

Mendelssohn Symphony No.4

in A major, Op.90 'Italian'



EDUQAS: AS Set Work | TEACHERS NOTES

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR USE WITH THIS RESOURCE:

- Eulenberg score of the 'Italian' Symphony by Mendelssohn (ISBN: 978-3-7957-6528-6)
- Recording of the symphony
- Preparatory information work with class regarding:
 - the musical and stylistic conventions of the Classical/early Romantic era
 - Mendelssohn's musical style
 - sonata form
 - an analysis of the first movement

These notes are intended to assist music teachers in their preparation and delivery of the set work. They are offered as outline guidance, and contain suggestions as to the necessary musical content and background for study, but are not meant to be an exhaustive resource. The information provided for teachers should be used alongside the worksheets for learners, and some additional questions and assignments have been included to support further research and extended understanding.

The Classical / Early Romantic Era:

- refers to an approximate time between 1750–1830
- began to emerge during the last few years of the previous *Baroque* era

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THE MAIN STYLISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASSICAL/EARLY ROMANTIC MUSIC:

- Less complex than Baroque music, with a lighter, clearer texture, including clarity of phrases and less ornamentation.
 - Emphasised grace (style *galante*) rather than the grandeur and seriousness of much of Baroque music.
 - Encased in formal structures which were held in proportion – melodies tended to be shorter, more evenly balanced and punctuated with clearly marked cadences. The regularity and balance of phrase structures brought clarity to the music (at times, it was the mixture of regular/irregular phrases and rhythms which brought a sense of individuality to a composer's personal style).
 - Larger, stronger structures predominated by three and four movements shaped the musical elements into a broader unified whole, with unified variety and refined contrasts of keys being the guiding principles.
 - Sonata form was recognised as the main structure used to build up movements (mainly first movements, but sometimes other movements as well).
 - Increased harmonic effectiveness within these structures was attained through simpler chords and more efficient progressions, with clarification of key relationships and modulation ensuring a 'functional' harmonic process.
 - Textures were mainly homophonic and melodic with a chordal accompaniment, although still including many examples of contrapuntal writing.
 - The overall style was more varied and flexible, with contrasts evident in the music (dynamics, mood, instrumental sonorities, rhythms and thematic material, tempo and keys).
 - Increasing importance was given to instrumental music, such as divertimenti, trios and the emerging string quartet, with the baroque trio sonata evolving into the Classical sonata, and the Italian overture growing into the new Classical symphony. The concerto was still very popular, although solo concerti more so than the older Baroque concerto grosso. The symphonic form continued as a favourite genre in the Romantic era, with expanded proportions, lyrical themes and colourful harmonies.
 - The orchestra increases in range and size, with the woodwind section becoming increasingly important; less reliant on the harpsichord for 'filling-in'. The early Romantic orchestra gradually continued to increase in size, with new developments and new instruments added.
 - The piano(forte) gradually replaces the harpsichord and the basso continuo falls out of use.
 - The new symphonic composers no longer wrote just for the court or the church, or were no longer exclusively employed by these institutions – now they wrote for concert-going audiences and music had moved from the palace to the concert halls. As the symphonies became longer and more expansive, composers' output in this regard was less.
- Mendelssohn continued to write in the domain of 'absolute music' in standard Classical forms, and is generally remembered as being 'conservative'...

'Classical by disposition, but with a special gift for Romantic scene-painting' (Grout).

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MENDELSSOHN AND HIS MUSICAL STYLE

Felix Mendelssohn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dates: 1809-1847• Wealthy family background and was given every opportunity in life.• German composer, conductor, pianist and organist from the early Romantic period.• Showed musical talent from a very young age and demonstrate outstanding ability in several areas (musically, artistically and linguistically).• He learnt from the musical masters (especially Bach and Mozart and also came under the influence of Goethe.• Wrote many youthful works which were important historically as well as artistically.• Throughout his career, he embarked on a series of tours, which by his own admission, contributed significantly to his spiritual and musical development. He once said: '<i>If I rest, I rust</i>'.• Musically, he was an important link between the Classical and the Romantic era; there was a strong element of Romanticism, but there was much akin to the 18th century in his style.
Output	As well as symphonies, Mendelssohn wrote concerti, piano works, chamber music and choral masterpieces.
The Symphonies	<p>His early sinfonias illustrate his development and links with tradition, and the influences of Bach and Handel and the Viennese classics were evident in the later string symphonies.</p> <p>Works: Symphony No.1 (1824) Symphony No.2 (1841, after revisions) '<i>Lobesgang</i>': symphony – cantata Symphony No.3 (1842) '<i>Scottish</i>' Symphony No.4 (1833) '<i>Italian</i>' Symphony No.5 (1832) '<i>Reformation</i>'</p>

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MUSICAL STYLE

Mendelssohn's use of form and harmony was rooted in the Classical period, having clearly been influenced by Mozart, Beethoven and Weber. He was also influenced by Baroque masters, such as Bach and Handel (seen in his use of counterpoint). From about 1824, he developed a characteristic style of his own, placing him among the early Romantic composers. His works are often programmatic in nature, with underlying literary sources, or they are descriptive of nature or emotions.

Like Mozart, he developed early as a musician and composer, demonstrating an exceptionally fluent technique. When judged against his contemporaries, Mendelssohn has perhaps appeared unadventurous. Throughout his life, Mendelssohn was wary of the more radical musical developments undertaken by some of his contemporaries. He was generally on friendly terms with Berlioz, Liszt, and Meyerbeer, but in his letters, he sometimes expressed disapproval of their works.

Structure

Mendelssohn's handling of form was probably less adventurous than that of his contemporaries, but he enjoyed a freer rein. It's not easy to distinguish overall general observations, but the student can note particular details of interest:

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Structure

Mendelssohn's handling of form was probably less adventurous than that of his contemporaries, but he enjoyed a freer rein. It's not easy to distinguish overall general observations, but the student can note particular details of interest:

- In sonata form, the recapitulation was often modified and in later works, the structure was less regular and more 'free' than might be expected.
- At times, the return to the main theme is built up with a crescendo (seen in the '*Italian*') and was the usual practice of the time; but more often than not, the return happens quietly, introducing some additional feature – harmonic or contrapuntal – to produce a very subtle outcome.
- He tends to shorten the gap between S1 and S2.
- He sometimes achieves a sense of 'completeness' in the Exposition section of his works by reminding the listener of the initial material, at the end of the section, which gives a clear sense of balance and unity (this is very clear to see in the '*Italian*' symphony).
- He sometimes recaps material which has been omitted from the developmental working, in the Coda section.
- In the '*Italian*' symphony, new material is introduced after the mid-point, and then integrated with the initial material.
- The influence of Haydn and Mozart can be seen in his adoption of clearly balanced themes and phrase structure, and formal control – after hearing the Piano Trio in D minor Op.49, Robert Schumann stated that Mendelssohn was the "Mozart of the 19th century."
- The 'freedom' he enjoyed when interpreting structures, is noted in his tendency to smooth over formal considerations at important points – he tended to 'bridge over' the formal divisions as such, in an attempt to create larger continuities. At the same time, he seemed to achieve clarity of form.

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MELODY

Mendelssohn was a 'lyrical' composer. He thought naturally in terms of melody – flowing and symmetrically rounded, attractive, but limited in scope and perhaps less varied in melodic curve and rhythmic impetus than say, Schubert. It was once written that '...the range of his musical ideas was limited' (Hawais). He tended to repeat the same melodic and rhythmic patterns. He had a fondness for tunes that began half-way through the bar (probably to avoid the rhythms from becoming too 'square'. Without judging against the work of others, we cannot deny the shapeliness and charm of his thematic material. In his best works, the beauty of the melodic line actually detracts from the regularity of structure.

As a composer, he certainly possessed and displayed an innate and subtle melodic gift, but sometimes in the structural context, it is not always strong or sufficiently varied.

Textures

We must not underestimate the textural 'finesse' that Mendelssohn displayed as a composer.

- Even as a young composer he was able to write fluently in a contrapuntal style, while still managing to achieve a sense of individuality.
- The contrapuntal presentation of his ideas often enriches the texture, and his mastery of contrapuntal technique must be acknowledged, although the content was never 'archaic' in styling.
- By his own admission, he was naturally disposed towards thick, contrapuntal textures, and in large measure, he owed his love of counterpoint, his inclination to write fugues and canons, to Bach.

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MELODY

Harmony

We must not underestimate the textural 'finesse' that Mendelssohn displayed as a composer.

- It includes chromaticism, but it does not play a crucial part in his music.
- He was fond of using the diminished 7th chord, often to create effective moments; and also, use of the extended dominant (i.e. b9/7).
- Frequent usage of inversions, particularly first inversion chords and that of the dominant 7th (6/5).
- Fondness of the subdominant minor chord.
- Effective usage of modulation, but perhaps less imaginatively utilised than in the works of his contemporaries.
- The success of the harmonic content often depended on how it was presented in the texture of the music.
- He used simple passages of 'block' harmony – like Beethoven, but sometimes with less successful results.
- He enjoyed creating inventive accompanying figures, which were mainly harmonic.
- At his best, he was able to achieve a sense of impressive spaciousness, by broadening the harmonic motion.

