

Teaching guide: Area of study 1 (Baroque solo concerto)

This resource is a teaching guide for Area of Study 1 for our A-level Music specification (7272). All your students need to study:

- Strand A (Baroque solo concerto)
- Strand B (The operas of Mozart)
- Strand C (The piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg).

Appraising music – listening

In the listening part of the examination, students are tested on their recognition of musical elements from excerpts of unfamiliar music across all three of these strands. Their learning and understanding of these musical elements can be developed from their study of the set works.

In the examination, students must apply their knowledge and skills to excerpts from other works within the genre. For two of these strands, students use their recognition of these elements to place the music in context.

We recommend you broaden your students' experience of these genres by regularly exposing them to works by other composers (in the case of Baroque solo concerto), other Mozart operas and piano music by Chopin, Brahms and Grieg. Students could also listen to examples from this list:

- Flute and Violin Concertos by Telemann
- Oboe Concertos by Albinoni, Handel, Marcello and Telemann
- Bassoon and Violoncello Concertos by Vivaldi
- Organ Concertos by Handel
- Harpsichord Concertos by Bach
- Trumpet Concertos by Torelli.

In the examination, recordings may be from period instrument performances (at Baroque pitch) or modern instrument performances.

In the analysis part of the examination, students answer specific questions on musical elements and contextual understanding from two of the three strands.

With the help of a printed score they use their knowledge and understanding of the set works to show:

- the effect of audience, time and place on how the set works were created, developed and performed
- how and why the music across the selected strand is different
- how the composer's purpose and intention for the set works is reflected in their use of musical elements
- relevant musical vocabulary and terminology for the set works
- the complex interdependencies between musical elements
- the sophisticated connections between music and its context.

The scores will be Sibelius files of an extract from three of the set works (one from each strand). No prior knowledge of a particular edition of the set works is necessary for this. For the Baroque solo concerto, the extract will be in open score.

The Baroque solo concerto

Sonata in D for Trumpet and Strings: Henry Purcell (1659 - 1695)

'Sometimes a hero in an age appears, but rarely a Purcell in a thousand years' from an engraving on a chest in the Song School at Westminster Abbey.

Henry Purcell is rightly regarded as one of this country's greatest composers. Despite his relatively short life (he died aged 36), he wrote music for almost every genre, including sacred and secular, vocal and instrumental. He's probably the best exponent of the expression of the English word in music and he wrote the first ever English opera - Dido and Aeneas. He grew up in a family of musicians and as a boy was a chorister in the Chapel Royal. When his voice changed, he acquired a collection of musical jobs, including assistant keeper and repairer of the King's instruments, organ tuner at Westminster Abbey and occasional copyist of music.

At eighteen, he succeeded Matthew Locke as 'composer for the King's violins' - a band of twenty-four violins which Charles II had instituted in imitation of the Louis XIV's players in France. Two years later he followed John Blow as organist at Westminster Abbey. His whole adult life was spent in the services of the court and church as composer and musician.

This Sonata for Trumpet and Strings was probably written near the end of his life. It was published in 1694. The use of the trumpet would indicate a celebration of some sort (Purcell composed numerous Odes and Welcome Songs for Charles II and James II) and it follows a similar pattern to the twenty or so Sonatas in 3 and 4 parts for violins, bass viol and basso continuo. In these Trio Sonatas Purcell had 'faithfully endeavoured a just imitation of the most famed Italian masters' - most notably the Trio Sonatas of Anton Corelli - although

imbuing them with the readily recognisable fingerprints of his own compositional style, namely a lively rhythmic energy, expressive and poignant harmony with adventurous chromaticism, and a strongly inventive melodic creativity.

Towards the end of the 17th Century, the Italians were the acknowledged masters of instrumental chamber music and opera (the French and German composers excelled more especially in keyboard music). It coincided as one might expect with the pinnacle of great Italian violin makers, Stradivarius, Guarneri and Amati. As the technique of violin playing developed, allowing for a greater tonal range than the older viol, so did the interest in showing off the best performers' skills. This high trumpet part requires a particular technique of playing with a very tight lip pressure on the higher harmonics, a feature of Baroque trumpet writing seen elsewhere. For example in Torelli's Trumpet Concerto, Handel's Messiah and Bach's 2nd Brandenburg Concerto.

Despite being called a Sonata (the 17th Century Italians were not particular about the titles of their instrumental works. Sonata, Sinfonia, Concerto, Divertimento and Canzona were frequently used for similar types of instrumental piece). There are many characteristics of this piece which relate well to the concerto which superseded the sonata as the predominant form of instrumental work from 1680 onwards; namely, (a) three movements (fast - slow - fast) as opposed to the four movement structure of the Sonata da chiesa (b) the emphasis on a firm bass with florid melody (c) the clear tonal organisation of major and minor keys to reveal the musical structure and (d) contrasts of texture within each movement. The latter two points enabled later composers (such as Vivaldi and Bach) to build much longer structures within a single movement.

The Baroque trumpet was a natural instrument with no valves. Most were pitched in the key of D (the celebratory tonality) and players had a set of crooks to insert into the tubing if another key was required. Purcell requires just ten different pitches, from nine different harmonics (the G and G# being 'lipped' from the same harmonic), and he reserves the lowest two pitches to the final section of the third movement:

The sound is different from the modern equivalent. The 'clarino' register required a different type of mouthpiece with a shallower cup and a sharper edge to the main bore which gave brilliance to the tone and made lipping the out-of-tune harmonics easier. The best players were able to 'manage their instrument as softly as a flute'.

Most available recordings use a string orchestra of six or eight violins, two violas, one violoncello, double bass and harpsichord (or organ) as basso continuo, although it is possible to perform the work with much smaller forces.

All three movements are short in length, and make their musical affection immediately, directly and concisely.



1st Movement: Pomposo

The first movement is just 29 bars long with most performances lasting only about 75 seconds. It can be divided into three main sections:

A bars 1 - 111

B bars 112 -19

C bars 20 - 29

Section A

Section A is built entirely on motif a. The trumpet sets the fanfare-like mood of the movement from the start with this characteristic rhythmic pattern, emphasising the tonic and dominant notes and adding a distinctive upper auxiliary on the second semiquaver. A root position D major chord supports the first bar, and the texture is melody and accompaniment.

The motif is immediately repeated twice more, rising up through the 3rd and 5th of the tonic triad. By the end of the first beat of bar 2, the solo trumpet has played every pitch (excepting the G#) it will have in the whole movement. The second repetition of the motif has a little variant at the end, an extra semiquaver which enlivens the rhythm further and includes an unprepared 7th, the kind of unexpected dissonance typical of Purcell.

This phrase is repeated exactly twice more above a rising bass line, before falling back to the tonic for the cadence, creating a classic arch-shape to the opening melody. The perfect cadence is heralded with a quickening of the harmonic rhythm in the third bar, coupled with more semiquavers in the melody. The dominant chord is decorated on the 4th beat with a 4 - 3 suspension, trill and anticipatory note in the melody.

Bars 4 - 6 repeat the material exactly, but for two essential differences; a) the violin takes the melody with the trumpet tacet and b) the melody is a fourth lower and, after the opening bar of tonic harmony, the music modulates to the dominant, A major, enhancing the brightness of mood further.

These two three-bar sections are followed by a four-bar section where the motif is passed antiphonally between the trumpet (largely unaccompanied), and the strings (violin and bass in parallel 10ths). The first three phrases are on the dominant chord, the fourth is back to the tonic and then bars 9 - 111 are a repeat of bars 2 - 41, albeit with one small change in the rhythm of the bass. This first section of the movement is therefore itself in a distinct ternary structure.

Section B

After the lively and decisive rhythmical style of the opening section, the B Section lends itself to a more relaxed, lyrical and plaintive mood. Purcell achieves this contrast in the following ways:

- a stepwise, instead of triadic, motif
- falling, instead of rising, melodic shapes
- regular quaver movement, without semiquavers
- B minor tonality (the relative minor)
- a more imitative and contrapuntal texture
- a quieter and more legato style (not marked in the score).

This B motif is played four times with the violin in close imitation of the trumpet, over a bass initially in parallel compound 6ths, then in compound parallel 10ths, the violin extending the final repetition into a perfect cadence in B minor, again with 4-3 suspension and anticipatory note.

At bar 14, the trumpet picks up the final three notes of motif b in rhythmic diminution and starts another antiphonal exchange with the strings, the trumpet ascending in sequence as the bass descends.

