

Teachers' Guide to set works and the World Focus

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Contents

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)	2
<i>Italian Symphony No. 4 in A major Op. 90</i> (Movements 2 and 4)	2
1 Background	2
2 Instruments	3
3 Directions in the score	3
4 Techniques	4
5 Structure and form	5
6 Commentary	6
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)	10
<i>Clarinet Concerto in A major, K622</i> (Movement 1)	10
1 Background	10
2 Instruments	11
3 Directions in the score	12
4 Techniques	12
5 Structure and form	13
6 Commentary	14
World Focus for 2019: China	18
The ensemble music of China	18
1 Historical background	18
2 Types of silk-and-bamboo ensemble	19
3 Overall musical features of Chinese music	24
4 Notation and transmission	25

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Italian Symphony No. 4 in A major Op. 90 (Movements 2 and 4)

There are a few small differences between editions of the score of this work (e.g. at which points the cello and double bass parts are notated on the same or different staves) but bar numbers for the second and fourth movements should be the same in every edition.

1 Background

Mendelssohn was a nineteenth-century German composer from a wealthy and educated background; his grandfather was an eminent philosopher and his father was a banker. He was a child prodigy, had piano lessons, and performed and composed from an early age. Despite his relatively short life, he composed works including overtures, concertos, oratorios, chamber music and music for piano, in addition to symphonies. He began his exploration of the symphony by writing at least twelve string symphonies, before the work now known as his symphony number 1 (written in 1824).

Mendelssohn admired the music of Bach, Handel, Haydn and Mozart and was partly responsible for the revival of Bach's music, arranging a performance of Bach's *St Matthew Passion*. The influence of these earlier composers may be seen in many of his works.

As part of his education Mendelssohn travelled widely throughout Europe, initially with his family and later alone. In May 1830 he departed for Italy, calling on his friend, the famous poet Goethe, en route and reaching Venice in October. He spent ten months in Italy, visiting ruins, museums and art galleries, attending church services and religious processions and experiencing the carnival in Rome. The letters he wrote to his family and friends during this time show that he was inspired to write a symphony. It seems that he drafted some ideas during his stay, but did not complete the work until he received a commission from the Philharmonic Society in London in November 1832, asking him to provide a symphony, overture and vocal piece and to come to London to conduct them in May the following year. After initially wondering which symphony to complete (Mendelssohn had begun a 'Scottish' symphony following his 1829 visit to that country), he worked on the 'Italian', completing it in March and conducting the première in London, which was very well received. To the consternation of the orchestra Mendelssohn conducted the performance with a baton, rather than the leader of the violins directing, which was the usual practice at the time.

Despite the enthusiasm of the first audience, Mendelssohn was dissatisfied with the symphony; he revised the second, third and fourth movements and intended to revise the first movement. However, so much time elapsed that he decided the work should be put aside. Since the Philharmonic Society retained the rights to the symphony for two years after the first performance, there were three further performances in London, but they were less well received than the première. The symphony was not published in Mendelssohn's lifetime, but in 1851 the London version (i.e. without the later revisions) was published. This is the version heard today. The posthumous publication explains why the work is now known as 'Symphony number 4', despite being the second full symphony Mendelssohn completed. As the title indicates, it is suggestive of Italy.

2 Instruments

Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony* is scored for a relatively small nineteenth-century orchestra, similar to that used by Beethoven. There are pairs of woodwind instruments (two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons), two horns, two trumpets, two timpani (tuned to A and E in the fourth movement) and strings.

Candidates will be expected to be able to transpose small fragments of a part played by some of the transposing instruments to the pitch at which the instrument sounds.

The following are the transposing instruments used in this work:

- 2 clarinets: these are pitched in A throughout the work, sounding a minor third lower than written (so candidates need practice in transposing **down** a minor third).
- 2 horns in A in the second movement and 2 horns in E in the fourth movement, with notes sounding lower than written. Where the horns have low notes (e.g. second movement b49–50) the music is written in the bass clef and the notes sound higher than written. Candidates will **not** be expected to transpose any horn parts.
- 2 trumpets in E in the fourth movement: unlike the horns, these sound higher than written, but candidates will **not** be required to transpose any trumpet parts.
- Double bass: this part sounds an octave lower than written (but candidates will **not** be expected to transpose any of this part).

In the string section Mendelssohn sometimes wrote a separate part for the double basses, giving a five-part string texture (e.g. fourth movement b196–199), but where the cellos and basses play the same part they may share a stave at the bottom of the score (e.g. second movement b58–70).

The only instrument which does not use the treble or bass clef in this work is the viola, which is written in the alto clef (where middle C is on the middle line). Candidates should practise writing small fragments of this part in the treble clef.

3 Directions in the score

The second movement is given a tempo marking of *Andante con moto*, meaning at a walking pace, with movement. The fourth movement is *Saltarello Presto*. A saltarello is an Italian dance in fast triple time, involving leaping (saltare means to jump). *Presto* means very fast.

Candidates will also need to be familiar with other markings found in the score:

- The abbreviation *pizz.* (short for *pizzicato*) in string parts means that the strings should be plucked until cancelled by the term *arco*, when the players should return to using the bow (e.g. *pizz.* in b75, followed by *arco* in b82 of the fourth movement).
- *Sempre staccato e p* at b12 in the second movement means always short and detached and quietly. Sometimes (e.g. strings, b76 in the fourth movement) the abbreviation *stacc.* is used for *staccato*.
- Some scores may have the editorial marking *sim.* at b38 in the second movement, short for *simile*, meaning in the same way, indicating that the string quavers should continue to be played *staccato*.
- *Solo* (or *sol* in some scores) at b45 in the second movement clarinet part indicates that the 1st clarinet is playing the melody.
- The abbreviation *div.* (short for *divisi*, in the viola part at b60 of the fourth movement) literally means divided and indicates that half the section should play the top notes and the other half should play the bottom notes.

- The abbreviation *a2* in the woodwind and brass parts means that both instruments should play the phrase with this marking (e.g. flutes from b1 in the second movement). *1.* above the oboe staff at b3 in the second movement indicates that the notes are played by the 1st oboe only.
- At b46 in the second movement, if cellos and basses are sharing the same staff in the score, then the marking *Vc.* indicates that only cellos play at this point. Basses play with the cellos from b49, indicated by the marking *unis.* (short for *unisono*, meaning in unison).
- *leggiero* at b76 in the fourth movement (abbreviated to *legg.* for the clarinets in b255) means lightly.
- *Più f* at bar 210 in the fourth movement means more loudly.
- A timpani roll is usually indicated by the trill sign, followed by a wavy line (e.g. fourth movement b214). A trill in other instruments (e.g. woodwind, fourth movement, b1) indicates rapid alternation between the printed note and the note above.
- Some scores use the following notation at b93-95 in the fourth movement:



This indicates that three quavers are to be played, rather than one note.

4 Techniques

Mendelssohn's music is **tonal**, but uses an extended vocabulary of chords, with **seventh and ninth chords**, typical of the nineteenth century. There is also use of **chromaticism** and **modal shifts** between major and minor (e.g. second movement b86). There are extended **pedal points** (e.g. 1st violins, fourth movement from b2), **sequential repetition** (e.g. oboe and bassoons, second movement b19-23) and **imitation**, including a **fugato** section (a passage of music in which a theme is heard in imitation in all the voices e.g. fourth movement from b122).

Mendelssohn uses a variety of textures: from a full tutti **homophonic** texture (e.g. fourth movement from b30) to a single melodic line (second movement b1–2) and also melodies in thirds and octaves (e.g. second movement from b3 is in octaves, fourth movement from b6 the flutes play in thirds). There is also sometimes **antiphony** between different sections (e.g. woodwind/brass and strings from b 85 in the fourth movement). Themes are subject to shortening and repetition; fragments of the pervading triplet rhythm in the fourth movement are heard frequently.