Instrumentation

You cannot deny the quality of his orchestration, which at times, is highly imaginative. His music, in this respect, utilises the forces to evoke space and distance, and is able to achieve colourful and significant contrasts between the grand and the personal, the celebratory and the intimate. He was capable of achieving a 'prettiness', as well as surprisingly emotional and agitated music, drawing out the special timbral qualities of the resources at his disposal. He was also a formidable and talented artist, and his ability to draw out and manipulate the 'colours' of his orchestral palette is evident in his music.

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The Eduqas specification includes a compulsory component which is based on **The Western Classical Tradition**, specifically, **The Development of the Symphony, 1750 – 1830**.

This has been presented as **Area of Study A**, and it focuses on the development of the symphony through the Classical era to the early Romantic era. The symphony was considered to be the most important instrumental genre of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The development of the symphony went hand in hand with the **rise of sonata form** and the **development of the orchestra**.

The symphony is acknowledged as an extended musical composition for orchestra. It had its roots in the Italian opera overture of the early 18th century, which was a composition in three parts i.e. fast – slow – fast, and quite a light form of entertainment. With the addition of a Minuet and Trio as a third movement, initially credited to the contribution of Stamitz and the Mannheim school of composition, the symphony became accepted as a more complex composition, mostly in four carefully balanced movements:

MOVEMENT 1	MOVEMENT 2	MOVEMENT 3	MOVEMENT 4
Usually: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Allegro in sonata form- sometimes preceded by a slow introduction- in the tonic / home key of the work.	Usually: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- either Adagio or Andante- in a key other than the tonic (e.g. a relative key)- built using structures such as three-part forms (e.g. ABA), theme and variations, or modified sonata form (minus the development section).	Usually: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Allegretto- Minuet and trio- Minuet was a stately dance, the trio often more gentle in character- moderate tempo- in the tonic key- in triple time- overall ABA form (with each section often in binary form). <p>(NB Beethoven replaced the minuet with a scherzo, which was faster.)</p>	Usually: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Allegro Molto (or Presto, or Vivace)- in the tonic key- in rondo or sonata form (or a combination!)- faster and lighter than the opening movement- sometimes featuring themes of a folk-like character.

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For students to give themselves the best chance to understand and appreciate the set work, they must familiarise themselves fully with **Sonata Form**. This type of structure does not refer to the organisation of a complete work – rather, it is applied to provide the framework for a single movement. The structure has three main sections – EXPOSITION, DEVELOPMENT and RECAPITULATION (although additionally, composers may include an Introduction section and a Coda section).

In this type of structure, two themes or subjects are explored according to set key relationships. It forms the basis for much classical music, including the **sonata**, **symphony**, and **concerto**.

For reference, the organisation of ideas is illustrated in the plan below

SONATA FORM - BASIC OUTLINE PLAY								
I N T R O D U C T I O N ?	EXPOSITION			DEVELOPMENT	RECAPITULATION			CODA
	The Exposition exposes and presents the main thematic material			The Development develops and explores the thematic material	The Recapitulation recapitulates and 'reminds' us of the original thematic material			The Coda 'rounds off' the piece
	first Subject S1	Transition passage (Bridge passage)	Second Subject S2	Exploring new keys while manipulating the thematic material (Usually ends with dominant preparation of the home key, ready for the return of I in the Recapitulation section)	First Subject S1	Transition passage (Bridge) now altered to stay in the -	Second Subject S2 Now in the	Also in the... Home Key
Home Key (Tonic Key)	Changing key	Related key		Home Key (Tonic Key)	Home key	Home Key		

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Teaching **Sonata Form** is best introduced initially through a small scale keyboard piece e.g. Sonatina no. 4 by Clementi. This provides useful prior examination of a smaller scale composition. Obviously, it is less complex (and lacking in the development of ideas), but the sections are clear, which hopefully will be more manageable and easier for students to understand at first.

Home Key:
F major

Sonatina 4

S1 in tonic key, F major

M. CLEMENTI
Op. 36, No. 4

CON SPIRITO



The image shows the musical score for the first system of Sonatina 4 by Clementi. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system starts with a forte (f) dynamic and includes fingerings (1, 2, 1, 4, 1, 2, 1, 2, 3, 5) and a trill (tr). The second system starts with a fortissimo (fz) dynamic and includes a piano (p) dynamic. The score is in 3/4 time and F major.

Bar 13: →

Transition,
changing
key

The B \flat s in the Transition, signal a gradual move to C major, the dominant key.

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S2 in dominant key, C major

The F#s in the S2 section are for decorative purposes only (i.e. lower auxiliary notes)



Musical score for measures 17-24. Measure 17 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody features a series of eighth notes with a sharp sign above the notes, indicating F#s. The bass line has a few notes. Dynamics include *fz* (forzando) and *dolce* (dolce). A blue box labeled 'Codetta' is placed at the end of measure 24.

The B^{fls} in the Transition, signal a gradual move to C major, the dominant key.



Musical score for measures 25-28. Measure 25 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody continues with eighth notes and a sharp sign above the notes. Dynamics include *fz* and *dolce*. A blue box labeled 'DEVELOPMENT SECTION BEGINS' is placed below measure 28.

3 bar phrase to conclude in the dominant key of C major.

Accidentals signal changing key



Musical score for measures 29-34. Measure 29 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody features a series of eighth notes with a sharp sign above the notes, indicating F#s. The bass line has a few notes. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *cresc.* (crescendo). A blue box labeled 'Rising sequence' is placed at the end of measure 34.

Rising sequence

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Musical score for measures 37-39. The right hand features a continuous sixteenth-note pattern. The left hand has a simple accompaniment. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is present at the start of measure 38.



Musical score for measures 40-42. The right hand continues with sixteenth-note patterns. The left hand has a simple accompaniment. A first fingering (1 5) is indicated above the right hand in measure 42.

Dominant pedal and preparation for return of the home key.



Musical score for measures 43-45. The right hand features sixteenth-note patterns with various fingering indications (4 2 1, 5 2 1, 5 2 1 3, 5 2 1 2). The left hand has a simple accompaniment. A fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic marking is present at the start of measure 45.



Musical score for measures 46-49. The right hand features a melodic line with a *dim.* marking in measure 46 and a *p* marking in measure 47. The left hand has a simple accompaniment. A blue callout box above measure 47 contains the text: "S1 in tonic key, F major".



Musical score for measures 50-53. The right hand features a melodic line with a *f* marking in measure 51 and various fingering indications (3, 5 3 2 5, 1, 3 1 2 1 2). The left hand has a simple accompaniment.

← Bar 61 Transition, now changed to stay in the tonic key

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Musical score for measures 54-56. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major). Measure 54 starts with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand. Measure 55 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 56 continues the triplet pattern.



Musical score for measures 57-59. Measure 57 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 58 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 59 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking.

S2 in tonic key, F



Musical score for measures 60-63. Measure 60 has a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. Measure 61 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 62 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 63 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking.



Musical score for measures 64-67. Measure 64 has a *dolce* dynamic marking. Measure 65 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 66 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 67 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking.



Musical score for measures 68-71. Measure 68 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 69 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 70 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking. Measure 71 has a forte (*fz*) dynamic marking.

Codetta:
concluding 3
bar phrase,
now in tonic
key, and
descending
instead of
ascending

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MENDELSSOHN'S 'ITALIAN' SYMPHONY

MOVEMENT 1

Mendelssohn had toured the main centres of Italy during October 1830 – August 1831, during which time he began work on the 'Italian' symphony. He was influenced by the atmosphere and surroundings, and wrote of his work:

"It will be the jolliest piece I have ever done, especially the last movement. I have not found anything for the slow movement yet, and I think that I will save that for Naples".

However, the composition did not come easily to him and he was to remain dissatisfied with his work. He finished the piece in 1832, and it was first performed in London in 1833, proving to be a resounding success with audience and critics alike. Only the composer himself seemed dissatisfied, and as with many of his compositions, he planned to make a number of revisions (especially to the last movement). He was never convinced that it was ready for publication and it appeared in print only after his death. The version we have today did not reflect his final conception, yet it remains his most popular symphony!

He made it known that it reflected a variety of impressions, not only from art and nature, but also from his personal experience and contact with the Italian people; the four movements have been described as 'a quartet of scenes around the topic of Italian life – seen ...through German eyes' [Thomas Grey].

The first performance of the 'Italian Symphony' took place in London in 1833. In accordance with the practice of the London Philharmonic society of the time, it was the role of the conductor to 'lead' from the piano at the start of each movement, while the 'leader' of the orchestra set the tempo and marked the beat. However, Mendelssohn was not prepared to leave this responsibility with leader of the orchestra and decided to conduct the performance using a baton. The appreciative audience demanded on having the second movement repeated – the performance was a wonderful success: 'On 13 May Mendelssohn was the jewel of the concert, presenting his wonderful A Major symphony for the first time, to thunderous applause' [Moscheles].

