

BRAHMS

Symphony No.3



Symphony No. 3 in F major by Johannes Brahms

Stage 5 & 6 Teaching Resource

Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Acknowledgements

© 2025 Sydney Symphony Orchestra Holdings Pty
Limited All rights reserved

Except under the conditions described in the Copyrights Act 1968 of Australia (the Act) and subsequent amendments, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means., electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Educational institutions copying any part of this book for educational purposes under the Act must be covered by a Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) licence for education institutions and must have given a remuneration notice to CAL.

Licence restrictions must be adhered to. For details of the CAL licence contact:

Copyright Agency Limited, Level 12, 66 Goulburn Street, Sydney, 2000.

Telephone: (02) 9394 7600

Facsimile: (02) 9394 7601

Email: info@copyright.com.au

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra would like to express its gratitude to the following for their generous support of the Learning & Engagement program and the production of this resource kit:

Simone Young, Chief Conductor, Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Craig Whitehead Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Resource Development

Writer: Philip Bailey

Editor: Daniella Garnero

Production: Alice Jarman-Powis, Jann Hing

Design: Amy Zhou

Contact

For information concerning the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's Learning & Engagement program, contact:

Email: schools@sydneysymphony.com

Online: www.sydneysymphony.com/learning

“Your life can be changed and enriched through all sorts of music; music from now, music from the past, music from the very distant past and music from as recently as yesterday.

Through intensive listening students become involved in one of the highest orders of thinking.

As a teacher, by bringing students to a concert and studying music in the classroom, you are providing your students with a special pathway to musical knowledge through direct experience of and contact with live music.”

Richard Gill AO

(1941-2018)

Conductor, notable educator and advocate. Richard was the founding Artistic Director of Education at the Sydney Symphony. He has inspired generation of musicians through his work and continues to inspire new generations through his legacy.

Syllabus Links

NSW Curriculum

Symphony No. 3 in F major by Johannes Brahms covers a range of topics from the NSW syllabuses:

Years 7-10 Additional Study Course:

Nineteenth-Century Music

Music 1 Preliminary and HSC:

Topics: Music for Large Ensembles
 Music of 19th Century

Music 2 Preliminary:

Mandatory Topic: Music 1600 to 1900

Music 2 HSC:

Additional Topic: Nineteenth Century Music

Syllabus Outcomes

Stage 4 and Stage 5 Elective Music

Activities	Syllabus Outcomes	Ideas for assessment
Activity 1: Listening	4.7, 4.8, 4.9 5.7, 5.8, 5.9	Short answer or class discussion
Activity 2: Aural and Score Reading	4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9 5.4, 5.5, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9	Short answer or class discussion
Activity 3: Performance and Score Reading	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.12 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.7, 4.12	Performance
Activity 4: Composition, Aural and Score Reading	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.9 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.9	Composition
Activity 5: Score Reading and Musicology	4.7, 4.8, 4.9 5.7, 5.8, 5.9	Extended Response

Stage 6 Music 1

Activities	Syllabus Outcomes	Ideas for assessment
Activity 1: Listening	P2, P4, P5, P6 H2, H4, H5, H6	Short answer or class discussion
Activity 2: Aural and Score Reading	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P10 H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H10	Short answer or class discussion
Activity 3: Performance and Score Reading	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P10 H1, H3, P4, P5, H6, H10	Performance
Activity 4: Composition, Aural and Score Reading	P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P11 H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H11	Composition
Activity 5: Score Reading and Musicology	P2, P4, P6 H2, H4, H6	Extended Response

Stage 6 Music 2

Activities	Syllabus Outcomes	Ideas for assessment
Activity 1: Listening	P2, P5, P6, P7 H2, H5, H6, H7	Short answer or class discussion
Activity 2: Aural and Score Reading	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P10 H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H10	Short answer or class discussion
Activity 3: Performance and Score Reading	P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P10 H2, H3, P4, P5, H6, H10	Performance
Activity 4: Composition, Aural and Score Reading	P1, P4, P9, P10 H1, H4, H9, H10	Composition
Activity 5: Score Reading and Musicology	P2, P5, P6, P7 H2, P5, H6, H7	Extended Response