5 Structure and form

The symphony has the standard four movements: a first movement in sonata form, a slow second movement, a third movement in triple time and a fast finale. However, the structure of the second and fourth movements is not straightforward, as Mendelssohn does not use a clearly-defined form.

The structure of the second movement is:

A	b1–35	D minor
Transition	b35–45	Modulating from D minor to A major
B	b45–56	A major
A ¹	b57–74	A minor
B ¹	b75–85	D major
Coda	b86–103	D minor

Some writers have suggested that the structure of the second movement could be sonata form without a development section (sometimes known as abridged sonata form). However, Mendelssohn does not follow the key structure of sonata form.

Sonata form movements usually have:

- An Exposition section, with a 1st subject in the tonic, a transition modulating to the dominant or relative major (if the work is in a minor key) and a 2nd subject in the dominant or relative major
- A Development section, where themes from the Exposition are developed (fragments of themes are heard in a variety of keys)
- A Recapitulation section, with the 1st subject in the tonic, a transition (which does not modulate) and the 2nd subject in the tonic
- The movement may also have an introduction and/or a coda.

In a symphony the first movement is in sonata form, as is often the final movement. Mendelssohn's finale uses some elements of a standard sonata form, but not all are present.

The structure of the fourth movement is:

EXPOSITION	b1–102	
1st subject	b1–34	A minor
Transition	b34–52	Modulating from A minor to E minor
2nd subject	b52–104	E minor
DEVELOPMENT	b105–233	
CODA	b234–264	

In this movement Mendelssohn dispenses with the recapitulation section, preferring instead to continue developing the musical ideas to almost the end of the movement.

6 Commentary

Candidates are not expected to know every detail of the following, but should focus on:

- structure and terminology
- themes and their transformations
- key centres and modulations
- identification of chords
- instruments and texture
- transposition
- score markings, performance directions, instrumental effects
- general background information about the context and genre of each work.

SECOND MOVEMENT

This movement has the character of a solemn, slow march and was possibly inspired by the music Mendelssohn heard in Rome in Holy Week (the week before Easter).

A

The movement begins monophonically, with woodwind (minus clarinets) and upper strings playing an introductory idea, focusing on the note A. This has the air of a call to prayer or a recitation. It contains the significant motif of a rising and falling semitone (A–B \flat –A) which Mendelssohn uses extensively in this movement and in the finale.

The entry of the cellos and double basses in b2 clarifies that the introductory note A is the dominant and that the key is D minor. The continuous bass staccato quavers may suggest the walking feet of those taking part in the procession and show Mendelssohn being influenced by Baroque music.

The first real melody is played by the 1st oboe, bassoons and violas from b3⁴. This is a simple eight-bar melody, divided into two equal four-bar phrases, ending with a perfect cadence in b10–11. The use of C \natural rather than C \sharp in the melody gives it a modal, church music feel. The melody contains the semitone motif from b1 in b9 and a new motif in b4⁴–5¹ – a rising stepwise major third.

From b114 the melody is repeated in octaves by 1st and 2nd violins, an octave higher than heard previously and with added 1st and 2nd flute countermelodies, with some use of syncopation (e.g. 2nd flute b12) and very small changes to the bass line.

Oboe, bassoons and violas take up the melody again at b19⁴, this time beginning with two bars repeated as an ascending sequence, followed by a repetition of b7⁴–11 with a different bass line. As before this is repeated by 1st and 2nd violins with flute countermelodies, but from b31⁴ oboes, bassoons and violas join the violins.

The pattern of a wind and viola melody being repeated by violins suggests a style of singing in church music, where one group of singers alternates with another, known as responsorial singing. Also, the four-bar phrases of this section resemble the structure of a simple hymn: a a¹ (a a¹) b a¹ (b a¹), where the letter in brackets refers to the violin repetitions.

TRANSITION

At b35 the staccato semiquavers pass to the 2nd violins and violas, and then 1st violins enter with music based on the monophonic opening, extended with new material including descending chromatic notes in b37-38. B39 begins as a repetition from b35 but is extended to lead into the next section.

B

Though the other instruments continue to have a key signature of one flat, the clarinets are given a key signature with no sharps or flats at this point. Since the section is in A major and they are clarinets in A it is clearly simpler for them to be notated this way.

It is in this contrasting section in A major that clarinets and horns are first heard in the movement, with the 1st clarinet playing the melodic line and horns on a dominant pedal (the note E). The staccato quavers stop and the scoring becomes increasingly thicker as more instruments enter. Mendelssohn also uses much richer harmonies including a diminished seventh chord in b56.

A'

This begins as b1, but with more instruments playing, at a *ff* dynamic and in the key of A minor. Cellos and basses also enter earlier with their staccato quavers under the main melody, which is a bar earlier and uses material from the second half of the melody (b7⁴–11), but still played by the same instruments. However, there are now two oboes and one bassoon with the violas. Flute countermelodies are also added (before they were not used until the repetition of the melody by the violins). B62–66 extend and develop the melody by repeating the final four notes (part of the semitone motif–B \flat –B \flat –A) at different pitches on various instruments. In b65–66 the cellos and basses accompany with an A pedal, decorated with the semitone motif.

The oboe, bassoons and violas continue with a melodic line from b67, related to, but not identical to earlier melodies. Violins now play the staccato quavers without a flute countermelody.

The transition section is reduced to just three bars, using material from b43 in b71 and the falling semitone in b73. The dominant pedal (A) heard in the cellos, basses and horns from b74 leads into the next section in D major.

B'

The major key theme returns with thicker orchestration (e.g. the melody is played by the 1st flute and the 1st clarinet) and begins on the fourth beat of the bar rather than the second. From b85 the ending is changed to lead into the Coda.

CODA

A modal shift from D major to D minor is achieved with the 2nd violins F \sharp –F \natural and the material from the Transition at b35 is heard again, played by the strings alone as before, with the staccato quavers in the 2nd violins and violas. From b90 the transitional material is extended and changed with a descending sequence (b92–93) and a return of the introductory material in the woodwind in b94. As the dynamic decreases, fragments of the A melody are heard over staccato quavers in the cellos and basses until they are left alone to finish the movement with three pizzicato notes. The music could suggest the religious procession disappearing into the distance, until it can no longer be heard.

FOURTH MOVEMENT

Traditionally the final movement of a symphony is at a faster pace than the first movement, requiring the use of presto for this movement. The title *saltarello* is Mendelssohn's only explicit Italian reference in the symphony; all other 'Italian' features are merely suggestions. The key of this movement is unusual as it was not common to end a major key symphony in a minor key.

EXPOSITION

First Subject (bars 1–34)

The movement begins with the full orchestra, playing five A minor chords with a trill (possibly suggesting the roll of a tambourine) in the woodwind. The rhythmicised tonic pedal from b2 introduces the triplet rhythm found throughout the movement, which, to the ear, suggests a compound time signature (12/8 rather than 4/4). At b4 both the texture and dynamic reduce (to upper strings, then just 1st violins and *f* to *p* and then *pp*) and in b6 the flutes introduce the 1st subject theme in thirds. This uses the triplet rhythm already heard and has some small leaps, typical of a saltarello. The melody also uses the two motifs from the second movement: the rising and falling semitone (E–F–E, the first, fifth and tenth notes in the 1st flute) and the rising stepwise third (b6⁴). The first four bars of the first subject are repeated with a changed ending from b10.

From the end of b14 the first subject theme is repeated with the flutes playing an octave higher, the clarinets now doubling the flutes and the full string section accompanying.

From b22 the theme is repeated again, now in the violins in thirds and based on chord V rather than chord I and with detached quaver accompaniment from the oboes, trumpets and timpani, which is used later in the movement. From b26 the theme is heard increasing in pitch and volume leading to a tutti statement of the theme (minus trumpets) *ff* at b30.