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The work is scored for:

WOODWIND: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons

BRASS: 2 horns, 2 trumpets

PERCUSSION: 2 timps

STRINGS

It is in four movements:

1. Allegro vivace (A major)
2. Andante con moto (D minor)
3. Con moto moderato (A major)
4. Presto and Finale: Saltarello (A minor)

Note:

This is a relatively small Romantic orchestra, using pairs of woodwind instruments, similar to the orchestra used by Beethoven. The clarinets and horns are pitched in A throughout the work, so written a minor third higher than they sound. For the string section, Mendelssohn writes a separate part for the Double bass, which is written an octave higher than it sounds. This gives a five-part string texture. As usual, the only instrument which does not use the treble or bass clef throughout this work is the viola, which is written in the alto clef (where middle C is on the middle line).

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Before beginning the set work analysis, students will need to familiarise themselves with the art of **score-reading** (possibly starting with a piano score, then a chamber piece, before attempting the orchestral score). Teachers must also explain the situation of **transposing instruments** and the use of the **viola (alto) clef / movable C clef**; furthermore, they need to be aware of the fact that there were still some limitations in the development of individual instruments (i.e. the limited restriction of pitches to brass instruments still without valves).

Note: In the 'Italian' Symphony, the transposing instruments are the clarinets, horns and trumpets. 'Natural' brass instruments were limited to the notes of the harmonic series. It is worth knowing, that despite the existence of valves on brass instruments from as early as 1815, manufacturers continued to make natural horns regularly for the rest of the century. There was resistance to accepting the new invention in many parts of Europe, particularly in France during the second half of the nineteenth century. Many writers and musicians felt that something was lost in the absence of even partially stopped notes on the horn. Consequently, many horn players continued to play, or at least study the natural horn throughout the nineteenth century. This clearly limited their melodic ability as far as composers were concerned.

In the *Italian* symphony, the brass instruments were deployed as follows:

Movement 1: Horns in A, Trumpets in D

Movement 2: Horns in A

Movement 3: Horns in E, Trumpets in E

Movement 4: Horns in E, Trumpets in E

The clarinets were fully-keyed instruments, with clarinets in A being a little larger than the more common B flat clarinet, but perhaps more suitable for tuning in the 'Italian' Symphony, which is actually in the key of A major.



*"...genuine music...
fills the soul with a
thousand things better
than words."*

Felix Mendelssohn

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MOVEMENT 1

An outline of the different sections is given below.

Section	Bars	Amount of bars
Exposition Section	1-209	209
First Subject Section (S1)	1-66	65
Transition section (Bridge Passage)	66-92	27
Second Subject Section (S2)	93-187	94
Codetta	187-209	23
Development Section	210-368	153
First Development section	210-284	69
Fausse Reprise / (Interruption)	285-296	12
Second Development Section	297-368	72
Recapitulation Section	369-510	141
First Subject Section (S1)	369-391	22
Transition passage	391-404	14
Second Subject Section (S2)	405-455	51
Third Development Section	456-510	54
Coda	510-586	77

Some initial observations:

- The Exposition is the longest section.
- The longest subsidiary section is S2 – but it does continue to include references to S1.
- A new thematic idea is introduced in the Development section.
- The Recapitulation is concise
(and note the False Reprise in the middle of the Development section).
- The Recapitulation section includes further development of ideas.
- The Coda is also a long section.

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Bars 51-66: This begins with a repeat of bars 2-10, with additional timps and enhanced scoring (oboes also have S1, with the full orchestra supporting). The answering phrase has been condensed (from 12 bars to 10), although it includes similar harmonic working, and the phrase again concludes in A major.

Transition Section (Bridge Passage), bars 66-90

This transition begins with an exciting antiphonal passage, using an oscillating quaver motif as strings alternate with the rest of the orchestra.

The image shows a musical score for two staves: Flute and Violins. Both are in 6/8 time and A major. The Flute part is labeled '(WOODWIND)' and features an 'oscillating 3rds' motif consisting of eighth notes. The Violins part starts with a rest, then enters with a quaver pattern marked 'f' (forte). A bracket under the Violins part is labeled 'tonicisation of B minor'. The Flute part ends with 'etc'.

The idea is treated sequentially, passing through B minor (bar 70) and D major (bar 72). As the repeated quaver motion settles in violins, ideas from S1 are heard in the cellos, supported with elongated reminders of figure 'x' in oboes and clarinets. A return to S1 fanfare motif (figure 'x') in violins in bar 82 bring a series of smooth phrases, which emphasize a subtle harmonic play with major and minor modes, bringing a tonicisation of B major (bar 86), which is dominant preparation for the key of the next section. Note figure 'y' in this preparation, as this is to be very much an important part of S2.

Second Subject Section: S2, bars 92-187

The section begins in the key of E major, though this shifts to E minor by bar 97. This theme maintains the overall spirit, but achieving a calmness that certainly feels like a welcome contrast after the eventful opening subject matter. The first idea is heard *piano*, with two motifs that seem inexorably linked: the motif in clarinets and bassoons, against the staccato quavers of the violins and violas, with lower strings punctuating the texture with a quiet rising arpeggio.

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S2a =

Musical score for S2a, showing Clarinet in A, Bassoon, Violin 1, and Violoncello parts. The score is in A major, 6/8 time. The Clarinet in A and Bassoon parts are marked *p* and are labeled "(as sounding)". The Violin 1 part is marked *f pp* and includes a "figure 'y'" annotation. The Violoncello part is marked *p*.

The graceful subject matter is extended over many bars in all – but not before a second idea is introduced in bar 110, again played by clarinets and bassoons:

S2b =

Musical score for S2b, showing Clarinet in A part. The score is in A major, 6/8 time. The Clarinet in A part is marked *p* and is labeled "(as sounding)".

This idea is still in E major and is probably the more prominent of the two themes. Clarinets and bassoons hold on to the thematic material (which is clearly still based on the first subject), until it is transferred to flutes and oboes in bar 124. This is heard above gentle quaver dialogue in violins, continued until it is cut off in bar 132. At that point the full orchestra joins in (*pp* at first) with an initial reference to the melodic motif from bar 17, heard above a pedal note of A for 8 bars (reinforced by the timpani roll, which is the 7th of chord B7 (i.e. chord of B4/2, or V 4/2).

The texture reduces to just strings; note that the V6 chord resolves onto an A major chord in bar 141 with a reminder of S1, followed by the tonicisation of F# minor in bar 143 before returning to E major. The oboes play a legato phrase using similar rhythms, and the section which follows includes imitative material with hints of the motifs from S1, a descending stepwise motif, and the arpeggiated idea. This musical sentence concludes quietly, with the dotted crotchet motif fading away. This is a sparse texture with just two string lines as the cello echoes the descending line of violin 1.

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Bar 158: A *pp* solo clarinet reminds us again of S1 – augmented, gradually to be joined by the rest of the orchestra. Note the low pedal G# for first violins and cellos here – it is 7 bars, not quite the lowest note for the instrument. (Is this an idea he later was to emulate in the first movement of his E minor violin concerto, when the solo violin sustained a low G as a tonic pedal note for 8 bars while flutes and clarinets delivered the delicious second subject theme?). At 171, S1 is repeated with renewed vigour played *tutti* and *ff*. This ends with a perfect cadence in E major (182-3), followed by 4 bars on the chord of E major, with figure 'x' from S1 in the violins above a descending arpeggio movement in low strings.

Codetta, bars 187-209

This first time bar is important as this codetta theme only appears here in this format: it contains fragments of S1 and S2, initially heard in clarinets and bassoons (in 3rds) and solo oboe, above the tonic pedal in horns and with lower strings outlining the bass notes of the perfect cadence in E *pizzicato* at 190 -1. The emphasis on the cadence is reinforced and extended at 194, as S1 monopolises the melodic content and the flute and bassoon change the pedal to that of the dominant (B). At bar 199, the theme is heard *p* above a pedal note back on E which proves to be - in the first instance and the first time bar, 10 bars of dominant preparation for the repeat of the Exposition section and a return to the home key of A major (which actually arrives in the last bar of the codetta).

[The second time bar remains on the chord of E major, before launching immediately into the Development section].

Development Section, Bars 210-368: The Development Section develops and explores the thematic material.

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First Development Section, bars 210-284

The thematic material of S2a begins its development at bar 210 – prefixed as before with the distinctive quaver patterning of figure 'y' – and is manipulated through modulation, both contrapuntally and sequentially. The rising woodwind phrases are now heard against staccato triplets in violin 1, and the music moves through A minor (217) and D minor (220) and the texture reduces eventually to a single line – fading away again with staccato quavers in violins 1, before the next surprise.

At bar 225, a new melody is introduced – a dance-like 'capricious' motif that never develops beyond the initial four bars:

S3 =

Violin 2

*** This new theme seems to have resulted from Mendelssohn's revision to the work, having previously deleted the idea from the Exposition section.*

Bar 229: S3 begins on an E major chord, first inversion (6/3 position) played by violins only. This acts as a dominant to A minor, bar 230 in root position (perfect cadence and tonicisation of that key).

Bar 231: The second two bars of S3 are accompanied by woodwind, trumpets and timps with a fuller chord of Eb9/7 acting as dominant again of A minor (i.e. perfect cadence to root position A minor chord in bar 232). The theme then becomes more fragmented and is heard fugato-style in the strings, beginning in viola (A7 → tonicisation of D minor in bars 233-4), then violin 2 (E7 → tonicisation of A minor in bars 235-6).

Bars 237-8: Note the reduction in the imitative texture – now, strings only (for the next 32 bars!). The harmony is Bb9/7 → E minor root position i.e. perfect cadence into E minor (tonicisation, bars 237-8). These two bars are then repeated.