Work: *Symphony No. 3 in F major* by Johannes Brahms

Composer Background

Composer Background: Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)

The German composer, pianist, and conductor Johannes Brahms was one of the most significant composers of the nineteenth century. His works combine the emotional depth of the Romantic period with the formal structure of classical influences such as J. S. Bach and Beethoven. In his early twenties, Brahms met a number of influential instrumentalists and composers, including Robert Schumann. The relationship between Brahms and Schumann is considered to be a significant milestone in his professional and personal life.

Brahms worked as a musician in various roles and, while he began composing at a young age, it was not until the success of his German Requiem, in 1869, that he fully gained the confidence to write many of his major orchestral works. Now living in Vienna, Brahms was able to devote more and more of his time to composition, producing his Violin Concerto in D major, the Piano Concerto No. 2 in B flat major and his third and fourth symphonies, among other major works.

Work Background

Brahms was fifty years old when he began work on his Third Symphony. Six years had elapsed since the Second Symphony, during which time Brahms had composed some of his most powerful and memorable works, including two piano concertos and the German Requiem. It is the only “cyclic” symphony of the four which Brahms composed and the most tonally complex. Although in F major, the tension between major and minor is the symphony’s most consistent musical feature. From the opening “motto,” which uses not the A-natural of the tonic F major, but the A-flat of F minor, the keys of A and A-flat play major structural roles within the movements. The major and minor duality is also evident in the overall structure, with “major” first two movements and “minor” last two movements. The symphony is virtuosic in terms of rhythm and meter, while one of this symphony’s most famous aspects is that all four movements end quietly.

Instrumentation of Work

Woodwind	Brass	Percussion	Strings
2 flutes	2 horns in C	timpani	1 st violins
2 oboes	2 horns in F		2 nd violins
2 clarinets in Bb and A	2 trumpets in F		violas
2 bassoons	3 trombones		cellos
contrabassoon			double basses

Listening Guide

Overview:

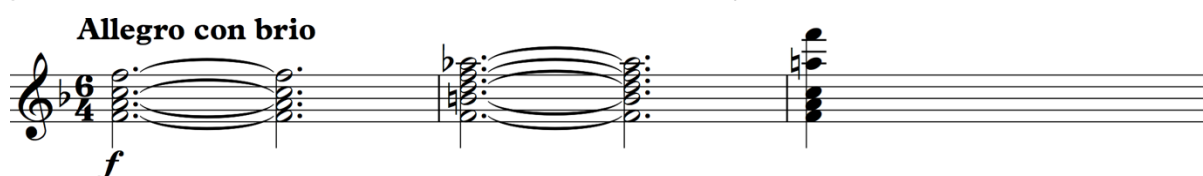
Published 1884. Dedicated to “his dearly beloved” Hans von Bülow “in true friendship” January 8, 1890.

First Movement - Allegro con brio

Sonata-Allegro Form. F Major, $\frac{6}{4}$ time, with two passages (of 13 and 9 bars) in $\frac{9}{4}$ time.

Exposition (Bars 1 to 76)

Bar 1 The symphony begins with the F--A-flat--F Motto. This is said to refer to Brahms's personal motto, “Frei aber froh” (“Free but happy”). The harmony beneath the F is F major but under A-flat, it is a dissonant diminished seventh chord. The Motto theme appears five times in the first twelve bars, ranging through the whole compass of the orchestra. Listen especially for the double basses, bass trombone and contrabassoon whose dark presentation of the Motto undercuts the heroic First Subject.



Bar 3 The first subject begins in the violins. It consists of two descending phrases, accompanied by the Motto theme in the lowest instruments. The main idea that forms the basis of this melody is a quotation from a passing phrase in Schumann's Rhenish Symphony.



