Visual-Spatial, Intrapersonal

Bloom’s Taxonomy

Knowledge, Comprehension, Analysis, Evaluation

Bibliography

Grun, Bernard. The Timetables of History, the New Fourth Revised Edition. New York: A Touchstone Book, Simon & Schuster, 2005.

“Jacques Offenbach.” http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Jacques_Offenbach (accessed July 25, 2017)

Sadie, Stanley, Ed. The Grove Book of Operas, Second Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Sadie, Stanley, Ed. The New Grove Dictionary of Opera, New York: Macmillan Press Ltd., Groves Dictionaries of Music, Incorporated, 1992.

Pépito

The Composer

In the early 1800's, Jacques Offenbach's father, Isaac Juda Eberst, moved from his *native* Offenbach am Main, Germany to the *ghetto* in Cologne, Germany. Here he worked as a *bookbinder*, music teacher, and composer and a *cantor* at a *synagogue*. He became known as "Der Offenbacher" and then later was simply called Offenbach.

On June 20, 1819, Jacob Eberst was born. Jacob was one of seven children. His father taught him to play the violin. In 1899, Jacob learned to play the cello. With his cello, Jacob formed a successful trio with his older brother, Julius (1815-1880) who played the violin, and his younger sister, Isabella (1817-1891) who played the piano.

In 1833, Jacob published his first *composition*. In November of the same year, Jacob's father took both Jacob and Julius to live and study in Paris. At the *Conservatory*, open only to *French nationals*, Jacob's father pleaded with the director to let Jacob play. Finally, the director consented and gave Jacob an almost unknown Italian *cantata* to sight-read and play on the cello. Halfway through the cantata the director cried out, "The ruling is wrong. You are a pupil of the Conservatory!" This is how Jacob began studying at the Conservatory.

While in Paris, Jacob came to be known as Jacques Offenbach. His father had made certain that both he and his brother sang in the choir at the synagogue in Paris. In the years following 1834, Jacques played in orchestras, gave music lessons, and copied music manuscripts. He became a familiar figure in the best *salons* in Paris.

In January of 1839, Jacques gave his first public *concert* with his brother who was now called Jules. In March of 1839, Jacques received his first *commission* for a *musical score*. He continued as a cello *virtuoso* and toured both Germany and England in the early 1840's.

Jacques Offenbach became a *Catholic* and married a young Spanish woman, Herminie d'Alcain in August 1844. He met Herminie at the salon of her mother, who was married to an English concert *agent*. Through this connection, Offenbach traveled to London to perform. One of his concerts was at *Windsor Castle*.

By 1848, Offenbach had *conducted* an orchestra in a Parisian theater and had established himself as a composer of dance music. Later that same year, the revolution broke out in Paris and Offenbach returned to Germany. Offenbach returned to Paris in 1849 to be the conductor at the Theatre Francaise, but was anxious to gain more recognition as a composer. He spent the summer of 1853 in Cologne with family to build his strength in order to win commissions and performances. Originally intended to be entitled *Vertigo*, *Pépito* received its premiere at the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris on October 28, 1853.

In June of 1855, Offenbach leased a small theater in the Champs-Elysees called the Theatre Marigny and *procured* a license from the government to present musical plays. The theater was near the site of the International Exposition that the Emperor of France, Napoleon III, had opened in May. Offenbach renamed the theater Bouffes-Parisiens and opened with a program of one-act *operettas*. One of these operettas ran for 400 performances and was a command performance before Emperor Napoleon III.

In 1857, Offenbach's entire *theater company* traveled to London, England to perform for eight weeks at the St. James Theatre. His brother, Jules, conducted the orchestra and traveled with the company to London.

In 1860, Jacques Offenbach became a *naturalized* Frenchman. He was appointed a *Chevalier of the Legion d'honneur* in 1861. By 1861, Jacques and Herminie's family had grown to include four daughters and a son. His work in theaters was so successful that Offenbach purchased and *maintained* two homes, one in the city and a second one at a resort city.

During the 1860's, Offenbach's more than 100 musical operettas brought him *acclaim* and *prosperity*. "The Toast of the New Empire," critics described his operettas as exhilarating, always tuneful, and original. Composers copied his style. Rossini called him "the Mozart of the Champs-Elysees."