Bar 241: S3 is played by low strings, above a G7 chord (note the Neapolitan inflection with the flat 2nd used as decoration) → C major in bar 242¹, with a dim 7th chord feeling on beat 2 with the use of the extended dominant Db9/7/#3 chord (with the 7th in the bass). This resolves to G⁶₃ in bar 243. Bar 244-248 is clearly based on the previous four bars, although it is a complete sequence i.e. one tone higher. This concludes in A minor.

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The stretto section with antiphonal working which follows in violins from bar 249, is eventually heard above an 8 bars pedal on F# which is dominant preparation for what is to follow. The tension increases through a rise in dynamic and pitch, passing through B minor in bar 266, until S1 is reinstated by the woodwind at bar 269, now in B major. This is answered by brass and timps in bar 273, with S3 still evident in upper strings. The new idea (i.e. S3) and S1 become somewhat intermingled before the music brings a return of the main theme.

False (Fausse) Reprise, bars 285-296

Now there follows a brief 'false recapitulation'. The opening phrase from S1 is heard played *tutti ff* in C major (second inversion harmony for 2 bars, moving to G7 in bar 287. At bar 289, only the first oboe plays from the woodwind section, along with violins 1, supported by the rest of the strings, brass and timps. The melodic material from the previous phrase continues, and there now follows a 4 bar harmonic sequence – above a C^6_3 positioning in bar 289, shifting to E^4_2 in bar 290. In bar 291 this brings a brief tonicisation to A (initially a 6_5 inversion).

The second step of the harmonic sequence i.e. starting at bar 293 uses chords D^6_3 , $F\#^4_2$, resolving to B65 in bar 295. This short 12 bar section now leads to a return of development procedures.

2nd Development Section, bars 297 - 368

At 297, the full orchestra returns, again *ff*, with further development of S3 – although the rising scalar ideas and other figuration remind us of earlier subject material also. The key here is E minor (note the tonic pedal for two bars and the move to Bb^9_7 in bar 299). Bar 301: the material is heard above a brief cycle of 5ths i.e. $Em \rightarrow A \rightarrow D \rightarrow$ before resolving onto B7 in bar 304. Bars 305 - 308 = bars 297- 301.

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Bar 309: the bass line descends by step (strings only) supporting Em – Bm⁶₃ (i.e. D in bass) – C#7, still delivering figure S3 in the same style as previous phrases. At bar 313 note the tonicisation of F# minor, through dominant and tonic chords in that key centre, with the timps joining in on an A beneath the F# minor harmony.

At bar 319, full orchestra plays *ff*, as S3 is heard in violins, clarinets and flutes, confirming the key of F# minor. Another tutti climax is reached at bar 323, still with S3 in low string, though S1 (fig. 'x') is starting to creep back in. By bar 325, the music is now in F# major.

From 327, the reference to figure x is re-shaped, and heard descending on various notes of the C# major chord (dominant of F#), all above a dominant pedal of C# which lasts for no less than 22 bars! Bar 333 bring another passage for just strings joined in bar 345, by the *pp* solo oboe which gently reminds of the S1a opening motif in long extended notes, just before the music moves into the recapitulation. This impressive section is founded on an augmented version of the opening motif, and there is a breadth achieved which prevents it from slipping into the naive working sometimes noted in 6/8 time by Mendelssohn. The effective dip in the dynamic to *pp* makes a gradual crescendo in anticipation of the return of the opening thematic material.

Recapitulation Section, bars 369-510: This section recapitulates and 'reminds' us of the original thematic material.

First Subject Section, bars 369-391

This proceeds with small changes:

- Same key as the exposition (A major)
- A shorter, more concise version of the same theme – only 14 bars for S1
- Bars 369-386 = bar 3-22. There are slight changes in scoring, with oboe and trumpets added at the (very) start of the recap
- The modulatory passage work seen in the exposition from bar 23 onwards has been changed as the harmony takes an unexpected 'surprise' move (interrupted cadence) to the chord of the submediant minor (bar 387), with a cadential progression of vi→V7/V → V⁷₍₄₋₃₎. Bar 389-391 reflects the harmonic move back to A major as in bars 17-19 of the Exposition.
- The re-statement of S1 heard from bar 51 onwards has now been altered, as continued development is taking place.

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Transition passage, bars 391-405

This is 10 bars shorter than the corresponding section in the Exposition.

Bar 391-404: the texture reduces to woodwind accented chords (*p*) (+horns) as at 383, with the cadential phrase as quaver figuration just heard in violin 1 initially, though violin 2 joins in an octave below (i.e. from the 2nd quaver in bar 399). Harmonically the content remains based around the dominant of A major (as expected), though there are some chromatic touches adding colour to the transitory material. The music fades to just violin 1, with content reminiscent of earlier material (figure 'y') (including the start of the Development section) in a short link, bringing the return of S2.

Second Subject Section, bars 405-455

Noticeable differences when compared to the corresponding section in the Exposition:

- The key is now A major i.e. the tonic key.
- Thematic material is now mainly strings (previously mainly woodwind).
- Theme is now in viola and cello (not clarinet and bassoon) – note the effective scoring here, as Mendelssohn achieves a rich sonority by creatively placing the cellos above the violas in pitch.
- Final phrase is in different string instruments (i.e. violin 1 and viola, not violin 1 and cello).

Bars 405-418: The thematic material is now heard in viola and cello, with the accompanying quaver idea in woodwind (figure 'y') in flute and clarinet, instead of violin 2 and viola. There is a reduction in the instrumentation which provides a lighter texture and contrast in sonority. The harmony in the first 4-bar phrase is uncomplicated (i.e. I→IV→V7→I in A major). The next 8 bars include a modulation to the dominant key of E major, first achieved in bar 412, with an inverted cadence $V^4_2 \rightarrow I^6_3$ in that key. This is followed by a cadential progression reinforcing the harmonic move, supported by a short dominant pedal in the bassoon.

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Bars 419-426: The first 4 bar phrase here is basically the same melodic material as bar 405, following the same chordal progression, though the theme is back in the violins and there is a dominant pedal in the cello part. The answering phrase ends with an imperfect cadence, landing on an inverted dominant chord i.e. V^6_5 .

Bars 427-455: Thematic material of S2 is now heard in flute, clarinets and violins, accompanied by dominant pedal E (i.e. dominant of the home key), with a reminder of the oscillating figure played by viola and cello (first heard in the transition section, bar 66) all above a pedal note D played by the double basses. (The first chord here therefore is E^4_2). A crescendo is gradually built throughout this tutti phrase, and after being reminded of the opening motif of S2 heard *f* in flutes and clarinets (in 3rds) and violin 1, there is a tonicisation of the subdominant key of D (bar 436), B minor (bar 438) before a cadential progression of $I^6_4 \rightarrow V7 \rightarrow I$ in the home key of A major (bars 440-442).

Following this, the texture reduces to just strings for 13 bars. As the melodic material is worked around a series of cadential progressions (i.e. D major in bar 443-4, back to B minor in bars 445-6). Bars 450-455 recall and extend the idea of bars 155-158 from the Exposition section. This musical sentence again concludes very quietly, with the dotted crotchet motif fading away, with a sparse texture as the viola echoes the descending line of violin 1.

The music moves seamlessly into the next section – where further development ensues.

Third Development Section, bars 456-510

Whereas the solo clarinet had interrupted proceedings in the Exposition section, now it is S3 which again attracts our attention, beginning *pp* in woodwind (in 3rds) with a dominant pedal in violin 1, violas and horns. There has been a change of mode to the minor: the key is now that of the tonic minor – A minor.

This passage is a further and continued development of the new idea which was introduced in the development section. As the music continues to expand texturally, note the harmonic 'exploration' through F major (472).

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MOVEMENT 2

GENERAL

Apparently, Mendelssohn had seen a religious procession when he was in Naples, and this movement was possibly a suggestion of the experience. This Andante movement 'breathes a restrained quietude and nobility' (Groves). According to Moscheles, the composer used the theme of a Czech pilgrim song in this movement. It is delicately scored, containing passages of unusually bare sonorities, and its introductory rhythmic material is most imaginative. (Compare this movement with the Andante of Schubert's C major symphony, the allegretto of Beethoven's 7th and the Pilgrims' March in Berlioz' *Harold en Italie* – they all suggest processions). Sometimes this movement is referred to as 'The Pilgrims' March'.

Key: D minor	Time Signature: 4/4	Tonality: Minor	Tempo: Andante con moto
Orchestra: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in A, 2 bassoons, 2 horns in A, 2 trumpets in D, and strings.			
Structure	A B A1 B1 Coda		
Other Interesting features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The introductory motif is imaginatively used as transitory material and in the Coda• Clarinets and horns are only found in sections B and B1• The movement is quite delicately scored and contains passages of bare colouring.		

