AQA AS/A Music: Unit 1 Section B

Unit 1 (Appraising) is worth 40% of your A Level or AS Level marks. It consists of three sections: A, B and C. Sections A and B are based on the study of the 'Western Classical Tradition 1650–1910'.

For Section B, AS Level students study set works based on the Baroque solo concerto OR Mozart's operas. A Level students study TWO of: the Baroque solo concerto; Mozart's operas; Romantic piano music.

If you choose to opt for the solo Baroque concerto for Section B, you will need to have analysed and studied the following set works:

- Purcell – Sonata for Trumpet and Strings Z850
- Vivaldi – Flute Concerto in D '*Il Gardellino*' Op. 10 No. 3 RV428 **(AS students study only the first movement; A Level students study the whole concerto)**
- Bach – Violin Concerto in A Minor BWV 1041 **(AS students study only the first movement; A Level students study the whole concerto)**

How you will be examined

You will be given an extract from one of the above-named set works.

The total marks for this section will be 17.

The Specimen Question Paper shows that 7 marks will be awarded to short questions – usually allotted 1 or 2 marks each at AS Level but with a 5-mark question at A Level.

Remember!
Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

These questions will ask you to identify features in the score including:

- staff notation
- intervals
- ornaments
- non-harmony notes (passing notes, auxiliary notes, notes of anticipation, suspensions)
- chords (including inversions, the dominant 7^{th}, the diminished 7^{th} and other chromatic chords)
- cadences
- keys and modulations
- structure
- texture
- articulation marks (*staccato/legato*, etc.)
- techniques such as: sequences, melodic inversion; *tierce de Picardie*; circle of 5^{th}s; pedals; cadential 6/4; instrumental techniques (such as *pizzicato*, *arco*, double-stopping, etc.); syncopation, etc.

The A Level 5-mark question will probably ask you to focus on the use of one of the musical elements in the movement under question.

A longer question (allotted 10 marks) will ask how a number of musical elements (such as melody, harmony, tonality, structure, timbre, texture, rhythm) are used by one of the composers, relating the extract to the broader context or effectiveness of the set work.

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How to use this resource

Firstly, we would advise you to hone your music theory skills such as identifying intervals, keys, chords and non-harmony notes. Also ensure you are fluent in reading treble, bass and viola clefs.

The notes on each set work follow the same format:

A brief **introduction** to the set work and its composer.

Analysis of each set work, movement by movement, and section by section. We recommend that you have **two copies** of the set work for your study: one to annotate with information from the analysis, and the other to keep blank and use as an aid for answering practice questions and revision.

Then follow **practice questions** on each of the set work movements. **Answers** are provided so you can check your own work.

The AQA examinations **do not require you to be able to analyse the thematic content** of the music itself, i.e. to be able to identify from where themes are derived and how they function within the passage or movement as a whole. You will need to be able to answer two types of questions: 1. **Identifying techniques and keys and chords** used by the composer; and 2. To comment on **how elements of musical style are used within a given passage,** often relating that passage to the movement as a whole, and comparing the use of elements between the three set works.

In the analyses that follow, mention is made section by section of features that might be asked in the first type of question. The **glossary** at the end of the pack summarises most of these and refers you to musical examples. The second type of question requires you to **apply your knowledge** – and several tasks are given (**Your turn now...**) throughout the pack to consolidate these skills. It is a good idea if you keep a **table** similar to that on p. 17 of this pack, to note for each movement relevant points concerning: **melody; tonality; harmony; structure; rhythm, tempo and metre; texture; sonority.** There is a summary of these points in the A3 **comparison chart** found at the end of the pack; this chart can also be used to pick out the differences/similarities between the set works.

Before starting the course, it would be a good idea to look at the '**How to tackle questions and revision guidelines**' sheets at the end of this pack.

! Important note: in this pack '**b. 31.2**' means 'the second beat of bar 31'; '**bb.**' is the abbreviation for 'bars'. In musical examples **Purcell, II: 19–20.1** means '**Purcell, second movement, bars 19 to first beat of bar 20**'; musical examples have often been altered from the original to clarify a point in the text.

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Introduction to the Baroque Concerto

The Solo Baroque Concerto: Overview

The Baroque
The word 'baroque' is used to indicate that something is eccentric or oddly shaped. It is used to describe not only music of this period but also painting, sculpture and architecture. Why not find an illustration of a Baroque building, painting or sculpture, bring it into class, and discuss what your example has in common with the examples your fellow students have brought in? Then listen to a piece of Baroque music and try to work out the possible connections between Baroque art and music.

The **Baroque** is the name we give to the style of music written in Europe between roughly 1600 and 1750.

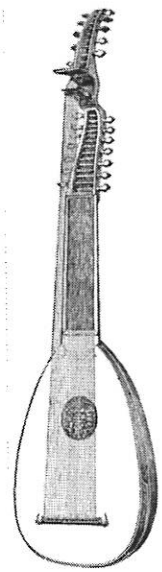
As you would expect of music that spans a 150-year period, the Baroque covers music of a great range and variety – from short instrumental pieces, such as Bach's C major prelude from his *Well-Tempered Clavier*, to long and complex pieces for chorus and orchestra, for example the same composer's *St Matthew Passion*. However, all the music of this period uses a similar language; most notably, with the exception of music written for solo instruments, it always employs a ***basso continuo*** part. The bass accompaniment providing the chords for the composition allowed composers to write their melodic parts with freedom and independence.

Basso continuo part (often shortened to *continuo*)
This was an instrumental accompaniment played from a bass line *either* by a melodic bass instrument or instruments, *or* by an instrument or instruments capable of playing chords (such as a keyboard instrument, or a larger type of lute) *or*, most commonly, by a combination of the two types of instruments, i.e. melodic and chord-playing. Sometimes numbers were placed under the bass line to help players work out the chords required (this is often called a **figured bass**).

In turn, this led to the establishment of our modern system of **major and minor keys (diatonic tonality)**, with their **triads** on each degree of the scale, along with the ability to **modulate** (change key). In reality, these trends were already manifest in music of the second half of the sixteenth century and earlier – but the use of *continuo*, with its improvised chords above the bass, helped accelerate the process.

The ability to work with major and minor keys gave composers a new way of structuring music. In the sixteenth century most instrumental music written for ensembles was either based on vocal musical forms, or else consisted of short, contrasting blocks of sound – each section differing in tempo and texture. The use of diatonic tonality meant that composers could plan movements by starting in the **tonic** (home key), modulating to various **related keys**, before returning to the **tonic again**; this resulted in the ability to create much longer movements than before.

Another great musical invention of the Baroque period was the **orchestra**. Initially associated with opera (another Baroque brainwave!), composers soon began to see that it could provide a new method of expression. The Baroque **concerto** was one of the ways composers exploited this new medium. Rapidly the orchestra became standardised in the Baroque period: **strings** (1st and 2nd violins, violas) and ***continuo*** with the addition of all kinds of other instruments (woodwind, brass, plucked strings, keyboards) as required, but the **four-part string** section became the norm, as it is today.



*The **theorbo** or **chittarone** was a long-necked plucked stringed instrument of the lute family which was often used by* continuo *players in the Baroque period.*

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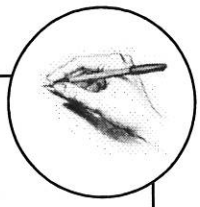
The Baroque concerto, therefore, was an **orchestral** form. By the eighteenth century it had settled into a **three-movement structure**, normally **fast–slow–fast**. The outer movements would be in **ritornello form**. The middle movement would normally be in a **simpler structure** – such as binary form (music that has two repeated halves). There were many variants to this standard pattern.

Ritornello form contrasts sections called the **ritornello** (the Italian word is related to our word 'return') – where the string orchestra plays, starting and finishing in the tonic but coming back at other times in the movement in various related keys – with sections called **episodes** which allow the soloist or soloists to either develop the ritornello material played by the strings or to introduce new material of its own. The episodes were accompanied either by the *continuo* or the orchestra, or else the soloist was left to play unaccompanied.

As we study the set works we shall see how three different composers responded to the challenge of writing instrumental music for solo instrument and strings: Purcell, feeling his way in the new style; Vivaldi, who was largely responsible for establishing the standard format of the concerto; and Bach, who took Vivaldi's model and transformed it through his own musical language.



Your turn now...

1. Name two important features found in practically all Baroque music.
2. Name four different instruments that might have been used to play a *basso continuo* part. (You might have to research this.)
3. What is the minimum number of parts a Baroque orchestra would normally have?
4. How many movements does a Baroque concerto normally have?
5. What do we call the sections which mainly focus on the soloist in ritornello form?

Answers at the end of the pack.

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The Origins of the Baroque Concerto

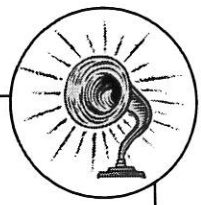
The examination does not require you to write an essay on the history of the Baroque concerto – so these notes are solely for **background** – but without some understanding of the origins of the concerto you will find it difficult to evaluate how successful the set work composers were in engaging with the form.

The term 'concerto' has two distinct meanings in Italian: 1. **playing together**; 2. **competing**. The second meaning is the one we most associate with the later concerto (listen to the opening of Grieg's famous piano concerto composed in 1868 to see how pianist and orchestra struggle for supremacy). In the Baroque period it was normally the first meaning that held sway; this doesn't mean the soloist necessarily blends in with the orchestra, but that the solo contributions fit within an overall ethos where both soloist and orchestra work together.

The other word 'concerto' is related to is, of course, 'concert'. This was a new concept. Around 1600, if you wanted to hear (as opposed to dance to) instrumental music you would either have to attend a church service or a theatrical performance (such as a play with musical interludes – or an opera). Musicians might come together and play in smaller venues ('chamber' music), but usually this was in private and there was little or no 'audience' as we use the word today. The idea of a **public concert** was very much connected with the development of the orchestra: music loud enough for people to hear in a larger hall and therefore necessarily in a simpler idiom that would both appeal to a wider public and be able to be performed by a larger number of players.

The immediate predecessor to the Baroque concerto is the **trumpet sonata** of **Bologna**, a city in North Italy. These were works for solo trumpet and strings, written for performance in the churches of the city, or else for public concerts given by the *Accademie* (institutions that fostered and promoted various arts and sciences, including music, and which would give regular concerts). North Italy was also the centre at this time for violin-making and playing, and the rise of a whole generation of talented string players led composers such as **Torelli** to write the first concertos for solo string instruments and orchestra. Purcell's Sonata Z850 is thus not far removed from the style of its Bolognese cousins.

A different tradition of concerto writing was established in **Rome** by **Corelli**. His *concerti grossi* Op. 6 are basically church sonatas of the time (works for two violins and *continuo*) scored for string orchestra, with textural contrasts highlighted between two groups of instruments: the ***concertino*** (the two violins and *continuo*) and the ***ripieno*** (the full orchestra). The musical material used by the *concertino* and *ripieno* was not usually differentiated. Corelli's music was very popular in **England**, and later **Handel** (who, although German, came to work in England) wrote his own set of concertos in the Corelli style. These types of concerto (with the orchestra divided into *concertino* and *ripieno* groups) are often described in books as examples of the ***concerto grosso***, even though the distinction between the *concerto grosso* and the solo concerto was not as clear-cut in the Baroque period as some writers make out. Your examination does not require you to know about the *concerto grosso*, but it makes good sense to listen to a Corelli concerto, so you can hear how differently Vivaldi approached the form.



Listen Up!

Go to the link and download some enjoyable examples of the Bolognese trumpet sonata from the album *La scuola strumentale della cappella di san Petronio in Bologna* performed by trumpeter Sandro Verzari with the Ensemble Seicentonovecento (Bongiovanni label):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lRCoOJ-3bc

Go to **zzed.uk/6763**

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Listen Up!

Follow the link to download a performance of Corelli's famous 'Christmas Concerto' from his Op. 6 publication. Try to follow the music as it moves from passages for the *concertino* to passages for the *ripieno*.

https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B00E69ZSTO/ref=dm_ws_sp_ps_dp

Find a video on YouTube where you can see a performance of the concerto and watch it closely while trying to answer the following questions:

1. In the performance you are looking at, name the instruments playing the *continuo* part.
2. How many players, apart from the *continuo*, are playing the *ripieno* part?
3. Listening to the whole *concerto grosso*, can you think of another way it is different from a typical Baroque solo concerto? A good example of a solo concerto would be an oboe concerto by Marcello (a Venetian contemporary of Vivaldi), such as the one that can be found here: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYnU-CaH0bM*

Discuss your answers with students in your class.

Go to **zzed.uk/6763**

Suggested answers at the end of the pack.

The Main Points to Learn

- The Baroque style lasted from about 1600 to 1750
- The solo concerto was normally in three movements: fast–slow–fast
- It was written for a solo instrument(s) and orchestra
- The Baroque orchestra had at its core strings and *continuo*
- *Continuo* was a bass accompaniment part normally played by a bass instrument and by a chord-playing instrument
- The outer movements of the solo concerto were usually in ritornello form

***Corelli** (1653–1713) was the inventor of the* concerto grosso. *His music was hugely influential, especially in England.*

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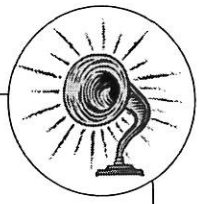
Purcell Sonata for Trumpet and Strings Z850

Purcell's Career

Henry Purcell was born in **1659** and was the greatest English composer of his generation. From an early age he was absorbed by music: first, as choirboy in the Chapel Royal (the King's personal chapel – where Purcell's father and uncle also worked), and then, after a number of other appointments, as organist in Westminster Abbey. It is from around this time that Purcell began to compose music for the King and his family (he held the prestigious title of 'composer-in-ordinary for the King's violins' from 1677), as well as writing music for the theatre. In 1682 he became an organist at the Chapel Royal and this was followed by further court appointments. He died in **1695** and is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Purcell was particularly influenced by the new Italian Baroque style, but his music also looks back to a more conservative English tradition.



Listen Up!

Explore some of Purcell's other music...

The music Purcell wrote for the funeral of Queen Mary (1695) contains two famous pieces written for brass ensemble: the March and the Canzona.

Listen to the two brass pieces and complete the following sentence:

'The March is mainly in a _____ texture and the Canzona is in a _____ texture.'

You can download the music from the same Purcell album as before:
https://www.amazon.co.uk/Purcell-Essentials-Various-artists/dp/B00AJG79WM/ref=sr_1_1?s=dmusic&ie=UTF8&qid=1451749652&sr=1-1-mp3-albums-bar-strip-0&keywords=purcell+essentials

Answers at the end of the pack.

Go to **zzed.uk/6763**

The Sonata Z850

Perhaps dating from 1694, very little is known about the origins of this piece which is found in a manuscript in York Minster Library. In all probability the piece was originally written for the London theatre, where a fine tradition of trumpet playing had developed.

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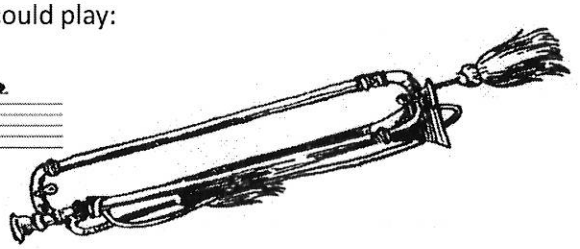
Overall Structure and Scoring

Purcell's piece, which like many concerto-like pieces written before 1700 was given the title 'sonata', **looks forward** to the style that would become associated with the solo concerto (such as the Vivaldi and Bach concertos which we shall study later on) where soloist and strings are pitted against one other; but also, at the same time, **looks back** to an older type of instrumental music, which emphasised equality between members of the ensemble, i.e. where the soloist is much more of an equal partner in the music with the other players.

The music is in **three movements** – only the middle movement has a tempo marking – '***Adagio***' (slow): but, no doubt, the outer movements were played at a faster tempo with the result that the whole piece looks forward to the **fast–slow–fast** plan popularised by Vivaldi's concertos.

The sonata was written with the trumpet very definitely taking on the role of a **solo instrument.** Instruments of the time were normally tuned **in D**; there were no valves on the Baroque (natural) trumpet (cf. illustration) and therefore the player had to produce different pitches by **over-blowing**. Purcell uses only the following eight notes in his piece because these were the ones that his trumpeter could play:



Ex. 1 Trumpet notes required by Purcell's Sonata

The limitations of using only these **eight notes** has important consequences for both the harmonic and melodic style of the music. Harmonically, Purcell is stuck with the notes of **D major**. In the second movement, for instance, which starts in B minor and moves **chromatically** to D major, Purcell only employs the strings because the trumpet can not play, for example, the A♯ that is required in the key of B minor.

In fact, the last three notes are naturally a little out of tune on the Baroque trumpet, and so the player has to 'lip' them to produce the correct pitch. The top G is naturally a bit sharp and so the player would need to flatten it to produce the G♮ which occur throughout the trumpet part. However, in bars 16–18 of the first movement Purcell gets the trumpet player to sharpen the note to take it to **G♯** – and this allows the trumpet to join in the **modulation to the dominant**, A major.

Melodically, the trumpet part mainly moves **conjunctly** around its top six notes which are the first six of the D major scale. At other times Purcell uses a '**fanfare**' type musical figure where the trumpet darts around between notes of the D major arpeggio (you can see this in the trumpet's opening entry – cf. ex. 2 below). The **string parts** share the melodic style of the trumpet, so all the instruments can work together with the same material.

It is possible, especially if it was originally written for the theatre, that the sonata would have been played by an **orchestra** with more than one violin and viola to each part. In fact, we know that up to 24 stringed instruments were used in Purcell's time.

The ***continuo*** part was probably played by a bass viol or bass violin, with the addition of a theorbo, harpsichord or organ, or combination of these instruments. The organ might seem a surprising choice for music that wasn't performed in church, but in fact small chamber organs were used in both taverns and stately homes of the time. The bass violin was a predecessor of the cello; it was larger and slightly lower than the Baroque cello, which did not become popular in England until about 1700. An alternative instrument was the bass viol, which was held like the cello but had six strings and frets. There is no evidence the double bass was used for Purcell's music.

The title 'sonata' here probably means no more than 'a piece of instrumental music'.