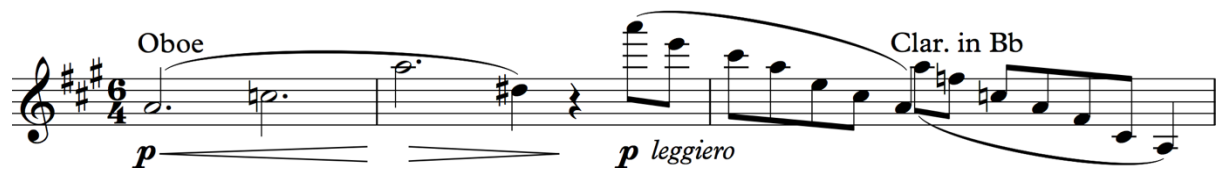
Bar 15 Transition. A series of rising sequences lead to an F-major cadence punctuated by trombones, played over the Motto beginning on A in the bass. The music moves to D-flat major. From here, Brahms uses an 'enharmonic modulation', to move from D-flat to the C# of A major.

Bar 31 The three-sharp key signature for A major indicates the new key.

Bar 36 Second Subject (A major). The time signature changes to $\frac{9}{4}$. The solo clarinet plays the melody accompanied by a bassoon counterpoint before it is repeated by the whole orchestra at bar 40.



Bar 49 The time signature changes back to 6_4 . The oboe plays a variation of the Motto Theme. The following music is characterised by arpeggios beginning on the last beat of the bar, creating a rhythmic displacement. At bar 56, there is a distinct change from major to minor and a build-up in the dynamics.



The Exposition is repeated.

Development (Bars 77 to 119)

Bar 77 The Development section begins in C-sharp minor using the second subject. It is transformed from its 9_4 version into the original 6_4 . The low strings and bassoons play the new version of the second subject, before the first violins take over the new 6_4 version of the second subject, with the cellos adding a new counterpoint. The winds also add off-beat interjections. The music sounds as if it is in E major, but it quickly modulates to A major. The key shifts again up the circle of fifths, to D major. Another shift up the circle of fifths, at bar 94 brings the phrase to G major, where it remains, while the flutes, clarinets and oboes share the melody. The mood and volume settle down and become much quieter before another harmonic shift to the distant key of E flat major.

Bar 101 The key signature changes to one flat, but the music is in E-flat major. The principal horn plays the Motto, on the notes G –B-flat–G. For the first time, the Motto is extended and becomes an actual melody, the horn adding a new descending line. At bar 112, the low strings and bassoons play a pared back version of Theme 1 without any accompaniment. The key shifts to B-flat minor after two bars, with an F pedal point established in the low strings, supported by a timpani roll.

Recapitulation (Bars 120 to 182)

Bar 120 Both the meter and the tempo return to that of the Exposition. The Motto is extended to four bars, with two statements of the initial F–A-flat over different chords.

Bar 124 After the extended Motto statement, the presentation of the first subject matches the exposition.

Bar 128 The Transition starts as it did in the Exposition but quickly changes both harmonically and dynamically. The “enharmonic modulation” follows the same formula, this time with F-sharp leading to the “dominant” chord in D major, where the key signature changes to two sharps.

Bar 149 The second subject returns in D major. The meter changes to 9_4 , just as it did in the Exposition.

Coda (Bars 183 to 224)

Bar 183 With full scoring, including trumpets, trombones, and timpani, the first subject begins the Coda. The key has moved back to F major, but the bass Motto against the Theme is on C–E-flat–C, introducing a dominant influence that will remain for most of the Coda. The music builds in energy and dynamics before rapidly dying away. A second swell of dynamics also gradually recede until the music arrives in the tonic key of F major in both melody and bass at bar 208. The Theme, a near inversion of this melody is played against it in the violas while the second violins take over the pulsations. The harmony finally moves toward F. The volume diminishes rapidly, and the melodic idea is repeated in the cellos, with the inversion in the second violins and the pulsations again in the horns.