Transition (bars 34–52)

There are two abrupt changes: to a texture of strings only, in octaves and clearer simple time (quavers rather than triplets). In b36 the triplets return briefly in a reference to the 1st subject with a new woodwind idea above. B38 is a repetition from b34, but the strings play in harmony rather than in octaves and from b40 move towards C major (the relative major). A new two-bar idea (falling stepwise triplet thirds on a diminished seventh chord) is introduced from b44, which is repeated twice but the third time is changed and the music reaches the dominant chord of E minor (B major) at b52.

Second Subject (bars 52–104)

The 2nd subject 1st theme is identical in rhythm to the 1st subject, but has some wider leaps and includes some slurs. It also begins with the rising and falling semitone motif from the second movement. It is accompanied by a dominant pedal in the trumpets (played as staccato crotchets) and from b54 a descending chromatic fourth in the woodwind in octaves. When the music from b52 is repeated from b56 the woodwind play an octave lower.

A completely new idea, the 2nd subject 2nd theme, interrupts from b61, played by 2nd violins, violas, cellos and basses. It is interspersed with fragments of the 2nd subject 1st theme (1st violins b62 and b64) and the 1st subject (woodwind b64). There are also some legato quavers in the 1st violins in b66 and b70. From b71 the 2nd violins enter in imitation one bar after the 1st violins and violas join from b73.

At b76 there is a repetition of the 1st subject in E minor in the flutes, then a descending E minor scale in the strings in b82–84 leads to the 2nd subject 2nd theme again in the woodwind and brass, alternating with the triplet pedal figure in the strings. From b90 the woodwind have the legato quavers first heard in the 1st violins in b66.

The closing section of the exposition from b97 alternates between an E minor and a diminished seventh chord, leading to a descending E minor arpeggio in b101–102 and the whole orchestra playing the note E in b103–104.

DEVELOPMENT (bars 105–233)

This begins with the first three bars of the 1st subject being passed around the woodwind, with very light accompaniment in A minor. The trills from the fourth bar of the 1st subject are finally heard three times in b118–121.

B122 begins a long passage for just the strings with new melodic material. The continuous triplet melody could be a tarantella, another Italian folkdance, usually in 3/8 or 6/8 and featuring scalic movement. 1st violins introduce the tarantella in G minor, with a detached quaver accompaniment from the lower strings. At b126 the 2nd violins begin to repeat the 1st violin melody, but then restart on a different note (A) in b127. The 1st violin entry in b129 overlaps with the 2nd violin statement and is an octave higher. The tarantella theme continues to be passed around the strings until at b145 the woodwind gradually enter, initially as accompaniment but then taking over fragments of the theme. B149–152 are part of a circle of fifths: E minor – A minor – D major – G major.

At b156 the opening rhythm is heard for two bars from woodwind and brass, answered by two bars of tarantella theme from the strings in imitation. This two-bar alternation continues with the addition of woodwind pedal notes from b166, when the strings begin a longer passage of the tarantella theme in imitation. This includes a rising two-bar sequence in the bass in b169–174 and the tarantella theme in octaves from b175.

From b179 there is further development of the 1st subject over a dominant pedal in E minor and from b183 over a dominant pedal in A minor. B185⁴–187² presents a two-bar idea which is then repeated twice by the strings with triplet interjections from brass and timpani. The accented crotchets in the strings move chromatically in contrary motion.

At b191 the whole orchestra unites on a *ff* C major chord before heading back towards A minor and a long dominant pedal from b195. Over this the tarantella theme is passed around the strings while the woodwind play descending minims originally heard accompanying the 2nd subject 1st theme.

The 1st subject returns in the tonic in b210, a point which might be seen as the recapitulation. However, the statement is not complete and after just four bars the music moves on to a tutti A7 chord followed by violin triplets (which, with the B♭s, extend the chord to a ninth), taken from the idea introduced in the transition at b44. The music returns to A minor with the 1st subject in the lower strings in b222, but only the first part is heard and from b226 it is used as a descending sequence. There is syncopation in the accompaniment using the falling fourth idea from b54, but without chromaticism. There is then a I_c–V–I progression in b232–234.

CODA (bars 234–264)

String triplets alternate with woodwind and brass chords until the flutes, clarinets, bassoons and horns play a reference to the 1st subject of the first movement from b238⁴ (now in A minor rather than the original A major).

From b255 very small fragments of the first subject are heard in imitation in the woodwind, over a tonic pedal. A sudden large crescendo and repeated perfect cadences in A minor, with violin and viola double- and triple-stopping end the movement.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Clarinet Concerto in A major, K622 (Movement 1)

Two different versions of scores are available for this work: for clarinet in A and for basset clarinet in A (with the lowest notes in the bass clef). It is recommended that candidates work from a version for clarinet in A (e.g. the Eulenburg score ISBN 3795766672), but they should be aware how the basset clarinet version is different.

Candidates should **not** work from a score for B flat clarinet or one that has only piano rather than orchestral accompaniment.

In the examination, scores and recordings used will be for clarinet in A.

1 Background

Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria, the son of the composer and violinist Leopold Mozart. He began learning the keyboard (harpichord and piano) from the age of three and quickly became a very accomplished child prodigy. From the age of six, he travelled with his family around Europe, performing to nobility and in public concerts, so that Leopold could show off his child genius. Mozart met and played for some of the world's most powerful figures, including Louis XV in France and George III in England. During this time, he also learned to play the violin and began composing. The early compositions reflect the fact that he was exposed to a wide variety of contemporary Classical music by other European composers on his travels, and he imitated features that he liked. Composers who particularly influenced his early works include J.C. Bach (J. S. Bach's youngest son) and Haydn. Mozart's first symphony was written while he was in London in 1764–65, aged 8. His Op. 1 (the first of his catalogued compositions) was a set of violin sonatas, composed when he was 11.

In 1773 the Mozart family settled in Salzburg again. However, it was not long before Mozart began travelling once more, as he was unable to find a position in Salzburg to his (and his father's) liking. He had two periods of working for the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, but found this unsatisfactory. The cycle of travelling and returning to Salzburg continued until 1781 when Mozart settled in Vienna, playing, conducting, teaching and composing. In 1782 he married Constanze Weber.

During his relatively short life Mozart composed in all the then current genres: concertos, chamber music, operas, sacred music and symphonies, producing a huge number of works. The works that are now most often heard date from his later years, when he had assimilated all the influences from his early life (including music from England, Germany, Italy and France).

Mozart wrote many concertos throughout his life. In Salzburg he wrote violin concertos and a small number of wind concertos and in Vienna he composed many concertos for the piano (often for him to play himself), four horn concertos and the clarinet concerto. The wind concertos were always written with a particular soloist in mind, either a friend of his or a player who had commissioned a concerto.

The clarinet concerto was written for the talented clarinetist Anton Stadler, a great friend of Mozart's who was a member of the Vienna Court Orchestra and for whom Mozart had written the clarinet quintet in 1789. The concerto was completed in the autumn of 1791 and it seems likely that it was premièred by Stadler on October 16 at the National Theatre in Prague. In common with most of Mozart's wind concertos and other Classical concertos, it has three movements in the pattern fast-slow-fast.

In addition to playing the clarinet, Stadler also played the basset horn, an instrument rather like the clarinet, but longer and at a lower pitch. Stadler helped to invent an instrument which combined elements of the basset horn and clarinet, known as a basset clarinet. Stadler's instrument, which no longer exists, was essentially a clarinet with a larger bell and four extra semitones below standard A clarinet pitch. Clarinets in Mozart's time had fewer keys than those of today and could therefore produce fewer chromatic notes, so clarinets were made in three different keys: C, B \flat and A, with the player using whichever one suited the key of the music best.