The bass viol was used in England for continuo *parts before the cello became popular in about 1700. Notice the six strings and the shape of the Baroque bow.*

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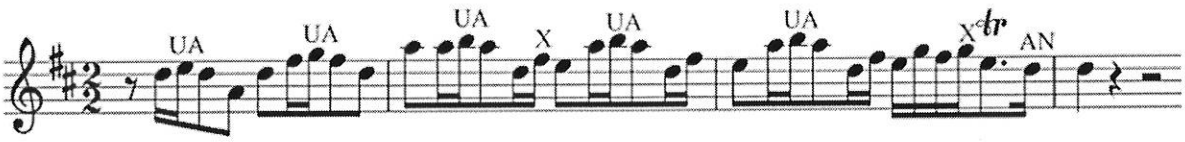
Analysis: First Movement

The first movement is made up of **three ideas** which proceed one after the other: bb. 1–11.1; bb. 11.2–19.1; bb. 19.1–end:



Ex. 2 Purcell, I: 1–4.1 (first idea)
UA = upper auxiliary notes; AN = anticipation; X = unprepared non-harmony note that resolves on the next note

Ex. 3 Purcell, I: 11 (second idea)

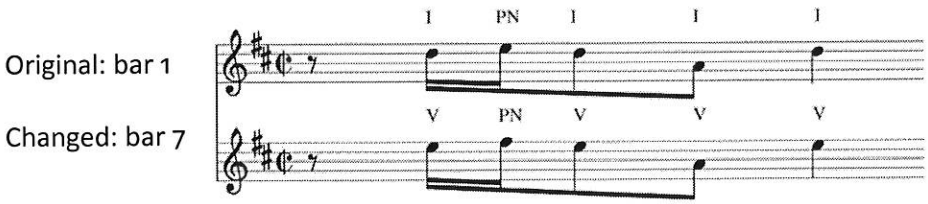
Ex. 4 Purcell, I: 19–20.1 (third idea: first quaver beat removed and replaced by rest)

Apart from perhaps the first idea with its fanfare-like call, none of the melodies are particularly striking; Purcell was writing in a fairly neutral, '**generic**' way for instruments – there is no difference between his violin and trumpet parts, for instance. Let us examine how he treats each idea in turn.

First idea bb. 1–11.1

This starts with just trumpet and *continuo* and ends with a **perfect cadence** in bb. 3.4–4.1. At this point the strings take over the theme – the 1st violins use exactly the **same rhythm** as the trumpet had employed with its catchy **anacrusis** (upbeat) but the pitches are altered so that the theme can move into the **dominant**, A major, leading to a perfect cadence in that key in bb. 6.4–7.1. The lower strings initially play the same rhythm (**homorhythm**) as the top violin part, but later (from b. 5) just support the chord changes. Note the three-bar length of the **phrasing** in this section.

The trumpet then re-enters in b. 7 with a **fragmentation** of the theme – just the first five notes of the opening bent into a shape that now outlines dominant harmony:



Ex. 5 Purcell, I, trumpet part, upper line b. 1, lower line b. 7, showing same melodic shape but use of notes of chord I (b. 1) and V (b. 7) – PN = passing note. (last note of b. 1 altered)

This is immediately **echoed** by the strings, and the **motif** is tossed to and fro until the strings and trumpet come together in a **perfect cadence** back in D (bb. 10.4–11.1) This type of **texture** is called **antiphony** and was very popular in music at the end of the sixteenth and start of the seventeenth century.

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Second idea bb. 11.2–14.1

After a brief rest in all the parts, the trumpet introduces the second idea: a **descending** set of **even quavers**. It is a short idea and is passed **antiphonally** from trumpet to strings, but this time using **imitation** (as the statement of the idea **overlaps** in each part, i.e. the violins start on the last note of the trumpet part and vice versa). The trumpet and strings each take the idea twice; it is harmonised in B minor (the **relative minor**), with a perfect cadence in that key in bb. 13.4–14.1.

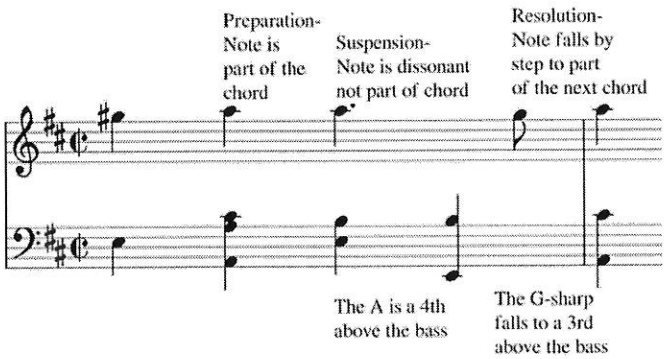
The trumpet now introduces a little figure of three notes; this could be a **fragmentation** of the b. 11 phrase – its last three notes – with semiquavers rather than quavers (**rhythmic diminution**). This is used antiphonally again in bb. 14–15, followed by a cadence into **A major**, emphasised both by the trumpet **lipping a G♯** (as we noted above, p. 11), and holding on a **long inverted pedal on A**. Under this pedal Purcell twists the string harmonies to a minor (the **dominant minor**) in b. 17 (see the C♮ in 1st violins), before returning to A major in b. 19.

A **pedal** is a long held note in the lowest part, usually the dominant or tonic note during this period. If the pedal appears in the top part it is described as an **inverted pedal**, and if it appears in the middle of the texture, an **inner pedal**. The pedal might consist of repeated notes rather than one long held one. Pedals are both a harmonic and textural device. They are easy to spot and likely to come up in your exam!

Third idea bb. 19–29

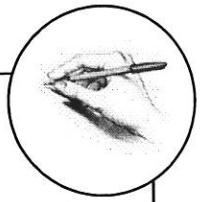
The last section starts back with the A major chord in b. 19 acting as a pivot (chord I in A and V in D) to take us back to the tonic, D major. It has a scurrying semiquaver theme in the 1st violins, sequenced **antiphonally** by the trumpet in b. 20, followed by a **fragment** of the theme (slightly altered) in the 1st violins and *continuo* together (working in **10ths**) in b. 21 and tossed between strings and trumpet in a set of **rising sequences** until the trumpet dissolves the motif into **three rising semiquavers and a crotchet** (b. 24), also bounced around antiphonally. Finally, the trumpet, now joined by 1st violins in **unison**, sedately leads the music back to its final cadence in the **tonic**.

First movement: Harmony and tonality



Ex. 6 A 4–3 suspension in the treble part from bb. 16–17.1. The actual suspension is the second A – unlike some suspensions it is sounded again and not tied to the previous note. The resolution is the G♯ quaver.

Most of the harmonic writing is **consonant**, mainly using **tonic and dominant** harmonies, giving the piece a bright, ceremonial quality. We have marked some of the **dissonances** found in the first theme in ex. 2 above. There are a number of **suspensions** (cf. ex. 6), all appearing at cadences; the one given is in the trumpet and 1st violin parts at b. 16.



Your turn now...

How many other suspensions can you find in the movement (excluding the *continuo* part)?
HINT: look for repeated or held notes from a weak to a strong beat (i.e. from beat 4 to 1, or from beat 2 to 3) that then fall by step.

Answers at the end of the pack.

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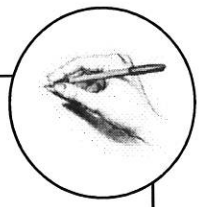
Purcell mainly moves to closely related keys by means of **pivot chords** (a chord that appears in both the old and the new key). The exception is the **modal change** (this basically means keeping the same key note and basic notes of the scale, i.e. ABCDEFGA, but altering which ones are flattened and sharpened) from A major into A minor in b. 17.

There is a nice trick Purcell plays in this passage with a ***tierce de Picardie.*** After being in the key of a minor for bb.16–18, the last chord of b. 18 is chord V in that key; as listeners we expect it to form part of a perfect cadence in A minor, but Purcell sharpens the 3rd of chord I so the result is a perfect cadence into A major. Remember that chord V is the same in both major and minor versions of the key. This A major chord, of course, is also V in D major (a pivot chord) – so a handy way for Purcell to bring us back to the tonic!



Your turn now...

1. What is the name of the textural technique used in bb. 14–15.3?
2. Name the key and chord at b. 18.1.
3. Devise a mind map of the textures used in this movement.
4. Discuss how the music of the first movement might have been suitable for performance at the start of a play.
5. Label the suspension and its preparation and resolution in b. 13.

Answers at the end of the pack.

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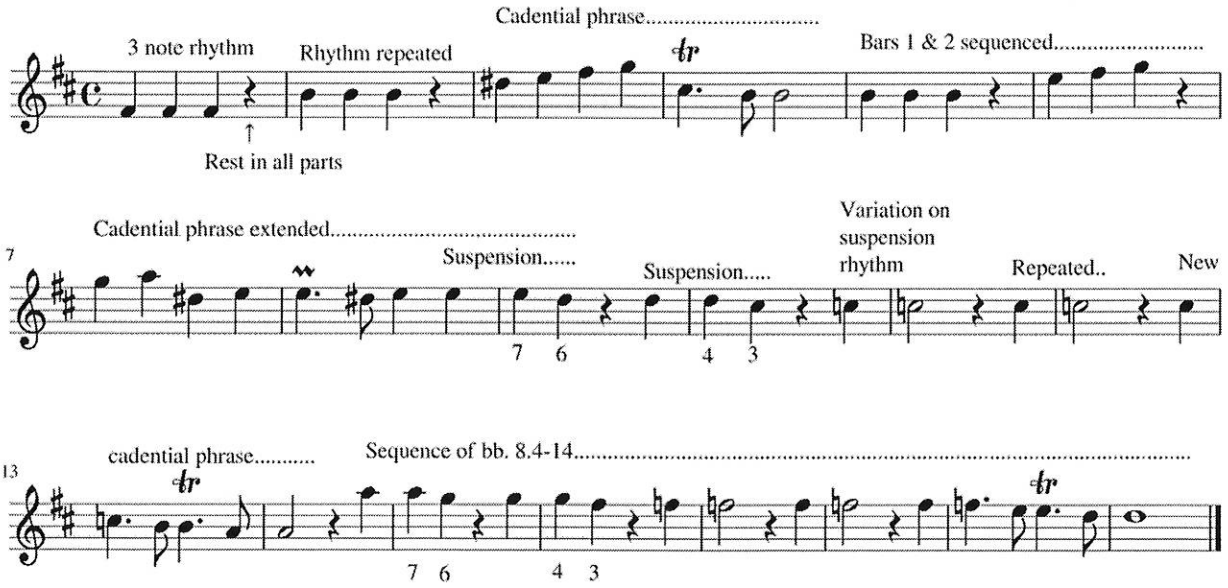
Analysis: Second Movement

This 20-bar passage is for strings only (cf. above, p. 11). It barely has a melody part worth noticing and the lower parts always move in a **homorhythmic and homophonic** texture. The whole passage grows **organically** from the first five-bar phrase.

The opening passage (bb. 1–4) consists of two bars of three crotchet beats each followed by a **rest**, completed with a **cadential phrase** and a **4–3 suspension**. This is loosely **sequenced** in bb. 5–9 with an extra bar thrown in, showing again Purcell's predilection for **irregular phrase lengths**. There is a **7–6 suspension** at the top of the cadence at the end of this phrase (bb. 8.4–9) which, in turn, is detached from the rest of the phrase and **sequenced** down a note in bb. 9.4–10. This is followed by a new version of the suspension rhythm: crotchet–minim–crotchet rest – and a new cadential phrase (bb. 11.4–13.2.0); bars 9.4–14 are sequenced up a 5th in bars 14.4 to the end, with the final cadence appearing in D major.



Ex. 7 Purcell, II: 1st violin part (complete)

What makes the music effective is Purcell's use of chords, and particularly his **chromatic** writing as well as the use of **suspensions**, some of them noted in ex. 7.

> A **7–6 suspension** means that when the suspended note becomes dissonant on the strong beat it is **seven** notes (a 7th) above the bass. On the next beat, as it falls by step it obviously becomes **six** notes (a 6th) above the bass, which is, of course, a consonance. Cf. ex. 6 on p. 13.

Several things are worth making a note of:

1. Purcell uses lots of chromatic changes from **major to minor** (b. 10.2–4 from A major to A minor; and b. 16.2–16.4 from D major to D minor) **and vice versa** (bb. 2.3–3.1 from B minor to B major; and bb. 6.3–7.1 from E minor to E major). There is also a use of a ***tierce de Picardie*** in b. 8.3 (we are in E minor but the V goes to I in E major).
2. The use of **augmented chords** in b. 13 and 19 add a real piquancy to his writing.
3. The use of unusual chords and chord progressions – **less reliance on functional harmony** (use of the primary triads) than is found in later music.
4. The use of **7th chords** on the first beat of bb. 11 and 17.

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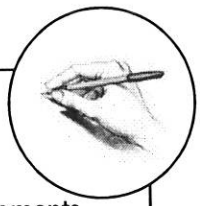

Your turn now...

By yourself or with a partner, complete the following table contrasting the first two movements of the Purcell:

	First Movement	Second Movement
Melody		
Tonality		
Harmony		
Structure		
Rhythm, Tempo, Metre		
Texture		
Sonority (Timbre)		

Answers at end of pack.

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Analysis: Third Movement

Overall structure

The final movement returns to the celebratory mood of the first, but there is more of a discernible pattern in the way the movement is organised:

- First idea bb. 1–16.1
- Second idea bb. 16.2–27.1
- Third idea bb. 27.2–33
- First idea in melodic inversion bb. 33–51.1
- Fourth idea bb. 51.2–58
- First idea bb. 59–64
- Second idea bb. 64–80

Roughly this looks like a ***rondeau*** (a popular structure in Purcell's time where a repeated refrain is contrasted with new music between the repeats): A (bb. 1–27) B (bb. 27–33) A'(b. 33–50) C (bb. 50–58) A (bb. 59–80).

First idea bb. 1–16.1

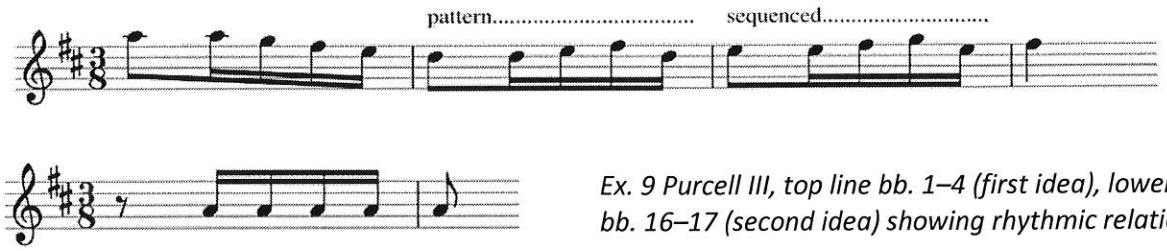
The **triple-time** main theme as outlined in violin I bb. 1–4 is a falling five-note scale, followed by a **rising sequence**:

Ex. 8 Purcell, III: 1–4 (first idea)

The main feature of this passage, however, is its texture – which is **imitative polyphony** throughout, giving it a somewhat old-fashioned sound for its time. The main theme is imitated down an octave in the violas in b. 3, down a 4th in the 2nd violins in b. 5, down two octaves in the *continuo* in b. 8, in the 1st violins (down a 4th) again in b. 10, and finally, at pitch, in the solo trumpet part in b. 13. The instruments focus on **accompanying** when they are not playing the **subject** (main idea) of this passage.

Second idea bb. 16.2–27.1

Seamlessly Purcell introduces the second idea, which is basically a rhythmic idea on a repeated **monotone** (one note):



Ex. 9 Purcell III, top line bb. 1–4 (first idea), lower line bb. 16–17 (second idea) showing rhythmic relationship

The rhythm is related to the first idea – it just misses out the initial quaver. The block **homorhythmic** (all the parts using the same rhythm) string chords are answered by the trumpet **antiphonally** with descending (three-note) **triads**, and finally (starting b. 26) trumpet and 1st violins join together for a **cadential phrase** (a melodic idea that leads towards a prominent cadence – here the final perfect cadence of the piece).

Third idea bb. 27.2–33

This is a section for just trumpet and *continuo* (it feels like an **episode** in a *ritornello* movement – cf. Vivaldi). The trumpet part has a one-bar phrase **sequenced** in the following two (bb. 28–30) followed by a short **cadential phrase** (bb. 31–33).

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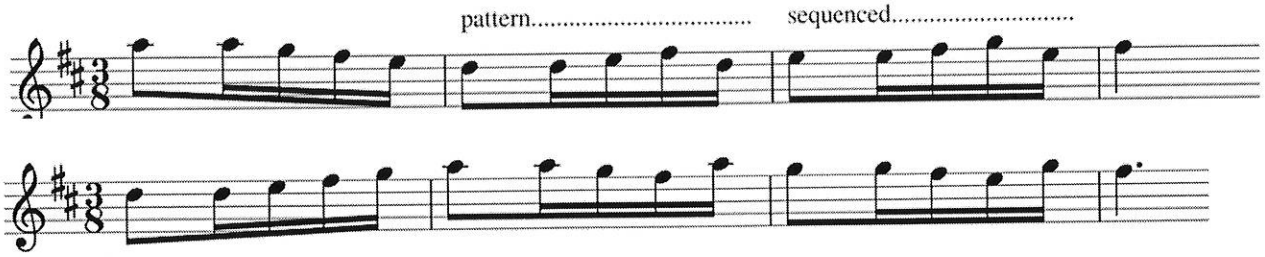
Inversion of the first idea bb. 33–51.1

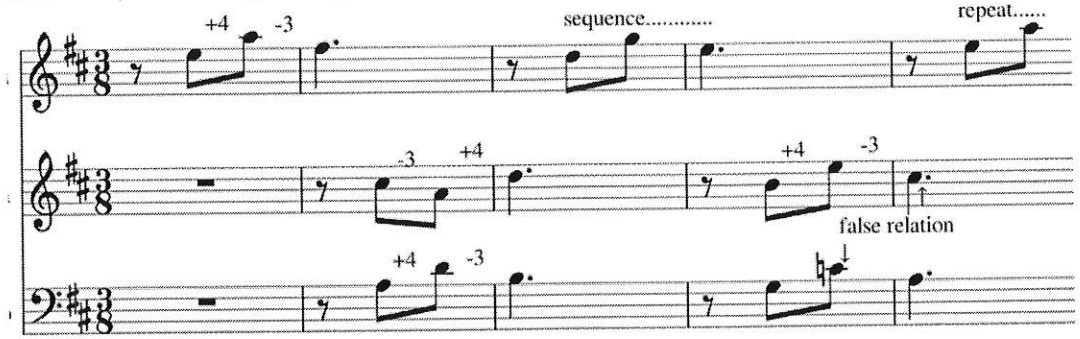
Purcell now reintroduces the opening idea but in **melodic inversion** (i.e. the pitches move in opposite direction to the way they moved originally). This type of change to a contrapuntal subject is another **conservative** feature of Purcell's writing. The subject is heard first in the 1st violins (b. 33), then 2nd violins (down a 4th, b. 34), violas (down an octave, b. 36), *continuo* (down two octaves, b. 41) and, finally, at pitch, trumpet in b. 47. There is also a **redundant entry** (one that starts but doesn't finish) in the 1st violins in b. 46 in B minor – the **first modulation** in the whole movement. The section ends with 1st violins and trumpet in **3rds**, (b. 49) ending on an **imperfect cadence** in bb. 50–51. Notice also the **suspensions** in the violin I part on the first beat of b. 39 (7–6 suspension) and b. 42 (4–3 suspension).