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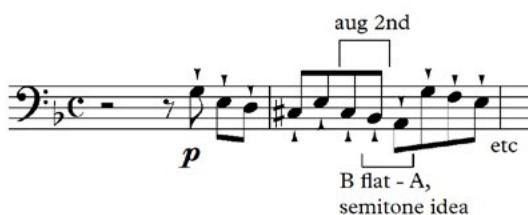
OUTLINE ANALYSIS

The rather mournful opening, the equivalent of a short two-bar introduction, is played by woodwind (without clarinets) and upper strings. It is a monophonic texture as the motif is heard in unison; it has been described as 'an invocative recitation', a responsorial psalmody reminiscent of his experiences in Rome. It is a formulaic intonation that hovers around the fifth scale degree, and is played *forte*. This opening motif returns later in the movement, both in the transitory material and in the Coda.



This motif is based around the dominant note of the home key of D minor. The upper auxiliary note (Bb) gives a modal feel – it is the flat submediant.

The main theme of Section A which follows, is pre-fixed by a steady quaver 'walking bass' marching type idea, heard *piano* in lower strings:



The interval of the augmented 2nd is associated with the harmonic form of the D minor scale.

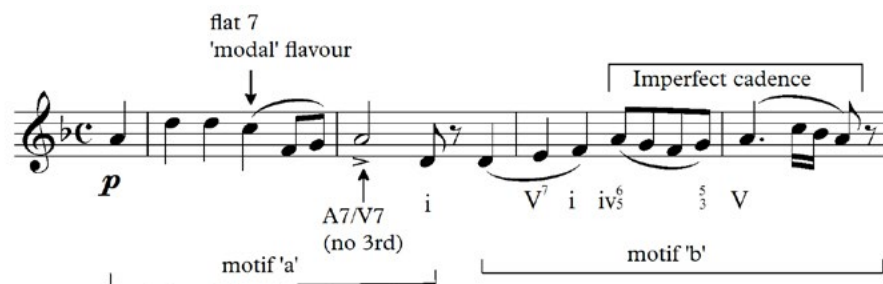
This idea continues under the entry of theme A.

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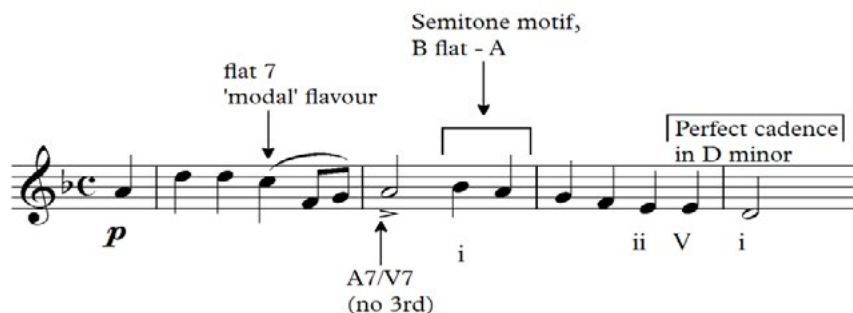
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Theme A =



This solemn main melody is creatively scored for oboes and violas in the upper octave and bassoon in the lower octave. The first statement remains in the tonic key, with an imperfect cadence ending the antecedent phrase in bar 7 (as above), and the consequent phrase ending with a perfect cadence:



Note the bass quaver line in this last bar (i.e. bar 11) which moves swiftly from the D up to the B flat – A semitone motif, subtly included in the line.

This theme is a hymn-like tune with modal inflection (i.e. the lowered 7th degree).

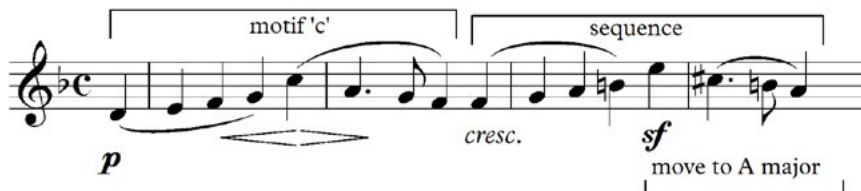
Bars 11-19. In this second statement, theme A is played by violins with a gentle countermelody played by both flutes, heard *piano*. The quaver movement continues *sempre staccato e p* in the lower strings, and the quiet repetition of the thematic material further establishes the idea and pattern of the responsorial 'chanting' effect'.

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Bar 19 now follows a third motivic idea:



The rising crotchet movement is reminiscent of the descending crotchet movement at the end of theme A. From 21⁴, as seen in the quote above, motif 'c' is repeated in sequence, a third higher.

Bars 23⁴-26: The second half of theme A returns as the music repeats bars 7⁴-11.

Bars 27-35: Based on bars 23-26, but with motif 'c' now played by violins an octave apart, and so higher in violins 1. The countermelodies played by the flutes are delightful, adding some chromatic touches to the harmony.

Bars 35-44: This is a transitory section, as the next idea played *piano* on violins is derived from the opening 'wail' (incantation) of the short introductory motif. The scoring is for strings only, and in bars 35 and 36, the harmonies of D – A7, tonic and dominant 7th chords in the home key are repeated. In bars 37 and 38, the material is homorhythmic; note the descending chromatic movement and decorative trill in the first violin part, supported by chromatic harmonic content with diminished harmonies, before concluding with a perfect cadence in D minor in bar 39.

Bars 39-40 are based on bars 35-6. Bars 41-44 begin as if to repeat the ideas from bar 37 onwards, but changes are soon noted in the content. The emphasis is on the chord of the supertonic 7th, which is clearly dominant preparation for the next section. In these few bars, **note**: the increasing chromatic movement, the continued staccato direction, the syncopated rhythmic accented chords re-enforced by trills in the first violins, and the contrary motion (for most) of bar 44. This leads to:

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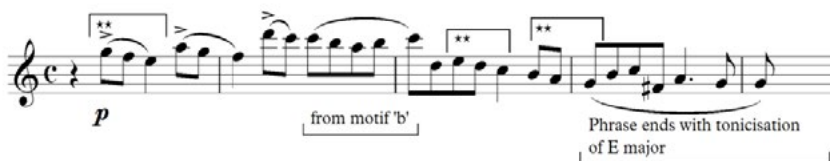
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Section B, bars 45-56

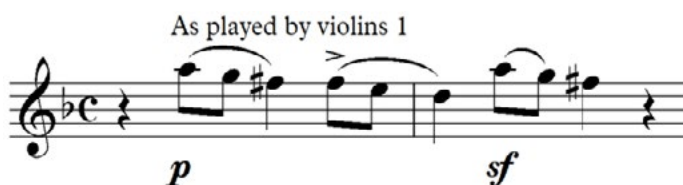
This is a contrasting section, which introduces a lighter theme. It is in more of a contrapuntal style and is a contrast in terms of the texture. Harmonically, the content is more complex, with a number of features to note. It also introduces the clarinets and horns for the first time in the movement. The passage begins *piano*, although it includes a variety of dynamics throughout. In total, this passage is 12 bars long

Theme B =



** = an idea linked with theme A: inversion of the 3 note stepwise idea from bar 4⁴-5, but more significantly, from motif 'b', where the 3 note stepwise figure dominates the melodic content.

This is played by clarinets, with middle strings filling out the harmony in quaver movement above a dominant pedal E played by the horns. By bar 49, the music has returned to the home key of D, but in the opposite major mode:



This is the theme played by the clarinet in A, as seen in the score. The actual pitches of the notes are therefore a minor 3rd below.

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Theme B continues throughout this passage, mostly heard in clarinets/violins. Of particular interest is the harmony. Following a variety of perfect cadences in D major during bars 49 and 50, there is a brief tonicisation of B minor (51¹) which moves to A major via a V4/2 chord of that key on bar 51²⁻³. The last beat of bar 51 is a D major pivot chord: in bar 52, the harmonic progression takes us through V6/4 → ii → Vb9/7, ready for resolution back to D major in bar 53. **Note:** the chromatic descending movement in viola (functioning as the bass line at that point), and in low strings (bar 55). The final bar of this passage is built on a diminished 7th chord (D#→F#→A→C) as the music builds in preparation for the return of section A.

Section A1, bars 57-74

Now begins the second half of the movement, in which the material is re-stated without too many complications.

Bars 57-58 are based on bars 1-2. However, the introductory motif is now heard *ff* and revolves around the note E (as expected); this is the 5th of the A minor chord, in which this section begins.

Bars 59-61 are based on bars 16-18, with the music now in the key of A minor. Note slight changes to the countermelody in flutes, although the syncopation is still evident. Thematic material is to be found in oboes, bassoons and violas (which is actually the same scoring as in bar 4).

Bars 62-74: This passage continues with ideas and patterns from section A, from bar 65 heard over a decorated pedal of A for two bars, using the semitone motif of B flat – A from the very opening of the movement. The B flats (evident since bar 62), are heard as the flat 9th of the dominant chord of D (i.e. A – C# – E – G – Bb) which adds the diminished flavour to the music as it makes its way back to D minor, which arrives in bar 69³. From bar 67, the flutes are silent, and theme A is again played in oboes, bassoon and violas, with the *piano* staccato running quavers, this time in violins.