As the trumpet reaches the top of its range, for the first time it shows its ability to sustain long-held notes over two cadential progressions in the dominant A major. Bars 17 and 18 reveal Purcell's adventurous approach to tonality and harmony with an abrupt switch to A minor after the first cadence, then use of the secondary chords II and VI under the inverted pedal to heighten the dissonance and expressive affection.

Note the clever weaving of motif b into the texture, in close imitation between violin and bass, and the long-descending bass line which reinforces the complete thematic unity of this B section.

The C# in the A chord at the start of bar 19 equally abruptly restores the major tonality (it sounds initially like a tierce de Picardie), semiquaver movement reappears, the b motif is inverted in the violin leading to rising shapes which bring about the return of the movement's opening mood.

Section C

The tonic is firmly re-established with root position D major chords in bar 20 (reminiscent of bar 1), the trumpet reasserts itself with the principal melodic line above the chordal texture, and the phrase shapes rise once again, outlining the tonic triad. Rather than simply reiterating motif a, Purcell opens with just the first three notes and then heads in a different direction with greater rhythmic movement and more passing notes to intensify the excitement.

Another antiphonal exchange follows between violin and bass in parallel 10ths and the trumpet using a variant of the first seven notes of motif c, this time rising in sequence through chords IV, IIb, V, IIIb, VI, IVb and Vb. At this point, halfway through bar 24, the trumpet changes tack and picks up the last four notes of motif b in inversion (so now as a rising pattern), and in rhythmic diminution, which is imitated twice by the strings before the trumpet embarks on

a broad final descent back to the tonic with the violin in unison for the first time in the movement.

This falling sequence of parallel first inversion chords is a typical baroque harmonic progression, using motif b in its original falling shape in quavers. The final perfect cadence is again decorated with a trill and 4-3 suspension, and the falling 7th which coincides with the anticipatory note creates a pair of consecutive fifths in the harmony - a rare example where this is musically valid. The whole of this 10 - bar C section is resolutely in D major.

2nd Movement: *Andante maestoso*

The second movement provides a direct contrast. After the exhilaration of the opening, the mood now changes and the music is gently expressive and poignant. The trumpet is rested and the strings play in a homophonic texture, often in short gestures of just two or three notes, punctuated by rests, which conveys a thoughtful and melancholic sentiment, aided by the slow tempo, minor tonality and almost entirely conjunct melody. The rhythmic movement is crotchets throughout, with dotted patterns preceding the cadence points, and minims at phrase-endings.

The structure is binary form:

- A (bars 1 - 4)
- A' (bars 5 - 73)
- B (bars 74 - 143)
- B' (bars 144 - 20)

The first bar establishes B minor (the relative minor) with a I Vb I progression, under a repeated F# in the melody (the 3rd of the D major tonic chord which ended the first movement). The second bar explores this idea further as a stronger VI V I progression, the melody now rising three notes by step as the bass descends, extending the breadth of the texture. These two one-bar phrases are followed by a two-bar phrase, the melody rising chromatically through a D# (harmonised by a secondary dominant (V of IV), and up four notes (reminiscent of motif b in the first movement) before falling by a characteristic diminished 5th to the cadence, a perfect cadence in B minor, once again with a 4 - 3 suspension and anticipatory note.

Bars 5 - 8 are a repeat of the same material, but pitched a fourth higher in the subdominant (E minor), a change of key which further subdues the mood. The progression of chords is identical, but Purcell varies the melodic shapes of both outer voices, the falling diminished 5th occurring earlier in the phrase to create a short descending melodic sequence, and the rising minor 6th in the bass now replaced by its inversion, a falling major 3rd. The cadence ends with a tierce de Picardie, in preparation for the modulation to A major at the start of the next section.

The B section intensifies the emotion with a series of falling gestures in the melody, and increasingly chromatic and audacious harmony exploring the flatter and darker side of the key spectrum. The phrases all begin with an anacrusis and the melody is entirely conjunct, starting and ending with falling tones, but descending by semitones throughout bars 10 - 133. As the melody falls, so the bass tends to rise, in contrary motion. Particular features to note are:

- the sequence of appoggiaturas
- the repeated Cs in bars 11 and 12, which extend the phrase to six bars
- the unresolved 7th in bar 11
- Vb7 in F in bar 12
- the augmented triad in bar 13 (IIIb in Am).

These six bars are then repeated with an expanded textural range, using the A major chord in bar 14 as the dominant of D major and exploring the distant key of Bb major before employing another tierce de Picardie to switch from D minor to the final D major chord, neatly preparing for the tonality of the last movement.

3rd Movement: Allegro ma non troppo If the first two movements can be regarded as serious and regal, as might be fitting for a performance at the royal court, this final movement allows for some spirited dancing in the manner of a Gigue. Although at 80 bars this appears to be the longest of the three movements, its brisk tempo and metre result in performances which last less than one and a half minutes.

Features of a Gigue:

- fast tempo
- 3/8 metre (one-in-a-bar), with occasional hemiolas
- D major key is typical of folk music (use of open strings), with little modulation
- easily memorable, conjunct melody
- imitative texture
- binary structure, with the theme inverted in the second half
- 32 - bar sections.

The texture is fugal in character and for the first time in the work, the 2nd violins and violas get an opportunity to share some of the principal melody writing. The absence of any significant modulation allows the trumpet full access to all the musical material.

Bars 1 – 16

The four-bar 'subject' is stated in the first violins in a regular rhythmical pattern which emphasises the strong beats of the bar. It utilises just five pitches of the tonic scale, firstly in descent from the dominant and then rising sequentially to finish on the third. The harmonic implications are I - I - V - I, in a harmonic rhythm which changes chord once every bar, a pattern maintained throughout this first section of the movement. In bar 3 the violas imitate the subject an octave lower, and in bar 5 the second violins imitate on the dominant a 5th higher than the violas. As there are no leading notes in the subject, this entry has no implication of modulating to the dominant key. The texture has now increased to three voices, an extra bar of sequence is added whilst the first violins give a brief reference back to the falling appoggiaturas of the previous movement (marked 'x' on the score). During this clever piece of thematic transformation the basses enter with the subject, again starting on A. One more dominant entry in the violins follows in bar 10 before finally the trumpet makes its entry in bar 13 with a final statement of the subject at its original pitch. Note how the bass rises by step from the second bar of its entry in bar 9 up a complete octave to reach top D at bar 16.

Bars 16 – 33

At this point the material changes. The strings introduce a fresh idea which slows the harmonic rhythm to a chord change every two bars, at the same time as creating a greater rhythmic vitality and energy with five rapidly repeating chords in a typically dramatic Italian fashion:

The trumpet pares down the opening subject motif into a three-note descending triadic figure, the two ideas alternating in antiphonal dialogue. After ten bars of this material the harmony reaches chord VI, the trumpet picks up the figure from the second bar of the subject and the II - V - I cadence arrives courtesy of a distinctive hemiola pattern, the strength of the dominant chord on the second beat of bar 26 being emphasised by a trill. The one-in-a-bar harmonic rhythm is restored at bar 27, and the section closes with a short descending sequence followed by another hemiola heralding the perfect cadence.

Bars 33 – 46

The second half of the movement begins with a return of the opening subject, this time inverted and with the second entry in the second violins entering after only a single bar. These bars are for strings only and after the bass entry the music modulates for the only time in the movement - four bars of the relative minor.

The image displays two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The top staff is labeled 'subject in inversion' and shows a four-measure melodic line: G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter). The bottom staff is labeled 'stretto imitation' and shows a four-measure melodic line: G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C#4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), G3 (quarter). Both staves have a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp.

Bars 47 – 64

The trumpet returns to state the inverted shape of the subject, and a bar later the tonic is restored for the remainder of the work. A change of shape at the end of the phrase brings about the first imperfect cadence in this movement (bar 51), and further new material is presented, characterised by intervals of the rising 4th and falling 3rd in another antiphonal exchange, this time with the first violins doubling the trumpet against the lower strings. Note the unexpected false relation between the bass C \flat and treble C \sharp in bars 54 – 55. A final statement of the subject in its original descending form starts at bar 59, apparently bringing the movement to a close with another hemiola and perfect cadence at bar 64.

