

Classical Piano Music

A common characteristic of **Classical** music is "graceful" melodies, in clear-cut and balanced phrases.

The **piano** was a relatively new keyboard instrument in the **Classical** period.

A popular musical feature used by **Classical** composers is the **alberti bass**. This is a type of broken chord accompaniment repeated in the left hand.



Extract 6 Listen to an excerpt from the second movement of *Sonata in C* (K.545) by Mozart played on the **piano**. Listen for:

Alberti bass **Simple harmonies** **Clear-cut phrases** **Major**

Andante ($\text{♩} = 63$)

p cantabile

cresc.

dim.

p

f

dim.

Sonata Form

Sonata Form is one of the most important forms used by composers. It is the form used in the **first movements** of Sonatas, Symphonies, Concertos, String Quartets etc.

The basic plan of Sonata Form is:

Exposition	Development	Recapitulation	Coda
1st subject (tonic)	Developing ideas from the Exposition.	1st subject (tonic)	To round off
Bridge (changing key)	Adding new ideas. Exploring new keys.	Bridge (altered)	
2nd subject (new key)		2nd subject (tonic)	



Listen to the first movement of *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* by Mozart played by a group of **strings**. Try to follow the **sonata form** structure.

EXPOSITION

First subject: Part A
(G major - the tonic key)

First subject: Part B (1st violins above repeated-chord accompaniment)

First subject: Part C

Bridge - busily working its way towards D major

Second subject: Part A (in the dominant key)

Second subject: Part B

(Part B repeated)

(2nd violins)

20 crescendo

35

45

50

55

60

65

70

75

80

85

90

95

100

105

110

115

120

125

130

135

140

145

150

155

160

165

170

175

180

185

190

195

200

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210

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225

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785

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795

800

805

810

815

820

825

830

835

840

845

850

855

860

865

870

875

880

885

890

895

900

905

910

915

920

925

930

935

940

945

950

955

960

965

970

975

980

985

990

995

1000

Second subject: Part C - codetta (a miniature coda, ending the Exposition)

DEVELOPMENT
(D major)
(expecting E minor but C major instead)
(A minor) (expecting G minor . . but 'surprise' chord of Eb major instead)

Linking passage - working back to the tonic key of G major

RECAPITULATION
First subject: Part A
(tonic key: G major)

First subject: Part B (2nd violins)

First subject: Part C

Bridge (now altered)

Second subject: Part A (now also in the tonic key)

Second subject: Part B
(Part B repeated)

Second subject: Part C - the original codetta, now lengthened to form a coda

Having listened to this movement, complete the following statements:

1. This **exposition** section starts is in the key of _____.
2. At the **bride** passage the music modulates to the _____ key.
3. The 2nd subject in the **exposition** is in the key of _____.
4. The 2nd subject in the **recapitulation** is in the key of _____.
5. What ornaments are prominent in this piece? (Refer to specific bar numbers).

These last bars at the end of the first section are called the

(175) 3

This middle section in Sonata Form is called the

What is the TONALITY?

Give three concepts (melodic/harmonic/rhythmic /texture) of what happens in this section

1

2

3

This final section, with the return of the first subject is called the

This is usually in the

key but here it is in major which is the

The musical score consists of two systems of staves. The first system shows measures 175-180, and the second system shows measures 181-187. The key signature changes from one flat to natural (major) in the final section. A blue arrow points from the first section to the end of the first section. A red arrow points to the beginning of the middle section. A blue vertical line marks the start of the final section. The final section includes a 'decresc.' marking and a key signature change to major.

Here is the 2nd subject

It is in the key

which is major

Listen carefully and name the chord

☐

major chord

☐

minor chord

☐

diminished 7th

☐

dominant 7th

These last bars are called the

Listen to the first movement of the piano piece Sonata no 1 by Clementi. This follows a simple Sonata Form structure. While you listen, try to identify the main sections: Exposition, Development and Recapitulation, 1st subject and 2nd subject, bridge passage. Write the concepts in the spaces provided.

Allegro M. CLEMENTI, Op.36, No.1

1

The musical score is for the first movement of Sonata No. 1 by M. Clementi, Op. 36, No. 1. It is in 3/8 time and has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The score is written for piano and consists of six systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The piece begins with a first subject in the right hand, followed by a bridge passage in the left hand, and then a second subject in the right hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and fingerings. Dynamics include f (forte), mp (mezzo-piano), p (piano), and cresc. (crescendo). The piece ends with a final cadence.