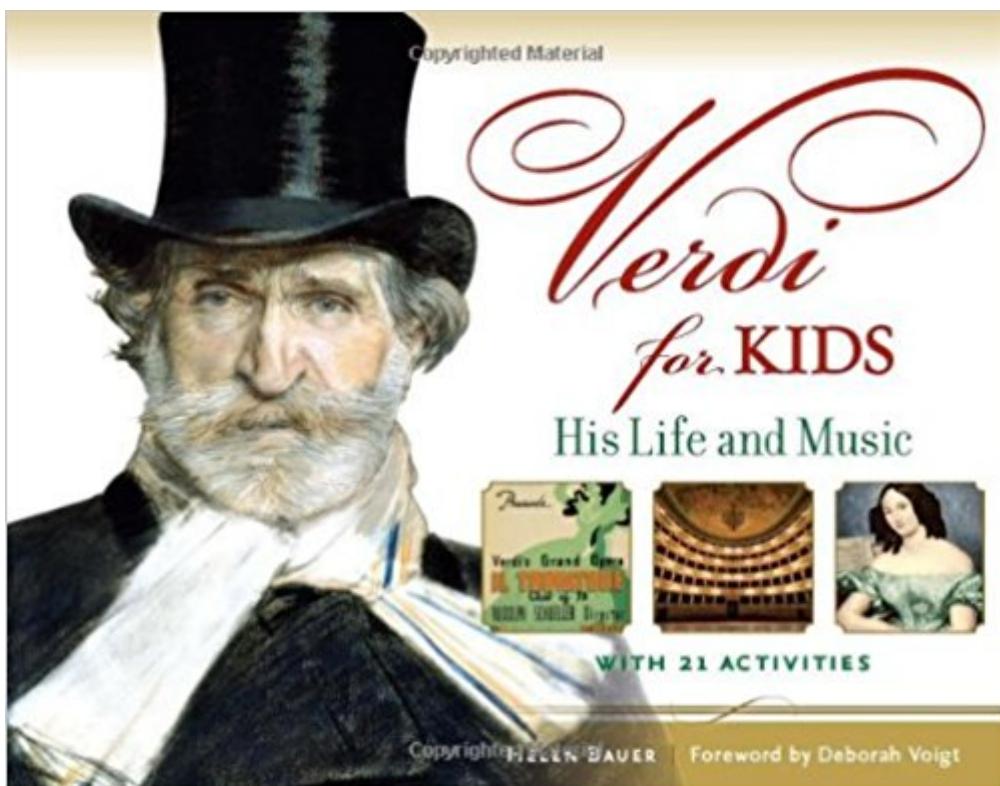


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# Verdi For Kids: His Life And Music With 21 Activities (For Kids Series)



## Synopsis

Giuseppe Verdi dominated Italian opera for 50 years, and his operas are performed throughout the world today. Verdi for Kids offers young readers an accessible, behind-the-scenes peek into the exciting world of opera and traces Verdi's path to fame, delving into the great composer's childhood, musical training, family tragedies, and professional setbacks and successes. Kids also learn about the Italians' passion for opera and Italy's tumultuous past, key political figures, and cultural pastimes. Aspiring sopranos, baritones, musicians, conductors, and stage directors will learn about opera jobs and production, what happens at rehearsal, and music terms and vocabulary, gaining an understanding of opera's rich tradition. Offering a timeline, glossary, and list of additional resources, Verdi for Kids is an engaging resource for students, parents, and teachers. Fun hands-on activities illuminate both the music concepts introduced and the times in which Verdi lived.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 9 - 13 years

Grade Level: 4 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8-Verdi, considered by many to be one of the world's preeminent operatic composers, lived

during a particularly turbulent time in Italy, which heavily influenced his music and his personal life. The focus here is primarily on his life as a composer, but because his work was so entwined with the political events of the time, quite a bit of historical context is also provided. The narrative is occasionally dense with descriptions of world events and political figures but is broken up nicely by lengthy sidebars and full spreads that offer some different avenues of information to explore. This could be an excellent resource for students doing research on Verdi, opera, or even the political upheaval in Italy at this time. Period photographs and related artwork are included throughout the text. Activities range from the artistic to the scientific, some with more kid-appeal than others. Ideas such as creating a simple water purifier or making a "stained glass" window could be fun for students, whereas others such as writing a letter to someone they admire or making a clay map of Italy, perhaps less so. There's not a lot out there for children about opera, and Verdi in particular, so this is a solid choice for libraries looking to beef up their music collections.-Jody Kopple, Shady Hill School, Cambridge, MA (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