Bars 64 – 80 (Codetta)

The fanfare figure of repeating chords returns, this time with the trumpet joining in with the same material in antiphony with the strings, first rising and then falling through the notes of the tonic triad. This is the only passage in the whole work where the trumpet plays bottom D and F \sharp , adding an extra authority to these final moments. After 11 bars of tonic harmony the cadence figure from bar 32 returns, repeated with the same phrase by the trumpet, and two more tonic chords for the curtsy to bring the dance to a close.

Flute Concerto in D OP.10 No.3, Il Gardellino (published in 1728) – Antonio Vivaldi

‘The song is a great rush of jangling and tinkling notes – golden notes; it always seems to me as if the sound were being played on tiny instruments of gold. There is a reckless, and, in a quiet way, a slightly overwhelming quality about a goldfinch in full song. It’s as if he has to get a certain number of notes out before a rather tight deadline.’ Simon Barnes – *Birdwatching with your eyes closed*.

Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice in 1678, and is one of the most significant, and prolific, composers of the late Baroque period. His father was a violinist, and Antonio learned the instrument to a very high standard from an early age. He was ordained a priest at the age of 25, the same year that he was appointed master of violins at Pio Ospedale della Pieta in Venice. This orphanage, one of four in Venice, was funded by the city to provide tuition for local orphans – the boys learning a trade and the girls learning music – and during Vivaldi’s time there it gained an international reputation for the high standard of the girls’ singing in the choir and playing in the orchestra. Vivaldi’s priestly duties did not last long (he was nicknamed The Red Priest because of the colour of his hair), and he later became the Musical Director at the orphanage, responsible for composing the music, training the girls in theory as well as their practical music making. It was not a permanent job – he had to be reappointed on an annual basis – and at various times he left to seek making his fortune in Mantua and Rome.

Vivaldi's first success as a composer came from his *L'Estro armonico* (op.3), a set of twelve concerti for one, two and four violins dedicated to Grand Prince Ferdinand of Tuscany and published in 1711. His most famous piece, *The Four Seasons* was composed whilst he was working in Mantua in 1723, based on four sonnets which he probably wrote himself, capturing in music a whole host of sounds from the natural world. He also wrote a number of operas and much religious choral music but, given the success of *The Four Seasons* and other popular works such as the *Gloria*, it is perhaps surprising to learn that Vivaldi died in poverty, his style of music having fallen out of fashion during the Classical period, and his music was not played at all until a revival in the early twentieth century. J S Bach, his contemporary in Germany, held Vivaldi's music in high regard and transcribed six of his concerti for organ and harpsichord.

In all, Vivaldi wrote about five hundred concerti, and he is the composer who most systematically developed the three-movement form, exploiting the potential for dramatic tension between the soloist and tutti, and exploring opportunities for colourful sonorities within a largely homophonic texture. Pictorial effects, such as those most obviously manifest in *The Four Seasons*, abound in his music.

His orchestral forces at the Pio Ospedale della Pieta in Venice probably consisted of twenty to twenty-five stringed instruments, with harpsichord, organ or mandolin for the continuo, although the girls were also known to play the flute and bassoon, for which instruments he also wrote concerti. The early 18th century flute had been developed by French makers, most notably Jean Hotteterre. Made from boxwood, the instrument was made from three sections, with a conical bore, and tuned in the key of D. There were no keys (except perhaps for one at the bottom to play low Eb), and chromatic notes were achieved through cross-fingerings. The Baroque flute has a characteristically pure and gentle tone, although the notes out of the natural key of D tended to have a distinctively different timbre and, as with the trumpet of this period, accurate intonation always required particular skill on the part of the player. Different types of articulation were the principal means of achieving variety in emphasis and phrasing.

Listen to this excerpt for an example of a goldfinch singing. It seems to capture the rapidly alternating perfect 4ths, followed by a long trill, and ending with repeated pitches.

1st Movement Allegro - Opening ritornello (bars 1 - 131)

The principal characteristics of the movement are concisely displayed at the outset in the string parts:

- lively dotted rhythms
- D E D E melodic shape - motif a
- sudden leaps of tessitura
- four repeated Ds - motif b

- texture in parallel octaves
- tonic and dominant harmonies.

Unusually (for the opening of a concerto) the strings provide the melodic material, and the solo flute accompanies on the third and fourth beats of each bar, providing the harmonic outline of I - V - I - V (imperfect cadence). The second phrase at bar 5 starts once more on the tonic, but then moves through a sequential descent I - IV - VII - III - VI - II - V - I (perfect cadence), at which point the flute joins the strings in parallel octaves in a rhythmically varied form of motif A, repeated and then extended, before the ritornello finishes with a series of descending scales starting and ending on the dominant with trills and octave leaps.

1st episode (bars 13 – 20)

An unaccompanied flute solo, marked a *piacimento* and played freely as if a *cadenza*. The soloist immediately picks up the features of the opening ritornello, notably the dotted rhythms, motifs a and b, the trills, the octave leaps, the scales and the increasingly rapid oscillations of perfect 4ths in rhythmic diminution, aptly characterising the song of the solo goldfinch. The whole episode is firmly rooted in D major, with repeated tonic and dominant notes and ascending scales.

2nd ritornello (bars 21 - 263)

This is a truncated (half-length) version of the opening, taking the first four bars and the last two bars, and omitting the trills.

2nd episode (bars 263 - 472)

The soloist sets off again unaccompanied, developing material from the first episode - the last four pitches of the rising D major scale, interpolated with three notes of motif b, then the demisemiquaver ascent of the whole scale and the familiar octave leaps in a dotted rhythm.

This time the pulse is strict time, as the violins engage in a little dialogue under the longer flute notes, sounding like small trills, but actually the varied form of motif a in parallel 3rds. The high tessitura and lightness of texture aptly convey the bird-like trilling.

At bar 32 new material appears in an idiomatically Baroque three-part polarised texture, the flute and first violins at a similar pitch at the top of the treble staff and the violas (unusually) providing the bass line at a tenor register. The flute's broken chord pattern outlines the same harmonic progression as the ritornello (I - V - I - V) in half-bar units, completing the two-and-a-half bar phrase with another chord I to complete the perfect cadence and another repeat of the violin's motif a and trill in parallel 3rds. The violins repeat top A in semiquavers, (rhythmical diminution of motif b), as an inverted dominant pedal. This whole phrase is then repeated as a rising sequence in E minor, the abrupt move to chord II assisted by a V - I (in the new key) in the violoncellos, the flautist strengthening the progression with a 7th (and the continuo player no doubt also

providing the D#). This is the first move away from the tonic key. A second repeat of the phrase takes the music to B minor (using the E minor harmony as chord IV) and an imperfect cadence (V - I - V - I - V).

At bar 39 the leaping dotted rhythms from the first episode return, this time as falling 6ths, and the texture increases to four parts as the second violins join the flute for the second part of the phrase in parallel 3rds, and the first violins maintain the bird-like trills in long-sustained 7 - 6 suspensions. The key appears to move back to the tonic in bars 41 - 44 as the harmony progresses through VI - V - IV, but then a distinctive diminished 7th chord at bar 443 draws the tonality back to B minor conclusively to bring the episode to a close. This whole passage is based on a descending sequence, a two-bar phrase which is repeated three times, each one step lower and always starting on the third beat of the bar. The harmonic rhythm is drawn out so both the suspension and its resolution last for a full four beats. The harmonic rhythm speeds up towards the cadence, announcing the approach of the next ritornello.

3rd ritornello (bars 473 - 52)

This ritornello is very similar to the previous one, being just five-and-a-half bars in length (albeit now starting half way through the bar), and using exactly the same material in truncated form. There are some significant differences:

- the key is now B minor
- the flute plays in octaves above the violins, creating an entirely octave texture
- the harmony now follows a I - V - V - I pattern in the first four bars, the shape of the descending scale altered at the end to accommodate the tonic chord.

3rd episode (bars 53 - 95)

This third solo section is over twice the length of the previous episode, which itself was considerably longer than the first, cadenza-like, one. Vivaldi largely develops material from the previous episodes, exploring it in ever-more imaginative ways, especially in terms of key, harmony and texture.

The episode begins with development of the music heard in the second episode at bar 32. The flute embarks on a rising sequence of motif b, ascending by semitonal steps in a chromatic scale, whilst the violins use a variant of the violas' bass line from the same bar. This is the first two-part contrapuntal texture of the movement, notable for being homorhythmic and with the violins in unison against the solo flute, with both parts low in their registers. The harmony changes every two beats, starting on the tonic (B minor), moving to a Neapolitan 6th under the C natural, then a trio of secondary dominants, V - I progressions in D major, E minor and F# minor. The move to this new key is emphasised by a firm bass note, and the harmony stays in F# minor for three and a half bars, the melodic writing developing the variants of motif a from the previous episode, and introducing a third one - the same dotted rhythm, but now with notes rising by a third instead of by step with an upper auxiliary. Note how Vivaldi swaps

over the violin parts here, with the second violins playing a third above the first violins.