Ex. 10 Purcell III, top line: bb. 1–4 (first idea), lower line bb. 33–36 (first idea in melodic inversion)

Fourth idea bb. 51.2–58

Another 'episode' develops using a further simple idea: trumpet and 1st violin in **unison** play a **rising 4th followed by a falling 3rd**. **Antiphonally** this is answered by the *continuo*. The passage is then **sequenced down a note**, and the whole pattern repeated. Purcell has lots of fun playing with **variants** of this little motif – for example, in b. 52 the 2nd violins and violas play a falling 3rd followed by a rising 4th in 3rds, and this same pattern appears in the *continuo* part in bb. 56 and 58.



Ex. 11 bb. 51–55, fourth idea (omitting viola and replacing some notes with rests)

Note the C♮ in the *continuo* part in b. 54. This is a **chromatic** note because it does not belong to the key we are in – D major – and Purcell contradicts it immediately in the next beat with the 2nd violin part which plays the expected C♯. This bitter effect in the music was loved by Purcell and his English contemporaries and is called a **false relation**, i.e. a different accidental version of the same pitch on two adjacent beats in different instruments or parts.

Return of first idea bb. 59–64

The first idea now returns, but **not contrapuntally** (i.e. not in polyphony). Trumpet and 1st violins present the idea in **unison**, the 2nd violins are mainly in **3rds** with the melody, and it is accompanied **homophonically** by the lower strings.

Return of second idea bb. 64.2–80

The strings now reintroduce the repeated monotone chord pattern with one difference: instead of remaining on one note, the final note of each entry moves up to the succeeding note of the D major arpeggio. The trumpet copies this pattern with the result that the trumpet and strings move up and down the **D major arpeggio**. This is followed by the briefest **cadential phrase** in the strings, repeated by the 1st violins and trumpet in unison accompanied by *continuo*, and the piece ends with three bars of the **tonic chord**.

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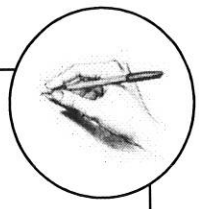

Your turn now...

This task is to be completed **after** you have studied the first movement of the Vivaldi concerto – do not attempt it beforehand! In class, pairs or by yourself, complete the table below. You are to say which features of the Purcell are similar to the Vivaldi (i.e. are forward-looking features of the music) and which features seem to hark back to a more conservative style of composing for instrumental ensemble. It might be a good idea to listen to one of Purcell's *Fantazias* to get an idea of the older English tradition in which he worked – here is a performance on four viols to download:
https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B00B46RCEQ/ref=dm_ws_tlw_trk4

Go to **zzed.uk/6763**

Use the headings in the left-hand column to make notes on the style.

	Forward-looking Elements of Purcell's Style	**Conservative Elements Of Purcell's Style**
Melody		
Tonality		
Harmony		
Structure		
Rhythm, Tempo, Metre		
Texture		
Sonority (Timbre)		

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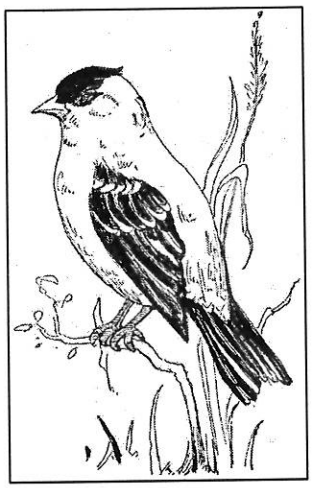
Vivaldi Flute Concerto in D Op. 10 No. 3

Background

The Baroque solo concerto

Vivaldi was the most important composer in the development of the Baroque concerto. Partly this is because he composed so many – **more than 450** – but also because the **popularity** of his works made his style of concerto-writing the **model** from which so many composers based their own compositions in the same and following generations. We shall see how **Bach** transformed Vivaldi's model when we study his violin concerto.

In order to properly understand Vivaldi's contribution to the concerto form, we need to be able to answer two questions: **why** did he compose so many concertos, and **in what ways** did he transform the genre? Finally, after trying to answer these questions in this section, we shall look at the little information that is known about the background to this particular flute concerto and consider why it was called '*Il gardellino*'.



Vivaldi (left) and a goldfinch (right)

Vivaldi was born in **1678**, the son of a well-known violinist in Venice. He studied to become a priest (his nickname was '*il prete rosso*' or 'the red priest' on account of his red hair), but soon it was clear that his future lay in music. From 1703 he was engaged at the Pietà (cf. below) originally as a violin teacher, but probably soon became involved with composing music for that institution. His first concertos (Op. 3) were published in 1711 and his fame began to spread across Europe. Around this time Vivaldi also became heavily involved with running an opera house, as well as composing operas for it and for other opera houses in northern Italy. He travelled and worked away from Venice in the second half of his career: Mantua (1718–1720); Rome (1723–1724); Prague (1730); he died in Vienna in 1741.

It was no accident that Vivaldi's career was established in **Venice**. This was an important city on the 'Grand Tour', which was an educational and recreational trip that young noblemen made across Europe, after which they were expected to return home, marry, produce heirs, settle down and run their estates. They often picked up new and fashionable art works en route which were shipped back home. The music of Venice was also highly exportable, especially opera (the market for Italian opera was insatiable across Europe), and the new style of instrumental music-making which the city had played a prominent part in developing, that is, the **concerto** – music specifically designed for performance in concerts. Lots of courts and larger houses across Europe (and there were hundreds of them in this period) had noblemen who supported their own orchestras, and wanted to hear the most fashionable music of the time played in their own houses.

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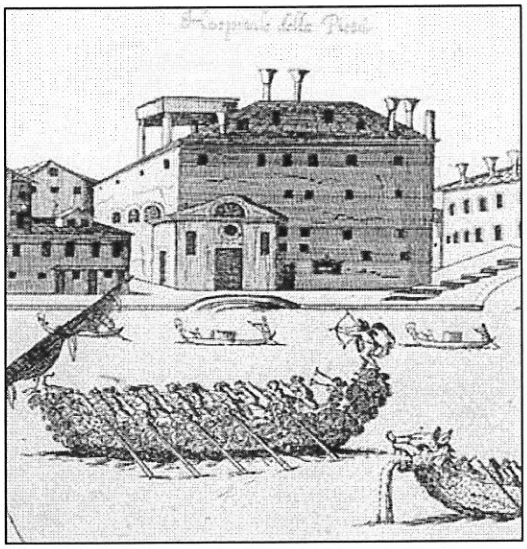
Further, it is important to understand Vivaldi's career at the **Ospedale della Pietà**. There were four *ospedali* in Venice; these were roughly equivalent to our modern orphanages. The idea was that unwanted children (either through poverty or illegitimacy) could be deposited in the *ospedali* and taught a trade. The Pietà was just for **girls**. They were trained to play musical instruments and sing to a very high standard. When they were older they were either married off or remained in the Pietà as teachers; a few became singers on the opera stage. The institution held **regular concerts** to show off the young ladies and the cream of Venetian society would come to listen. It was for La Pietà that Vivaldi wrote most of his concertos.



Ospedale della Pietà

Vivaldi **standardised the concerto**. Most of his concertos share three main characteristics:

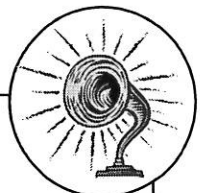
1. A **solo instrument** (324 out of all his concertos) with **string orchestra and *continuo*** – mainly for **solo violin** (214)
2. **Three movements** in a **fast–slow–fast** plan
3. The use of **ritornello form** in the outer movements

Of course, there are many exceptions.

Il Gardellino

The flute concerto in D (RV 428; RV is the abbreviation for the catalogue of Vivaldi's works) appeared in his opus 10 (meaning his tenth publication), published by one of the top music publishers in Amsterdam, Le Céne. It was the earliest publication of a set of concertos (there are six of them) designed for flute. It was published around 1729–1730, and was probably not written much earlier as the Pietà only reappointed its flute teacher in 1728; it was this teacher who was probably the first performer in these concertos. It seems that this concerto, along with two others that have actual names rather than just the title 'concerto', was rearranged by the composer from a chamber concerto (that is, a concerto for a group of instruments) that included the recorder playing what is now the flute part.

Not many Vivaldi concertos have a name, although his most famous, *The Four Seasons*, do. *The Four Seasons* are **programmatic** – that is, they tell a story in the music. Each season's concerto is based on a poem, and Vivaldi printed the words of the poems in front of the music they inspired. He also put letters corresponding to the actual lines of poetry on the score so that performers and listeners would know what each passage specifically represented. In this concerto (*gardellino* is the Venetian dialect form of the Italian word *cardellino*, meaning 'goldfinch'), Vivaldi was less specific. The use of a **flute**, the ***cadenza*** for solo flute which mimics birdsong (e.g. 1: bb. 13ff), the 'tweets' on the violins with **written-out and ornamental trills** (e.g. 1: bb. 28ff, 39ff), the repeated **high-note** chirps of violin I (e.g. 1: b. 32), and the **omission of the bass** for quite a number of passages (e.g. 1: bb. 27ff) give the impression of bird-like music. The second movement might be listened to as a bird's 'song' played on the flute, and the last movement brings back a few of the techniques of the first: tweets, trills and high notes. This type of programme music was especially popular in France and Northern Europe, and no doubt Vivaldi chose this concerto (and the others which had names) to maximise his sales!



Listen Up!

There are lots of performances of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* (*Quattro Stagioni* – like the pizza! – in Italian) – listen to at least a couple of the concertos, following the poems on which they are based. You can easily find the music and texts of the poems online.

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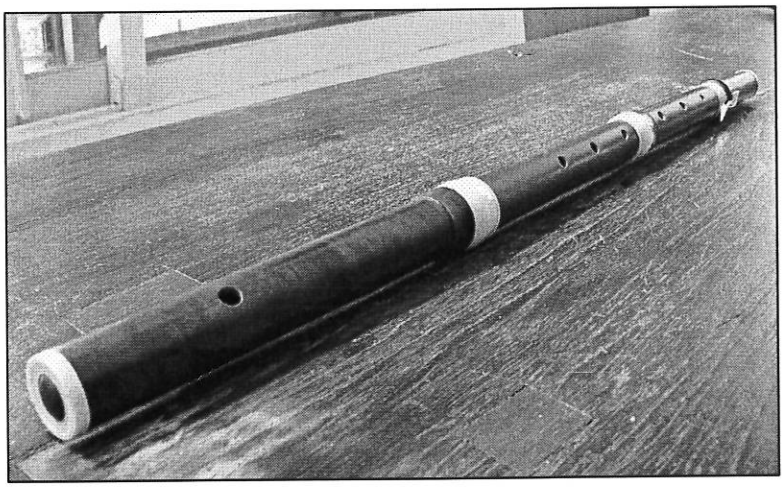
The **instrumentation** of the concerto requires a few comments. The title page says it is written for '***Flauto Traverso***; which means flute; this was quite different from the modern flute – basically a long wooden cylinder with only one key at its foot. It works well in the **key of D** (which Vivaldi uses here) but certain accidentals and trills are more difficult to play. It makes a purer, more 'woody' sound than a modern flute, and is also much quieter which is why Vivaldi takes care to **reduce the scoring** when the solo flute is playing. The orchestra consists of '*Violino Primo e Secondo, Alto Viola*' (according to the title page) which just means **1st and 2nd violins and violas**. These instruments would certainly have been doubled (i.e. played by more than one instrument), but the number playing would depend on the venue, circumstances and wealth of the institution performing them. In the Pietà the orchestra could include up to 60 players. Finally, the ***continuo*** is played by *'Organo e Violoncello'*. Here '*organo*' means **keyboard**, not necessarily organ, and the part was most likely performed on a harpsichord. The cello might have been doubled by a double bass playing the cello part but sounding an octave below. The *continuo* part would have been read from the bass line and the numbers (**figured bass**) would indicate to the keyboard player the chords they needed to play, e.g. '6/4' means a 2nd inversion chord, a terminology we still use today. Notice how there are few figures in the first and last movements – that not only shows how fond Vivaldi was of root-position chords (which normally do not need a figure) but also indicates that even when other chords are needed it was felt by the composer or publisher that they were too obvious to be included in the figures.



A Baroque flute

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Analysis: First Movement

Overall structure

As we have already mentioned, Vivaldi's concertos are nearly always in **three movements.** The first movement is normally a fast **tempo** as here with the marking ***'allegro'*** ('lively').

Vivaldi used a **ritornello form** structure for most of the outer movements of his concertos, including this one. Simply put, this means that the whole orchestra plays the main theme or themes which keeps coming back throughout the movement (the Italian word *'ritornello'* is related to the English word 'returning'), and in between the soloist takes the spotlight in sections which are called **episodes**.

Bars	(Total no. of bars)	Section
1–13.1	13	Ritornello 1
13–20	8	Episode 1
21–26.3	5 1/2	Ritornello 2
26.3–47.2	21	Episode 2
47.3–53.1	5 1/2	Ritornello 3
53–95	43	Episode 3
96–100	5	Ritornello 4

Notice how **short** the ritornellos are after the very first one – each just about five bars. Also, note how the episodes get **longer** from 8 bars (episode 1) to 21 and then 43 bars for the succeeding episodes.

One final thing to notice about the structure is that the ritornellos **overlap** with the start of each episode, i.e. the orchestra's final note is the soloist's first note – this helps the music maintain its continuous flow.

A word about **plurals.** Italian words ending in –o end in –i in the plural; hence *ritornello/ritornelli* and *concerto/concerti.* As these words are used a great deal in English, however, it is now common to use the English plurals: concertos and ritornellos.

!

An Important Note!

The analysis that follows explains how Vivaldi arranges his melodic and thematic material. The examiner will **NOT** expect you to be able to identify where themes were first heard – BUT you will be expected to:

(i) describe **how themes have been altered** within the part of the movement set by the examiners, e.g. have the themes been sequenced, inverted, used in rhythmic diminution?

(ii) (in the 5 (for A Level students) and10-mark questions) be able to **describe** more generally Vivaldi's **melodic techniques** (as well as rhythm, harmony-mark, etc.)

(iii) (in the 10-mark question) be able to talk about the **relationship** between the **melodic material** and **overall structure** of the movement, i.e. **how the episodes and ritornello are related.** In these 10-mark questions examples will help amplify your answer – for AS students, examples should come from **the whole movement,** and for A Level students, **the whole concerto.** Given the short written time you are allotted for these questions, it would be useful to learn the bar numbers of some of the major sections and features of each work; it can also be quicker in some cases to write out an annotated musical example rather than try to describe it fully in writing.

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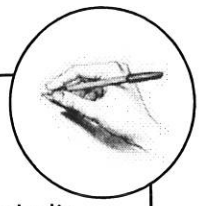

Your turn now...

As you work through the analysis write down, in the table below, features of Vivaldi's melodic style as found in all three of the movements of the concerto; give an example in the right-hand column.

Melodic Techniques	Example(s)
Uses compound rather than simple intervals	In b. 1 there is a maj 9th, not a maj 2nd

Answers at the end of the pack.

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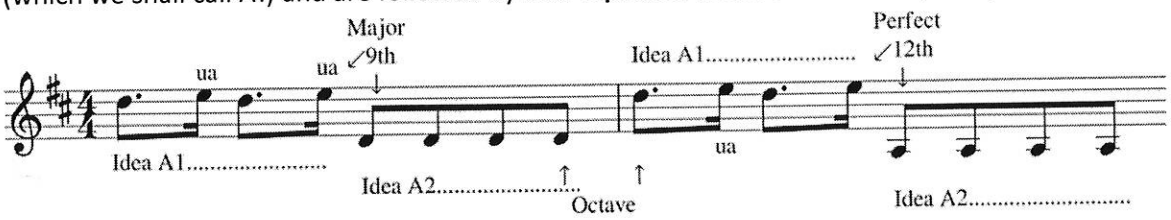
First ritornello (bb. 1–13.1)

The opening ritornello is made up of three distinct musical ideas which we shall label for ease of analysis as A, B and C. In an examination answer you will need to identify these ideas more precisely for the examiner. A simple way of doing this is to write: 'Vivaldi uses *what I shall label "idea A"* which first appears in the string parts bb. 1–4.'

The three musical ideas that Vivaldi uses are **presented one after the other**; this was usual for the opening ritornello. Also typical, especially in works by Vivaldi, is that, apart from the short flute arpeggios (bb. 1–7), the whole of the ritornello is played in **unison**.

Idea A takes us up to b. 8.3. It is basically a one-bar rhythmic and melodic shape consisting of two pairs of dotted quaver–semiquaver followed by two pairs of straight quavers. The **dotted notes** use an **upper auxiliary** pattern (which we shall call A1) and are followed by four **repeated notes** on the same pitch (which we shall call A2).



Ex. 12 Vivaldi, I: 1–2 (Idea A: ua = upper auxiliary note)

Vivaldi could have written bb. 1–2 as follows:

Ex. 13 Vivaldi, Idea A rewritten

... but instead turns the descending 2nd and 5th to **compound intervals** (greater than an octave – in this case a **9th** and a **12th**; the major 9th might be described as an 'angular' interval because it is not easily sung – give it a try!). This was a popular procedure used by the composer in his melody-writing; what could be a rather nondescript tune takes on a new vigour and energy, aided by the **unison texture**, the **dotted rhythm** and the ***forte*** dynamics (not labelled in Le Cène's publication, but generally music of this period began *forte* unless otherwise indicated). Over the top of this idea Vivaldi writes simple **arpeggios** landing on the last beat of the bar for the solo flute; these too add rhythmic impetus by starting on an **offbeat** semiquaver.