Part of the first movement of Mozart's clarinet concerto exists in a version in G major for basset horn. Mozart then returned to the incomplete score, transposing it up a tone for performance on Stadler's basset clarinet. Unfortunately, the autograph score has been lost and until relatively recently scores were based on an edition from 1801. This was arranged so that the solo part could be played on an A clarinet (without the extra four low notes available on the basset clarinet). However, some modern editions have recreated the clarinet part as it would have been played in the première and performances have been given on modern reconstructions of Stadler's instrument.

After the completion of the concerto Mozart wrote just two pieces for voices and began his Requiem. The clarinet concerto was therefore his last piece of instrumental music. After illness, he died in December 1791, aged 35 and was buried in a communal grave, as was common practice. There are many theories about how Mozart died, including that he was poisoned, but the actual cause of death is still unknown. The 1984 film *Amadeus* tells the story of the last ten years of Mozart's life, including exploring one controversial theory about his death.

The number K.622 given to the concerto refers to a catalogue of Mozart's works by the Austrian Ludwig Ritter von Köchel. The chronological catalogue was published in 1862 and the numbers are still used today to identify individual works.

2 Instruments

Mozart's clarinet concerto is scored for solo clarinet in A, 2 flutes, 2 bassoons, 2 horns in A and strings. Mozart often included clarinets or oboes in his orchestral works, but since this is a concerto for solo clarinet there are no oboes or clarinets in the orchestra. The small woodwind section, no trumpets or drums, and a texture often using just soloist and strings gives a chamber music feel at times, not unlike the clarinet quintet.

The clarinet part is 'in A' so the music sounds a minor third lower than written. Candidates will need practice in transposing fragments of the clarinet part **down** a minor third. Scores which have reconstructed the original solo part for basset clarinet have the extra lower notes available on this instrument in the bass clef, an extra octave lower (therefore sounding a major sixth higher than written). Candidates will not be expected to transpose any clarinet notes in the bass clef.

The solo clarinet has music printed from the beginning of the concerto, doubling the music played by the 1st violins, usually in unison, but sometimes an octave lower. It is likely that Stadler directed the first performance from the clarinet and may have played in parts of the tutti sections. The clarinet (even without the basset clarinet's extra low notes) has the widest range of all woodwind instruments and can play in three distinct registers: low, middle and high. The low register is often known as the chalumeau register, after a predecessor to the clarinet which could play only low notes.

Throughout the concerto Mozart fully exploits the capabilities and range of the clarinet, in lyrical melodies, sweeping scales, arpeggios and large leaps and in contrasting different registers. By alternating use of the

chalmereau register with high notes (e.g. b90) he creates a dialogue in the solo part. Once the clarinet enters at b57 there are very few bars where it is not heard (just in the orchestral ritornellos).

The horns in the first movement of the concerto are also pitched in A, so candidates should practise transposing fragments of their part **down** a minor third. At this time horns did not have valves and therefore had a restricted number of notes which they were able to play. For this reason their music is mostly based on notes of the tonic and dominant chords.

The parts for strings are usually written on four staves, with the cellos and basses sharing the bottom staff. However, there are several points at which Mozart indicates that the two parts should be independent. For example, in b25 the marking *Violoncello* indicates that only the cellos should play the printed music, with the double basses re-joining at the *Tutti Bassi* indication in b31. (In some scores the cellos and basses are simply notated on different staves when they have different parts.) By writing some independent music, Mozart was moving towards a later development, when double basses would have their own part. The double basses are the only other transposing instruments in the concerto: their notes sound an octave lower than written but candidates will not be expected to transpose any of this part.

The only instrument which does not use the treble or bass clef in this work is the viola, which is written in the alto clef (where middle C is on the middle line). Candidates should practise writing small fragments of this part in the treble clef. At b259 there are two parts for violas written on one staff, one with tails up and one with tails down. At this point half the viola section plays the upper notes and half the lower notes. Some scores have the marking *div.* at this point, literally meaning 'divided'.

3 Directions in the score

Markings in the score are usually in Italian. Just one tempo indication is given for the whole of the first movement: *allegro vivace*, meaning fast. There are no other tempo indications in the movement.

Candidates will also need to be familiar with other markings found in the score:

- The abbreviation *a2* (or *zu 2* in some scores) in the woodwind and brass parts means that both instruments written on a single staff should play the phrase that has this marking (e.g. the flute part in b13). A *1.* or *1mo* (e.g. bassoon b235) indicates that the part is to be played by just one instrument.
- At b17–19 in the 2nd violin part in some scores there are notes which look like minims, but are beamed together like semiquavers. This means that the two notes are to be alternated as semiquavers. Similarly, at b342 the repeated semiquavers in the violins and violas may be notated as a minim with two lines crossing the stem.

4 Techniques

As a Classical work, the concerto uses functional tonal harmony, in which the tonic, dominant and subdominant are particularly important. There is also modulation to other keys, some of which are closely related to the tonic and others which are not, and occasional modal shifts (between major and minor versions of keys on the same note). Mozart uses some chromaticism and some chromatic chords including the diminished seventh and augmented Neapolitan sixths. There is also use of sequence, imitation and antiphony.

5 Structure and form

The first movement of the clarinet concerto is in sonata form but also combines elements of ritornello form, as used in Baroque concertos. Sonata form was used in the first movements of sonatas and symphonies. Sonata form movements usually have:

- An Exposition section, with a 1st subject in the tonic, a transition modulating to the dominant or relative major (if the work is in a minor key) and a 2nd subject in the dominant or relative major
- A Development section, where themes from the Exposition are developed (fragments of themes are manipulated and heard in a variety of keys)
- A Recapitulation section, with the 1st subject in the tonic, a transition (which does not modulate) and the 2nd subject in the tonic
- The movement may also have an introduction and/or a coda

Ritornello form, as used in Baroque concertos, has recurring ritornellos played by the full orchestra, in different keys and of differing lengths, but often using the same musical material, interspersed with episodes featuring the soloist playing new material.

As would be expected in a concerto, there is an opening orchestral exposition section (or orchestral ritornello) in which the 1st subject is heard. However, during the orchestral exposition there is no 2nd subject, simply the 1st subject presented again, but in imitation. The solo exposition begins with the 1st subject again and then after the transition the 2nd subject is finally introduced.

The structure and keys of the movement could be summarised as follows:

ORCHESTRAL EXPOSITION		
1st subject	1–24	A major
1st subject	25–49	A major
Codetta	49–56	A major
SOLO EXPOSITION		
1st subject	57–77	A major
Transition (or bridge passage)	78–99	A minor – C major – dominant of E minor
2nd subject	100–127	E major
1st subject	128–154	E major
ORCHESTRAL RITORNELLO	154–164	E major
Codetta	164–171	E major
DEVELOPMENT	172–227	E major – F# minor – D major – B minor – F# minor
ORCHESTRAL RITORNELLO	227–251	F# minor – E minor – D major – dominant of A
RECAPITULATION		
1st subject	251–271	A major
Transition	272–288	A minor – C major – E minor – D minor – dominant of A
2nd subject	288–315	A major – F# minor – dominant of A
1st subject	316–343	A major
ORCHESTRAL RITORNELLO	343–352	A major
Codetta	352–359	A major

6 Commentary

Candidates are not expected to know every detail of the following, but should focus on:

- structure and terminology
- themes and their transformations
- key centres and modulations
- identification of chords
- instruments and texture
- transposition
- score markings, performance directions, instrumental effects
- general background information about the context and genre of the work.