This whole material is then repeated, this time with the flute rising by semitone steps from F# back to B, six different pitches instead of eight, and therefore a bar shorter in length. The violins use similar patterns to bars 53 - 56, but the harmony is different, with no Neapolitan chord, but bVII instead followed by Vb - I and then VIIb (acting as a dominant substitute) in B minor to swing the music back to the original key of this episode, again secured by repeated Bs in the bass and three bars of variants of motif a, this time without the 3rds' leaps, nor the violin parts swapped over.

At bar 65, the flute having just risen slowly through a full octave chromatic ascent, then sets out on a descending sequence to reach the key of A major at bar 69. The texture here is more clearly melody and accompaniment, just two parts with the violas accompanying in repetitions of motif b.

The next passage, bars 69 - 76, is striking in its audacity. Over a long sustained A in the bass (not strictly a pedal point as the harmony doesn't change) the flute and first violins engage in an animated dialogue of trills and broken chord figures, as if two goldfinches are having a close encounter while time stands still below. They rise and fall in close imitation before the flute appears to win the tussle in bar 74, and the violins take refuge at a lower pitch, joined in parallel 3rds with the second violins. The basses briefly join in with the action (their first semiquavers of the movement) until a more normal harmonic rhythm resumes at bar 77.

The next passage (bars 77 - 84) takes up previously used material from bar 32, this time in just two part texture with flute and violas, contrasting in alternate bars with motif b in a chordal texture in full strings. The music modulates first to E major and then winds its way through a long cycle of fifths as a descending one-bar sequence back to the tonic key - D major.

The tonic is reinforced through a series of tonic and dominant harmonies whilst the violins reiterate familiar patterns in parallel 3rds and the flute explores ideas using motif a and the leaping octave from the start of the movement. At bar 88 there is a sudden switch to the tonic minor key (D minor) which swings the tonality to the flat side of the key spectrum for the first and only time in the movement, before a bold harmonic progression of D7 - Gm - E7 - A, supporting a rising melodic sequence in the flute based on the rising chromatic scale first heard at the start of this episode, prepares the ground for a final return to the home key. Just as one might expect the full orchestra to embark on the final ritornello, the soloist strings the music out for three more bars of decorative patterns based on motif b and the leaping octave before eventually the ritornello reappears at bar 96.

Final ritornello (bars 96 - 100)

After the long and discursive episode, this return of the opening material is succinct and declamatory. Motif a appears just once in its dotted rhythm form,

immediately followed by its varied version, and then the three descending scales to finish. This is an exact repeat of bars 93 - 12 and, with the whole bar of tonic at the end, creates in total a five bar section, the shortest ritornello of all.

2nd Movement Cantabile

If the first movement has provided a vehicle for the soloist to show off agility, rhythmic vitality, pictorial effects and dialogue with the orchestra, then this second movement is a complete contrast. The direction Cantabile (in a singing style) provides for a relaxed, lilting dance in the style of a Siciliano and enables the soloist to demonstrate beauty of tone and expression, perhaps more like the human voice than that of the goldfinch. Scored for solo flute and continuo alone, the attention is focused on the lyricism of the melody and its dancing compound rhythms.

The structure is rounded binary form, the opening section (bars 1 - 6) modulating from the tonic (D major) to the dominant (A major), and the second section (bars 7 - 13) modulating back via the supertonic minor (E minor) to the tonic. Each section is repeated, typically with elaborate decoration in both the flute and continuo parts. There is a pleasing symmetry to the two sections:

- A 3 bars cadencing in D, followed by 3 bars cadencing in A
- B 2 bars cadencing in Em, 2 bars cadencing in D, 'rounded off' by 3 bars in D

Melody

- A section characterised by leaps on the strong beats (rising 5ths and 4ths, falling octaves and 7ths)
- B section almost entirely conjunct, until the rising 4ths and falling octaves in the final three bars
- Upper auxiliaries, passing notes and echappee notes
- Sequences
- Irregular phrase structure
- Range of a minor 9th (octave + lower leading note)

Rhythm

- Repeated rhythmic pattern in bass throughout
- Placing of the dotted rhythm on the down beats of the first four bars in section A, and again on the down beats of bars 7 - 11 in section B, but on the weak beats in the last two bars of each section
- Syncopations
- Varied harmonic rhythm - a full bar of I (bar 1) and Vb7 (bar 4), but moving more frequently towards cadences, and at a faster rate in section B

Harmony

- Diatonic throughout, except for the two diminished 7ths in bars 7 and 9 which act as dominant minor 9ths in first inversion
- Consonant, excepting the diminished 7ths, Vb7 (bar 4), IIb7 (bars 5, 8 and 10) and II7 on the third beat of bar 12
- Six perfect cadences (bars 3, 6, 8, 10 and 13) and a quasi-interrupted progression in bar 2
- Cadential 6/4 progressions in bars 3, 5, 6 and 13
- Two bar sequence in bars 7 - 8 and 9 - 10
- Inverted tonic pedal from bar 11 beat 3 to bar 13 beat 1

Texture

- Melody with chordal accompaniment, the melody and bass polarised, extending to four octaves apart in the final bar.
- The bass frequently moves in contrary motion to the melody, expanding apart as phrases begin, and then closing back together at cadence points.
- The falling bass line which characterises the openings of both sections is extended to full octave scale in bars 11 and 12 underneath the decorated inverted pedal in the flute.

The last three bars of the movement show Vivaldi's creative imagination at play. Instead of simply repeating the opening three bars, he takes the beginning of the first phrase (x), and the end of the second phrase (y), extending it as an inverted tonic pedal (*) with the added delight of syncopated rhythms, whilst the bass extends its original descent into a full octave to reach the point of maximum separation at the start of the final bar, a satisfying resolution of the dissonant II7 in the previous bar.

3rd Movement Allegro

The lively pictorial effects of a chirping goldfinch return in the final movement, and many of the distinctive features of the first movement can be heard again here - rapid trills, repeated pitches and rising 4ths in the melody, dotted rhythms, strings in octaves in the ritornello sections, textural variety in the episodes, a clear tonal structure and ritornello form. The spirited mood of this movement is further enhanced by the 3/4 metre and, in most performances, a faster tempo than that of the first movement.

Opening ritornello (bars 1 - 15)

The ritornello theme is characterised by a decisive tonic, separated by a quaver rest from a scalar descent in semiquavers (motif a) and followed by a rising triadic figure in quavers (motif b) - all in a parallel octave texture in the strings. This assertive statement is played five times:

bar 1	four-bar phrase	tonic to dominant
bar 5	four-bar phrase	tonic to dominant
bar 9	three-bar phrase	dominant to tonic
bar 12	two-bar phrase	tonic
bar 14	two-bar phrase	tonic

Between each statement, the flute and first violins respond antiphonally with a little rising three note idea (motif c) in parallel 3rds, ending with a trill, which will become the main feature of the first episode.

1st episode (bars 16 – 39)

In the first movement of the concerto, the solo flute had the first episode entirely to itself, and subsequently mostly worked an independent path through the succeeding episodes. The instrumental scoring here is a fresh one, with the first violins joining the flute in a trio sonata – type polarised texture, moving closely together (largely in parallel 3rds) and high above the bass part.

The material is a modified version of motif c, rhythmically augmented and with the emphasis (highlighted by the dotted rhythms, trills and double appoggiatura) firmly on the second beats of the bar – a pattern more typical of the slower-moving Sarabanda.

Other features of this passage include:

- distinctive articulation
- crossing over of flute and 1st violin parts
- feminine perfect cadence in bar 19
- echo effect of the pp repetition of the phrase.

After 23 bars in the tonic key (and almost wholly I and V7 harmony) the next 8 bars provide for the first modulation of the movement, a four-bar melodic and harmonic sequence based on the following rising chord pattern – D major G major E major A major. The material is almost entirely borrowed from the first movement, the oscillating motif a in the violins, repeated quavers (motif b) in the flute, followed by the falling dotted rhythmic pattern which was a principal feature of the first and second episodes. Now the texture is a four-part one, the violins merrily trilling in parallel 3rds just underneath the flute's chirruping whilst the bass provides a solid support far below, quaver movement facilitating the change of harmony at phrase-endings. Note also the apparently unobtrusive C which helps the harmony act as a secondary dominant (V7 of IV).