Bar 205 The volume now softens as the string instrument groups extend their ideas, working down over two more bars and finally reaching a full arrival on F in the melody and bass at bar 216. The Motto theme reappears at bar 216, followed by the heroic first subject, which gently leads to an unexpectedly quiet ending.

Second Movement - Andante

Modified short sonata form. C major 4_4 time.

Exposition (Bars 1 to 70)

Bar 1 First Subject (C major): The clarinet leads the woodwinds through a long and lyrical melody.

Andante
Clarinet in Bb



Bar 24 Transition. The oboes begin with an upbeat playing a decorative semiquaver part. Clarinets, bassoons, and horns, joined by the low strings, play the theme against this decoration. The violins join in, playing for the first time in the movement and soaring upward, moving the harmony toward the dominant key of G major.

Bar 41 Second Subject (G major). The theme is played in unison by clarinet and bassoon. It has an austere chorale-like character.



Development (Bars 71 to 84)

Bar 71 The violins play a version of the first subject, with a busy quaver accompaniment in the violas and cellos. Beginning with a striking harmonic shift, it is presented in a new key, B major.

Bar 77 Semiquavers notes, originally from the transition passage completely take over in the strings. They are passed between instrument groups.

Bar 80 The violins play the main theme, combining it with the semiquaver rhythm. The key of C major is gradually re-established.

Recapitulation (Bars 85 to 134)

Bar 85 The first subject returns, with the beat displaced, beginning on the fourth beat of the bar. It eventually returns to the expected form, beginning on the first beat of the bar.

Bar 108 A new, passionate and chromatic theme appears in the place of the original second subject from the Exposition. It is presented, in octaves, by the violins. The volume steadily builds, working toward a major climax, which arrives at bar 112, where the violins reach their highest pitch. Brahms indicates a slowing here. The F-minor arpeggio resolves into the final C major chord.



Coda (Bars 122 to 134)

Bar 122 A quiet reference to the opening theme brings the movement to an end, concluding with a plagal cadence, employing a minor chord iv I. The presence of the A-flat reflects the opening "Motto" of the first movement. The chord is gently repeated by the lower instruments, then held.

Third Movement - Poco Allegretto

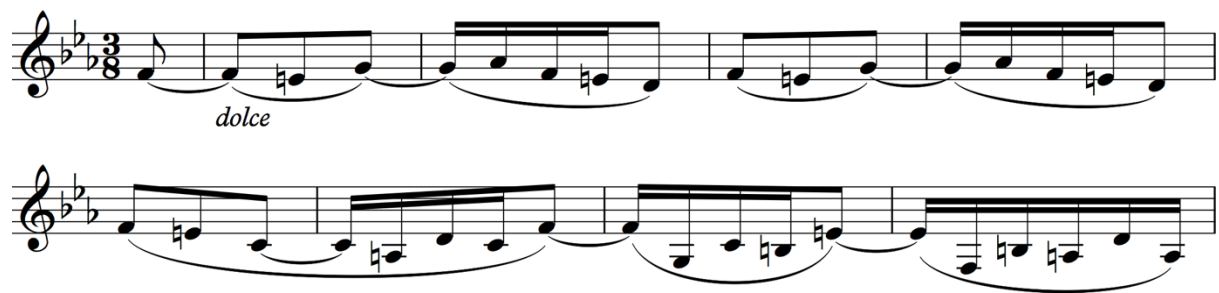
Ternary form [ABA'] resembling a Scherzo and Trio. C minor, $\frac{3}{8}$ time.

First Section (A) (Bars 1 to 53)

Bar 1 The elegiac mezza voce minor-key theme is played by cellos in their upper-middle register. The accompaniment is harmonic, but active. The first and second violins pass a triplet figure between them, while the basses play pizzicato. The size of the orchestra is reduced. Flutes and bassoons are the only wind instruments.



Bar 24 The cellos begin the new melody in the tonic major. Marked *dolce*, it is the second part of the melody.



Bar 41 The main theme returns, played by the flute, oboe and horn.