Vivaldi's **phrase lengths** are normally **irregular**. For instance, the opening four-bar phrase is balanced by a three-and-a-half-bar phrase, which then proceeds without pause to the next idea. Nevertheless, there are glimmers in Vivaldi's writing of what is called **periodic phrasing** which became the normal way of organising music in the new **Classical** style. Here four-bar phrases would be **balanced** by symmetrically long four-bar phrases, and within each phrase there is also often an internal symmetry of two bars vs two bars. Vivaldi's first phrase is four bars long and can be divided into two two-bar groups. When asked to comment on the melodic style of a passage in this Vivaldi concerto it is always worth analysing the phrase structure the composer uses.

The harmonies both times move from **I to V** (reaching V on the second half of b. 2 and b. 4). With yet another chord I in b. 5 this creates a whole series of **perfect cadences** in the tonic key which helps both establish the key and drive the music forward.

Bar 5 takes idea A1, following it this time with idea A2 on the the **subdominant** – chord IV. Bar 5 is now **sequenced** down a step in bb. 6 (harmonies VII–III), 7 (VI–II) and 8 (V–I): so that we end up with another **perfect cadence** in the tonic. This is a nice example of a **harmonic sequence**.

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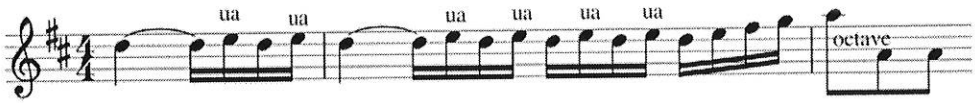
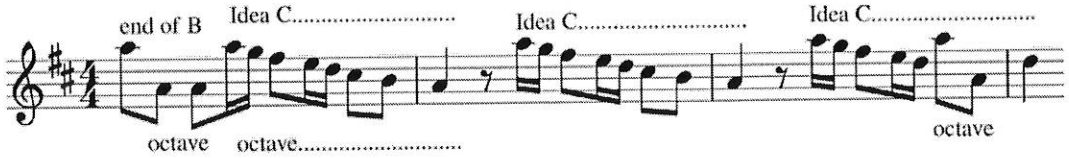
Idea B now runs from bb. 8.3 to 10.1. The flute now joins the strings in **unison**. Notice how the new idea starts on the last note of idea A (another Baroque technique that keeps the melody moving on at all times). This idea contrasts with the previous one by way of its **conjunct semiquaver runs** followed by quaver octave leaps.



Ex. 14 Vivaldi, I: 8.3–10 (Idea B: ua = upper auxiliary note)

The **syncopated rhythm** of the crotchet tied to a semiquaver also provides rhythmic impetus. Closer examination reveals that both idea A and idea B are linked by the use of the **upper auxiliary notes** and a **downward leap**. The harmony moves from **tonic to dominan**t in b. 10.

Idea C starts halfway through the second beat of b. 10. The first time it is heard it is joined directly onto idea B, but in bb. 11 and 12 it starts after a **quaver rest**:



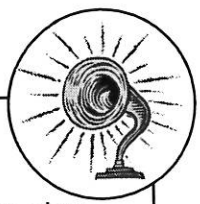
Ex. 15 Vivaldi, I: 10–13.1 (Idea C; the trills have been left for you to add in)

It is merely a **D major scale** filling the **octave leap** heard at the end of idea B (pitches: A down to A): but with the use of a typical Vivaldi two-semiquaver-quaver rhythm again adding rhythmic dynamisim to the opening ritornello. The low note is emphasised each time by a **trill** (inconsistently added into all the parts in the original edition), and moves on to another **perfect cadence** in D on the first beat of b. 13.

Notice the **asymmetrical phrasing** of this section.

Episode 1 (bb. 13–20)

The first episode is written for **solo flute alone** without any help from the orchestra or *continuo* section – and as such it is relatively unusual. In fact, this section acts more like a ***cadenza***, a section in a piece of music where the soloist is allowed to improvise, usually towards the end of a movement. The rationale for its inclusion at the start of the concerto is connected with the work's title; here, the soloist can show off and at the same time 'imitate' the goldfinch.



Listen Up!

Programme (descriptive) pieces were especially popular in France at this time. Listen to or play Daquin's *Le coucou* (the cuckoo) written for harpsichord – there is a link to a performance below. Notice how the cuckoo's minor 3rd call unites the whole movement, and also try to hear how the structure of this amusing piece is in the form of a rondeau: ABACA. Vivaldi probably included '*Il Gardellino*' in his Op. 10 publication to increase the commercial viability of his music.

Download from: *https://www.amazon.co.uk/Le-Coucou-Daquin/dp/B001GG48XM/ref=sr_1_1?s=dmusic&ie=UTF8&qid=1451919245&sr=1-1&keywords=daquin+coucou*

Go to **zzed.uk/6763**

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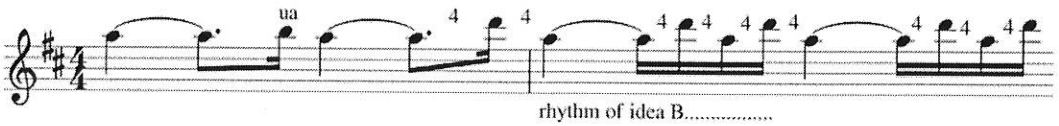
Notice how Vivaldi first uses an upper auxiliary note (pitches: A–B–A) which recalls Idea A1 and B of the ritornello in the first half of b. 13 before widening the interval to a perfect 4th in the second half of the bar (the perfect 4th is said to be important in the actual sound of the goldfinch's birdsong):



Ex. 16 Vivaldi I, 13–14 (ua = upper auxiliary note; 4 = perfect 4th)

The rhythm of this episode begins with the longest note value so far (a crotchet tied to dotted quaver) and then rapidly moves in b. 14 to the same rhythmic idea heard at the start of idea B in b. 8.3. Following this there is **diminution** into straight semiquavers and then demisemiquavers. The crotchet tied to a dotted quaver comes back in the second half of b. 16 (note how fond Vivaldi is of introducing new ideas halfway through a bar) with **octave leaps** and **trilled notes** on the strong beats. The *cadenza* ends with demisemiquaver **ascending scale** runs followed by four repeated quavers (idea A1) and ends with a ***fermata*** (pause – Vivaldi uses this sign a lot) on a trilled minim D in b. 20. As the soloist is totally independent in this section, with the music might be played in a free tempo – making any similarity with birdsong even more obvious.

Second ritornello (bb. 21–26.3)

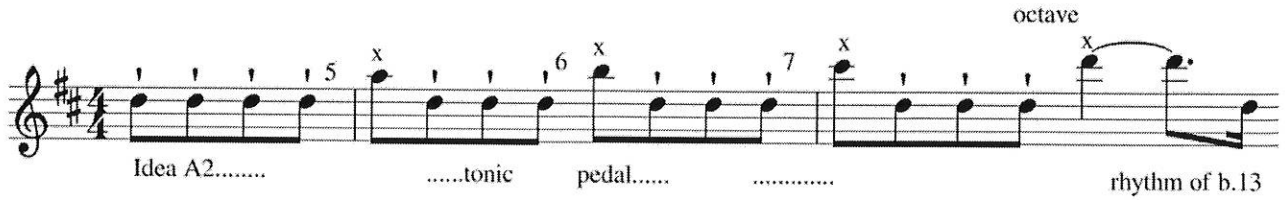
The second ritornello is an **abridged** version of the first one – the main difference being that the **second idea B is 1omitted**. Bars 21–24.3 are the same as bb. 1–4.3, and idea C appears on the last quaver beat of b. 24 (notice its **rhythmic displacement** – not beat 2 as in the first ritornello but beat 4), and only with **two** statements rather than three. (In addition, the trill on the low A is not marked – but would probably have been added by performers.) As with the first ritornello, the last statement ends with a **perfect cadence** on D overlapping with the first note of the next episode.

Second episode (bb. 26.3–47.2)

This episode can be divided into two halves. The first section (bb. 26.3–31.4) is basically another flute birdsong-like ***cadenza***, this time accompanied by the **violins**. The second section starts in b. 31.4 when the **viola** joins in, providing a bassline, and the music gathers more momentum. This second section can itself be divided into two subsections, the second starting in b. 39.3.

Second episode: First section (bb. 26.3–31.4)

In b. 26 the flute begins with the four repeated notes (A1), this time marked ***staccato*** (Vivaldi was ahead of his time in employing many more dynamic and articulation marks than many of his contemporaries), which gradually stretches from a 5th to a 6th, then a 7th and finally an octave. Another way of looking at these few bars is to see the repeated Ds as a continuous (tonic) **pedal** with the pitches above – A, B, C♯, D – as a simple but separate melodic line (Vivaldi does this type of thing quite often).



Ex. 17 Vivaldi, I: 26.3–28 (5, 6, 7 = intervals of 5th, 6th, 7th; x = notes of D major scale from A to D)

Motivic links: When the flute reaches top D it takes the rhythm of the crotchet tied to a dotted quaver from the first episode (compare b. 13 with b. 28.3) as an **octave jump**, followed by the demisemiquaver scale (also from the first episode, b. 19.4), with the octave jump rhythm now reduced to dotted quavers and semiquavers (b. 30 – related to idea A1, repeated b. 31).

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As mentioned above, the violins join in this passage **in 3rds** with a short motif (idea D) based on the **upper auxiliary note** and a **trill** – like birds chattering on a branch:

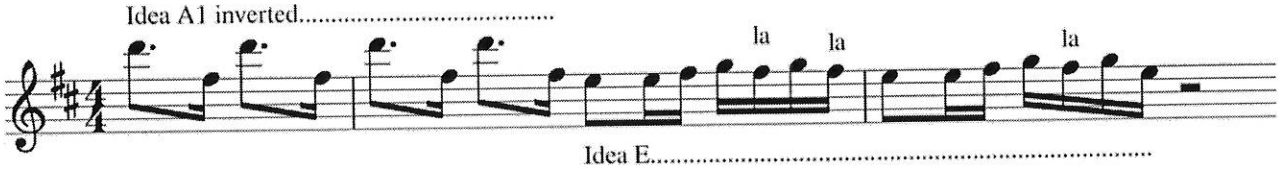
Ex. 18 Vivaldi, I: 28.3–29 (Idea D)

Second section – first part (bb. 31.4–47.2)

The flute then takes a three-semiquaver upbeat to b. 32 to start a run of semiquaver **broken-chord figuration**. The new section is emphasised by two **tonic chords** in the ***continuo***. Underneath the broken chords the **viola plays a bass line**; Vivaldi often **thinned out the texture** in his episodes by allowing the viola to carry the bass (i.e. lowest) line. This offers variety, but is also useful in a flute concerto in that it allows the rather soft Baroque wind instrument to come across more strongly – notice that Vivaldi has marked the viola part '***p***' here. Meanwhile, the 1st violins play a repeated **dominant semiquaver inverted pedal** (where the pedal is at the top of the texture) over the flute part, and end with a short reference to idea D. Up to this point you will have probably noticed that there hasn't been much harmony apart from tonic and dominant root-position chords in the tonic, so this section provides a real contrast with a **greater variety of harmonic progressions**.

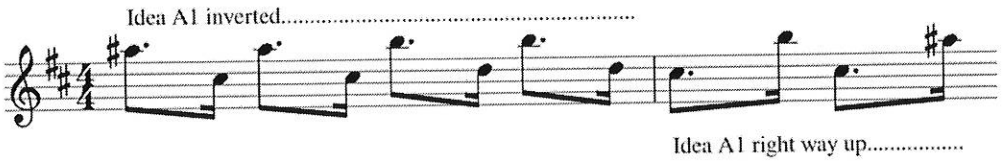
Bar 33 is a **repeat** of b. 32 and b. 34 follows with idea D. This means bb. 31.4 to 33.2 is one **period** – two-and-a-half bars with an upbeat! This period is then **sequenced** in bb. 33.2 and 36.4. Notice because of the odd phrase lengths Vivaldi starts the main idea on **different beats of a bar**. With these sequences this time we change key for the first time in the music, each **modulation** punctuated by the *continuo* part: E minor in b. 32.2 and B minor in b. 36.

In b. 39 the **viola** has a semiquaver lead-in to a new set of **sequences** that are built on material we have heard before. The melodic phrase that is treated as a descending sequence is two bars long and starts at b. 39.3, then sequenced at bb. 41.3, 43.3 and 45.3. The *continuo* part drops out completely. The flute uses an approximate **inversion of the opening idea A1** (a falling 6th this time), followed by a new idea (**idea E**) which uses a **lower auxiliary**, and is accompanied in 3rds by violin II:



Ex. 19 Vivaldi, I: 39.3–41 (Inversion of A followed by idea E; la = lower auxiliary note)

The viola provides a steady bass line and the 1st violins add **bird-like trills** (both as an ornament and written-out semiquavers) as a kind of pedal. There is **periodic phrasing** here: each two-bar sequence is a balanced 1 bar + 1 bar, and each bar is in itself a balanced ½ bar + ½ bar. In addition, the two-bar sequences work into a 2+2 bar pattern, and even a 4+4 arch. Only the final statement does not follow the pattern exactly and drops idea E for a **half-bar sequence** (up a note) **of the A1 inversion**, followed by a cadential figure (based on the original shape of A1 this time but with very wide intervals) to lead into the third ritornello:



Ex. 20 Vivaldi, I: 46–47

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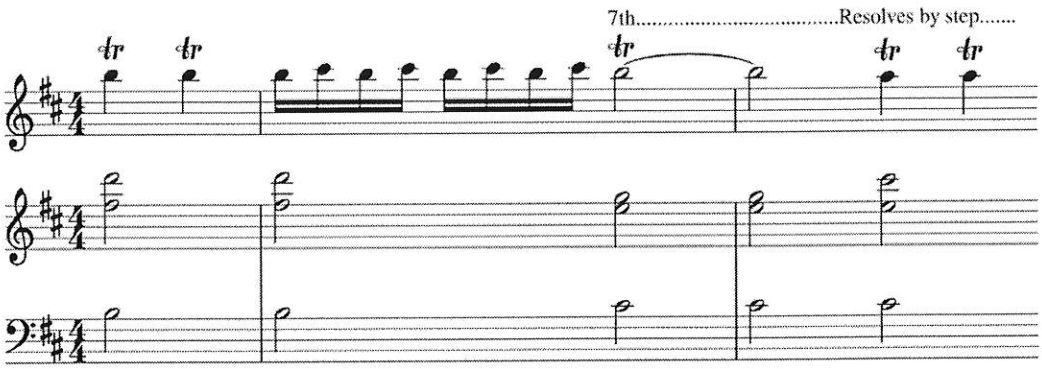
Notice this whole section (bb. 39.3–47.1) is in **B minor** (relative minor). Notable harmonic features include: a **one-bar harmonic rhythm** that speeds up to give more momentum towards the end of the episode; the use of the **flattened form of the leading note** A♮, b. 41.3 – Vivaldi was very fond of this chord and it sounds to the listener as if we are moving back into the tonic of D again at this point, only to be thwarted at b. 42.3 with another B minor chord (so the progression sounds a bit like an interrupted cadence); the use of 7ths – which all appear in the violin I part and resolve down by step onto the next chord:



Ex. 21 Vivaldi, I: bb. 39.3–41, violin I part and harmonies underneath

Ritornello 3 (bb. 47.3–53.1)

This uses idea A in B minor, and follows with idea C (b. 51.2), omitting idea B just as with ritornello 2.

Episode 3 (bb. 53–95)

The longest episode of the movement can be divided into six segments:

1. A new chromatic idea followed by the bird calls, sequenced in b. 59.3
2. A link passage bb. 65–68
3. Birdsong *cadenza* over a dominant pedal bb. 69–76
4. Broken-chord figuration bb. 77–84
5. Variations on the birdsong idea bb. 85–90
6. Transition passage based on idea A leading to the final ritornello

Segment 1 (bb. 53–64)

In b. 53 the flute takes idea A2 (the repeated four quavers – marked ***staccato*** as it was when it appeared at the start of the second episode, b. 26) and moves it up the **chromatic scale** from the tonic note B to the dominant F♯. It is accompanied by the 1st and 2nd violins in **unison**, marked **piano**, playing a bass line similar to the viola part of b. 32. This creates a **two-part texture**.

The music moves to D major again in b. 54, then E minor in b. 55 and F♯ minor in b. 56. Worth noticing are: the **even harmonic rhythm**, the **constant modulations** to related keys and especially the use of the **flattened supertonic chord in first inversion** (the so-called **Neapolitan 6th**, b. 53) which adds colour to this section. The final cadence into the dominant of B minor, F♯ minor, is harmonised with a root-position chord, whereas the previous modulations had been harmonised with 1st **inversions**.

Neapolitan 6th – is the 1st inversion of a major chord on the flattened supertonic! Let's take that statement apart. For example, in C major or minor the supertonic (second note of the scale) is D. The flattened supertonic therefore is D♭. The major chord of D♭ consists of the notes of D♭, F and A♭. As it is a 1st inversion, F will be its lowest-sounding note. In our Vivaldi movement the key is B minor. C♯ is the supertonic (second note of the scale). The flattened supertonic is therefore C♮. The major triad on C is C, E and G. In 1st inversion the E will be in the bass – just as in b. 53.3!

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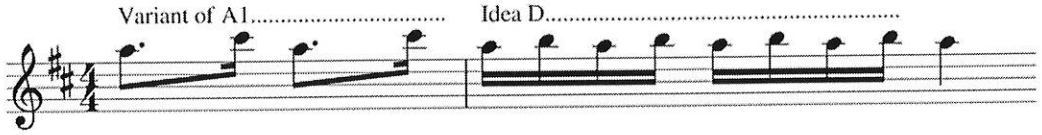
The harmony then remains static in **F♯ minor** until b. 60. The violins use **idea D** (bb. 56–57: the birdsong motif) and above it the flute moves from the tonic to its upper auxiliary note first in dotted crotchet–quavers, then as a written-out semiquaver trill, and finally as a proper **trill** (b. 58.3), at which point the violins have a snatch of a variant of idea A1 followed by the written-out trill in **3rds** from idea D (notice **violin II** have the upper part!) This is supported by regular presentations of **chord I** from the *continuo*.



Ex. 22 Vivaldi, I: 58.3–59

At b. 59.3 the chromatic idea heard in b. 53 gets **sequenced**, this time moving from F♯ minor back to B minor (b. 61.3).