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The Composer cont.

In 1871, the Second Empire in France collapsed. Offenbach's music temporarily went out of fashion resulting in **financial** losses, which forced him into **bankruptcy** in 1875. Offenbach traveled to New York City and Philadelphia in 1876 and gave 40 concerts. Even though the critics were not **complimentary**, Offenbach considered his tour a financial success.

Beginning in 1877, Jacques Offenbach started to compose *The Tales of Hoffmann*. His main **preoccupation** was to complete a serious opera. From 1877-1880, Offenbach experienced success in London and Paris with his new and revived works. Yet Offenbach was in poor health and was concerned that he would die before he could complete his opera. In September 1880, during a rehearsal for *The Tales of Hoffmann*, he collapsed. On October 4, 1880, Jacques Offenbach died. Offenbach's family requested the composer, Guiraud, to complete the score of *The Tales of Hoffmann*. It premiered in Paris at the Opera-Comique in February 1881.

Jacques Offenbach's contributions to the musical world can be measured with his outstanding development of the operetta, which was the **precursor** of today's popular Broadway musicals. Yet, it is *The Tales of Hoffmann*, the opera, for which he is best, remembered. It remains one of the most popular operas in France. It has been produced on hundreds of stages in many other countries. In the United States alone, at the **Met**, there have been 210 performances over 27 seasons, from 1913 to 1993. Jacques Offenbach (born Jacob Eberst) did indeed accomplish his goal to compose a successful serious opera.

Glossary

native: Born in a particular place

ghettos: Areas in European towns (at this time) in which the Jewish population was required to live

bookbinder: Someone who binds or puts books together

cantor: Jewish official who is lead singer of the songs for the worship service

synagogue: House of worship for Jewish congregation

composition: A piece of written music

Conservatory: An advanced school of music

French Nationals: People who are born in France

cantata: Musical composition for voices and instruments, usually with a religious theme

salons: Grand sitting room where guests are received and entertained

commission: Fee paid

musical score: A written piece of music for performance

virtuoso: Exceptional performer

Catholic: Belonging to the Roman Catholic Church

concert agent: Businessperson who books concerts for the performing group and the concert hall

Windsor Castle: A home of the Queen or King of England

conducted: Led

procured: Got

operettas: Theatrical productions, usually with comic theme, similar to opera but with spoken dialogue and some dancing

theater company: A group of actors and musicians

naturalized - Not born in France, but became a French citizen according to the rules of government

Chevalier of the Legion d'honneur: (pronounced *sheh-val-yea* of the *lay-jee-on d'on-nair*) French title of honor used by members of the French Legion of Honor