At bar 32 the texture reduces to a high-level duet between the flute and 1st violins. Motivically the roles are reversed, the subsequent descending sequences featuring 2 – 3 bass suspensions (inverted 7 – 6 suspensions). The final three

bars of the episode refer back to bar 24, now in the dominant key, a conventional 4 - 3 suspension heralding the next ritornello.

2nd ritornello (bars 40 – 58)

After the gentle piano sounds of the first episode, the ritornello theme reappears forte – this time in octaves with the full orchestra, soloist now included, in A major. The principal melodic characteristics remain, but the little turn around at the end of the opening scale (motif d from the first episode) is significant as the triadic ascent in bars 41 - 42 becomes vertiginous, and the dominant repeat appears earlier in only the third bar.

A new idea of repeated chords (the melody 'borrowed' from bar 24 - which was itself an extension of motif b from the first movement) acts as the preparation for a descending sequence of 7 - 6 suspensions, the suspended 7ths in the solo flute part decorated firstly with a turn and then motif d twice. After four repetitions of the two-bar sequential phrase, the dominant 7th is reached in bar 53 and then the ritornello theme is repeated twice more, once in A major and then on the dominant, the triadic pattern in the second bar each time reduced to mere repetitions of a falling 3rd. The 2nd ritornello section therefore has its own ternary structure, finishing with the now familiar 4 - 3 suspension and trill emphasising the 2nd beat of the bar.

2nd episode (bars 59 – 88)

The texture lightens again to the upper four parts, all marked piano, and the harmonic rhythm slows to four bars of A major, followed by four bars of E major, the goldfinches perhaps now relaxed and settled on their perches. A long trill in the first violins acts as a sustained inner dominant pedal whilst above it the flute flutters inconsequentially through broken cord and arpeggio figures, the second violins and violas adding harmonic support below.

Greater energy and vitality resumes once the basses are introduced in bar 67, and the falling 4ths from motif b at the start of the movement appear inverted in the first violins, taken over by the flute in the following bar in its familiar dotted rhythm pattern. A long ascending sequence ensues, a two-bar phrase repeated four times as the bass rises, mostly by semitone steps, a bar at a time. The inversion of motif b is followed each time by three repetitions of motif d, also inverted and adding to the sensation of climbing ever higher and higher. Although the texture is essentially melody and accompaniment, the two violin parts add a little melodic inversion of their own in each alternate bar, an adaption of their trilling motif in 3rds from bar 24.

The harmony progresses as follows:

bar(s)	bass note	chord
67/68	A	I
69	C#	Ib

70	D	IV
71	D#	Vb7 of V
72	E	V
73	E#	Vb7 of VI
74	F#	VI
75	F#	IVb
76/77	G#	Vb7
78	A	I

The final part of this episode (starting at bar 79) starts by reprising the material from the beginning (bar 59), settling on a sustained tonic in the bass (*tasto solo* indicating that the keyboard player should not add upper harmonies at this point). The other melodic ideas are also redistributed in the texture, the violins now playing the broken chord figures in parallel whilst the flute trills its descent through each step of the A major arpeggio. As it lands on the low tonic, the violins fall silent and a six-bar modulatory passage takes the tonality towards B minor via a diminished 7th chord in bar 84. The now customary 4 - 3 suspension under a trill on the 2nd beat of bar 88 marks the end of the episode.

3rd ritornello (bars 89 – 93)

The characteristics of this ritornello include:

- relative minor key
- only 5 bars long
- motif b altered to bare 5ths and only one bar long
- 4 - 3 cadence without a trill
- final bar takes the tonality back to D major.

3rd episode (bars 94 – 111)

This final episode develops many of the melodic patterns from the previous episodes, reaffirming the soloist's dominance as the principal voice and firmly restoring the home key. The first 8 bars are effectively a repeat of bars 24 - 31 (the central section of the first episode) following the D - G - E - A chord sequence, but the violin trills now more subdued as sustained crotchets and the flute melody subtly changed. The tied notes, dotted rhythms and rising 4ths moving into a rapid alternation of semiquavers are, of course, very reminiscent of the goldfinch song heard at the start of the first movement (bars 13 - 15), that lone voice now gently accompanied by D major harmonies in the upper strings.

After that brief reminder of the dominant key (bars 98 - 101), the tonic chord is restated no fewer than ten times on the first beat of every bar, each one in the

same position and textural spacing whilst the soloist trills for the last time down, and then up, the tonic arpeggio. An ad lib cadenza in bar 111 gives one final opportunity for unaccompanied soloistic display before the 4th ritornello.

4th ritornello (bars 112 – 117)

This is the final statement of the ritornello theme, in its original version and key, the II - V - I cadential figure repeated in angular melodic form in a strongly declamatory ff.

Violin Concerto in A minor (BWV 1041)
John Sebastian Bach (1685 – 1750)

It has been estimated that if one were to copy out all of Bach's music by hand, it would take twenty one years of continuous writing to complete the task. In the days before mass printing, it was not unusual for composers to be remarkably prolific in their writing of compositions, but with 1,127 BWV numbers of catalogued works, and many more which have been lost, it is an extraordinary output. These works cover a vast range of different genres; the church music includes over 300 cantatas, the mighty St. Matthew and St. John Passions and B minor Mass, toccatas and fugues, preludes and fugues, trio sonatas and chorale preludes for the organ; and the secular music includes the six Brandenburg concertos, four orchestral suites, solo concerti, sonatas and unaccompanied suites for violin and violoncello, and plenty of keyboard music including the French and English Suites, the Goldberg Variations and the 48 Preludes and Fugues of the Well-Tempered Klavier.

Bach's music is not, however, admired primarily for its wealth of material, but more for its extraordinary skill in drawing together the best of the Baroque styles from Germany, Italy, France, and even England into a synthesis of music which is remarkable both for its technical achievement and breadth of emotional power. Every composer of note since Mozart, Beethoven and especially Mendelssohn in the nineteenth century, and through to the present day have acknowledged their study of Bach's music for training their own compositional techniques. He is the master of harmony and, in particular, four-part harmony where the progression of chords within a well-structured tonal scheme matches perfectly with the independent contrapuntal lines which combine to create that harmony. Bach's ambitious exploration of chromaticism opened a new world of expressive power through harmony, and he was the first composer systematically to use the full spectrum of twelve major, and twelve minor, keys as exemplified by 'The 48' – a compositional development made possible by the embracement of equal temperament. No wonder that students in music today are still trained through his examples of Chorale harmonisations.

Bach used his expertise in harmony to create, for the first time, large-scale structures based on a profoundly thought-through tonal scheme, and he combined the dramatic Italian practice of alternating solo and tutti sections in his concerti with his own skills in motivic development and contrapuntal textures. He had long been an admirer of Vivaldi's music and had, some years earlier,

arranged some of Vivaldi's Violin Concertos for the organ. Much of Bach's music was inspired by his deep religious conviction, by his love of numbers, and by his fascination with rhythms and textures, and yet, as can be heard in this violin concerto, his music is also full of exuberance and sublimely romantic expression.

This Violin Concerto in A minor was probably written during his time as Kapellmeister to Leopold, Prince of Anhalt-Cothen between 1717 and 1723, although as the earliest evidence of the work comes from a set of parts Bach himself copied out in 1730 it may come from a later period when he was working in Leipzig as Cantor at St. Thomas' Church. Prince Leopold was only 25 years old when he appointed Bach to his staff, and being a Calvinist who had no use for the deeply profound music of the Lutheran Church which Bach had been composing during his previous post in Weimer, Bach was able to devote himself to the composition of instrumental and chamber music. The Prince was a keen violinist and harpsichord player himself, and he spent lavishly on the music at his court, paying Bach a good salary and employing an orchestra of about eighteen players, drawn from far afield in an attempt to bring the quality of German instrumental music up to the standards of the Italian orchestras which he had heard during his travels abroad.

In both places where Bach worked, he had opportunities for regular performances of instrumental works and with players who were the leading virtuosi of the time, as can be seen by the extraordinarily demanding solo parts of the Brandenburg Concertos.