Second segment (bb. 65–68)

At bar 65 the flute moves off again with a new idea of a simple broken chord followed by idea E:

Ex. 23 Vivaldi, I: 65–66 (new idea followed by idea E)

Here is a summary of how this passage works:

Bar	Key	Chord	Melody
65.1	B minor	I	new idea
65.3		V♮b (i.e. **without raised leading note**; pivot chord = IIIb in D)	idea E
66.1	D	IIb	sequence of 65
66.3		Ib	sequence of 65 (idea E)
67.1		V^7c then V^7	sequence of 66
67.3		I (pivot chord – IV in A)	sequence of (idea E)
68.1	A	V^7d	sequence of idea E
68.3		Ib	

Third segment (bb. 65–68)

As often happens in this concerto, a passage of harmonic dynamism is followed by a passage of **static harmony;** bars 69 to 76 are all based on chord I in A major, which of course will act as the **dominant of D major** returning to the tonic in b. 77. '***Tasto solo***' in the *continuo* part indicates that the keyboard player just plays the bass line – in this case a long **tonic pedal** on A (or as we eventually hear it, a long dominant pedal in D). The flute is **imitated** by the 1st violin; this is the only section of the movement where Vivaldi gives us a glimpse of **contrapuntal** writing. Because the harmony is static it means that the violin can imitate the flute exactly – so what we get is a unison **canon** at a minim's length:

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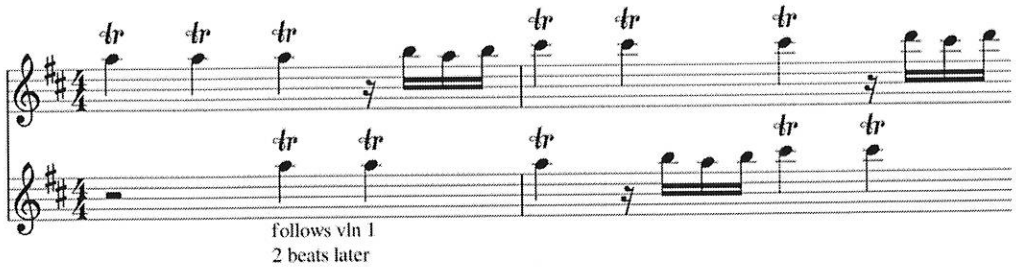


Ex. 24 Vivaldi, I: 69–70

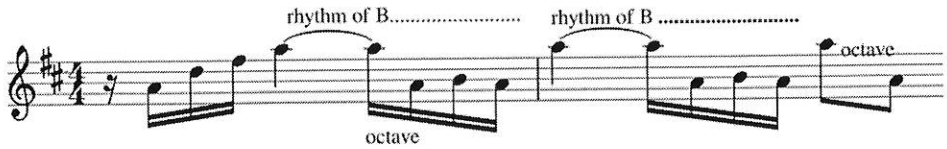
The flute (followed, of course, by the violin) reaches a high E (b. 71) – providing even more birdlike sounds. Arpeggios, trills and repeated notes make up this further '***cadenza***'-like section. In b. 74 the canon stops and the flute plays written-out semiquaver **trills**, followed by an ornamental trill (which would be played with faster note values), while the violins enter and play the bird motif (**idea D**), and the *continuo* adds some **descending arpeggios** when the violin parts have rests.

Segment 4 (bb. 77–84)

At b. 77 the violin and viola take the music of b. 32 (from episode 2 – minus the violin I inverted pedal) which is finished by the repeated quaver idea **A2** in the strings in D major. This idea is sequenced up a note into e minor in 78.3 with an extra half-bar semiquaver work added onto it. At b. 80.3, back in D major (the E minor chord there acts as a **pivot chord**, i.e. I in E minor and II in D) this semiquaver idea is **sequenced** (with the viola line but omitting the violins' A2) at bb. 82.3.

Segment 5 (bb. 85–90)

At b. 85 the trill idea **D** continues in the violins supported by **tonic and dominant** harmonies in the *continuo*. Over the top the flute plays arpeggios related to the very opening:

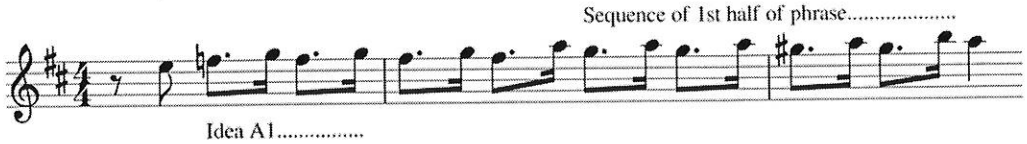


Ex. 25 Vivaldi, I: 85.2–83

In bar 88 there is a **modal change** to the **tonic minor** (D minor) – another of Vivaldi's hallmarks. It provides a new cadential theme, played in 3rd's with the 1st violin and discreetly harmonised by the viola:

Ex. 26 Vivaldi, I: 88.2–89

At b. 91.3 the flute plays a **minor** version (i.e. uses F naturals rather than sharps) of idea A1 which then moves up **chromatically**:



Ex. 27 Vivaldi, I: 90.2–92

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Segment 6 (bb. 91–95)

In the final part of this episode the flute comes in with a three-semiquaver upbeat to the repeated quaver idea (A2) followed by dotted quaver–semiquaver octaves (A1 inverted, from b. 30), A2 again, and then the octaves as straight semiquavers followed by a scale to take us down into the final ritornello:

Ex. 28 Vivaldi, I: 93.4–95

The harmony and tonality of this passage is fairly straightforward with modulations to D minor (b. 88), G minor (b. 91), A major (b. 92) and back to the tonic, D major (b. 93). Notice the **appoggiatura** chords on the first beat of bars 89 and 90.

Fourth ritornello (bb. 96–100)

This is constructed from the first ritornello as follows:

b. 96.1–96.2 = b. 1.1–1.2 but with the flute playing in unison rather than with the arpeggios of the opening;

bb. 96.3–end = 9.3–13, final note converted into a semibreve.

Notice that idea B, which only appears in the first ritornello, makes a brief restatement here.

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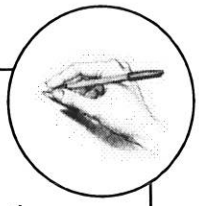

Your turn now...

Complete the table below noting the relationship between the ritornello and episodes in the first movement, i.e. how much of the episode material is derived from the ritornello material; is there reuse of material from one episode to the next; do the ritornellos all use the same material?

Section	Thematic Relationships
First ritornello	Ritornello 1 – three ideas one after the other ('A', 'B', 'C')
First episode	Episode 1 – takes upper aux note idea of A then widens interval
Second ritornello	
Second episode	
Third ritornello	
Third episode	
Fourth ritornello	

Answers at the end of the pack.

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Analysis: Second Movement (A Level only)

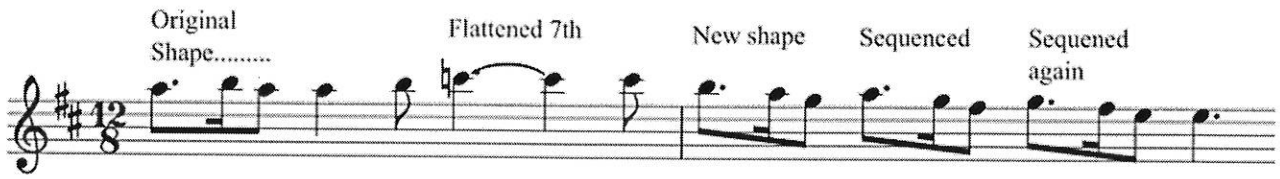
This movement is typical of the second movements of Vivaldi's concertos in the following respects: **reduced instrumentation** (just flute and *continuo* – keyboard alone here); **same key** as the outer movements; **slow tempo** – not marked in the Vivaldi, but the nature of the 12/8 rhythm shows that the music is written in the Baroque style of the ***siciliana***; the bass merely supports the melody instrument rather than providing any counterpoint to it – **binary form** of two roughly equal repeated parts.

> The ***siciliana*** was a slow, lilting number in 6/8 or 12/8, with phrases that often start on a quaver anacrusis; this type of movement was associated with **pastoral** (countryside) scenes – so its inclusion as the slow movement here is no doubt owing to the concerto's title. Normally it was in a minor key, unlike the major version here.

As the main interest of the music is in the melody, let's look at the **melodic structure** first. The first thing to notice is the lack of periodic phrasing. **Phrase lengths are unequal** and separated by short **rests** that allow the flautist to take a breath. Every phrase uses the typical dotted quaver–semiquaver–quaver rhythm so typical of the *siciliana*, mostly this is also used with a melodic shape that includes an **upper auxiliary note** (bb. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12 (slightly adapted – twice)). The melodic style is very lyrical, and with a few adjustments could easily become a vocal line – hence the movement title: '***Cantabile***' (singing).

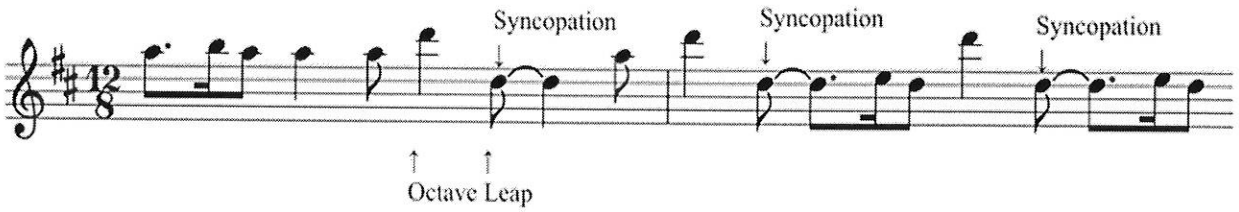
The second phrase (upbeat to b. 3 – the quaver of which Vivaldi has pushed up an octave so it **falls a 7th** to the C♯ rather than moving by step) looks as if it is going to be the first phrase sequenced down a note, but quickly peters out. The third phrase (upbeat to b. 4) also starts as if the first phrase is going to be sequenced up a note, but repeats the **rising 5th** of the first phrase and then moves on to a cadential phrase to end the movement on the **dominant**.

The second half also consists of three phrases, the first lasting two bars, the second a **sequence** down a note of the first, and the final phrase extending **asymmetrically** for three bars. The first phrase of the second half (bb. 7–8) takes the rhythm of bb. 1–2, just extending the dotted quaver–semiquaver–quaver idea in a three-note descending pattern, so it is sequenced twice, each time down a note:



Ex. 29 Vivaldi, II: 7–8

The most striking thing about this phrase is the unexpected **flattened 7th** (b. 7.3, sequenced b. 9.3). The final phrase starts like the very first phrase of the piece, but instead of moving from tonic to dominant it moves from dominant to tonic. This is followed by some striking octave drops and gentle syncopation:



Ex. 30 Vivaldi, II: 11–12

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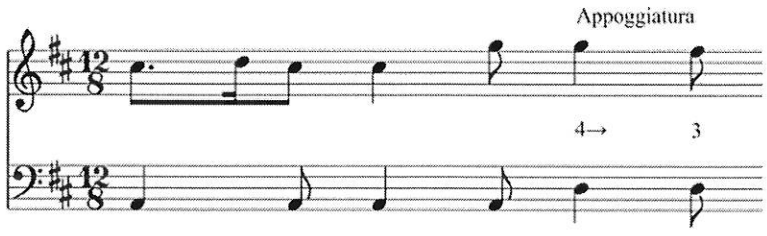
Your turn now...

Practise your chord recognition skills by completing the following table. Take care to notice how much of the bar you are asked to analyse and how many different chords are needed. The keys and some of the chords have been left in for you. The answers are at the back of the pack; check them before you continue with the notes.

Bar	Key	Chord
1.1	D	I
2.1		
2.3		
3.1		
3.3		IVc–I (IVc is an appoggiatura; the I is a pivot chord IV in A)
4.1	A	
5.1 then 5.2 (2 chords in all)		
5.3 then 5.4 (3 chords in all)		
6.1 (4 chords)		
7.1		VI
7.3		dim^7
8.1	E minor	I–II^7b–V–I
9.1		
9.3		
10.1(4 chords)	D	
11.1 (4 chords)		
12.1		IV–Ib–II^7–I
13.1(4 chords)		

Answers at the end of the pack.

The most interesting features of the harmony include: the G (b. 3.3) in the flute part which creates an **appoggiatura** (4–3) over the bass line, harmonised as a rapid IVc–I;



Ex. 31 Vivaldi, II: 3

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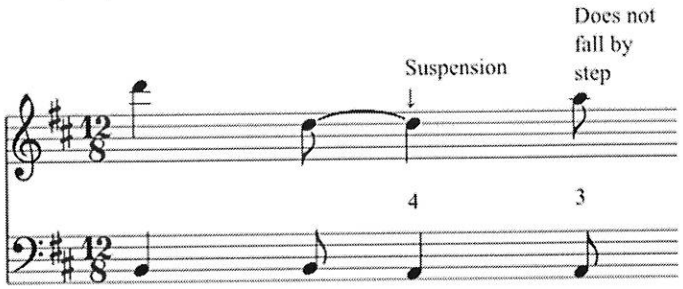
the **diminished 7th** chords (bb. 7.3, 9.3), which allow Vivaldi to change keys; and the D in b. 11.4 held on in the flute part against dominant harmony in the bass (so a 4–3 suspension) but that doesn't resolve by step – instead it leaps up to an A:



Ex. 32 Vivaldi, II: 11.3–4

Analysis: Third Movement (A Level only)

First ritornello (bb. 1–15)

This is made up of two ideas. The first (bb. 1–4.1: idea A) is a **unison** strings theme consisting of a descending semiquaver offbeat scale followed by a **broken-chord** quaver pattern with a few passing notes:

Ex. 33 Vivaldi, III: 1–4, idea A

The second (bb. 4–5.2, idea B) is a repeated 'chirping' motif performed on flute with 1st violins in 3rds and ending on a trill:

Ex. 34 Vivaldi, III: 4–5, idea B

This is how Vivaldi uses these ideas in the opening ritornello:

Bar	Idea	Chord (D maj)
1	A in the strings	I
4	B in fl. and vl. I	V
5	A again	I
8	B, but the final crotchet beats do not rise up a note as before but remain at the same pitch	V
9	A, this time starting on the dominant and lasting only 2 not 3 bars	V
11	B, but in the tonic keeping same pitch for last beats	I
12	A (shortened version) in tonic once more	I
14	A starts again 2 bars early! Just a little fragment of B	I
15	Cadential extension of A with trill	I–IV–V(with a 4–3 suspension)

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This is a good example of how Vivaldi creates a 15-bar passage of music with real economy – sometimes making the ideas **overlap**, sometimes **squeezing** them together – all over simple **tonic and dominant** harmony. The final chord V has a **4–3 suspension** and forms part of a **perfect cadence** into the first episode which starts with chord I in the tonic. The way idea A returns at quicker and quicker intervals (similar to a fugal ***stretto***: cf. the analysis of the Bach Concerto, last movement, for an explanation of this) helps give the music its sense of purpose.

Episode 1 (bb. 16–39)

After the unpredictable phrasing of the ritornello, the episode gives us **balanced periods**: bars (4+4) (4+4) (5+3). Only in the last eight bars does Vivaldi add some imbalance which helps thrust the episode towards the next ritornello.

First eight bars (bb. 16–23)

Flute and violin have a **duet** over the *continuo*. The parts **overlap** with each other. The opening rhythm (crotchet–dotted crotchet–quaver) gives a **sarabande-like** feel to the music. Notice the familiar 'bird-like' **trills** on the dotted crotchet beat. After three bars of tonic harmony the first four bars end with a **perfect cadence** (ending here, less commonly with I on a weak beat), whereas the second four end on chord V (imperfect cadence) which leads back onto chord I in b. 24, with a **cello link** that also appears in bb. 27 and 31.

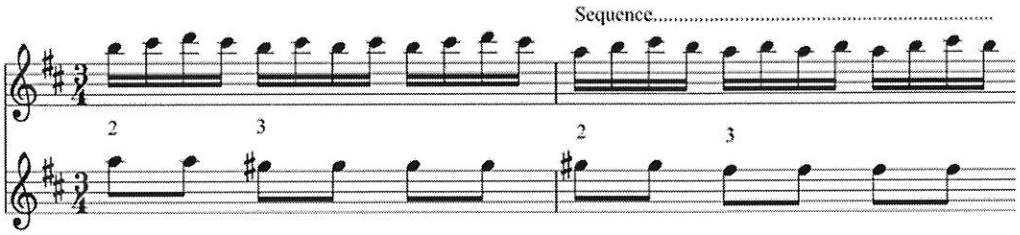
> The **sarabande** is a slow triple-time dance with an emphasis on the second beat of the bar – here the character of the dance is transformed by Vivaldi with a fast tempo.

Second eight bars (bb 24–31)

Here a new four-bar phrase is introduced made up of repeated staccato quavers, dotted quaver–semiquaver broken figuration on the tonic arpeggio, and a semiquaver run. The second four-bar phrase then **sequences** the first up a tone. Underneath the melody the violins 'twitter' together in **3rds** in semiquavers followed by a long trill. The harmonies of this section are: I in D (b. 24) which acts as a pivot chord as V in G; V^7–I in G (bb. 26.3–27); V^7–I in A (bb. 28–31).

Last four bars (bb32–39)

Next the flute has a new semiquaver pattern which is accompanied solely by violin I and is **sequenced** four times to create a **five-bar phrase**. The implied harmonies are in A major: I–V^7–VI–V–IV and from b. 33 the 1st violin creates a **2–3 string of suspensions**:

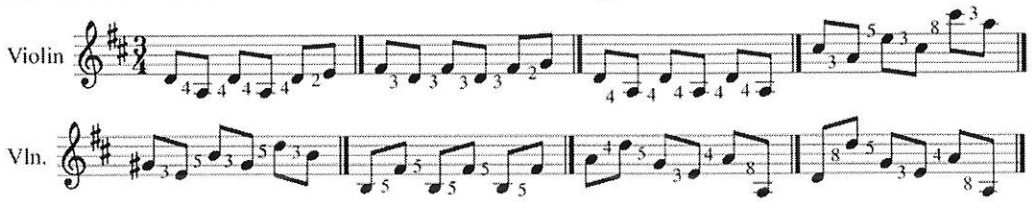


Ex. 35 Vivaldi, III: 33–34, 2–3 suspensions indicated

Finally, at b. 37 the violins re-enter with their 'twitter' from b. 24 and the flute breaks into a semiquaver flourish that moves into the same **cadential progression** that we saw in b. 15 with its 4–3 suspension.

Second ritornello (bb. 40–58)

This starts off with **idea A** in bb. 40–41 (**I in A major**), followed by a sequence of the same idea down a 4th to the shape of chord V^7 in the same key. Note that the broken-chord part of this idea is handled very flexibly by Vivaldi and we can find lots of different variants of it throughout the concerto:



Ex. 36 Vivaldi, III: shapes of the broken-chord motif of idea A, intervals indicated above each example; bb. 2, 3, 13, 41, 43, 90, 115, 116.