Bar 45 In the second phrase, the same instruments (flute, oboe, and horn) play the melody.

Second Section or “Trio” (B), A flat minor/major (Bars 54 to 97)

Bar 54 Everything is metrically displaced, with the upbeats acting like downbeats. The woodwinds alternate chords on A flat minor and A flat major.



Bar 70 The strings alone play a new idea that immediately restores the downbeat and sense of meter. It is in B major, which (if considered as the enharmonic C flat major) is the relative major key to A flat minor.

Bar 79 The music from bar 54 returns at a lower pitch.

Bar 83 This second half of the statement is also changed in several subtle ways. The “melody” in the winds now alternates between clarinets and flutes/bassoons. The final harmony is not on E flat, but a “dominant seventh” on B flat, leaving the arrival on E flat unfulfilled.

First Section Reprise (Bars 99 to 149)

Bar 99 The theme is now played by a solo horn instead of the cellos, which is a striking change.

Bar 111 The oboe plays the melody instead of the first violins.

Bar 122 The bassoon, previously accompanying the oboe, now continues as the melodic instrument for this contrasting passage.

Bar 139 Both phrases of the Theme is played by first violins and cellos spread over three octaves.

Coda (Bars 150 to 163)

Bar 150 Following two chords, the orchestra swells on a rising line, harmonised in thirds, based on the theme.

Fourth Movement - Allegro

Varied Sonata-Allegro form with Development and Recapitulation combined. F minor (ending in F major), Cut common time (2_2).

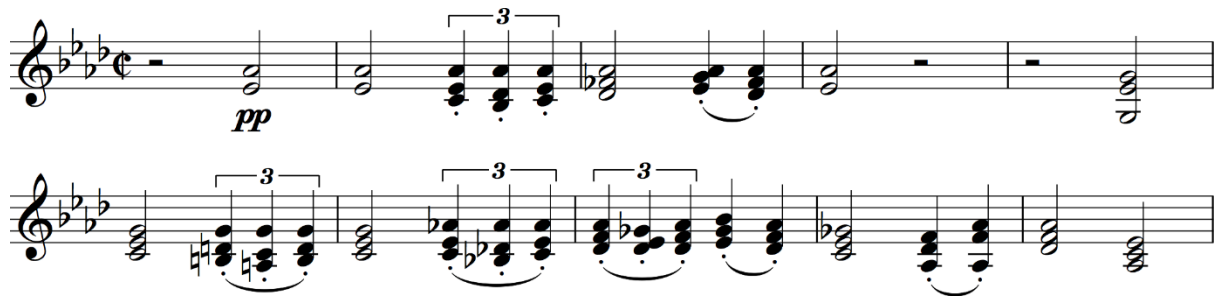
Exposition (Bars 1 to 133)

Bar 1 First Subject. All the strings and bassoons in unison, sotto voce, state the Main Theme. It features a crotchet and two quaver rhythm pattern for the first four bars. In the following three bars, mild syncopation is introduced with off-beat accents.

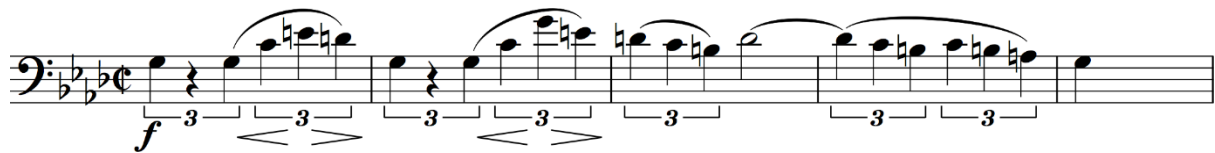


Bar 9 The Theme is now stated by flutes, clarinets, and bassoons. It is harmonised in thirds and sixths, mezza voce. The violas and cellos play rapid and light upward arpeggios.

Bar 19 The strings, lower winds, and horns play Theme 2 of the second movement, the one that was omitted from the recapitulation of that movement.