Bach's music is remarkably versatile and it is instructive to listen to a variety of different performances from the period instrument stable, such as Carla Moore San Francisco Early Music Ensemble with only nine players, to a version using modern instruments such as that of Nigel Kennedy with the Irish Chamber Orchestra.

In addition to the sheer number of players, the sound is very different too. The period instrument formation is more like chamber music (note the absence of a conductor) whereas the modern one is clearly a full string orchestra. The instrumental timbres are worthy of comparison too.

Baroque Violins

- Shorter neck and fingerboard, so a smaller range up to 6th position
- Strings made of cat gut, less brilliant sound
- Shorter, curved bows with less tension in the hair
- Little vibrato, lighter phrasing

Modern Violins

- Longer neck and fingerboard, bigger pitch range
- Metal strings, stronger tone

- Longer, straight bows, more robust sound and better sustaining power of longer notes
- Some vibrato, leading to a more colourful and varied sound

The pitch is noticeably different, with Baroque pitch at A 415 being about a semitone lower than modern A 440 pitch. The continuo part might be played by a harpsichord, an organ, or even a lute, in addition to the violoncello and double bass, and the absence of any figured bass to provide the inner harmony would suggest that Bach intended to play the keyboard himself. The double bass part would actually have been played by the older violone, an instrument with six strings that can play down to the necessary bottom C. Modern double basses often use an extension for this note.

The Concerto follows the typically Italian model, as inherited from Vivaldi and others, of three movements: (i) Allegro (ii) Andante (iii) Allegro assai

The first movement is in Ritornello form:

Ritornello	(bars 1 - 24)
First Episode	(bars 25 - 51)
Ritornello	(bars 52 - 84)
Second Episode	(bars 85 - 142)
Ritornello	(bars 143 - 171)

First ritornello

The ritornello has an immediately appealing and memorable opening. An anacrustic two-note rising 4th motif accompanied by the upper strings, outlining the tonic chord of A minor, is imitated with a rising octave by the bass*. This antiphonal texture is a taste of the more complex contrapuntal textures to come later in the movement. The whole pattern is then repeated in the second bar with smaller minor 2nd interval in the melody, and then at the third hearing the motif develops into a falling sequence of semiquavers, the two violin parts moving in parallel thirds. The melody has fallen an octave, from top A to lower A, through the course of the four bars, contrasting with the rising octaves in the bass at the beginning.

Note the strong harmony which establishes the A minor tonality. One bar of the tonic, a bar of the subdominant over the tonic note, creating a short tonic pedal, and then the pace of harmonic rhythm quickens in bar 3 into the perfect cadence.

* In this analysis, bass refers to the whole of the basso continuo part, ie 'cellos, double basses (sounding an octave lower than the printed score) and the keyboard (harpsichord, organ or lute) providing the inner harmonies.

In the next four bars the melody rises back up the scale, using a typical fortspinnung technique of semiquavers, in parallel 10ths with the bass over a

dominant pedal, leading to a Phrygian cadence in bar 8. Bach disguises the cadence with a sophisticated web of counterpoint and cross-phrasing.

After the homophonic melody and accompaniment texture of bars 5 and 6, the music changes into four-part counterpoint, with each part pursuing its own independent line through the texture. It is one of the most thrilling experiences playing chamber music like this, everyone having their own rhythmic and melodic shape combining to produce music of great complexity and vitality. Note how the viola and 'cello imitate each other with a mixture of two patterns (a) a descending triad in quavers and (b) the figure x (first heard in bar 4), but played in the reverse order and with an inversion of x in the 'cello. The second violins dovetail the cadence and then proceed with descending semiquaver scales (imitating the first violins in bar 8) whilst the first violins soar above the texture with a series of suspensions. The four * show how each phrase starts in a different part of the bar, the cross-phrasing increasing the rhythmic energy and disguising the underlying metre of the music.

A cycle of fifths in bars 8 to 12 underpins the descending harmonic sequence, as the tonality begins to move towards the dominant E minor. Bach cleverly extends this ritornello section with two interruptions to the expected perfect cadence. Firstly, in bars 17 – 18 the Ic - V progression (with cadential trills) is followed by a diminished 7th chord, and then the IIb - V progression two bars later is turned into an interrupted cadence before all the parts hurtle downwards to a perfect cadence at the third attempt in bar 24, and the first structural resting point of the movement. One final surprise, a tierce de Picardie on the final chord prepares nicely for a return to the tonic, A minor, at the start of the first episode.

In the first ritornello the solo concertato violin and ripieno first violins play together in unison. From the first episode onwards, the soloist's part is largely independent.

First episode

In earlier solo concerti of the Italian model, the ritornello and episodic material was mostly contrasting in character. In this concerto, and indeed in many others by Bach, there is a sophisticated integration, lending a much stronger unity to the whole movement.

As the texture thins towards a typically Baroque polarised melody and bass (and Bach adds a cautionary piano dynamic for the ripieno), the soloist takes a first opportunity to shine, creating a decorative melody which quickly rises to the highest note of the movement so far. The melody is based on the rising 4th and y motifs from the ritornello, and the antiphonal accompaniment patterns the rising 4th imitatively and motif x. Notice how all three upper string parts are very high in tessitura to lighten the sound after the robust finish to the ritornello.

The tonality stays firmly rooted to the tonic A minor, notwithstanding another cycle of fifths in bars 32 – 37 suggesting brief nuances of C and then F majors,

before a strong reminder of the opening four bars of the ritornello in bars 40 – 43 with its perfect cadence in A minor. All the while, the soloist has been describing long runs of semiquavers in sequential patterns, often using the descending scale first heard in bar 7.

A second idea is introduced at bar 44, a rhythmically syncopated shape which is, melodically, a development of motif x. This time it has a different character, more buoyant and skittish, and markedly contrasting with the steady repeated quavers in the chordal accompaniment. The second bar of the phrase is a simple arpeggio figure with a cheeky reference to motif y, the lower auxiliary note D# helping to confirm the harmonic progression to E minor. Meanwhile, the bass adds a playful counterpoint to the texture using the x motif. The whole two bars are then treated as a descending sequence, firstly to D minor and then a darker C minor (as the first violins move to Ab), but in bar 49 an abrupt change to C major and the soloist rises triumphantly to herald the return of the ritornello in the relative major.

Second ritornello

Three main features in comparison with the first ritornello:

- i) it starts in C major
- ii) it is seven bars longer
- iii) the soloist takes 4 bars to realise it has started!

Ritornello 2	Ritornello 1
bars 52 - 59	bars 1 - 8
New key - C major Varied bass	
bars 592 - 611	bars 82 - 101
same key - G major bass an octave lower	
bars 612 - 631	
solo interlude x and y featured	
bars 632 - 651	bars 102 - 121

same key – G major bass an octave lower	
bars 652 - 671	
solo interlude x and y featured	
bars 68 - 72	bars 13 - 17
same key – E minor one viola note changed	
bars 73 - 78	
solo interlude over a walking bass	
bars 79 - 84	bars 19 - 24
same key – E minor small redistribution of lower parts at cadence	

Second episode

The second episode is considerably longer (58 bars) than the first episode (27 bars) and takes the music through a much broader spectrum of tonalities with bolder harmonic progressions and more interplay between the soloist and ripieno. It begins with exactly the same material (for four bars) as the first episode, but a 4th lower in the key of E minor.

At bar 89, the solo violinist sets off again on a long passage of development which uses motif y as a decorated inner pedal point, whilst motif x rises in augmentation in a figure taken from bar 5 of the opening ritornello. The ripieno first violins shadow the soloist's line in an heterophonic texture.

Note another cycle of fifths as the harmony changes from Em in bar 88 to E7, Am to A7, Dm to D7, G to G7, C to C7 and F at bar 99.

Now for the first time in the movement, Bach explores the flat side of the A minor tonality. Material from the first episode (bar 40 – 43) returns, a restatement of the opening ritornello theme marked forte in the ripieno parts, but this time in the subdominant key, D minor.

At bar 106 the soloist takes over again, continuing with the same material from bar 89, but this time in extended three-bar phrases, and with a greater sense of dialogue between solo and ripieno forces. More flat keys are explored (F major in bars 108 – 111) and G minor in bars 112 – 113) before returning to D minor (bars 114 – 117), C major (bars 118 – 120) and then A minor, apparently for the start of the final ritornello in bar 123.

Note the detailed attention to dynamics in the ripieno parts during this second episode, and also the articulation in the solo violin part which requires as many as fifteen notes to a single bow in places.