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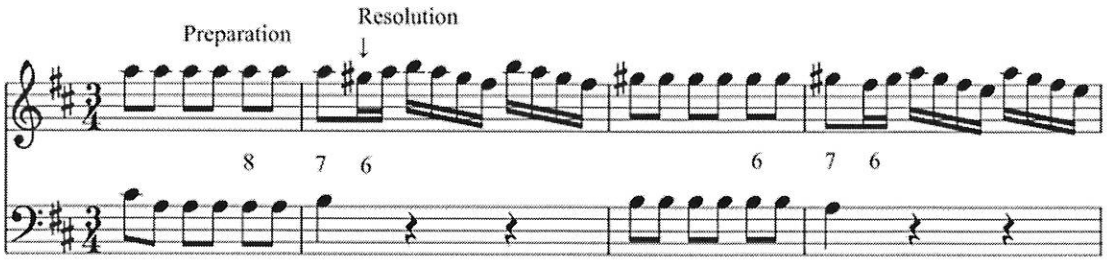
The flute doubles violin I in the first two bars, and rests in the second two.

At b. 44 Vivaldi gives us a new two-bar pattern: a bar of **repeated block-chord** quavers, followed by a flute pattern based on four notes. This is **sequenced** four times. Here are the **harmonies**:

Bar	Key	Chord
44	A	I
45	A	II^7
46	A	VIIb
47	A	I^7
48	A	VIb
49	A	VII^7
50	A	Vb
51	A	VI^7
52	A	IVb
53	D	II^7

As you can see, Vivaldi makes great use of **7th chords**; the 7ths appear in the flute part, **prepared** (i.e. sounded) in the previous chord, and **resolving** by step as follows:



Ex. 37 Vivaldi, III: 44–47

At b. 54 the ritornello reverts to **idea A** which is heard in the strings as I in A major (b. 54), then as V^7 (b. 56), before a cadential bar (b. 58) which cadences into A major for the second episode.

Episode 2 (bb. 59–88)

The first eight bars (bb. 59–66) follow a **four-bar pattern,** which is varied the second time. Each four bars in turn are made up of two repeated bars. Bars 59–60 consist of arpeggio semiquaver figuration followed by a quaver arpeggio on the flute, accompanied by **two-part** quaver broken chords on violin II and viola; this is then repeated in bb. 61–62. Throughout the passage (which is all based on I in A major), the 1st violins have a continuous **trill** on the dominant note, E (**inverted dominant pedal**). These four bars are then repeated in bars 63–66 but altered to fit the harmonies of chord V. Bar 67 adds an ending to the period (chord I again).

From b. 68 to b. 78 a new two-bar pattern is repeated and **sequenced** five times. The flute part has a repeated dotted quaver–semiquaver pattern followed by a repeated ascending four-note semiquaver pattern. It is accompanied by the **violins in 3rds** plus ***continuo*** in the first bar and with just *continuo* alone in the second. The harmonies of this episode move to E (b. 71), F♯ minor (b. 73) and back to A in b. 75.

The final passage in this episode consists of four bars (bb. 79–82) where the flute moves down the A major **arpeggio** with **trills** and **semiquaver figuration**, while the violins repeat A major **broken chords** and the bass line plays a long **tonic pedal** (***tasto solo*** = no chords in the *continuo* part). Bars 83 to 88 introduce a new flute phrase, **sequenced** three times, the last time moving into the customary **cadential** bar with its **4–3 suspension** (b. 88).

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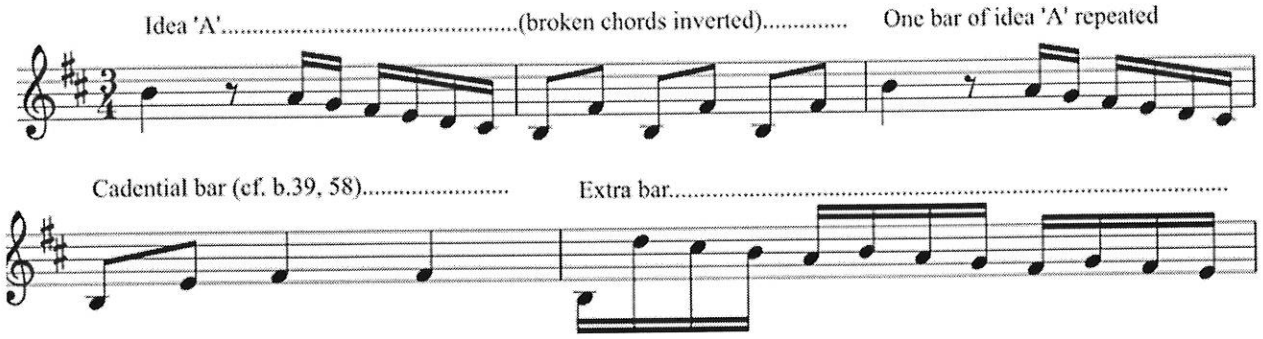
Ritornello 3 (bb. 89–93)

Here **idea A** appears in the strings with the **broken chords** in **inversion**, the first bar **repeated** then cutting straight into the customary cadential bar. The harmony is all I in B minor except for the cadence bar which is the usual V–I with a 4–3 suspension. Then as a surprise there is an extra 'link' bar of scurrying string semiquavers on chord I in B minor before the next episode starts:



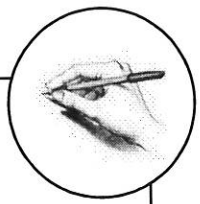
Ex. 38 Vivaldi, III: 89–93

Episode 3 (bb. 94–111)

This episode takes another four-bar idea (bb 94–97) and accompanies it with the **upper strings**, the fourth bar being a 'linking unit' in the ***continuo*** part. This then **repeats** (bb. 98–101) as a **sequence** but instead of the *continuo* link phrase the flute part begins a written-out semiquaver **trill** on a high A, extended for another two bars (bb. 102–103) accompanied by string chords punctuating the first beat, and with a cadential octave drop and trill in b. 104. Bars 105–107 **vary** this with the flute gradually working up a D major **arpeggio** with written-out and ornamental **trills**, still supported by chord I on the main beat by the strings. Bars 108–111 are largely a **repeat** of bb. 101–104. The **keys** are G (b. 96), A (b. 98) and back to D (b. 102).

Ritornello 4 (bb. 112–117)

This is a repeat of the first three bars of the opening of the movement with a new **cadential figure** (b. 115) **repeated** and coming to rest on a **unison** D.



Get Creative!

Composing your own ritornello-shaped movement would be a good way to have a break as well as to consolidate your knowledge of the Vivaldi. You could compose something by yourself using computer software – compose your ritornello theme, copy it transposed into related keys and then work out some connecting episodes. You could be ambitious and compose for strings and the instrument that you yourself play – you could really try to make the episodes difficult for the player of the solo instrument!

Another way of approaching the task would be to to create a group composition – with the whole group getting together to compose the ritornello and everyone creating their own individual episodes. You might want to use a programme (a poem or story) to help you structure the music.

Record your piece and listen back. How does it compare to Vivaldi's? What were the challenges of composing with a ritornello structure? Do you think you overcame them?

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Bach Violin Concerto in A minor BWV 1041

Introduction

Bach was born in Germany in **1685** from a long line of musicians and spent his life working in North Germany, finally ending up in charge of music at St Thomas's Church, **Leipzig**, one of the most important posts in Germany. He died there in **1750**. His stature as a composer and performer (particularly as an organist) was immense; although immediately after his death his music was largely forgotten, regarded as somewhat old-fashioned, there was an important revival of interest in his music in the nineteenth century. From that time on Bach has been regarded as one of the greatest contributors to Western civilisation, with works such as the *St Matthew* and *St John Passions*, the *Brandenburg Concertos*, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and *The Art of the Fugue*.

We do not know exactly when Bach wrote his Violin Concerto. Parts survive, written out in Bach's and others' hands, dating from about **1730**, but presumably they were copied from a pre-existing score that could have been written much earlier. The traditional view is that they were composed while Bach was court composer at **Cöthen**, between 1717 and 1723. Some scholars, however, think they could have been connected with the **Collegium Musicum** in Leipzig, of which Bach was director from 1729 to 1737. The Collegium Musicum was a loose-knit collection of professional musicians and students from Leipzig who gave concerts at least once a week. The concertos could easily have been played at one of these concerts.

Bach came across **Vivaldi's** concertos (and those of other Venetian composers) in 1713–1714 while he was in charge of the music of another German court, Weimar. The influence of Vivaldi on his musical style seems to have been critical; his music became more vigorous and possessed of more clarity. Nevertheless, Bach combined this new style with more traditional features of German church music – especially a love of **counterpoint** which usually keeps his inner parts very busy. It is this meeting of styles that makes his music so recognisable and so satisfying to listen to.

Analysis: First Movement

An Important Note!
The analysis that follows explains how Bach arranges his melodic and thematic material. The examiner will **NOT** expect you to be able to identify where themes were first heard – BUT you will be expected to:

(i) describe **how themes have been altered** within the part of the movement set by the examiners, e.g. have the themes been sequenced, inverted, used in rhythmic diminution?
(ii) (in the 10-mark question) be able to **describe** more generally Bach's **melodic techniques** (as well as rhythmic, harmony, etc.)
(iii) (in the 10-mark question) be able to talk about the **relationship** between the **melodic material** and **overall structure** of the movement, i.e. **how the episodes and ritornello are related.** Given the short written time you are allotted for these questions, it would be useful to learn the bar numbers of some of the major sections and features of each work; it can also be quicker in some cases to write out an annotated musical example rather than try to describe it fully in writing.

First ritornello (bb. 1–24.1)

Immediately we can hear the differences between this concerto and Vivaldi's – most noticeably in the way the composer handles the **texture**, the construction of the **melody**, and the **harmony**.

Texture first. There is just so much more going on in Bach's music. True, the music is still dominated by its top part (solo violin and violin I playing together), but the other parts are also independent, which gives the music a much busier 'feel'. For instance, at the very start of the movement, the 1st violin melody is broken into gaps, and in those gaps the *continuo* part echoes the rhythm of the top parts creating a very basic **antiphony** (call and response):

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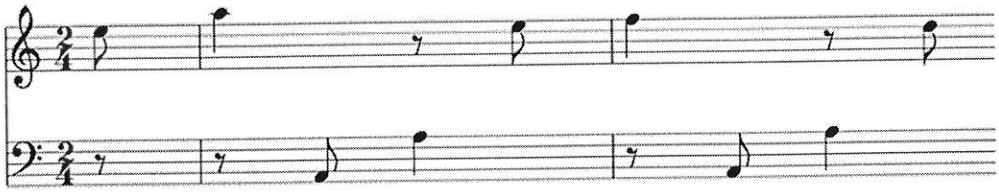
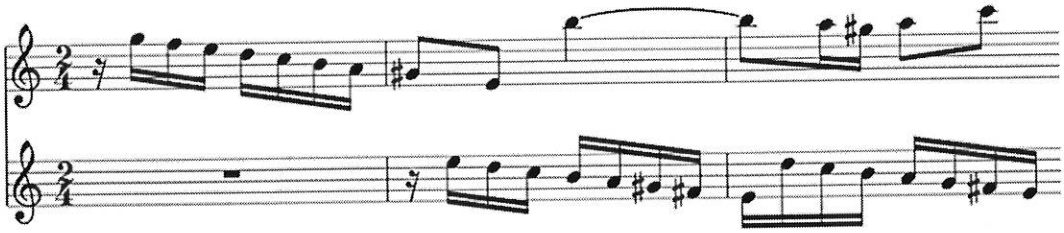


Ex. 39 Bach, I: 1–2

In bar 8 the 2nd violins **imitate** what the 1st violins played in bar 7, and then continue independently with the same pattern, sequenced down a note:

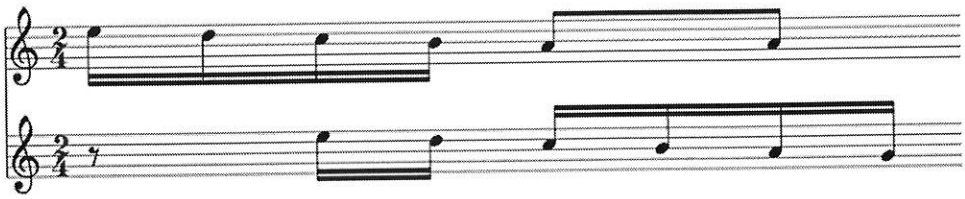


Ex. 40 Bach, I: 7–9 (some notes omitted to reveal imitation)

Later, just before b. 13, the cello moves into the foreground:

Ex. 41 Bach, I: 13–14

Then, in b. 20 the 2nd violins **imitate** the 1sts again, this time at a quaver's distance. Note that in this and the previous example the 2nd violins start **above** the 1st violin line.

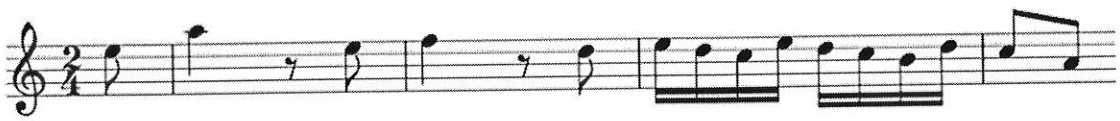


Ex. 42 Bach, I: 29 (some notes omitted to reveal imitation)

Only the **viola** seems subsidiary, but even this instrument's part is far more interesting than equivalent passages in the Vivaldi (unison tuttis excepted).

There are also many passages in the Bach of instruments playing in **3rds and 6ths**, such as the 1st and 2nd violins in bb. 3 and 19.

Turning now to **melody**, the opening phrase (upbeat to bb. 1–4.1) has a nice regularity about it, as if Bach is going to balance it with an equivalent **period**. The **anacrusis** (upbeat) gives it real forward momentum, emphasised by the **rests**, and notice the little internal **sequence** which finishes it off:



Ex. 43 Bach, I: 1–4

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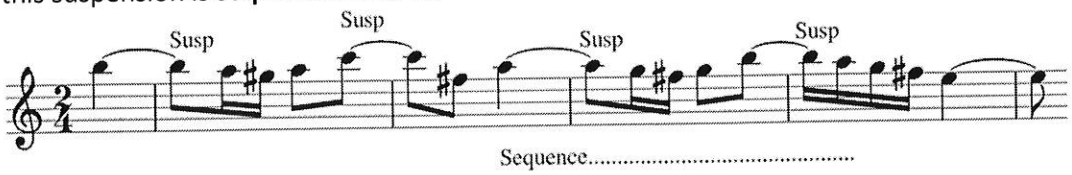
The second phrase, however, just goes on and on, not resting until the end of the ritornello in b. 24! This is typical Bach; it's like a downhill cycle ride on a winding road – you know you have to keep going, but just when you think you've reached the bottom there's another twist in the road which reveals new scenery and a new descent! Bach starts with a little idea, reminiscent of the pattern used in b. 3, which he then extends by **increasing the interval** between the first two notes each time, from a tone to a minor 3rd, perfect 4th, perfect 5th and minor 6th:

Ex. 44 Bach, I:5–6

After a descending scale (b. 7) he makes the violins leap up a perfect 12th creating a crotchet **suspension** in b. 9; this suspension is **sequenced** in b. 11.



Ex. 45 Bach, I: 8.2–13.1, suspensions marked

This is followed by a strong quaver passage with leaps of 6ths and 7ths (bb. 14–19), before a slow descent down to a **cadence** ending on the violin's lowest E (with a **sequence** bb. 21–22). This type of melody-writing which seems to go on and on is called ***Fortspinnung*** (brief definition: the process of developing a musical motif), and Bach is the master of it.

The **harmonies** of this opening ritornello are as follows:

Bar	Key	Chord
1	A minor	I
2		IVc
3		I–V^7
4		I
5		Vb–I
6		VIIb–Ib
7		IV–V^7
8		V
9		Ib – last beat anticipates b. 10 (cf. box below)
10	G	V^7
11		Ib
12		IV
13		dim^7
14	E minor	V^{7}b–I
15		IVb
16		V^7–I

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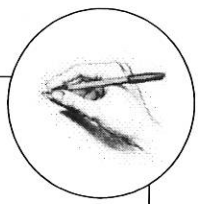
Bar	Key	Chord
17	E minor	Ic–V
18		V^7d
19		Ib–VI–IIb–V
20		VI (N.B. interrupted cadence!)
21		dim^7
22		dim^7
23		V^7c–I–Ic–V
24		I (perfect cadence into E minor)

Again, we notice how much more varied and busier the harmony is in the Bach: the harmonies change (**harmonic rhythm**) at least every minim, and sometimes on each quaver beat (e.g. bb. 19, 23). Things to notice include: the **modulation** to G major (the dominant of the relative major – not a closely related key) which allows for a welcome ray of sunshine; the move from G then moves smoothly to its relative minor, E minor, which of course is the dominant of the home key, A minor; the **6/4 cadence** into the first episode; the surprising **interrupted cadence** into b. 20; the **dominant pedal** (repeated Es) in the bass part bb. 5–6; the use of the **diminshed 7th** chord in bb. 13, 21–22 which acts as a substitute for the dominant 7th in E minor.

Modulation: notice how Bach subtly moves from the key of A minor to G major, almost imperceptibly: b. 9.2 could be read as Ib in A minor; the G♮ and F♯ in the violin II part are both notes in A minor (one taken from the ascending and one the descending version of the melodic minor), but ACF♯ on the last quaver beat of that bar also makes chord VIIb in G major!



Your turn now...

Another feature of Bach's harmony is the constant use of **dissonance.** You will need to be able to identify the dissonances Bach uses. Test yourself:

Can you find the **first** example that occurs in the violin II part of bb.1–24 of the following (they are listed in the order in which they occur)?

1. An **unaccented passing note**
2. An **accented auxiliary note**
3. A **7–6 suspension**
4. An **anticipation**

Answers at the end of the pack.

