

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

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)

Measure numbers: 1, 5, 9, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45

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 contains measures 175-180, and the second system contains measures 181-187. The key signature changes from one flat to natural (major) at measure 181. 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 written for piano and bass. It begins with a treble clef and a 3/8 time signature. The first system starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system includes a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The third system features a piano (p) dynamic and a crescendo (cresc.) marking. The fourth system continues with a piano (p) dynamic. The fifth system includes a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and a crescendo (cresc.) marking. The sixth system ends with a forte (f) dynamic. The score is filled with various musical notations, including notes, rests, and fingerings (1-5).