ORCHESTRAL EXPOSITION (bars 1–56)

1st subject (bars 1–24)

The 1st subject theme is presented by the strings, with the violins playing in thirds. The opening eight bars, ending on an imperfect cadence, are answered by a tutti statement of the theme, which is decorated and changed from b13. From b16 the music continues with a new melodic idea, but featuring the rising seventh (b17), originally heard in b6. The accompaniment includes syncopation in the violas. B18–19 are a slightly altered repetition of b16–17, and b20–22 include descending sequences, initially a bar and then half a bar in b22. The rising scale in the strings in b23, leading to the dominant chord in b24, suggests something is about to happen.

1st subject (bars 25–49)

Instead of moving on to a 2nd subject, the 1st subject is presented again, by the strings (without double basses) in imitation, leading to development of the 1st subject from b31. From b31 there are two points of imitation: violas imitate the 2nd violins while flutes and 1st violins imitate the cellos, basses and bassoons, who play a pattern derived from the opening of the 1st subject. Imitation and repetition is also used in b39–42 and there is a perfect cadence in A major in b48–49.

Codetta (bars 49–56)

The codetta theme begins with two bars repeated as a descending sequence and ends with three repeated A major chords.

SOLO EXPOSITION (bars 57–154)

1st subject (bars 57–77)

The clarinet is now heard as the soloist for the first time, playing the 1st subject with very light accompaniment, initially just violins, with 1st violins playing in thirds and sixths with the soloist. The clarinet adds some decoration to the melody (compare b61 and b5) and at b65 the melody is handed back to the 1st violins, while the clarinet begins a virtuosic passage featuring scales and arpeggios covering a wide range and a leap of 2½ octaves in b70. B74–75 have a perfect cadence in A major and b75 is a repetition of b55.

Transition (bars 78–99)

There is a modal shift as it is in the tonic minor (A minor). The clarinet melody has very light string accompaniment, just the 1st violins in b86–88. In b82–83 the clarinet outlines a G7 chord, changing the key to C major from b86. In b90–94 there is a dialogue in the clarinet part between the high and low registers. In performances using a basset clarinet the three notes in b91² to 92¹ would be played at the very bottom of the range of the instrument, sounding an octave below middle C (and in some scores are notated in the bass clef), resulting in a leap in b92 of nearly 3 octaves. Performances given on a standard clarinet have these notes an octave higher and therefore not such a large leap. B93 features an augmented sixth chord.

Low notes in the chalumeau register are also used in b94–97. The flutes join the accompaniment in b96 and the 2nd flute has a suspension at the start of b97. The transition ends with two bars of full orchestra and an imperfect cadence in E minor, overlapping the start of the 2nd subject.

2nd subject (bars 100–127)

The clarinet entry at b100 suggests the start of the 2nd subject, but it could equally be seen to begin at b104, where the music has firmly reached the dominant key of E major, with a perfect cadence in b103–104.

The clarinet plays the 2nd subject over very light string accompaniment, using the descending sequence from b20 in b108 and extending it with a virtuosic arpeggio in b111. From b115 there is only clarinet with 1st violin and then 1st and 2nd violin accompaniment, as at b86. By playing material in two different ranges (high and chalumeau registers) the clarinet creates a kind of dialogue. At this point the music moves to C# minor, but by b126 the chord is the dominant 7th in E major. Here there are pauses over the clarinet part, suggesting that the soloist may add some decoration.

1st subject (bars 128–154)

The 1st subject is heard in imitation, as at b25, but the music has been rescored, with the solo clarinet as the third entry. The music is also now in the dominant (E major), rather than the tonic. From b134 the material from b39 returns, in the dominant and with an added clarinet Alberti bass chalumeau register accompaniment. At this point there are differences between the basset clarinet and standard clarinet versions. On a basset clarinet the fourth beats of b134–137 are a printed D (sounding B) but on a standard clarinet a printed F# (sounding D#) has to be played instead.

There then follows a passage of pure showmanship from the clarinet: scales and arpeggios (including two diminished sevenths in b146–147) demonstrating the very wide range of the instrument over light string accompaniment, ending with a chromatic scale and trill in b152–153.

Orchestral ritornello (bars 154–164)

The music of b16–23 is repeated in the dominant, but with the insertion of an extra bar at b162. There is therefore a perfect cadence in E major in b163–164. The characteristic rising sevenths in b155–156 are also obscured, becoming a falling 2nd and rising octave.

Codetta (bars 164–171)

This is a repetition of the codetta from the end of the orchestral exposition in the dominant.

DEVELOPMENT (bars 172–227)

The clarinet begins with what at first sounds like the 1st subject in the dominant, but after just 1½ bars has more in common with the 2nd subject, accompanied by the strings. The first four bars of the development are repeated and lead to a passage of semiquaver scales in the clarinet over light string harmony. The scales eventually reach a high note and the sudden descent of the clarinet over three octaves (or two octaves for a standard clarinet) while the key moves to F# minor.

Four bars of string and clarinet antiphony (b194–197) are followed by further demonstration of the clarinet's wide range. By b200 the music has reached D major and the clarinet has the music from the end of b85 (the transition) with very light string accompaniment as before, but now a tone higher. As in the transition the melody is followed by a dialogue within the clarinet part, between the high and chalumeau registers, reaching B minor in b210 with scalic flourishes.

At b215 there is one bar without the soloist where the orchestra play loudly in F# minor. B216–219 are similar to b194–197 in the strings, but this time the clarinet has semibreves rather than alternating with the strings. It is possible that Mozart intended the clarinet semibreves to have some kind of decoration added. Here the chords are very chromatic and include a Neapolitan 6th in b216 and diminished sevenths in b217 and b219.

The following bars, mostly on a 2nd inversion F# minor chord, are very similar to b210 onwards and the soloist ends the development section with three trills.

Orchestral ritornello (bars 227–251)

The orchestra returns to the music from b215, in the same key (F# minor) and at the same *f* dynamic. The two loud bars are repeated twice, the second time *p*, with the repeated semiquavers becoming quavers, reduced instrumentation and suspensions added in the 1st bassoon and cellos.

All six bars are then played as a descending sequence, now in E minor, with the same changes after the first two bars. The texture of this ritornello is very striking, with much of the music played in octaves by wind and strings.

At b239 the music from b16–22 is heard again, now beginning in D major and changed from b242 to lead to the dominant of A major in preparation for the recapitulation. As at the end of the solo exposition, the distinctive rising sevenths have been changed to a falling 2nd and a rising octave. A clarinet ascending E major scale in b248 and two bars of held E provide a strong dominant lead into the recapitulation in the tonic.

RECAPITULATION (bars 251–343)

1st subject (bars 251–271)

The start of the recapitulation is almost identical to the solo exposition, with the clarinet accompanied by the strings in A major and two bars of full orchestra leading into the transition.

Transition (bars 272–288)

This section also begins as in the solo exposition, in A minor. However, the accompaniment is higher than in the exposition and from b275 the music is changed as it no longer needs to modulate to the dominant, but to remain in the tonic. The music passes rapidly through C major, E minor and D minor. B282 begins a repeat of the music from b94 (but not in the same key). As before, two bars of full orchestra precede the 2nd subject.

2nd subject (bars 288–315)

There are many similarities to the 2nd subject in the solo exposition, but the key is now A major and the clarinet part is sometimes higher than the exposition and sometimes lower. For 2 bars from b303 the 1st violins play the melody originally played by the clarinet in the solo exposition and the clarinet adds a new countermelody, taking advantage of different registers. As in the exposition this section is in a minor key (now F# minor rather than the original C# minor). B315 would probably have some added ornamentation from the clarinet (as in b127).

1st subject (bars 316–343)

In this repetition of the 1st subject in imitation, the clarinet now starts, followed by the 2nd violins and violas and finally the 1st violins. There are now only two bars of Alberti bass accompaniment from b325 (rather than four) and the arpeggios in b311-333 are played in three different octaves on a basset clarinet, whereas in the exposition they were repeated only in two octaves. As before, there are wide ranging arpeggios, scales (including a chromatic scale in b341) and a trill leading to the final orchestral ritornello. There is no cadenza in this movement. Had Mozart wanted to insert one, this would have been the place for it.