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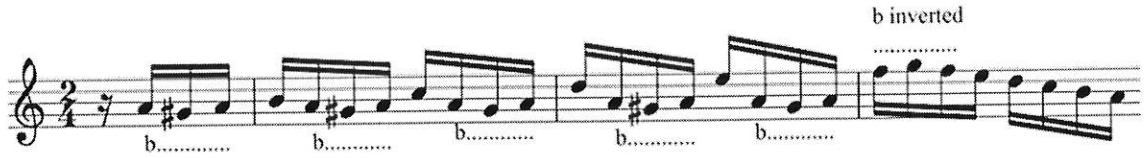
First episode (bb. 24–51)

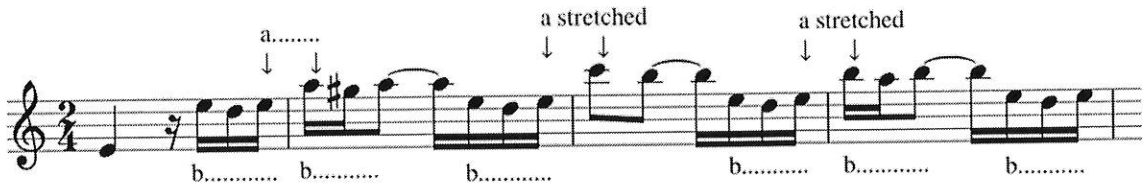
If we just look at the solo part, we might feel that as with Vivaldi the music of the episode only bears a slight relationship to the material used in the ritornello. In fact, Bach creates the new material for the soloist by using **two little cells** (small melodic shapes) from the ritornello, which we shall call cell a and cell b. Cell a is the rising 4th interval from the very opening, and b is a three-note shape which is used with its melodic inversion (turning the melodic shape upside down). Here is how cell b first appears in the ritornello:



Ex. 46 Bach, I: 4.2–7

The shape b also appears in bb. 9 and 11 and inverted appears twice in the cello part of b. 13.

In the episode, cell b appears 10 times in bb. 24–31. It might be worth ringing them all as you spot them. Notice also how the first two appearances of b are joined by the rising perfect 4th (which we know is cell a – remember it is from the very opening two notes of the ritornello's melody):



Ex. 47 Bach, I: 24–27

Notice how Bach **stretches the intervals** of the melody – at first a perfect 4th followed by a minor 6th, then a perfect 5th followed by a minor 7th. There is also use of **sequence** to develop the melody in bb. 29–31: each bar includes the little cell b. Then in b. 32 the inversion of cell b (circle them) appears and we have a string of two-bar **sequences**:

Ex. 48 Bach, I: 32–33

In b. 44 Bach introduces a new idea which disrupts the rhythm as it lands on the second (weaker) beat, which is **sequenced** twice, the second time leading into the second ritornello.

The biggest difference, however, between Bach's and Vivaldi's approach can be seen in the **role of the accompaniment**. There are some passages which follow Vivaldi's model – for instance, the use of *continuo* only in bb. 29–32 and bb. 49–5, and the use of repeated upper string chords in bb. 44–48.

However, the orchestra's role is much more important in the Bach: it plays music that has thematic value, and the themes derive from the material of the opening ritornello. This closely **ties the episode and the ritornello together**, much more so than in Vivaldi. Let's examine some passages in more detail.

Bars 25–28 show Bach using **cell 'a'** (the rising 4th derived from the very first two notes of the concerto), the **antiphonal texture** of the opening and also another cell (d) which first appears in b. 13, but more prominently is seen in the first beat of bb. 21 and 22:

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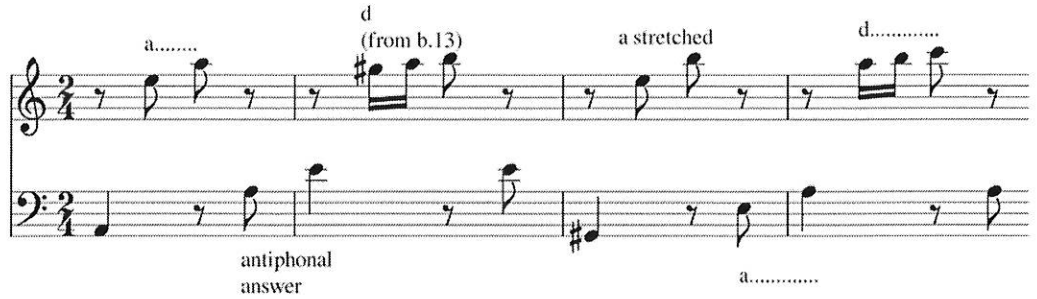
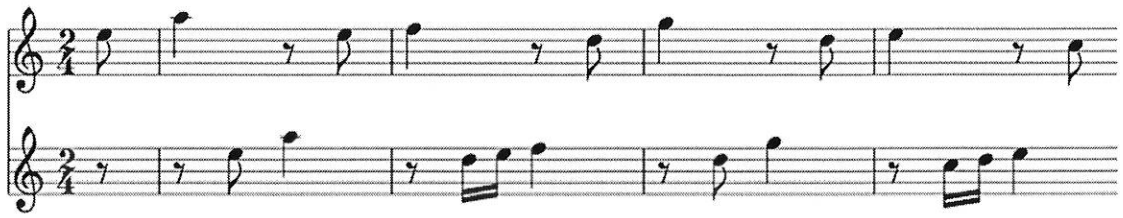


Ex. 49 Bach, I: 25–28

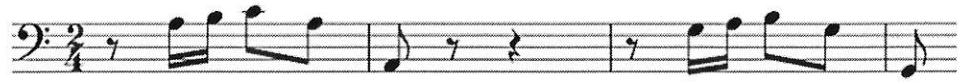
Then, starting just before b. 33 the first four notes of the opening (a longer version of 'a') appear in the 1st violins, imitated by the seconds, who play while the 1sts have rests so we get an **interlocking texture**:



Ex. 50 Bach, I: 32.2–36

This is then **sequenced** in a descending pattern until the upbeat of b. 40 when we get four bars' worth of the opening ritornello theme (with the **interlocking imitation**).

Let's look at the cello part in b. 43: it is an exact repeat of b. 4. In b. 4 it seemed just a harmless linking phrase, nothing out of the ordinary. But of course it is the same as our cell 'd', which appears in a melody part in bb. 21–22, and then in the example above (ex. 43) in the violin II part, as well as in bars 26 and 28. The cello now sequences this motif underneath the repeated string chords, bb. 43–48:



Ex. 51 Bach, I: 43–45

It remains to analyse the harmony of this passage:

Bar	Key	Chord
24	E minor	I with a *tierce de Picardie*, so it acts as a pivot chord V in a minor
25	A minor	I
26		V
27		V^7
28		I
29		I–IV (pivot II in C)
30	C	V^7–I
31		IV–VII (pivot II in A minor)
32	A minor	V
33		I

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Bar	Key	Chord
34	A minor	IV (pivot II in C)
35	C	V^7
36		I (pivot V in F)
37	F	I (pivot VI in A minor)
38	A minor	II
39		V^7
40		I
41		IVc
42		I–V^7
43		I
44		VIb–dim^7
45	E minor	Ib
46		dim^7
47	D minor	Ib
48		dim^7
49	C	Ib
50		I
51		V

Most of the passage does not stay in the dominant (E minor) but reverts to the **tonic** (A minor); the main pull away from the tonic in this passage is to the **relative major** (C), with **passing** (short) **modulations** to the relative major's subdominant (F), the dominant (E minor) and the subdominant minor (D minor) – as well as a passing F♯ at the end of b. 50 which briefly implies the dominant of the relative major (C) and helps reinforce this new key area. Again, Bach uses a great many **diminished 7th chords** which help him change key. **Dissonance** is also employed, but here milder forms are used.

Second ritornello (bb. 51.2–84.1 with brief solo 'interruptions')

Just as Bach **integrates the material from the ritornello into his episodes**, likewise we find when we reach the **second ritornello that section is expanded with solo material**. The first ritornello was 24 bars long – this one is 32 bars!

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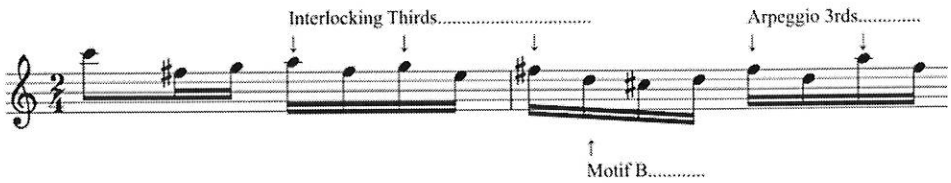
This table outlines where the 'proper' ritornello material derives from. After that we shall look separately at the new solo material.

Rit. 2 bb.	Comes from Rit. 1 bb.	Comments
51.2–61.1	0.1–10.1	The original material appears a minor 3rd higher in C major. The parts are rewritten – most noticeably bb. 51–53 where the solo violin has a new rising arpeggio figure and the bass is modified accordingly; and imitation in b. 59 by the cellos of violin I b. 58. At b. 59.2 the theme moves back to the original A minor.
63–65.1	10–11	Rewritten with some new accompaniments.
67.2–73.1	13–18.1	Starts slightly differently but otherwise as originally scored.
78–84.1	19–24.1	First bar new, otherwise as originally scored.

We can see from this that Bach has actually repeated his opening ritornello, at first in the relative major, but mostly **in the tonic**, and has used a 'cut-and-paste' technique so that in between the various parts of it there is **solo violin passagework** (passagework refers to music that is less thematic, typically made up of scale and arpeggio figures).

In the first two violin breaks (notice **without *continuo***), Bach merely uses a series of falling interlocking 3rds, linked by motif b:



Ex. 52 Bach, I: 61–62

The second break is a **sequence down one note** of the first. The third break is accompanied by *continuo* and punctuated by string chords on the first beat of the bar. It is one bar of new figuration (melodic patterns), **sequenced** down four times, followed by a long two-bar scale passage up two octaves from **low to high B**, with the orchestral violins joining in the last octave (2nd violins playing in 3rds).

Here is a summary of the harmonic progressions of the ritornello:

Bar	Key	Chord
52	C	Ib
53		IVc–II^{7}b
54		Ib–V
55		I
56		Vb–I
57		Vc–Ib (acts as pivot: Vb in F)
58	F	I–Ib (acts as pivot: IVb in C)

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Bar	Key	Chord
59	C	V(7)
60		I–VIb (pivot: IIb in G)
61	G	V(7)
62		V
63		Vb
64		Ib
65		IV
66		IV
67		IV
68		VIIb–dim7
69	E minor	Vb–I
70		IVb
71		V7
72		Ic–V
73		V7d
74		dim7
75		dim7
76		IIb
77		V7
78		V7b
79		Ib–IV–IIb–V
80		VI
81		dim7
82		dim7
83		VIIb–Ib–Ic–V
84		I

As you would expect, the harmony does not deviate a great deal from that used by the first ritornello. Notice the use of **chromatic auxiliary notes** (bb. 62, 67) and the extensive use of **diminished 7ths**.

Second episode (bb. 84.2–101.1)

Bach shows how tightly he organises his material in this episode:

bb. 84.2–88.1 are based on the opening of the first episode 24.2–28.1 but **transposed into the subdominant, E minor.**

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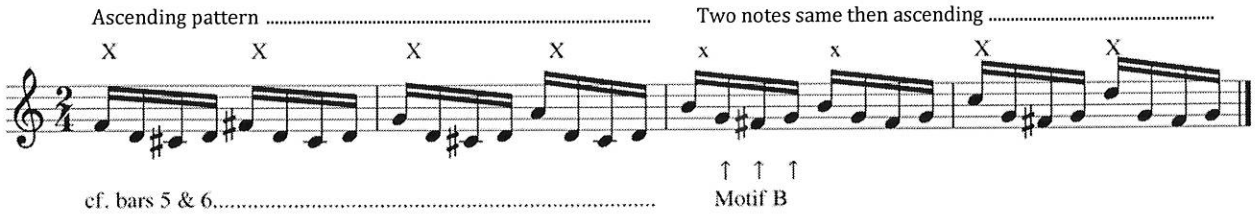
Bars 88.2–90 are based on the start of the second phrase of the opening ritornello (bb. 4.2–8.1), with a less busy accompaniment (the tune isn't doubled by the 1st violins who harmonise instead with the 2nds, and the bass line is greatly reduced). This is then **sequenced** starting the second semiquaver of b. 91 and then b. 93. At b. 95 the pattern is varied a little (the top notes of the last two sets of four semiquavers repeats rather than continue to ascend), and this variant is itself sequenced in b. 97:



Ex. 53 Bach, I: 93–6, first note put down an octave to reveal pattern

Finally, bb. 99 to 101 are a *continuo*-accompanied violin solo, consisting of mainly **scalic figuration** (i.e. scale patterns), that leads into the next ritornello.

Harmonies from bar 89 are:

Bar	Key	Chord
89	E minor to A minor	V^7 over tonic – V^7d in A minor (notice the D natural/sharp clash)
90		Ib–V
91	A minor to D minor	I–V^7 in D
92		Scrunchy chord: VII on raised leading note of D minor over dominant–V
93	D minor to G	I–V^7c in G
94		Ib–V
95	G to C	I–V^7 in C (notice the F sharp/natural clash)
96		VI over dominant–V
97	C to F	IV–V^7d in F (notice the B natural/flat clash)
98		Ib–V^7c
99		I–VI
100	F to D minor	II–Vb (pivot IIb in D minor)
101		V

Ritornello interruption (bb. 101.2–105.1)

Bach now brings in ritornello material but in **D minor (the subdominant)** – and only for four bars, before the episode continues. The harmonisation is similar to, but not exactly the same as, when the music appeared at the start of the second proper ritornello.

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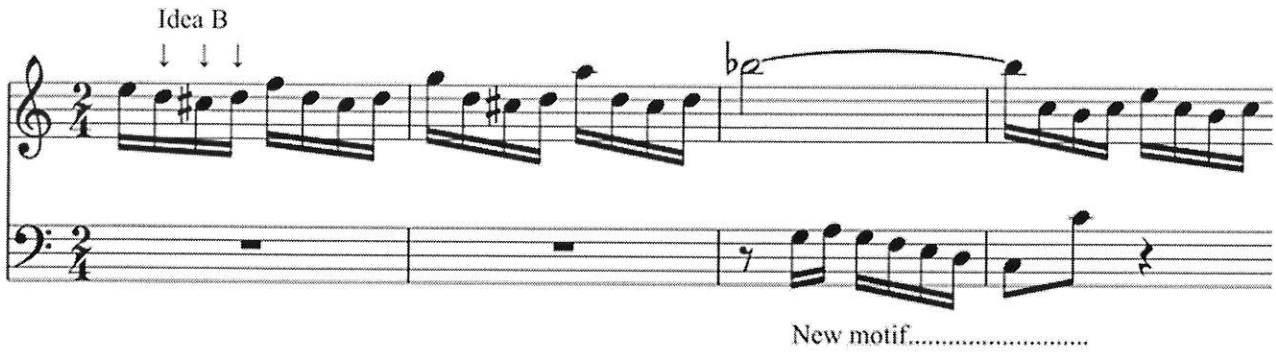
Episode 2 continues...

The idea which we last heard at b. 88.2, but originally from b. 5, returns to the solo violin in b. 105.2, accompanied by chords in the upper strings, with a new motif heard in the *continuo* when the soloist reaches its highest note – which is this time sustained:



Ex. 54 Bach, I: 106–109

This idea is **sequenced down** a note in b. 109. In b. 112 the soloist produces an ascending and descending scale, ending on a sustained note with the *continuo* using the new idea from b. 108; this scale passage is sequenced up a tone in b. 115, and finally in b. 117 there is a new two-bar phrase of **string-crossing figuration** (i.e. melodic patterns produced by moving rapidly from a note on one string to the next; very typical of idiomatic violin writing), sequenced in b. 119 and b. 121.

Another ritornello interruption! (bb. 122.2–126.1)

The ritornello first phrase returns in the strings while the soloist continues with the new motif first introduced in b. 117. Again, it is only a short snatch of the ritornello but as it comes back in the tonic it is almost as if Bach is **fooling us** into thinking that the final ritornello has arrived.

Episode 2 continues...

The solo violin starts off just as it did after the last interruption with the b. 5 idea, this time harmonised by all the strings, **sequenced up a 4th** in b. 129, up a 4th again in b. 131, and yet again in b. 133. At b. 135 the violin, because of all these upward 4th transpositions, is playing on its **top string**, introducing the distinctive **syncopated motif** from b. 44, which is sequenced down a 4th this time in b. 137 and then in b. 139. Bars 140–142 takes on the music of b. 49 (heard twice, second time in sequence) and b. 50 which was the music Bach previously used to move into the second ritornello, this time moving into the final ritornello.