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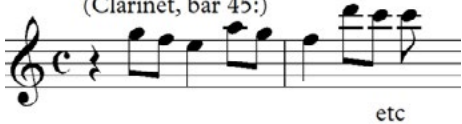

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Lower strings support the harmony with detached quaver notes. The passage comes to close on the chord of Ab9/7 in bar 73, ending on a short quaver staccato A7 pp chord in bar 74. A repeated quaver A in the lower strings links to:

Section B1, bars 75-85

This is just slightly shorter than the initial B section, by virtue of the fact that the thematic material is actually placed differently. In the initial section, the first strong beat was on the third of the bar – now, it is on the first beat of the bar:

Section B	Section B
<p>(Clarinet, bar 45:)</p>  <p>etc</p>	<p>(Flute, bars 744 -76)</p>  <p>etc</p>

There are some changes in scoring (as clarinets and horns are re-introduced) and there is re-distribution of the patterns and motifs. The main difference is clearly one of key.

Note:

- It begins in D major.
- Once again, quite modulatory, with brief tonicisation of the following keys – B minor (bar 77), A major (bar 78), G major (bar 79), E minor (bar 80).
- When the return of the tonic is expected around bar 82, the harmony actually is that of the tonic major with the $b9/7$, although acting as a secondary dominant of G major (V/IV), which is also used in bar 84. The passage concludes with a $I6/4 \rightarrow V7 \rightarrow I$ progression in D major.

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Coda, bars 86-end

This concluding section is 18 bars in length. To begin with, the writing has been reduced to only strings. It begins with the introductory motif in violin 1, against running quavers in 2nd violins and violas, supported by lower strings outlining the harmony. Note the descending chromatic movement in violin 2 – not a new idea in this movement – and although the F# on the first beat of bar 86 in violins 2 may indicate the major tonic, it soon slips chromatically, and by bar 87, the music is clearly back in the tonic minor. This Coda has been based on the transitory material from bars 35-44, and although it starts similarly, by bar 92, change is afoot as the introduction motif is transferred to the woodwind (although without clarinets). As the texture reduces further, the 'procession' fades into the distance, with fragments of the hymn melody, theme A, heard *pp*.

The movement ends with just over 3 bars heard in cellos and bass (monophonic texture). The modal inflection on B flat falls to the dominant note of A (the semitone motif and the two notes with which the movement began). This leads to four final tonic notes, the last three of which are heard *pizzicato*.

For consideration by teachers

There are always different ways of looking at things – particularly as far as musical analysis is concerned! Teachers may want to consider the following structural outline (modified sonata form – i.e., sonata form structure without a development section) for movement 2 which may be taken as a viable alternative to that suggested above:

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For consideration by teachers

Section	Bars
EXPOSITION	1-56
Introductory theme	1-3
1 st subject group	3 ⁴ -35
Transition	35-45
2 nd subject group	45-56
RECAPITULATION	57-86
Introductory theme	57-58
1 st subject group	58 ⁴ -73 ¹
Transition	73-74
2nd subject group	74⁴-86¹
CODA	86-103

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MOVEMENT 3

GENERAL

It has been well documented that Beethoven took the Haydn symphonic minuet and turned it into a lively scherzo on many occasions. In his 8th symphony, however, he reintroduced the more refined minuet – and it seems to be this movement that Mendelssohn, so often influenced by Beethoven, now turned to as inspiration for the third movement of the 'Italian' symphony. He had probably also experienced many types of minuet in this vein during his time in Italy.

It is a piece reminiscent of the delicacies of his music in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its subtleties of scoring and restrained moments. Rather than a stately minuet or a lively scherzo, the movement takes the form of a graceful dance. It shows Mendelssohn in a more conventional mood: it is nevertheless beautifully written.

Clear knowledge of the particular background and influence of dance features to the early Classical symphonies, is useful for students. The Minuet and Trio (originally a 17th century stately court dance with a characteristic stately 3/4 metre) is a movement found in almost every Classical Symphony and the usual features are: two sections in binary form (with the first section repeated in each case); a graceful style; triple time; symmetrical construction; features of the Trio (which include a reduction of instrumentation).

It has been suggested that this movement was Germanic in origin. It may well have been inspired by the composer's study of Goethe's *Lilis Park*, as he wrote to his sister that he wanted to turn it 'into a scherzo for a symphony'. However, it is not a boisterous scherzo – rather, it is a stately dance.

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Key: A major	Time Signature: 3/4	Tonality: Major	Tempo: Con Moto Moderato
Orchestra: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in A, 2 bassoons, 2 horns in E, 2 trumpets in E, timps and strings.			
Structure	A B A Coda / B1 – with clear links to Minuet and Trio		
Other Interesting features	Minuet <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upbeat/anacrusis of half-bar value• Woodwind and horns are used with restraint, to colour the strings initial thematic statement• The scoring in the 2nd and 3rd periods is much richer, although trumpets and drums are still held at bay.		

OUTLINE ANALYSIS

Minuet: Section A, bars 1-76

This Minuet is in two parts, as expected, but is in three (large) phrases or periods. All the material in Section A is very similar in melodic shape and phrase length.

Theme a1 Bars 1-20 A major → E major Repeat marks at the end of this phrase.	Theme a2 Bars 21-41 Extends the dominant (minor), then various keys.	Theme a3 Bars 42-57 Back in the tonic key.	Codetta Bars 57-76
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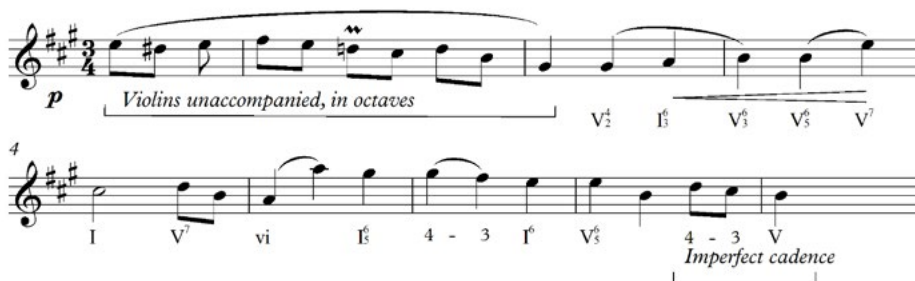
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Theme a1, bars 1-20

The opening is written for strings only, and is in the key of A major. It begins in violins, with a *piano* quaver running idea that leads into the graceful theme 'a'.

Theme 'a' =



p *Violins unaccompanied, in octaves*

4 *Imperfect cadence*

This ends in an imperfect cadence, landing therefore on the dominant chord, E major. At this point, the horns quietly enter with a dominant pedal note. Along with this sustained note, is heard a repeated pattern:



p *V*₂ *I*₆

As the melodic line moves forward, sequentially at first, the harmony returns to the tonic A, before passing through a tonicisation of F# minor (bar 15) which then brings about a cadence in E major (creating a short circle of fifths progression):

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Bars 29-34 is heard *forte* as the suspension motif and the quaver accompaniment idea from theme A are heard weaving through C#b9/7 in third inversion (bar 29) preparing for the impending tonicisation to F# minor (bar 31). Despite a brief foray to D major in bar 32, the diminished flavours return in bar 33. In bar 34, the opening of theme A is heard in violins 2 and violas and yet again there is a two bar section repeated, implying a shift to F# minor, although not securely established, as the E# has been omitted from the dominant of the cadence:



The image shows a musical score for Violin 1 and Violin 2. The key signature is A major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The notation shows a cadence in F# minor. A bracket under the notes in bar 33 indicates a correction: 'No E# in this chord: C#, G#, B (C#7)'. The notes for Violin 1 are: bar 29 (quarter rest), bar 30 (quarter rest), bar 31 (quarter note G#), bar 32 (quarter note A), bar 33 (quarter note B), bar 34 (quarter note C#). The notes for Violin 2 are: bar 29 (quarter note G#), bar 30 (quarter note A), bar 31 (quarter note B), bar 32 (quarter note C#), bar 33 (quarter note D), bar 34 (quarter note E).

The music makes its way to the dominant of the home key and the return of the initial thematic material (although via an interrupted cadence in bars 42-43).

Theme a3, bars 42-57

The rest of the orchestra re-enters, although still without the trumpets. From bar 45³-49, the thematic material is heard in violins 1 in the manner of the opening, while the woodwind emphasises four cadences into D major: the first two are $V^{4/2} \rightarrow 1^6$ (in D), and the 2nd two are $V^{6/5} \rightarrow I$ (in D). For the remaining 8 bars, the texture is initially reduced to strings, although builds to include bassoons and woodwind to complete the passage assertively, heard *forte*. The harmony continues to be of interest in this 8 bar passage, which eventually concludes with a perfect cadence in A, the home key of the Minuet, using the following progression in bars 53³-7:

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Bar 53 ³	Bar 54	Bar 55	Bar 56	Bar 57
☺	☺ ☺ ☺	☺ ☺ ☺	☺ ☺ ☺	☺
F#7	Bm C#7	F#m IV	I6/4 V7	I

PC in Bm	PC in F#m	Cadential progression in A major
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Codetta, bars 57-76

This is based on bars 1-20 and theme a1, with some re-organisation of ideas and with the material scored more fully for orchestra (although still no trumpets).

Note:

- The emphasis on the tonic pedal, which is an addition (bars 57-9, 61-3, 69-76 in the bass, and also in the horn parts).
- The inclusion of trills for all upper woodwind in bars 64 and 66.
- Reliance on the quaver figuration from theme a1 throughout the passage.
- The very gentle ending to the passage, with *piano* quaver chords in flutes and clarinets (pizzicato in violins 2 and string bass) and a *pp* thematic line in violin 1.
- The section ends in A major.