Orchestral ritornello (bars 343–352)

There is a return to the material first heard in the orchestral exposition from b16 (for four bars) and then from b44.

Codetta (bars 352–359)

This is a repetition of the codetta from the end of the orchestral exposition (b49).

World Focus for 2019: China

The ensemble music of China

This topic examines the musical features and performance practice of **two** types of Chinese music ensemble. The region from which the extract is taken will be specified. Candidates would not be tested on the historical or geographical background but they would be expected to:

- Identify and briefly describe some of the main instruments (including the main performance technique, e.g. bowed, plucked)
- Understand which instruments are associated with each ensemble
- Describe the musical processes and features (e.g. scale/mode; texture; rhythm, metre and tempo)
- Describe the performance contexts and modes of transmission

1 Historical background

China is a huge country with an ancient tradition of around three millennia. It became unified in 221 BCE after the King of the State of Qin conquered all the other Warring States and established himself as Qin Shihuang, First Emperor of the Qin Dynasty. The Qin dynasty, however, was short-lived and was succeeded by the powerful Han dynasty, which ruled from 206 BCE to 220 CE. As the Han dynasty is considered the first golden age of China's imperial rule, the majority of the population is known as Han Chinese to this day. China subsequently went through a number of different dynastic rules until a modern republic was founded in 1912 by the Nationalist Party, ending the 2000-year imperial rule in China. Following a time of turmoil which saw the Sino-Japan war and civil war between the Nationalists and the Communist forces, the Communist Party, led by Mao Zedong, defeated the Nationalists, establishing the People's Republic of China from 1949. The Nationalist army and its leader Chiang Kai-Shek fled to the island of Taiwan and set up a rival government.

Today, 91.5 per cent of China's population is Han Chinese, while ethnic minorities, comprising 55 officially recognised ethnic minority groups, make up about 8.5 per cent of the population. The official language of China is known as Mandarin or *Putonghua*, which is taught at schools. Different regional dialects or languages also exist; some regions may share common terms and a degree of intelligibility, but some are so different as to be mutually unintelligible. The written form of the language, known as *hanyu* or *zhongwen*, has been standardised since the time of Emperor Qin Shihuang. The written text comprises characters that generally represent one syllable of spoken Chinese. In modern times, the traditional system for Chinese characters has been simplified in China and some Chinese-speaking countries outside mainland China. However, places like Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau have retained the traditional system.

Just as there are many different regional dialects and languages, Chinese music consists of many regional traditions that are different in form, style, instruments, notation systems, performance practice and repertory. Traditionally, music is often closely linked to religious or ritual contexts and plays an important role in social ceremonies such as weddings, celebrations and funerals. Music ensembles of different regions can generally be differentiated by the instrumental combination and distinctive instruments. We will focus on two types of string and wind (known typically in Chinese as *sizhu*, literally 'silk-and-bamboo', as it comprises instruments made from bamboo and instruments with silk strings; see *bayin*) instrumental ensembles.

2 Types of silk-and-bamboo ensemble

A. Jiangnan sizhu ensemble (Jiangnan silk-and-bamboo ensemble)

Geographical and social background

Jiangnan (lit. south of the river) is a geographic area in China referring to the regions south of the *Yangtze* (modern romanisation *Yangzi*) River. Also known as *Chang Jiang* (lit. Long River), it is the longest river that flows from the peak of the Tanggula mountains in Qinghai province in Tibet to the East China Sea, the mouth of which is in Shanghai. It has served as one of the most important waterways in China and has played a huge role in the history, culture and economy of China. As one of the five treaty ports opened to foreign trade in the nineteenth century, it grew in importance as a major economic centre and financial hub. Being opened to foreign trade and international settlement, it became a hub of modern and Western culture in the twentieth century.

Traditionally, music ensembles have existed all over China; many of these are part of Chinese village societies or associations which provide their services as paid professionals performing for religious and life-cycle ceremonies. At the same time, music-making for self-cultivation or pleasure has also existed. In the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, amateur music-making activities began to spread in urban areas; amateur musicians from well-to-do families and educated backgrounds would gather and play music for self-cultivation and to entertain themselves. In the early twentieth century, many *Jiangnan sizhu* ensemble groups and music clubs began to develop in the city of Shanghai. Music enthusiasts would gather and play at teahouses, in clubs or neighborhood associations. They would meet to play music for their own entertainment, to improve their performance skills and to socialise. It was in this climate that the *Jiangnan sizhu* became established as a genre of wind and string ensemble.

In music conservatoires today, students are expected to learn pieces of the *Jiangnan sizhu* repertoire and to know something of the style. However, conservatoire-trained groups tend to play from notated scores while folk groups tend not to use notation when they play.

Instrumentation

The term *sizhu* originally came from the ancient Chinese *bayin* (lit. eight sounds) classification system in which musical instruments were classified according to the material used in the construction of the instruments, the eight being stone, earth, bamboo, metal, skin, silk, wood and gourd.

The core instruments used in the standard *Jiangnan sizhu* ensemble include the *dizi* (transverse bamboo flute), *xiao* (end-blown bamboo flute), *sheng* (mouth organ), *erhu* (two-stringed bowed lute), *pipa* (four-stringed plucked lute), *yangqin* (dulcimer or struck zither), *sanxian* (three-stringed plucked lute), *bangzi* (woodblock) and *ban* (clapper).

At any gathering, the number of players is not fixed. As few as two or as many as ten or more players may participate. But generally, only one of each instrument is played. If more players of a particular instrument turn up, the players will take it in turn to play. Those waiting to play will sit around, chatting and drinking tea.

Candidates should be able to identify and briefly describe the following instruments:***Dizi***

The *dizi* is a transverse or side-blown flute made from a piece of bamboo with six finger holes and a blowhole. Halfway between the finger holes and the blowhole is an extra hole which is covered by a thin membrane of bamboo skin. This membrane produces a slightly nasal buzzing tone colour and amplifies the volume. In *Jiangnan sizhu*, the moderate-length flute known as the *qudi* is used. It is tuned in the key of D and has an average range of about two and a half octaves. It is normally the leading instrument of the ensemble.

Sheng

The *sheng* mouth organ is one of the oldest Chinese wind instruments. It is made up of fourteen to seventeen bamboo pipes of different lengths set in a small wind chamber traditionally made of gourd; in modern times this may be made of metal. Each pipe has a free reed made of metal or brass attached to the end of it before it is inserted inside the wind chamber. It is held at an angle to the player's right. Sound is produced by exhaling and inhaling air through a wooden or metal blowpipe connected to the base and by closing the finger holes in the gap in selected pipes. It is capable of producing two or more tones simultaneously, producing the harmony of a fourth, fifth or octaves.

Erhu

The *erhu* is a two-stringed, bowed fiddle. Originating from the bowed spiked-lute of Persia, this instrument travelled to China via Central Asia on the ancient Silk Road. Today it is very much an important Chinese instrument. It has a round and long fretless pole mounted perpendicular to a small hexagonal-shape soundbox covered by snakeskin. Two silk strings (in modern day, steel or nylon strings) are fastened to the lower end of the pole and are passed over the face of the soundbox by means of a small bamboo bridge and then wound onto tuning pegs at the top. The bow, made of horse hair, rests between the two strings. Sound is produced by pushing or pulling the bow against the inner or outer string. The strings are commonly tuned a fifth apart to D–A, C–G or A–lower D.