Final ritornello (bb. 142.2–171

This is nearly an exact repeat of the second ritornello, with two main changes:

1. Bach omits the material from bb. 55.2–58.
2. He transposes the material as follows: bb. 142–145 are down a 3rd, and the remaining bars are down a 5th. If we look at what these transpositions do to the key scheme of the ritornello we get the following:

Second Ritornello	Key	Transposition	Resulting Key in Third Ritornello
52	C	down min 3rd	A minor (143)
60	A minor	down 5th	D minor (147)
61	G	down 5th	C (148)
69	E minor	down 5th	A minor (156)

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Summary of the main points

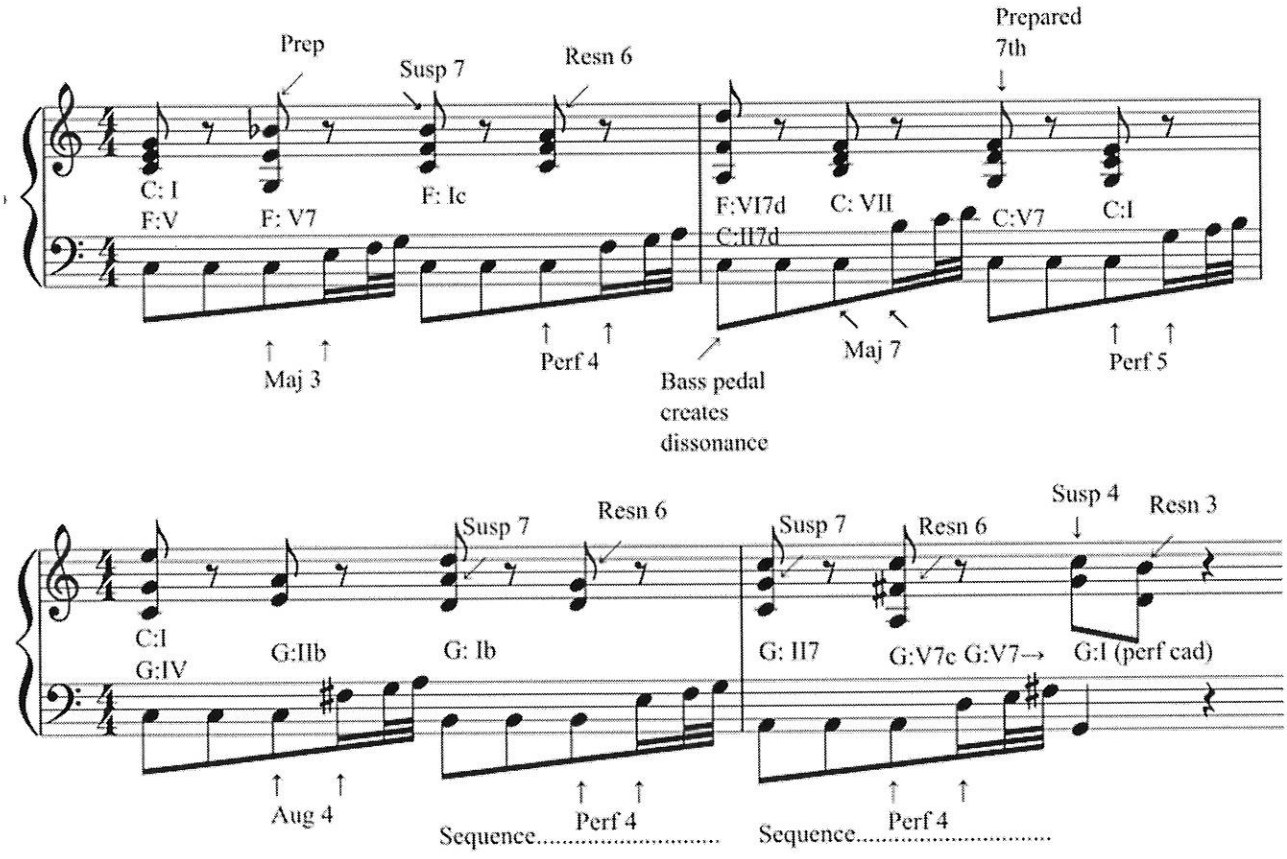
This movement is very complex. Before we move on to the second movement it will be useful to take stock of four main points that are key to the understanding of the Bach:

- **Texture** – Bach's texture is busy; he achieves this by ensuring all his parts are independent a great deal of the time, but also tying them together through the use of imitation.
- **Melody** – This avoids any sort of periodic phrasing, but develops his melody through sequences, stretching intervals, melodic inversion, etc. into one long line, a technique called *Fortspinnung*. Bach unites the melodies by the use of a few small melodic cells which crop up throughout the movement.
- **Harmony** – Bach's music uses a great deal of dissonance and modulates almost constantly; apart from using pivot chords, Bach loves the use of *tierce de Picardie* and diminished 7^{th}s to aid modulation.
- **Structure** – Ritornellos and episodes are tightly bound together through the following processes:
  - Episode 1 – uses cells from ritornello 1 in both solo and accompaniment
  - Ritornello 2 – has solo interjections
  - Episode 2 – has ritornello interruptions
  - Ritornello 3 – is an abridged version of ritornello 2

Analysis: Second Movement (A Level only)

The tempo is ***andante*** (a moderate speed), the key C major (the **relative major**), the metre a more leisurely **4/4**; so far so typical of the late Baroque concerto (although Vivaldi kept his middle movement in the same key as his outer two). The structure of this movement is, however, unique. Bach uses a **recurring refrain** or **ostinato bass** where the thematic interest is in the **bass (*continuo*) part**; this repeats 10 times in total throughout the music. In the hands of a lesser composer this might make for a somewhat rigid and forced structure, but Bach's genius is to surmount this with a beautiful, **rhapsodic solo violin melody**; it is almost like having a written-down improvisation by one of the great jazz musicians – no wonder jazz composers have always admired Bach.

Here is the first statement of the refrain:



Ex. 55 Bach, II: 1–4, expression marks omitted

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Four bars that look quite simple in the orchestral score have a lot going on, as the annotations above show. Let's tease out what is happening:

1. The bass line is made up of a **half-bar motif** consisting of three repeated staccato notes, and a slurred upward stepwise 3rd to the semiquaver–two-demisemiquaver rhythm; you can see this repeats seven times in the opening statement.
2. The first five times the motif appears it starts on the tonic C, which therefore acts as a **tonic pedal**. The final two times it is **sequenced** down a step.
3. Bach continually alters the **interval** between the repeated note and rising section of the motif – he includes some expressive and angular (not easy to sing) intervals such as the **major 7th** and the **augmented 4th**.
4. The harmonies are **restless**; by beat 2 we are in the subdominant, F major, in bar 2 back in the tonic again, and in bar 3 we have moved to the dominant, G. The refrain ends on a **perfect cadence** in G.
5. Each time Bach modulates he uses a **pivot chord**.
6. There are lots of **suspensions** that add interest to the harmony. The first is in the top part of bar 1 where its preparation, dissonance (a 7th) and resolution (falling by step to the 6th) has been labelled. The next suspension (b. 3) is similarly prepared and resolved (A falling to G), the resolution acting as the preparation for the next suspension in the following bar (G falling to F♯). The final suspension is a 4–3 suspension (C falling to B) over the last chord of the cadence.
7. The bass pedal in bar 2 also creates **considerable dissonance**: it carries on regardless of the upper parts and only on the last beat provides the root to chord I.

From the above analysis we can get a flavour of the **types of question** an examiner may ask you:

1. Identifying techniques: pedal, sequence, suspension
2. Identifying intervals
3. Identifying keys
4. Identifying chords
5. Identifying dissonance

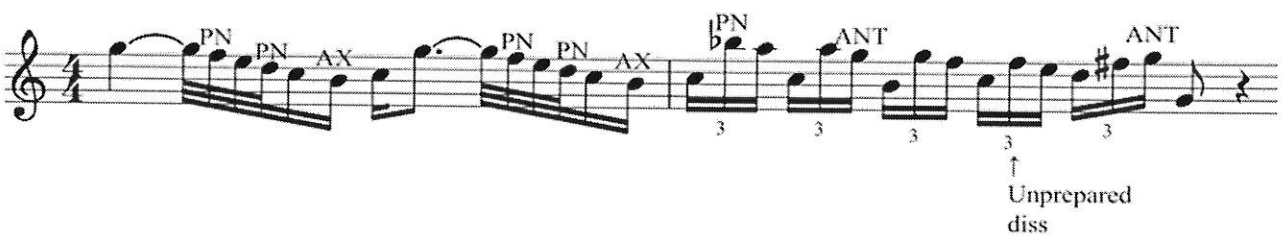
Very little of this can be learnt by heart; you really need to be able to analyse the movement in exam conditions.

What is pertinent to overall understanding of the movement is that Bach makes the little refrain **restless and expressive.** It will take too much space to continue the analysis of this movement in this kind of detail, but it is worth your while taking little passages apart in as much detail as possible and checking your answers with fellow students and your teacher.

Bars 5 and 6 introduce the solo violin over the upper strings without the *continuo* (a pattern that continues throughout the movement):

1. The viola provides a continuous quaver **tonic pedal,** until b. 6.3 where it provides a **semiquaver link** back to the reprise.
2. The violins start with the quaver followed by a quaver rest pattern for a bar before moving to quaver notes on every beat.
3. The harmony starts in **C**, moves to **F** (b. 5.3) and back to **C** at b. 6.2 (the F♯ in b. 6.3 merely reinforces the dominant harmony in C).
4. The solo violin plays a period of one bar and three beats. It consists of **descending scale runs**, and a **triplet semiquaver figure.**

Let's examine the dissonances that Bach uses in the solo violin part:



Ex. 56 Bach, II: 5–6

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Most of the dissonances are straightforward (PN = passing note; AX = auxiliary note; ANT = anticipation note). Two of the dissonances are particularly interesting:

The passing note on b. 6.1 moves C-B♭-A but instead of moving conjunctly Bach stretches the C to B♭ into a 7th.

The **unprepared dissonance** in b. 6 is an F; this is like a mini-suspension in that it appears as the 7th of V7 in the previous group of triplets (its preparation) and it falls by step onto a harmony note on the next semiquaver (E – its resolution).

Note how the violins provide the semiquaver–demisemiquaver–demisemiquaver upbeat into the second appearance of the reprise.

Bars 7–8 are an exact repeat of bb. 1–2.

The solo violin's next period **(bb. 9–14)** is a lovely example of ***Fortspinnung*** – it lasts for six bars and one beat, climaxing to a **very high G** as its last note.

The solo has very little repetition or apparent structure – it is like a written-out improvisation. Only the second half of b. 9 is an **inexact sequence** of its first half. A new rhythmic figure (dotted semiquaver–demisemiquaver) is introduced; in Bach's time this might have been assimilated to the rhythm triplet quaver–semiquaver, to give it a gentle swing.

Tonally, the music moves from C to G (b. 9.3), back to C (b. 11), G again (b. 12) and a lovely **chromatic passage** in b. 13: note the **diminished 7ths** on b. 13.1 and 13.3; the whole bar flirts with the dominant minor (G), but in b. 14 moves to G major.

The solo violin part is also suffused with **chromaticism** – b. 13 and one note each side use 11 of the 12 notes of the chromatic scale.

The texture is as at b. 5, but note there is a **short two-bar entry of the reprise** starting in b. 11 in the dominant.

The next time the **reprise enters (b. 15)** it is four bars long. It uses G as a pedal note, firstly as the dominant in C (b. 15), then as the tonic in G (b. 16). It then sequences following the **diminished 7th** harmonies of b. 17, and ends cadences in **D minor in b. 18**.

Bach this time starts the next solo phrase two bars before the end of the reprise – the violin commencing with a beautifully **held B♭** (a note of the diminished 7th chord in the strings below). The solo figuration follows the same patterns as previously established. The last two bars of the violin solo are accompanied as in b. 5.

In **b. 21 the reprise** returns for just two bars in **D minor** (the supertonic minor).

In b. 23 the **solo violin repeats bb. 9–14 but up a note**. The accompaniment is also mainly the same, with a few minor changes, most notably the introduction of the ***continuo* lead-in in b. 28.4**. The keys employed therefore are **D minor and A minor**. Notice how in b. 24.3 Bach employs V in A minor which cadences on chord I in 25.1, but 25.2 chromatically alters this A minor chord so it becomes an A major chord (***tierce de Picardie***), acting as the dominant of D minor.

The **reprise returns in b. 29** – this time for only one-and-a-half bars – and it moves from D minor to cadence into A minor.

At b. 30.3 the next solo starts for six-and-a-half bars. There is similar figuration to before – but notice the mini 'near' **sequence** of b. 30 beat 3 to beat 4; and bars 33–34 a **sequence** a 4th higher of bb. 31–32; second half of b. 35 a **sequence** of its first half.

The long solo violin notes, as before, emphasise the **diminished 7th harmonies** in those bars. Bar 32 is G minor and bar 34 is C minor, via whose chord V leads us back to C in b. 37.

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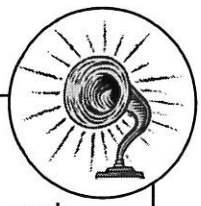
There are **two entries of the reprise** while the soloist is playing – in bb. 31–32 in the **viola**, and in bb. 33–34 in the ***continuo*** part.

The very **first two bars of the piece** return in bb. 37–38.

At b. 39 the soloist, accompanied in b. 5 fashion, has a three-bar and three-beat period. It starts in C, there is a **diminished 7th** on b. 41.1, followed by a **chromatic** passage leading down to chords I and V in C.

The **final reprise** occurs in b. 43 – the first two bars are the same as bb. 1–2 (but harmonised slightly differently). Bar 45 uses a sequence of the half-bar motif but keeps in C major and the final bar is a V^7c–I–V–I cadential progression.

The solo violin embellishes this final reprise – there are a couple of **sequences** (bb. 44.4 = 44.3; 45.3–4 = 45.1–2) and it finally **joins with the 1st violins** in their cadence.



Listen Up!

Compare two recordings of Bach's slow movement, one played on instruments of the time, and another on modern instruments. You can find your own recordings or use the ones we have suggested to your teacher.

Make a list of as many differences as you can and then discuss in class to see which performance you prefer, supporting your answer with reasons.

Some ideas are given at the end of the pack.

Analysis: Third Movement (A Level only)

In this movement we focus on a major difference between Bach and Vivaldi: their handling of **texture**. Bach follows Vivaldi in finishing with a fast (***allegro assai*** – fairly fast) movement in **ritornello form**.

The metre is **9/8** – three beats in compound time – which makes the movement feel like a **gigue** (jig) – a dance form that was often used for the **last movements** of sonatas and suites in the Baroque period.

Whereas Vivaldi almost always used a homophonic texture throughout his concertos, Bach loved to use **counterpoint**. We have already seen how much busier his texture is in the first two movements compared with Vivaldi's. In the last movement he takes this one step further and furnishes the ritornello with a **fugal texture**.

A fugue is a **strict imitative texture** where each part comes in one after the other with the same theme (called the **subject**). Bach was famous for writing in what was regarded at the time as an old-fashioned form. Here he is not as strict as in a real fugue. It is also worth noticing that the gigues, which were the last movement of his instrumental **suites** (sets of dances), tend to be **fugal** as well.

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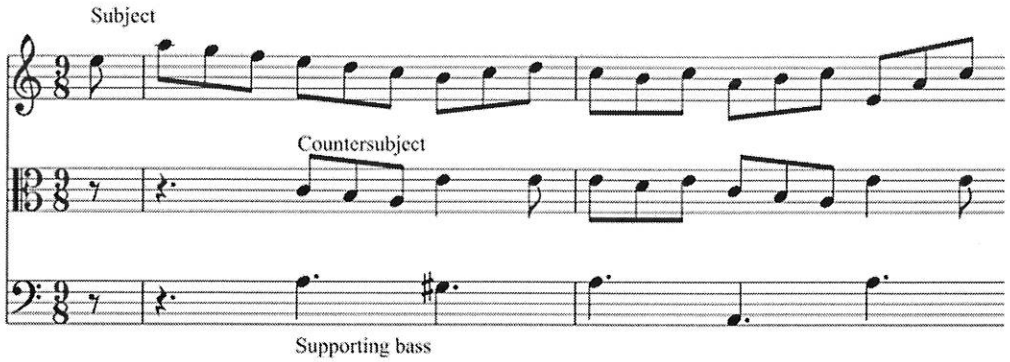
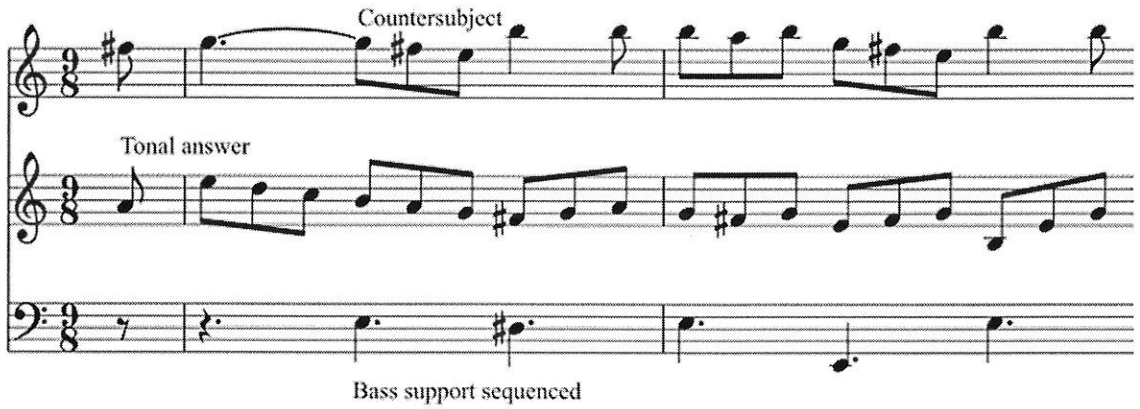
Let us examine how it works. Note that **throughout the ritornello the solo violin doubles the 1st violins**:



Ex. 57 Bach, III: 1–2

The 1st violins enter with the fugue **subject**, which is accompanied by a **countersubject** (a subsidiary subject) in the violas. The bar of repeated crotchet–quaver notes is an important feature of this theme (b. 3). The ***continuo*** provides a supporting bass.

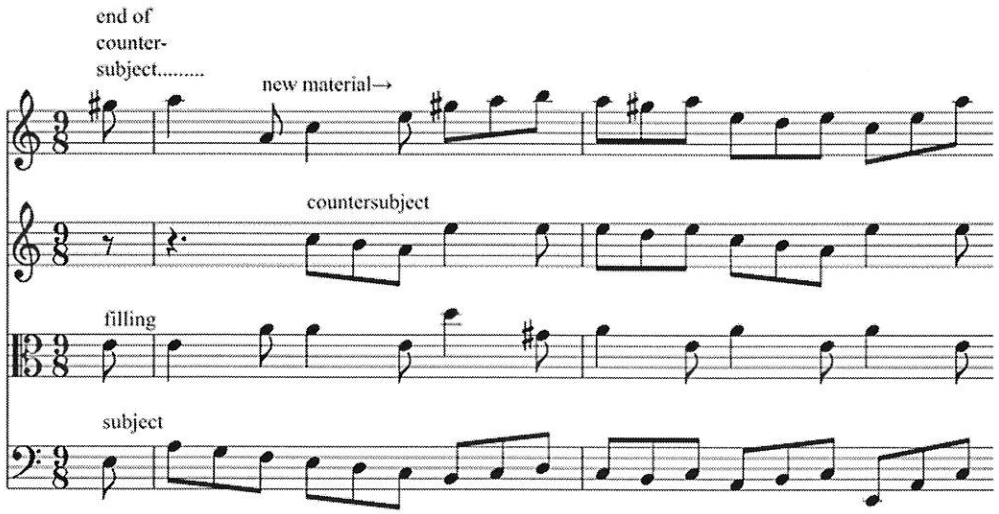
Now let's fast-forward to when the violins II enter:



*Ex. 58 Bach, III: 5–6 (slurs omitted, **bass part altered** to reveal sequence)*

The 2nd violins take the subject in an altered form called a **tonal answer**. When a subject starts with the interval of a 5th, a tonal answer starts with the interval of a 4th and vice versa. The result of this interval change is to enable modulation to the **dominant** as here – E minor. Note the **sequence** (the start of which is disguised by Bach) in the bass part. The violas continue playing supporting harmonies, while maintaining the independence of their part. The 1st violins now have the **countersubject**.

The next entry of the subject is in the *continuo* at the end of b. 8 with the **subject** in its original form (rising 4th), returning us back to the tonic, A minor:



Ex. 59 Bach, III: 9–10 (violin II part altered to reveal countersubject)

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