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Section B: Trio, bars 77-124

The trio was originally given this title in the early Classical era because it was conventionally written in three parts.

The trio is also in two main divisions, again following a similar structural outline with three distinct phrases:

Theme b	Theme b1	Theme b
Bars 77-92: E major Repeat marks at the end of this phrase.	Bars 93-108 Again, a move to the dominant (minor), then various keys.	Bars 109-124 Back in E major.

Theme b, bars 77-92

This is a 'picturesque' trio, which adds a touch of mystery to the proceedings. It opens with a soft fanfare in bassoons and horns, answered by an ascending *pp* phrase in violins, which has a distinctive, halting rhythm.

Theme b =



Mercer-Taylor says: "...the Trio....evokes the German forest and hunting, arguably inducing a mood of nostalgia for Germany in the midst of the Italian setting" (Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn). A repeat of the fanfare idea (theme b) is answered by flute, and then bassoons and horns complete the statement by extending the opening fanfare idea (i.e. bars 86 onward). The upbeat / anacrusis in this section is a crotchet value, and the idea includes soft accents which punctuate the figure. The horns and bassoons end the section, which concludes with a perfect cadence in E major.

This section is then repeated.

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Theme b1, bars 93-108

This is heard *mf*, and tentatively, as Mendelssohn includes trumpets and drums to support the fanfare, which is heard on a unison B played by woodwind, echoing the figure previously played by horns at the start of the trio. Although the previous phrase clearly finished in E major, the omission of the rest of the chord here puts a question mark over the exact tonality. While the B (dominant pedal note) is sustained for just over two bars, the entire string section answers with a fanfare of their own, in antiphonal manner – and the harmonic progression now confirms the shift to E minor i.e. $V^{4/2} \rightarrow i^{6/3}$ in that key (bars 933-943). This figure ends (still in strings), with an imperfect cadence in bars 95/6. In bar 96, the fanfare rhythm repeats bars 92³-95, but the answering response in strings takes a different direction harmonically speaking, as the music tonicises the key of A minor, before ending the short string response with an imperfect cadence in A minor.

There are two further steps in this particular passage: the first fanfare is given by brass and timps (bar 100³-104¹), answered by strings with a new, repetitive motif:



Bars 104³- 108 is based on bars bar 100³-104¹, although violins and violas are an octave higher and the fanfare rhythm is heard only in trumpets this time, still supported by timps.

Theme b, bars 108-124

This is based on bars 76-92, and the return to the opening of the trio restores calm. Note that the music for violins and flutes has been swapped.

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Section A1: Minuet, bars 125-202

After a two bar link in the style of the opening, the Minuet is repeated. Stylistically, there is typically no repeat of theme a in the recap of the Minuet.

Theme a1: bars 125-146

Theme a2: bars 147-166

Theme a3: bars 167-183

Codetta: bars 183-202

Section: Coda / B1, bars 202³-end

The fanfares from the Trio are heard sporadically, combined and answered with elements of the minuet. The two sections have been united and are now presented by the whole orchestra. The texture is still antiphonal in style. In bar 210, bassoons and horns play the material from bars 84-88, before the first violins begin a quaver ascent, along with further short reminders of the fanfare figure heard *pp* in upper woodwind, then trumpets and timps. The movement ends with three very quiet tonic chords on the first beats of the final three bars, with the strings playing pizzicato.

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MOVEMENT 4

GENERAL

This movement has been entitled 'Saltarello'. This was a musical dance which originated from Italy, distinguished by a fast triple metre and named as such after its rather peculiar leaping step, taken from the Italian word 'saltare' which means 'to jump'. The standard description of such a dance would be that of a moderately rapid Italian dance – by Mendelssohn's time, it had been superseded by a more vigorous dance, which the composer depicts in this finale – a boisterous outcome labelled 'Presto'. The folk dance is suggested not only by the breakneck tempo and compound metre (in 4/4 with triplets – not written in compound metre, although may feel like it), but also by the scoring.

The first movement of this symphony was Allegro Vivace, and surely approached the type of movement many would associate with the finale style of a symphony – now Mendelssohn needs to top this, and go to the next level! It has been described as '...a motoric folkdance', incorporating dance figurations which also show characteristics of a 'tarantella'. This was a type of dance which is among the most recognised forms of traditional southern Italian music, characterised by a fast upbeat tempo, usually in 6/8 (sometimes 4/4) time, and accompanied by tambourines.

Key: A minor	Time Signature: Common time	Tonality: Minor	Tempo: Presto
Orchestra: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in A, 2 bassoons, 2 horns in E, 2 trumpets in E, timps and strings.			
Structure	Sonata Form – very loosely treated.		
Other Interesting features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This symphony is among the first large multi-movement works which has a first movement in the major (in this case, A major) and a last movement in the minor (in this case, A minor). This appears to be another nudge towards folk-based modality. Another example of this may be seen in the first piano trio by Brahms.• Sonata form has been interpreted with freedom in this movement. As stated by Douglas Seaton, '...formal conventions seem to yield to programmatic considerations' (Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn).		

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OUTLINE ANALYSIS

Exposition Section, bars 1-102

First Subject: S1, bars 1-34

The music starts with five decisive rhythmic chords, played *forte* by the full orchestra. The *ff* rhythmic strumming which follows is played by the strings, flutes, clarinets and bassoons and sets the tempo; the unison triplets are heard as the tonic pedal in the key of A minor. For ease of reference, this repetitive rhythm will be referred to as figure 'x'. In bar 4, the texture reduces to upper strings, then heard *dim* as the music is reduced to the single line of the first violins. Above this continued *pp* tonic pedal, the first idea (maybe representing the first dancer...) begins '*leggiere*' with the theme played by the flutes. The clarinets and bassoons join *pp* with tonic, subdominant and dominant harmonies (above the tonic pedal):



Musical score for Flute and Violin 1, bars 1-4. The Flute part features chords marked with Roman numerals i, iv, and i, with triplets and a *p* *leggiere* marking. The Violin 1 part features a continuous triplet rhythm.



Musical score for Flute and Violin 1, bars 5-8. The Flute part features chords marked with Roman numerals V, i, iv, and i, with triplets. The Violin 1 part continues with the triplet rhythm.

Fig 'x'



Musical score for Flute and Violin 1, bars 9-12. The Flute part features chords marked with Roman numerals V and i, with triplets and a *(tr)* marking. The Violin 1 part continues with the triplet rhythm.

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In bar 13/14, the dotted crotchet-quaver figure in flutes and clarinets is heard through diminished harmony, built on an extended supertonic major chord in first inversion i.e. B $b9/7/\#3$ (i.e., V/V secondary dominant) with the 5th of the chord (F#) heard in the bass played by the bassoons. The triplet figure in violins shifts up to a D# here.

Bar 14-22: Back to the tonic chord, and as more and more instruments join in (from bar 14), the excitement builds. Theme S1 is heard in upper woodwind above a continued tonic pedal (still the triplet-idea) in violins 2, viola and cello, and horns and bassoons also support the thematic material with the dominant quaver chords in bars 16 and 18. The oboes cut through the texture with rising minims from bar 17, to hit a sustained A in bar 19, and the music builds in pitch and dynamic to conclude the passage on the secondary dominant chord (V/V), B $b9/7$ (in first inversion), in bars 21 and 22.

Bars 23-33: As the chord of the dominant major is reached, the dynamic suddenly reduces back to *pp* as the theme of S1 is heard based on chord V. The thematic material is now in violins 1, pitched an octave lower than the initial statement in flutes. Oboes support the content by playing just the first quaver beats at the start of each triplet in the bar – and this 'detached' quaver idea, emulating from the first two beats of the bar, is one that becomes well used later in the movement. From bar 27, S1 is delivered by violins in thirds, with the material doubled in clarinet and flute at the octave. This is heard above a sustained tonic pedal in oboes and bassoons, but with the original triplet rhythms noted as the tonic pedal in viola and lower strings, heard *crescendo*. This builds in intensity – above a dominant pedal in horns in bars 29-30 (in addition to the continued tonic pedal). Also note the descending minims in woodwind, with distinctive chromatic lines in flutes and oboes. Bars 30-33: S1 is played *tutti* (although no trumpets), and *ff*. Horns and timps emphasise the tonic pedal triplets yet again and S1 is repeated in violins and flutes, supported by the rest of the woodwind playing a rhythm clearly linked with the main thematic material:

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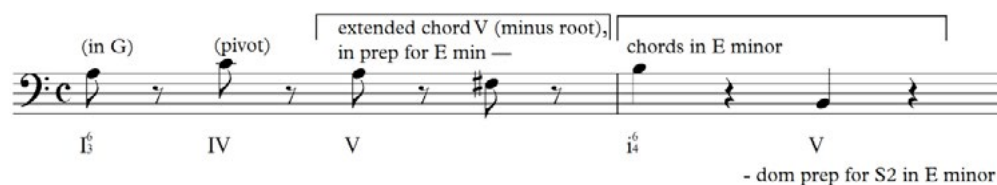


Transition passage, bars 34-53

The function of the transition is to change key in preparation for the second subject group of themes. The passage begins with an immediate reduction of texture to just strings as they play a *ff* idea in unison. As S1 is referred to in strings (bar 36) - still in unison, the woodwind section present a new motivic idea above two perfect cadences in A minor:



Bar 38-41 is based on bars 34-37, but this time the unison statement in strings has expanded into harmonies which lead again to the above motivic idea in woodwind, now based over two perfect cadences, this time in C major. At bar 42, the music shifts (via a higher dominant dischord with diminished tones i.e. A, C#, E, G, Bb = Vb9/7/#3) to D minor. From bar 44, the transitory material again introduces a two bar pattern which is repeated, above the harmonies of Bb9/7→V⁶→V7→i in A minor. Bar 48 begins as if to repeat this pattern, although with the different harmonic content of Db9/7. This leads to two bars of alternating harmonies which include a tonicisation of G major (note the alternating diminished harmony here). This is followed by a cadential progression, which leads directly to the second subject section in the key of E minor:



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Second Subject: S2, bars 53-101

S2 is the second Saltarello theme, heard in violins 1, then violins 2 and viola.