Pipa

Like the *erhu*, the *pipa* is an instrument imported into China via the Silk Road in around the 6th century CE. Its ancestor is the Persian *ud* (or *oud*). The *pipa* has a pear-shaped wooden body. Today, the *pipa* has 29 or 31 frets, six on the neck and the rest on the body of the instrument. Four strings run from a fastener on the belly of the instrument to conical tuning pegs in the sides of the bent pegbox. The strings are commonly tuned to A–D–E–A. Previously, silk strings were used but today, nylon-wrapped steel strings are used to make it sound more powerful; as a result, finger picks are attached to the right hand fingers, which pluck the strings to produce sound. The left hand presses on the frets to produce the desired pitch. When it first arrived, the instrument was played horizontally, but gradually it is held more upright. In the *Jiangnan sizhu* style of playing, it elaborates the melody by using performance techniques such as the finger rolls, tremolos, harmonics and glissandi.

Yangqin

The *yangqin* ('foreign' *qin*) is a trapezoidal-shaped hammered dulcimer. Its origin can be traced back to the *santur* of Persia. In China, it has been adapted and has expanded in size. The instrument used commonly in *Jiangnan sizhu* has two rows of bridges at the top, each supporting eight to twelve courses of metal strings (two strings per course) passing over each bridge. In the lower octave, each course has a single string. The strings are struck with two slender bamboo beaters covered with felt.

The following instruments are commonly used in a *Jiangnan sizhu* ensemble, but candidates will not be expected to identify or describe them:

Zhonghu

The *zhonghu* is similar to the *erhu* but is slightly larger in size. It is tuned an octave lower than the *erhu* and is used more often as a subsidiary instrument to add a thicker sound texture to the high-pitched *erhu*.

Xiao

The *xiao* is a vertical-notched bamboo flute. It has four or five finger holes in the front and one in the back. It is thin and long and pitched a fourth or fifth lower than the *dizi*. It has a softer tone and more delicate timbre than the *dizi* transverse flute. Its range is about two octaves. In *Jiangnan sizhu* it usually plays a less ornamented version of the main melody.

Sanxian

The *sanxian* is a fretless plucked lute with three strings. It has a small rectangular sound box covered in the front and back with a snakeskin. It has a long neck, with a curved-back pegbox at the end of the neck and three tuning pegs at the side of the neck. The instrument used in the *Jiangnan sizhu* ensemble is about 95 cm in length. It has a rich tonal quality and has a compass of about three octaves. It is played by plucking the strings with the fingernails of the right hand or with a plectrum.

Percussion instruments in *Jiangnan sizhu* (candidates should understand the importance and role of the percussion, but will not be expected to identify or describe the instruments)

The percussion part in *Jiangnan sizhu* ensemble is played by a single musician, who holds the *ban* clapper in the left hand while the right hand strikes the *bangzi* woodblock with a stick. The *ban* clapper marks the strong (at times also on medium strong) beat, with the *bangzi* woodblock playing the rest of the beats (see section on Rhythm, Metre and Tempo). Although the percussion part is not technically demanding, the percussionist plays an important role of controlling the tempo of a piece and signalling changes in tempo between sections. In the slow section in 4/4 time, the woodblock subdivides the weak beats into two, four or eight pulses in an improvisatory manner. As the tempo quickens, the rhythmic patterns in the woodblock becomes less dense; as the music progresses into a very fast tempo in the last section, the clapper and woodblock alternate in rapid succession.

Ban

The *ban* is a wooden clapper consisting of two slabs of wood loosely attached together by a cord at one end. One slab is actually formed from two pieces of wood permanently tied tightly together and is thus twice the thickness of the other slab, which is a single piece of wood. The two parts of the clapper have flat surfaces on one side, which are struck together, while the other sides may be slightly contoured.

The single slap of the clapper is held in the palm of the left hand with the thumb separating the two slabs. The heavier double slab hangs down freely. The moving part is struck against the other slab, which remains stationary.

Bangzi

The *bangzi* is a rectangular woodblock partially hollowed out with a horizontal slit. It is placed flat on a table and played with a single thin piece of wood or bamboo.

YouTube example: www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOFr4Th7CD4
www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdivgQiG_hY4

Performance contexts

As explained above, this music is performed by amateur musicians who play for recreation. Groups meet weekly in the tea-houses and/or community centres dotted around the city of Shanghai. Some members regularly attend one music club or centre, but some play in different places. In the more public tea-houses, musicians sit in one corner around one or two tables. Members of the music club usually take it in turns to play; those not playing will sit around, drinking tea, smoking or chatting among themselves. Patrons in the tea-house may listen to the music if they wish, but more often than not, they would simply ignore the group. Today, groups may also be invited to play on the concert stage.

B. Guangdong music

Geographical and social background

The Guangdong province lies on the coast of the South China Sea. As the region is in the far south of the Chinese territories, the region and its people have often been marginalised and dismissed as the 'southern barbarians'. Since opening up the region as an important port of entry for foreign trade in the early part of the twentieth century, Guangdong has flourished rapidly, attracting foreign businesses and Christian missions. The region has thus been highly influenced by Western culture. Today, Guangdong is the most populous province in China, with its capital city Guangzhou and its special economic zone Shenzhen becoming an important economic hub. Both the people of Guangdong and the dialect spoken in the province are referred to as Cantonese, Canton being the romanised name of the city of Guangzhou. Hong Kong and Macau, two islands on the southern coast of Guangdong province, were ceded to the British and Portuguese in the late nineteenth century. Both places were then under British and Portuguese rule until their return to the People's Republic of China in 1997 for Hong Kong and 1999 for Macau. Mass migration of Cantonese from the Guangdong region, Hong Kong and Macau to other parts of Southeast Asia, America and Europe in the nineteenth century has led to the spread of Cantonese culture.

The term *Guangdong yinyue* (lit. Guangdong music) may refer broadly to music that developed in or originated from this region, but it is also a type of silk and bamboo (*sizhu*) ensemble music of the region.

Hong Kong's proximity to Guangzhou has had some impact on Guangdong music as the then British colony has a vibrant recording and movie industry, night clubs and live entertainment venues. Since the 1920s, Cantonese music played in Hong Kong has been more experimental, with the addition and adaptation of Western instruments such as the violin, cello, Hawaiian slide guitar, banjo, xylophone, and so on. Musicians and composers active in Hong Kong were also performing in Guangzhou, Macau and other cities. Recordings and the commercialisation of this music have made it a modern urban genre.

Instrumentation

Like the *Jiangnan* silk and bamboo ensemble, the instruments used in *Guangdong yinyue* largely comprise of bowed and plucked lutes and wind instruments. Some instruments found in *Jiangnan* silk and bamboo ensemble are also used in Cantonese music. These include the *sanxian* three-stringed fretless lute, *yangqin* hammered dulcimer, *dongxiao* end-blown flute and the *pipa* four-stringed lute. But several other instruments not heard in *Jiangnan* silk and bamboo ensemble make it uniquely Cantonese. These include *gaohu*, *yehu* and *qinqin* fretted plucked lute. At times, other instruments such as the long boxed zither *guzheng* may be added to the ensemble. Traditionally, Cantonese ensembles do not often use percussion instruments, but today, pieces may be arranged for larger orchestras in which percussion and other instruments may be added.

Candidates should be able to identify and briefly describe the following instruments:

Gaohu

The *gaohu* (lit. high fiddle) belongs to the family of two-stringed bowed lutes. It is about 78 cm in height. Developed from the *erhu* in the 1920s by a Cantonese musician and composer, it has a slightly smaller soundbox than the *erhu*'s and the strings are tuned a fourth or fifth higher. It is held with the resonator between the player's knees. It is the lead instrument in the Cantonese ensemble.