maintained: To keep up with

acclaim: Much praise

prosperity: Money

bankruptcy: Legal inability to pay debts

preoccupation: Constant thought about something

The Met: The Metropolitan Opera House in New York City

precursor: Something that comes earlier

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Time Table for 1819 - 1881

Year	J. Offenbach	History	Literature	Music	Visual Arts	Science
1819	Records show Jacob Eberst born January 20 in Cologne, Germany	Florida Purchased by U.S. from Spain	Walt Whitman, Amer. poet b. (d.1892)	Beethoven becomes deaf	Gustave Corbet, Fr. painter, b. (d. 1877)	Danish physicist H.C. Oersted discovers electro-magnetism
1828	Plays in trio with brother and sister	Andrew Jackson elected U.S. President	N. Webster: <i>American Dictionary - English Language</i>	Rossini: <i>Le Comte Ory</i> , Paris Opera	Rossetti, Eng. Pre-Raphaelite poet/ painter b. (d. 1882)	C. Danworth & J. Thorp invent cap & ring spinning machines resp.
1833	Publishes 1 st composition; Moves to Paris w/ brother to study and work	Gen Santa Anna becomes Pres. Of Mexico	Bestseller: Davy Crockett's auto-biography	J. Brahms, Ger. composer, b. (d.1897)	Turner's 1 st Venetian pictures, Royal Acad., London	Gauss and Weber devise telegraph to function over 9,000 feet
1835	Plays in orchestras, gives music lessons, copies music manuscripts	Texas declares its right to secede from Mexico	Mark Twain, Amer. Novelist b. (d.1910)	Camille Saint-Saens, Fr. composer, b. (d.1921)	V. Cousin, "L'Art pour l'Art" - Art for Art's sake.	Halley's Comet reappears
1844	Becomes Catholic Marries Herminie d'Alcain Travels to England	James K. Polk elected U.S. Pres 1845-Texas - U.S. state	John Boyle O'Reilly, Ir-Am. poet b. (d. 1890)	Verdi: <i>Ernani</i> , Venice, Italy	Moses Ezekiel, U.S. sculptor and musician, b. (d.1917)	S.F.B. Morse's telegraph 1 st used between Baltimore and Washington
1850	Conductor at Theatre Francaise upon returning to Paris at end of Revolution	California - a U.S. state	Hawthorne: <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>	Bristow: <i>Rip Van Winkle</i> Am. Opera Wagner: <i>Lohengrin</i>	J. Paxton builds Crystal Palace, London	R.W. Bunsen (1811-1899) produces gas burner
1853	<i>Pépito</i> premiere in Paris	Washington Territory is created from Oregon Territory.	Solomon Northup: <i>Twelve Years a Slave</i>	Heinrich Steinway begins Steinway & Sons, Co. in New York	Vincent van Gogh, Dutch painter, b. (d. 1890)	Elisha Otis invents the elevator safety brake making skyscrapers possible
1860	Naturalized Frenchman Appointed a Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur	A. Lincoln elected 16 th U.S. Pres; 1861-Am. Civil War	Anton Chekhov, Russ. author, b. (d.1904)	von Suppe: <i>Das Pensionat</i> , 1 st Viennese operetta	Manet: <i>Spanish Guitar Player</i> , painting	F. Walton invents cork linoleum
1865	At peak of success called "Toast of the New Empire"	A. Lincoln d. C. War ends June, 19 th TX slaves freed	Lewis Carroll: <i>Alice's Adventures - Wonderland</i>	Wagner: <i>Tristan and Isolde</i> , Munich, Germany	Yale University opens 1 st Dept of Fine Arts in U.S.	Pasteur cures silkworm disease thus saving French silk industry

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Time Table for 1819 – 1881 cont.

Year	J. Offenbach	History	Literature	Music	Visual Arts	Science
1868	Continues to experience acclaim and prosperity with his work	Ulysses S. Grant elected U.S. Pres	Louisa M. Alcott: <i>Little Women</i> ; Dostoevsky: <i>The Idiot</i>	Tchaikovsky <i>Symphony No. 1</i> ; Brahms: <i>Requiem</i>	1867 Paris World Fair Impressionist style begins	L. Lartet finds skeleton of Cro-Magnon man in France
1871	Offenbach's music is not popular at this time	France's 2 nd Empire falls; 1872 RR comes to Dallas, TX	Lewis Carroll: <i>Through the Looking Glass</i>	Verdi: <i>Aida</i> premieres in Cairo, Egypt	Rossetti: <i>The Dream of Dante</i> , painting	G.A. Hansen discovers leprosy bacillus
1874	Suffers financial losses and declares bankruptcy	1873 Slave markets & exports in Zanzibar abolished	Robert Frost Am. poet b. (d.1946)	Wagner completes his <i>Ring des Nibelungen</i>	1 st Exhibit of Impressionist Paintings in Paris	Begun in 1851 Les Halles in Paris by Baltard is completed
1876	Travels to New York city and Philadelphia and gives 40 concerts	<i>Declaration of Rights</i> - Centennial Exposition, Philadelphia	Jack London, Am. novelist, b. (d.1916)	Brahms: <i>Symphony No. 1, Op. 68</i>	Renoir: <i>Le Moulin de la Galette</i> , painting	A. Bell invents the telephone; L.H. Latimer does blueprints for Bell
1877	Begins <i>Tales of Hoffman</i> ; Wants to write a serious opera	Rutherford B. Hayes inaugurated 19 th U.S. Pres	Henry James: <i>The American</i>	Saint-Saen's <i>Samson and Delila</i> debuts in Weimer, Ger	Rodin: <i>The Age of Bronze</i> , sculpture	Thomas Edison invents sound recording
1878	Sick, worries he can't finish <i>Tales</i> ; Does have success with new and revived works	Treitschke: anti-Semite movement; Zulu War in Africa in '79	Thomas Hardy: <i>The Return of the Native</i>	Gilbert and Sullivan: <i>H.M.S. Pinafore</i>	William Morris: <i>The Decorative Arts</i>	A.A. Pope manufactures 1 st bicycles in America
1880	Rehearsing <i>Tales of Hoffmann</i> when he dies on October 4th.	J.A. Garfield elected 20 th U.S. Pres	J.C. Harris writes: <i>Uncle Remus</i>	Gilbert and Sullivan: <i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Rodin: <i>The Thinker</i> ; Cezanne: <i>Chateau de Medan</i>	Edison and Swan each devise the 1 st practical electric lights
1881	<i>Tales of Hoffmann</i> premieres in Paris	Persecution of Jews in Russia	Henry James: <i>Portrait of a Lady</i>	Wagner, Ger. opera composer, d. (b. 1813)	E. Manet, Fr. artist, d. (b.1833); Renoir: <i>Umbrellas</i>	1 st Telephone Exchange for Dallas, TX opens