The passage above is the first occasion in this movement where the first violins in the ripieno have a sustained melodic role in counterpoint to the soloist. It creates a typically Baroque three-part polarised texture with two closely entwined lines high above the bass. The soloist articulates motif y in a different part of the bar, creating an exciting cross-rhythmical effect with the accent on the second quaver of the bar.

Note the tied suspensions which appear to resolve upwards in parallel 7ths with the bass, although the true resolution comes at the start of the next bar.

At bar 123, the ritornello theme returns as expected in A minor, although the soloist is seemingly unaware. After four bars, the soloist embarks on further development and the second episode continues. It was a false recapitulation, and Bach surprises the listener with an extraordinary passage remarkable for its boldness of harmony and texture.

The music from bar 89 is now treated as a long rising sequence (a two-bar pattern repeated three times) as the soloist ascends over two complete octaves to top C while the bass descends in contrary motion to bottom C (its lowest string). A passage that begins with the two parts a minor third apart finishes with them four octaves distant. Meanwhile, the tonality moves through another cycle of fifths from A minor through to F minor, the flattest moment of the whole movement, resting on a dominant pedal point before sidestepping back to G minor through a crafty diminished 7th chord.

Throughout this, the first violins of the ripieno have their own countermelody, a strong line which starts above the soloist, dives down to its lowest note (bottom G), before soaring back over the solo part. Second violins and violas play in unison, providing inner harmonies, at the beginning of this passage, but then divide to create a thrilling five-part texture at the moment of climax.

Third ritornello

The final ritornello eventually returns for real at bar 143, although once again, Bach cleverly conceals the entrance with the soloist dovetailing its lively passagework until the end of the fourth bar. From bar 146 the ritornello takes an identical path to the music of the second ritornello (starting at bar 592) for the final 25 bars of the movement, except that it is a fifth lower in C major and A minor rather than G major and E minor.

Note the small alterations of details in the passage from bars 154 to 157 which take the violins into a higher tessitura for the last part of the movement, the top E in bar 166 being the highest note of all.

2nd movement andante

If the first movement is notable for its rhythmic energy and its contrapuntal interplay between soloist and orchestra, then this slow movement takes quite a different tack. Here the chordal texture of the upper strings above the throbbing heartbeat of the bass rhythmic ostinato provides a stabilising foil for a soaring, sublime solo violin melody of transcendent grace and ethereal splendour. It is like a glorious operatic aria in which Bach is at his most supremely expressive and romantic. The lyricism of the violin part, however, surpasses any vocal equivalent in contemporary oratorio or opera through the breadth of its range (three octaves), its variety of melodic shapes and audacious leaps coupled with moments of intimate chromaticism, and in its rhythmic freedom and expansive phrasing. Despite the complexities of these combinations of musical elements, the resulting sound is one of apparently effortless improvisation. (Although the tempo is marked Andante in a common time metre, performances usually regard the quaver as the unit of pulse).

The rhythmic ostinato pattern provides a structural basis in 2 and 4 bar units which link the sections and also dovetail in and out of the soloist's 4 and 6 bar phrases. The stability of the repeating pedal notes contrasts with the frequent leaps of melody, and the measured tread of the bass rhythm likewise contrasts with the free-flowing triplet and tied-note rhythms in the violin melody. Rhythmic interest is further achieved in the melodic lines through subtleties of agogic accentuation and cross-phrasing. The orchestra-only passages are all forte, the solo passages piano.

Opening ostinato pattern:

Important features to note include:

- a tonic pedal in bars 1 - 2
- a secondary dominant strengthening the move to chord IV in bar 1 matched by.....
- a modulation to the dominant in bars 3 - 4
- the tension of suspensions and other dissonances on most strong beats
- the rising stepwise shape of the bass pattern on the weak beats matched by.....
- the wide leaps downwards on to the strong beats.

Two contrasting melodies feature in the structure:

Melody A

Melody B

The overall structure of the movement looks like this:

Bars 1 - 4	Opening ostinato	C major to G major
Bars 5 - 6	Introductory solo	C major
Bars 7 - 8	Linking ostinato	C major
Bars 9 - 14	Melody A	C major to G major
Bars 15 - 16	Linking ostinato	G major
Bars 17 - 20	Melody B	D minor
Bars 21 - 22	Linking ostinato	D minor
Bars 23 - 28	Melody A	D minor to A minor
Bars 29 - 30	Linking ostinato	D minor to A minor
Bars 31 - 36	Melody B	G minor to C minor
Bars 37 - 38	Linking ostinato	C major
Bars 39 - 42	Melody A	C major
Bars 43 - 46	Codetta	C major

Features of the melody and harmony include:

- suspensions disguised as the solo part weaves about the chordal texture
- chromatic chords and substitution chords borrowed from the opposite mode (marked *).

In this passage towards the end of Melody A, the prevailing tonality of G major is coloured with chords from G minor, including the Neapolitan 6th, with suspensions in the melodic sequential descent.

False relations

The expressive appoggiaturas and accented passing notes in the melody are heightened by chromaticisms - the resolution (on to a diminished 7th harmony) of the (sharply dissonant) suspension at the start of bar 36 being achieved through the upward leap of a minor 7th (octave displacement of a falling passing note), creating a particularly telling false relation.

An introductory solo matches the opening 4 bars with its tonic pedal (now in the viola), secondary dominant to chord IV followed by a move to chord V (imperfect cadence). The melody in the first bar repeats a scalar descent, the repeat featuring the only lombardic rhythm of the movement, with the second bar previewing the final bar of melody B.

To balance this structure, the last four bars of the movement act as a kind of codetta. The rhythmic ostinato is repeated for the final time in the tonic, the upper string parts now in a higher tessitura than at the start of the movement, and the soloist now leaves behind the intricate rhythmic patterns and unusual

melodic turns to glide peacefully upwards in diatonic scalar patterns in regular triplets to a calm and peaceful conclusion.

3rd movement *allegro assai*

The final movement, back in the tonic key of A minor, is a rollickingly spirited Gigue in 9/8 time, perhaps Bach's most energetic and effervescent movement in a minor key. Nigel Kennedy's recording with the Irish Chamber Orchestra ([youtube.com/watch?v=C2T-stg5BMU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C2T-stg5BMU)) takes this movement at about 150 bpm. The dance-like characteristics are established from the start, not only by the triple-time metre, but also by the running quavers of the main subject, the repeated ♪ rhythms in the countersubject and the regular four-bar phrasing at the start of the opening ritornello. The fugal texture of the ritornello adds to the sense of this movement being a fast and furious galloping hunt, the sparser scoring of the solo sections being balanced by the increased vitality of the semiquaver movement and leaps of tessitura in the violin part and the later displays of virtuosic string-crossings and bariolage.

Opening ritornello (bars 1 – 5)

The opening ritornello follows the structure of a fugal exposition in four voices:

1. Solo violin and first violins in unison
2. Second violins
3. Violas
4. Violoncellos, double basses and continuo

The subject

The countersubject

The answer

Melody

The subject uses three distinct patterns, each of three quavers:

- x falling scale (also in sequence, and in inversion - x')
- y featuring a lower auxiliary note
- z rising triad.

Also important are the opening anacrusis and rising 4th interval (a reminder of the first movement), and the widely sweeping contour (tracing a large W) and range (an octave and a half). Combinations of patterns (a and b) become important vehicles for development later in the movement.

The countersubject also uses patterns x and y, but is distinctive for its trochaic rhythms (often repeated as a pedal point) and narrow range (a 5th). The subject and countersubject are wholly diatonic.

The answer is identical to the subject, except it is in the dominant key (E minor), and the opening anacrusis is lowered by one note so that the subject's dominant - tonic is answered as tonic - dominant. This is known as a tonal answer.