YouTube example: www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZCGHmPuUsw&list=RDyZCGHmPuUsw#t=4

Guzheng

The *zheng*, known today as *guzheng* (gu meaning ancient), is a Chinese zither with more than 2500 years of history. It has 16–21 strings and is 160 cm long. It has a high arching soundboard and large wooden, moveable tuning pegs mounted diagonally on the soundboard itself. The strings are tuned to a pentatonic scale without half steps over a three-octave range. Today, the instrument is played resting on a stand. It is plucked with finger picks made of plastic, ivory or tortoise shells and taped to the first three fingers in the right hand. The left hand presses the strings to the left of its bridge as it is plucked.

YouTube example: www.youtube.com/watch?v=jg3lftj3V2k

Example of ensemble: www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmTI3s90All

The following instruments are commonly used in a *Guangdong yinyue* ensemble, but candidates will not be expected to identify or describe them:

Yehu

The *yehu* (coconut-shelled bowed lute) has a resonator made from coconut shell with its front end covered with a piece of coconut wood instead of the snakeskin commonly used in other two-stringed lutes. Like the other types of two-stringed lutes, the bow passes in between the two strings, and a small seashell serves as a bridge. It is a supporting instrument in the ensemble. It has a medium pitch and a distinctly mellow timbre.

YouTube example: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2xcnIFbgao

Qinqin

The *qinqin* is a fretted three-stringed lute with a fretted neck. It has a scalloped resonator covered with a wooden soundboard. It is held in a horizontal (or diagonal) position, the soundbox resting on the player's lap. It is plucked with fingernails or a small plectrum.

Performance contexts

In the early twentieth century, *Guangdong* music, like the *Jiangnan sizhu*, was also played in tea-houses by amateur musicians. However, it soon developed into a form of pure entertainment music by semi- or professional music bands. This music came to be played on radio, in dancehalls and on television. The music is also used in films and recorded commercially, particularly in Hong Kong.

Today, amateur music clubs still exist in cities and rural areas, but it is not always easy to locate such groups. In places such as Hong Kong, Singapore and the United States, Cantonese music is often played by modern, larger Chinese orchestras (e.g. The New York Chinese National Ensemble www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEFSX0vumGk)

3 Overall musical features of Chinese music

- A Scale/mode
- B Texture
- C Metre, rhythm and tempo
- D Melodic labels

A Scale/mode

The Chinese scale system is heptatonic, having seven degrees in an octave. Although it is a heptatonic system, the basic scale of the majority of the melodies is pentatonic, consisting of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th degrees of the scale. The 4th and 7th degrees are commonly used as leading or passing tones, which are essential for filling in the gaps and helping to elaborate the melody, particularly when the music is in a slow metre.

B Texture

Harmony in the Western sense does not traditionally exist in Chinese instrumental music. Rather, each instrument decorates the basic melodic outline in different ways according to the idiom and technique of each instrument, resulting in simultaneous variation of the same melody. This form of musical texture is known as heterophony. The ability to ornament the basic melody spontaneously is an important feature of Chinese music and is a highly regarded skill in the playing of *Jiangnan sizhu* and *Guangdong* music. Thus, for the musicians, the music is never played in the same way each time.

C Metre, rhythm and tempo

Metrical structure in Chinese music is referred to as *banyan* ('beat and eyes'), *ban* (also the name of the clapper percussion instrument) being the strong beat of a measure and *yan* the subsidiary beats. In Chinese music, duple or quadruple metre is common; triple metre is rare. A time signature of 4/4 is known in Chinese as *yi ban san yan* (One *ban* and three 'eyes'); 2/4 is referred to as *yi ban yi yan* (One *ban* and one 'eye').

Sometimes, free tempo sections may introduce a piece or end a piece. In general, Chinese instrumental music tends to progress from slow to mid- to fast and really fast tempo. Slow to mid-tempo sections are often in 4/4; fast sections are in 2/4, and towards the end of a piece when the tempo really accelerates to a very fast tempo, the metre is in 1/4.

D Melodic labels and performance practice – teachers will find this section helpful in understanding more about Chinese music, but candidates will not be tested on this

As mentioned above, the basis of Chinese music is the basic melodic outline. Melodies, both vocal and instrumental, are built from the system of *qupai* or 'labelled melodies'. These are pre-existing melodies which are assigned name titles, hence the word 'label'. One of the most common *qupai* structures is that of a melody having a total of 16 beats in 2/4 metre. This melodic unit then forms the basis on which variations are created. One method of transforming the labelled melody is through the process of metrical expansion, slowing down the metre to 4/4 time. When expanded, the notes in the original labelled melody become further apart temporally, thus allowing more notes to be inserted. This thus results in more densely decorated versions of the original labelled melody (see Figure 1). A labelled melody on which other derivative pieces can result is referred to as the 'mother tune'. In the *Jiangnan sizhu* repertoire, there are pieces which begin with densely ornamented melodies in the expanded 4/4 metre. As the piece progresses and the tempo speeds up, the melody becomes less ornamented until it is stripped back to its core labelled melody outline. An example of this is a piece titled *Huanle Ge* (Happy Tune) (see Jonathan Stock, *World Sound Matters: An Anthology of Music from Around the World*, Transcriptions. Schott Educational Publications,

1996, p.14). At the same time, 'stand-alone' pieces that need not contain the stripped back labelled melody may also result.

74 "SILK AND BAMBOO" MUSIC IN SHANGHAI

a) $\overset{3}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \overset{5}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \overset{2}{\underline{\quad}} \quad | \quad 1$

b) $3 - | \underline{3-2} \quad \underline{5-3} | \overset{6}{\underline{\quad}} - | \underline{2-5} \quad \underline{5-3} | \overset{1}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \overset{1}{\underline{\quad}} |$

c) $3 - \underline{35} \quad 2 | \underline{3-5} \quad \underline{61} \quad \underline{5524} \quad \underline{3553} | \overset{6}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \underline{5617} \quad \underline{6157} \quad \underline{6561} | \underline{223} \quad \underline{54} \quad \underline{3561} \quad \underline{5235} | \overset{1}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \overset{-1}{\underline{\quad}} |$

a) $\overset{5}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \overset{6}{\underline{\quad}} \quad |$

b) $0 \quad \underline{35} | \underline{23} \quad \underline{27} \quad \underline{6-1} \quad \underline{23} | \underline{5-6} \quad \underline{3-2} | \underline{53} \quad \underline{0-23} |$

c) $\underline{1612} \quad \underline{3253} | \underline{2356} \quad \underline{2215} \quad \underline{6123} \quad \underline{2161} | \overset{5}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \overset{-1}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \underline{3235} \quad \underline{6136} | \overset{5}{\underline{\quad}} \quad \underline{3561} \quad \underline{4532} \quad \underline{6532} |$

Figure 1. Example of the expansion of the labelled melody: a is the 'mother tune'; b is a version in mid-speed, and c is in slow 4/4 metre. (From J Lawrence Witzleben, *Silk and Bamboo Music in Shanghai: The Jiangnan Sizhu Instrumental Ensemble Tradition*. The Kent State University Press, 1995, p.74)

4 Notation and transmission

Different types of notation system are used in China for different genres and instruments. Some solo instruments use the tablature notation system. Traditionally, a more common notation system for instrumental music is one that uses Chinese characters to denote the seven degrees of the scale. However, this form of notation is now less commonly used. Since the early twentieth century, cipher notation (borrowed from the French Chev  Galin system), whereby numbers 1 to 7 are used to represent the degrees of the heptatonic scale, is the most prevalent form of music notation. With the introduction of the Western music conservatoires since the mid-1950s, the Western staff notation is now also commonly used.

Although different forms of notation systems exist, oral/aural transmission was also an important part of music learning and was usually passed on within the family or a hereditary lineage. However, with the introduction of music conservatoires, music learning has become more institutionalised with formal teaching resulting in the playing from notated scores, standardised and virtuosic performance.

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