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Name _____ Date _____

Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach Activity Worksheet

Directions: Using the information in “The Composer”. Calculate Offenbach’s age for each of the following events in his life:

- 1) Jacob was _____ years old when he published his first composition. At this time his father took both Jacob and his brother to live in Paris.
- 2) Offenbach became a Catholic and married Herminie d’Alcain when he was _____ years old.
- 3) At the age of _____ Offenbach became the conductor at the Theatre Francaise in Paris.
- 4) When *Pépito* premiered at the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris, Offenbach was _____ years old.

Choose three other important events in Offenbach’s life. Complete each of the following sentences with an event and calculate Offenbach’s age at that time.

5) At the age of _____ Offenbach _____

6) Offenbach was _____ years old when he _____

7) In _____ Offenbach was _____ years old when he _____

Using the Time Table, identify three World Events. Complete each of the following sentences with a world event and calculate Offenbach’s age at that time.

8) In _____ Offenbach was _____ years old when _____

9) In _____ Offenbach was _____ years old when _____

10) In _____ Offenbach was _____ years old when _____

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ANSWER KEY

Life and Times of Jacques Offenbach Activity Worksheet

Directions: Using the information in “The Composer”. Calculate Offenbach’s age for each of the following events in his life:

- 1) Jacob was **14** years old when he published his first composition. At this time his father took both Jacob and his brother to live in Paris. (**Moved to Paris 1833 - born 1819 = 14 years old**)
- 2) Offenbach became a Catholic and married Herminie d’Alcain when he was **25** years old. (**Married 1844 - born 1819 = 25 years old**)
- 3) At the age of **31**, Offenbach became the conductor at the Theatre Francaise in Paris. (**Conductor 1850 - born 1819 = 31 years old**)
- 4) When *Pépito* premiered at the Théâtre des Variétés in Paris, Offenbach was _____ years old. (*Pépito* premiere 1853 - born 1819 = 34 years old)

Choose three other important events in Offenbach’s life. Complete each of the following sentences with an event and calculate Offenbach’s age at that time. (Answers will vary depending on events chosen.)

- 5) At the age of **41**, Offenbach became a naturalized Frenchman and was appointed a Chevalier of the Legion d’Honneur. (**1860 - 1819 = 41 years old**)
- 6) Offenbach was _____ years old when he _____

- 7) In _____ Offenbach was _____ years old when he _____

Using the Time Table, identify three events. Complete each of the following sentences with an event and calculate Offenbach’s age at that time. (Answers will vary depending on events chosen.)

- 8) In **1835**, Offenbach was **16** years old when **Halley’s Comet appeared**. (**1835 - 1819 = 16 years old**)
- 9) In _____ Offenbach was _____ years old when _____

- 10) In _____ Offenbach was _____ years old when _____