Texture

The design of the texture looks like this:

	bars 1 - 4	bars 5 - 8	bars 9 - 12	bars 13 - 14	bars 15 - 18	bars 19 - 24
Solo + Vlns I	Subject	Countersubject	Free part	Development	Free part	Development
Violins II		Answer	Countersubject	Development	Free part	Development
Violas	Countersubject	Free part	Free part	Development	Subject	Development
Vcl/DB/Hps c	Bass line	Bass line	Subject	Development	Countersubject	Development

Unlike a normal fugal opening, the subject and countersubject are announced together above a supporting bass line. The three threads of the counterpoint are immediately distinguished by their own place in the tessitura and the rhythmic hierarchy. When the answer arrives in bar 5, the four parts are separated further (the bass descends a 4th and the first violins rise above the staff) to allow its entry a clear space in the texture, but very quickly the violas' free part weaves above and below this line. As the answer is now underneath the countersubject, this is an example of invertible counterpoint at work. The texture becomes even more exciting and aurally challenging once the basses join in with the subject at bar 9. Crossings of parts becomes more adventurous with the second violins first swooping above the first violins and then diving below the violas and there is even a moment in bar 18 when the violas are at the very top of the texture. The x and y motifs frequently appear in parallel 3rds and 6ths, and their compounds.

Tonality

Bars 1 - 4	Tonic	(A minor)
Bars 5 - 8	Dominant	(E minor)
Bars 9 - 12	Tonic	(A minor)
Bars 13 - 14	Modulatory passage (D minor, G major)	

Bars 15 - 18	Relative major	(C major)
Bars 19 - 20	Tonic	(A minor)
Bar 21	Subdominant	(D minor)
Bars 22 - 24	Tonic	(A minor)

Harmony

The first three bars firmly establish the A minor key, using only chords I and V. Bach enhances the lightly dancing character of the music by using Vb and the higher tonic on the strong beats, and indeed the absence of any harmony on the very first down beat. The harmonic rhythm is largely one harmony per bar until bar 4 when it moves faster into the modulation to the dominant - achieved through VIIb rather than V7 for a lighter touch. After the entry of the subject in the bass in bar 9, chords I and V appear in 2nd inversion, and then the harmonic palette broadens in the modulatory passage of bars 12 - 14, with a IIb - Vc7 - Ib in D minor, followed by IVb - Vb - I in G major (repeated in C major) in a much faster-moving harmonic rhythm to give the impression of a cycle of 5ths.

If the harmony has been wholly consonant up to this point, then the last four bars of the ritornello bring about increasing levels of dissonance. The change of motif b (the 4th bar of the subject) into b' creates appoggiaturas on the 3rd main beats of bars 21 and 22 (a melodic feature which Bach develops further in the following episode) and simultaneously lower auxiliaries clash with the appoggiaturas' resolutions. Suspensions drive the harmonic movement forward at the starts of bars 22 and 23, and at the beginning of bar 24 a double appoggiatura coincides with the descent of a 7th in the bass to propel the ritornello to its conclusion. Note also the leaping octaves in the bass part of the sequential passage in bars 21 and 22 - an embellishment of the dancing bass line of bar 2.

1st episode (bars 25 - 42)

After the intensity of the complex contrapuntal textures and striking dissonances towards the end of the tutti ritornello, the excitement takes on a different flavour. The soloist embarks on a showy episode of arpeggio figures (in quavers) and scales (mostly in semiquavers), combined with varied articulations and bowing patterns requiring considerable dexterity and agility. The appoggiatura figures (first heard in bar 21) from are rhythmically augmented in bars 26 and 28. Here the main musical interest is supported by the barest shadow of accompaniment (marked piano), the bass providing beats 1 and 3 (sometimes with extra movement to cross the bar line), and the upper strings applying a high register harmonic filling on beats 2. Underneath the soloist's appoggiaturas the 1st and 2nd violins draw the attention with snippets of motif a, which the basses then copy with an added anacrusis and wider leaps in bars 39 and 40. A sequential passage (bars 33 - 38) takes the key from A minor, through G major to E minor in readiness for the second ritornello in the dominant.

2nd ritornello (bars 43 – 45)

As in the first movement, Bach cleverly dovetails the entry of the ritornello subject ahead of the soloist's final phrase by one bar and we only hear three bars before the soloist hurries back in for the second episode. It is enough time to hear it in a different textural formation, the first violins carrying the subject, the seconds sounding the countersubject mostly just above with the violas on a free part which leaps above and below, all three voices in a very close texture. The basses provide firm harmonic support in E minor.

3rd ritornello (bars 60 – 72)

With the bars equivalent to 41 and 42 omitted, the entry of the ritornello subject in bar 60 appears to come in two bars sooner than expected, and again the entry emerges surreptitiously under the soloist. The key is now C major and the textural treatment is fresh. The second violins take the subject for the full four bars, the first violins doubling in parallel 6ths above whilst the soloist hovers on long held inverted dominant pedal notes and occasional reminiscences of x and its inversion. Basses and violas support lightly. At bar 64, the roles of the two violin parts are reversed, the subject now in the first violins with the seconds doubling in parallel 3rds below, and the key now G major. At bar 67 the soloist takes over figure b, two secondary dominants briefly suggesting the keys of D minor and A minor, before an assertive forte entry in bar 69 rapidly brings the tonality back to C major. A more familiar texture ensues with the soloist and first violins doubling the subject in unison, the second violins mostly doubling a 3rd below and with the countersubject in the violas, all above the original bass line from bars 1 – 3.

3rd episode (bars 723 – 90)

The disguise of the structural changes continues as this next episode develops out of the third and fourth bars of the ritornello subject in a series of two-bar sequences. The pattern is repeated four times, passing through the keys of F major, D minor, G major, E minor, A minor, F major and G major again before reaching the tonic A minor in bar 82. The changes of key are reinforced in every other bar by the upper strings doubling motif with the soloist in parallel 3rds and 6ths. A new idea is introduced at bar 82 as the soloist embarks on rapid string crossings in widely spaced arpeggio figures in semiquavers over a gently rocking accompaniment figure. The harmony outlines a cycle of fifths (Am - Dm7 - G7 - C7 - Fmaj7 - Bm7/dim5) before landing firmly on a widely-spaced sustained dominant chord to prepare for next (final?) ritornello. The regular gigue-like momentum is interrupted for the first time in the movement as the solo part first reintroduces the semiquaver patterns from the first episode (bar 31), but now in inversion, and then in bar 89 inverts the rhythmic pattern and then further dislocates the dancing rhythms with ties across the main beats and cross-phrasing of motif x as it turns repeatedly around the 7th of the chord. A triple-stopped spread dominant 7th chord brings the section to a close, although

in many performances this moment is treated as the spring-board for a solo cadenza.

4th ritornello (bars 902 - 93)

The expected final ritornello in the tonic key is treated to a brief false dominant entry on the second beat of the bar in the basses under the sustained chord, before the regular metre is restored with a full entry of the subject in bar 91. Bach again varies the texture, placing the second violins' free part above the subject with a semblance of the countersubject below in the violas. It is only a short glimpse of a ritornello as the soloist still has more to offer.

4th episode (bars 94 - 116)

The music of the first episode is repeated for a third time, now back in the tonic, for eight bars. In the eighth bar (bar 101) the second violins start off a four-bar section of imitation of motif b with the first violins, falling in sequence from A minor to D minor, and then G major to C major. Motif b is subtly altered (the rising perfect 4th becomes a minor 3rd) such that the highest note of the phrase becomes the 9th of a dominant minor 9th chord. The leap on to this dissonance is followed by a four-note descent on to the 3rd of the tonic resolution whilst the solo part simultaneously dances playfully around, firstly below and then above the imitative parts in a sequential conjunct line that traverses nearly two full octaves. A fourth strand to the counterpoint is the viola part which introduces a new pattern, lightly tracing arpeggio patterns above the firm bass line. The five textural strands are easily delineated in this airy passage because of the profusion of rests – an effective contrast to the density of contrapuntal texture about to be experienced in the concluding ritornello.

At bar 105 the special bariolage string-playing technique is displayed – the soloist contrasting the brightly resonant sound of the open e string with the stopped e note played on the a string in rapid succession. For 12 bars the soloist sustains this technique in a passage where the stopped notes rise in ever-increasing intervals (from a major 3rd to a major 7th) with growing excitement whilst the bass and upper strings accompany in an antiphonal texture, passing firstly between motif z and motif a in 3rds and then, from bar 110, imitation of a variant of the ritornello theme (the 1st violins, 2nd violins and violas now all in unison). For the first, and only, time in the movement the roles of the instrumental forces are reversed, the soloist supplying the harmonic support for the orchestral melodic lines. As the ritornello theme falls steadily in sequence it gradually becomes clear that the open e string notes are in effect a long inner dominant pedal preparation for the return of the 5th and final ritornello at bar 117.

5th ritornello (bars 117 - 141)

The final ritornello is an exact repeat of bars 1 - 25, rounding off the whole concerto in a satisfying structural reprise.