First GEB Reading Assignment

Description: This assignment contains a ten-item list of interesting knowledge from "Introduction: A Musico-Logical Offering," and a single paragraph reaction to "Three-Part Invention".

Will Schell 1-31-2017 10 items of knowledge that were particularly interesting:

- 1. As much as Frederik The Great, King of Prussia, is remembered for being this great military leader, he had a much greater love and interest in music than most anything else.
- 2. It is hard to fathom that someone as famous and known, at the time, as Frederik The Great, had an admiration of someone other than himself, this person being J. S. Bach. Usually you think of a king not having any admiration of others and that they are more self-absorbed and more worried about themselves. This shows a lot of character from someone as powerful as Frederik The Great.
- 3. It seems unusual, especially back then, for King Frederik to just go out and buy fifteen or so Silbermann piano-forte pianos just for himself and put them all throughout his home. Nobody needs that many pianos.
- 4. Why would the King need to hint to Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach, J. S. Bach's son, that he wanted to meet J. S. Bach? He could have just asked him himself to come to his home and meet. It just is a bit peculiar how he goes an indirect route to have someone over when he is the king and anyone would be thrilled to have an invite from the king.
- 5. It is very interesting why King Frederik would have "Old Bach" go room to room in the palace to play every single one of the pianos. Wouldn't playing just one of them be enough?
- 6. J. S. Bach was able to just sit down and make this incredible music really without even trying. The fact that he just sat down, the King told him what he wanted to hear, not a song selection, but just by saying he wanted to hear a "Fugue with six Obligato parts" and Bach just made it happen, that is extraordinary.
- 7. J. S. Bach was not given a chance to change from his travelling clothes to his black chanter's gown which meant he had to apologize numerous times to the king. It just seems odd that he was rushed there and the king wanted him to play all these pianos and everything but never got the time to put on the appropriate attire.
- 8. The theme of Bach's famous, and most complex creation, six part fugue is the Royal Theme. It is so interesting how he is able to just incorporate all these different parts and musical pieces that contain parts of others, such as the Royal Theme, and just make incredible masterpieces.
- 9. Canons, in music, seem so complex but in fact we have all been doing them since we were young kids. These can be done in music with pianos and other instrumentals, but as when were kids, when you sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and one person starts and then at a certain time someone else then enters at the beginning, that is a canon. Probably the most famous one of these songs that was sang was "Frère Jacques".
- 10. Each of the canons in the "Musical Offering" uses a different variant of the King's Theme. This is so cool because every single time you listen to this you hear the theme and it will sound a little different each time but it is still the King's Theme. This is just showing how much resect Bach had for King Frederik.

Reaction to "Three-Part Invention"

The section "Three-Part Invention" needs to be read numerous time because there is a lot going on for such a short part of the book. There are so many things that are happening, such as logic, philosophy and even math comes into this. For example: on page 29, Tortoise is talking and says "I've never had the time to analyze beauty. It's a Capitalized Essence; and I never seem to have time for Capitalized Essences." If we adjust this sentence into logic, A = "I've never had the time to analyze beauty", B = "It's a Capitalized Essence" (where "It's" is beauty), and C = "I never seem to have time for Capitalized Essences". This would, in logic, be read as: A AND B Therefore C. This statement would then be true because beauty would be the connector of A and B. Philosophy comes into this because Zeno is talking about his theorem and what he learned from the fifth patriarchy. The thoughts that "Motion is Inherently Impossible" then Zeno's Theorem, "Motion Unexists" these are based off of the beliefs that motion is in the mind but it is not something that truly occurs. Zeno tries to prove this with the race between Achilles and Tortoise. This race is also where math becomes a factor. Since Tortoise is starting "ten rods" in front of Achilles, since Achilles is faster, that means that the starting position of Achilles(A) = 0 and Tortoise(T) = A + 10. After a few seconds of racing, Achilles is at the position of where Tortoise started, Tortoise has advanced a total of one rod since then. Then Achilles gets to where Tortoise was but by that time Tortoise has advance a bit farther forward. This will continue an infinite amount of time because no matter how close Achilles gets to that position Tortoise is at, Tortoise will move too. So Achilles will be getting infinitely closer and closer to Tortoise.