S2a =



This is similar to S1, but is now in the dominant key. This is accompanied by a quiet descending chromatic minim line in oboes and clarinets (in octaves), with lower strings supporting the harmony, along with a staccato dominant pedal in trumpets. Bars 57-60 repeats the material from bars 53-56, although the woodwind play an octave lower.

Bars 61-70: This is the second idea presented in this subject group i.e. S2b.

S2b =



This is combined with snippets of S2 – and S1, as the quiet triplets in woodwind (without oboes) which follow, remind us of the earlier triplet-type fanfare idea. The simple, conjunct single bar in first violins (bar 66) leads again to S2b over a $i6/4 \rightarrow V7 \rightarrow i$ progression in E minor. Bars 68³-70 repeats bars 64³-66.

Bars 71-75: A short 5 bar link in strings. The texture is a complete contrast; it is played by strings, beginning in violin 1; violin 2 imitates at a full bars distance, followed a bar later with a countermelody in viola. All parts play running quavers; the key is A minor – note the different versions of the harmonic minor scale (bar 71 and 72).

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Bar 76: Final statement of S1 (again in two bar units) in flutes, accompanied by string (then oboes).

Note: the imitative treatment of thematic fragments in woodwind (from bar 80), before the passage concludes with a perfect cadence in the key of B major (bar 81-82). The *b9* of the chord is soon in evidence as the strings begin a forte quaver unison descent leading back to E minor and the triplet unison pedal fanfare figure in that key (bar 84). Woodwind and brass answer this figure with S2b, and the interaction between the orchestral sections continues in this manner, building to reach a tutti climax in bar 97 which concludes this section, still in E minor.

Codetta, bars 97-102

This is played by the full orchestra, using the alternating chords of E minor with its extended dominant, B D#, F#, A and C (with the 7th in the bass). The codetta ends in the key of E minor.

Development Section, bars 103 -233

There is no discernible Recapitulation section as such; Mendelssohn continues developing the thematic material throughout the movement.

1st Development section, bars 103-174

The music continues in the key of E minor. The descending arpeggio (bars 101-102, end of codetta) in all parts leads into a continuation of ideas from the previous section i.e. sustained unison note of E in woodwind and brass, unison triplet figure on E in strings, above a timp roll on E. As expected, this functions as a dominant taking us to figure 'x' now on A in just violins as the texture reduces – although the dynamic is *ff*.

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Bars 106-122: Now begins development of S1, the Saltarello theme, in a very lightly scored textural presentation, with the theme initially in clarinets (bar 106), then joined by flutes (bar 110) before oboes join with the theme in bar 115, supported by detached quavers in other parts while the violas continue with figure 'x'. Harmonically, the music moves from D minor (bar 107, via diminished colouring) as the triplets of fig. 'x' fall a semitone to Ab (bar 109) before resolving onto a G7 chord, which becomes the dominant of C minor (bar 110³). A dim 7th chord in bar 114³ tonicises D major briefly in bar 115 before this resolves further into G minor. This harmonic structure is repeated in the next two bars and the passage concludes with three such cadences in woodwind resolving onto the chord of D major, as the strings reduce to just cello and bass.

Bars 122²-155: This next developmental process is in G minor. This is **new thematic material** – the 'running' Tarantella theme:



There is much exploration of minor keys through contrapuntal treatment of the Tarantella, with the addition of the Saltarello rhythm. Note the following:

- It begins, *pp* in violins, still supported by the detached quavers (from bars 51-2 at the end of the transition) supporting the harmonies in violas and low strings. Violins 2 join with the new theme in bar 126, and violins 1 re-join at 129, an octave higher than originally.
- The viola takes over the theme in bar 133, as the harmony tonicises A minor at the start of bar 137.
- Then follows a busy passage harmonically, as there is much exploration of minor colouring and quick chord changes:

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The image shows two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first staff contains four measures of music with chords: B⁹, Em, A⁶, and Dm. The second staff contains eight measures of music with chords: C, F, Dm, G, Em, Am, F#m, B, B7, and Em⁶. A 'G' is written above the final note of the second staff, indicating a key signature change to G major.

At bar 143, the imitative texture between violins, provides continued interest as the tonality shifts back to E minor (V → i6/4 → V progressions noted in that key until bar 149). From bars 149-152,

Note:

- Cycle of 5ths i.e. Em → Am → D major → G major.
- Imitation / stretto texture now extended to woodwind instruments.
- Repetition of ideas, as bars 153-155 is based on bars 149-151.

Bars 156-165: Figure 'x' in woodwind, heard *piano*, on the dominant 7th harmony of the home key – a V6/5 chord, to prepare us for the return of S1 and the arrival of the Recapitulation section. A two-bar link with imitative delivery of the Tarantella theme leads to:

Bars 160-163: The key and chord of A major is used to repeat the material from 156-159.

Bars 164-5 repeats the material from bars 156-7, but without the oboes, above a sustained F# in string bass which belongs this time to chord V 6/5 of G major (i.e. D, F#, A, C).

Bars 166-175: Imitation of the 'running' Tarantella theme ensues in strings (stretto), with the tonicisation of G by the 3rd beat of bar 167; this proves to be the dominant of C major, reached by the 3rd beat of the following bar. Bars 169²-174 involves harmonic sequences (3 x 2 bars) with further interest achieved through the stepwise shaping, contrary motion and occasional chromatic movement in strings along with the sustained pedal notes in woodwind.

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A final *f* version of the Tarantella theme played over tutti (minus trumpets) alternating dominant/tonic harmony in the home key A minor (175 – 176), followed by F major harmony leads into...

False Recapitulation, bars 179-195.

Bars 179-194: This involves a shift to E min, where S1, the Saltarello theme is heard in violins above a dominant pedal (figure 'x'), *forte*, in brass, violas and lower strings. The short two-bar phrase is repeated before the music reaches a tutti climax, *ff* in bar 183. S1 is now heard in A minor, and in bar 186 the contrary motion, chromatic accented crotchets in strings lead to the dominant chord of A minor. Once again, this is a two-bar idea repeated in bars 189-190.

Bars 191-194: Tutti *ff* chord in C major changes direction harmonically as we revisit an alternating chords idea reminiscent of the phrase at the end of transition passage (bars 49-50) – now augmented into crotchets, and including triplet rhythms from figure 'x'.

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2nd Development section, bars 195-233

At this point, we are expecting the Recapitulation 'proper' – but the material is still developmental, and this turns out to be a 2nd development section, using the Tarantella theme.

As the music begins with similar material to bar 175 (i.e. the 'running' Tarantella theme), we embark upon a section built on a dominant pedal of the home key, lasting for no less than 19 bars; this certainly feels as if we are building up to something – and indeed, this includes the smooth inclusion of the Saltarello theme (S1) at bar 210.

Bars 214-233: An *ff* tutti chord of A7 – tonic major 7th – is reached and sustained for the bar, above figure 'x' on an A in low strings, answered by violins with running quaver figuration (hinting at *b*9 of the chord with the B flats). Bars 216- repeats this two-bar idea, before the content shifts upwards, as S1 returns in A minor from bar 222. The descending movement in woodwind is somewhat reminiscent of earlier lines in this movement (and perhaps also of the phrase at the end of Section A in the Minuet). There is a tonicisation of D minor in bar 230 via *b*9/7 chord of its dominant in the previous bar; more diminished flavours (*B*b5, *b*9, 7) in bar 231 finally bring *i*6/4 → *V*7 → *i* (bars 232-234) to conclude the section.

Coda, bars 234-264

This concluding section is in the tonic key of A minor. The Saltarello rhythm is evident with a brief reminder of the first subject from movement 1 (bar 239). It also ends with imitative fragments of the first Saltarello theme (S1), mixed with figuration that has been utilised throughout the movement: figure 'x', the detached quavers from the end of the transition section (bars 51-2), sustained pedal notes and the like. In bar 254, the texture reduces to just violins 1, heard *pp*, with figure 'x', as there is a reference to fragments of S1 in woodwind. For a moment, the dance again fades, before the crescendo; a final reminder of the Tarantella theme and the repeated perfect cadences in A minor bring the symphony to an exciting conclusion.

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FURTHER RECOMMENDED LISTENING:

1. Symphony No. 3 in A minor 'Scottish'
2. Symphony No. 5 in D 'Reformation'