Giuseppe Verdi, one of the great composers of the nineteenth century, lived in a turbulent time in Italy. He frequently injected his operas with political commentaries, but these often met resistance from political leaders. Reluctantly, Verdi would then revise the works to comply with demands so his compositions could be performed. Verdi became quite involved in local and national politics—although his preference was to live and work quietly in his home. Bauer competently ties together Verdi's life and the development of Italy into a unified country in a way that helps readers (both youth and adult) understand the complexity of each. Photographs and informational text boxes enhance the text. As with previous books in the series, 21 related creative activities are included. Back matter is highlighted by recommended recordings of Verdi's operas. Of particular interest to budding musicians and music educators. Grades 5-8. --J. B. Petty

A good book not only for kids but for adults also.

If you're a music teacher, a student or Opera buff, you'll appreciate this great music resource immensely. The biographical information is well-written and truly the book is a labor of love. Many of us know that Verdi wrote opera, choral and chamber compositions, plus songs that tell a story. We've listened to his famous works of Requiem, La Traviata, Aida and Otello. But who was Giuseppe Verdi that 200,000 people came to his service? I had to know. The study of great music

and the life of Verdi will not disappoint. Learn of Verdi's personal loss and grief that motivates and compels him to write more successful works. As you discover Verdi's constant desire to monitor the political scene, the reader comes to know the composer's love to unite his country Italy, and the charities he created from his concern for others less fortunate. As a piano teacher and grandmother of 5, I especially like that the book is for ages 9 and up. 21 activities are provided all through the book, like making homemade pasta, playing bocce ball, creating pizza party invitations, costume designing and planting a tomato sauce garden. Not only is this a fun book for singing like a Diva but learning about Leitmotif and the kiss motif, too. It's a wonderful and valuable music resource with beautiful illustrations, offering a timeline, glossary and list of additional resources with end notes. Highly recommend.

Verdi for Kids is laid out in a somewhat similar format as *Beethoven for Kids*. However, the Time Line comes before the Introduction in this book, instead of vice versa like *Beethoven for Kids*. The introduction focuses on Italian Opera, as opposed to Verdi. Verdi's life was filled with disappointment early on by having his application denied at a conservatory in Milan. However, it was tragedy that had a more profound effect on his life. He was married to a woman named Margherita, and they had two children. Both children died in infancy while he was working on his first opera, and she died shortly thereafter from encephalitis. A lot of the extra boxes tell us about different musical pieces, like what a cantata is or what a Bel canto is. One tells us about agriculture in Italy during Verdi's time, and another highlights the Franco-Prussian War. Activities for your children range from solving a word search to planting a "tomato sauce" garden. Having never been a huge opera fan, I find myself appreciating this style of music more. I have decided to give it another try, at least Verdi's operas. I can't wait to check out other books in the "For Kids" series.

Verdi for Kids takes readers on a glorious journey through the life and times of Italian opera composer, Giuseppe Verdi, born in 1813. The well-written forward by renowned opera singer, Deborah Voigt will make you not only want to read the book, but also want to learn more about opera in general. The publication of this title marks the 200th anniversary of Verdi's birth. He was the shy son of an innkeeper, and by the age of seven his parents got him a well-used harpsichord. Young Giuseppe took to the instrument so well that he mastered it quickly. Because his parents wanted to give their son the best education possible, both academically and musically, they sent him to live with a family friend in Busseto. He began to compose around the age of 13, had private music teachers and later attended the Milan Conservatory. We learn of

Verdi's life was filled with many hardships as an adult. After the loss of his daughter, son and wife as illnesses plagued Italy. He worked through his grief by composing music and later traveled to Paris where he met and fell in love with a soprano named Giuseppina Strepponi. Verdi served on the first Italian Parliament and later becomes a senator, all the while still composing music. There are wonderful activities with full instructions scattered throughout the pages of the book, such as making your own pasta, solving an opera word search, learning to read music, painting a poster to advertise an opera and even sketching a costume design for an opera. Kids will enjoy the many extraordinary old black and white photographs, drawings and offset boxes with detailed information about people and places. This book is fascinating in that it not only details the life of a famous composer, but also gives insight into what life was like in Italy during the 1800s. I like the fact that the activities are well thought out and are both educational and fun. As with all other Chicago Review Press books, the author never talks down to the reader, rather she enlightens and inspires. Every member of the family will enjoy reading Verdi for Kids. It would make a great addition to your home library.

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