Bar 52 Second Subject (C major). This Theme is a heroic and grandly arching melody, played in broad triplet rhythm by the cellos and horn.



Bar 108 First Subject. Before the Development, the Main Theme is given a reprise in the tonic key of F minor. The unison statement is in the woodwinds, played over pizzicato string notes, also in unison. This re-statement of the Main Theme in the tonic key is one of the most prominent characteristics of Brahms' approach to Sonata Form.

Bar 120 Oboe and bassoon now present a straightforward statement of the opening phrase. It is accompanied by hushed yet agitated rising half-step figures in the strings, also punctuated by flutes and clarinets.

Development (Bars 134 to 171)

Bar 134 Playing in a measured tremolo over a low held E-flat in cellos and basses, the violins play a version of the main thematic phrase in the key of A-flat minor.

Bar 142 In a sudden, powerful outburst, the opening downward turn of the theme is used in a rapid upward sequence of changing harmonies.

Bar 149 Everything stops in an extremely dramatic general pause. The Chorale Theme - originally the Second Theme of the second movement - with alternation between the higher wind instruments and the lower ones (bassoons and trombones), with horns split between them. Meanwhile, the strings begin a forceful accompaniment with swirling, arching motion in fast triplets. The slower triplets of the chorale theme are also played in alternation. The key is A minor.

Bar 167 The last modulation is to the home key of F, but it is now triumphantly F in its major version. The tension between A flat and A natural from the very beginning of the whole symphony, between F minor and F major, seems to have been definitively won by F major

and A natural. The climax is intense, with the chorale proclaimed by all the winds and brass, and with the timpani making a grand entrance.

Recapitulation (Bars 172 to 251)

Bar 172 The transition passage from the Exposition (bar 30) appears.

Bar 194 Second Subject. Now in the tonic major key, F major. The cellos and horns again presenting the heroic triplet-rhythm melody. The music becomes increasingly chromatic.

Coda (Bars 252 to 309)

Bar 252 The violas enter with an entirely new version of the First Subject in a slow triplet rhythm. It is in the distant key of B minor. The woodwinds enter and play their harmonised version of the subject.

Bar 267 This is the key moment of the movement and the symphony. The key signature changes to F major and the tempo slows to *un poco sostenuto*. The oboes play an augmented version of the First Subject Theme. The violins and violas introduce a rustling semiquaver pattern in the accompaniment.

Bar 280 In the major-key statement of the First Subject, its rhythmic similarity to the Main Theme of the second movement has become clear. The T from that earlier movement that has played a large role in this finale now makes a final appearance. Beginning halfway through the bar, the oboes, bassoons, horns, trumpets, and trombones begin a statement of the chorale theme in F major.

Bar 297 The Motto Theme re-appears in the woodwinds.

Bar 301 With the appearance of the Motto Theme, the Main Theme of the first movement now follows. The strings present it as a shimmering tremolo. The extended descent, with cellos joining, reflects exactly the presentation at the end of the first movement, ending with two pizzicato chords.

Audio Excerpts

Access the Spotify playlist by visiting the following link:

[*Symphony No 3 in F major by Johannes Brahms*](#)

Alternatively, you can watch a performance on YouTube. Watch it here:

[*Symphony No 3 in F major by Johannes Brahms*](#)

Score Excerpts

Score excerpts are from Public Domain, IMSLP which you can access here:

[*Symphony No 3 in F major by Johannes Brahms*](#)

Learning Activities

Activity 1: Listening/Score Reading

Investigating Sonata Form

In this activity, the students will review Sonata Form and investigate how Brahms has modified the structure and its harmonic relationships defining himself as a Romantic composer, while adhering to the structure of the traditional classical form.

Task 1

Begin by reviewing what the students know about Sonata Form. The following videos provide a brief summary of the structure of Sonata Form:

[Sonata Form in two minutes video](#)

[How to listen to classical music: Sonata Form](#)

1. Exposition

Now listen to the Exposition section, bars 1 to 72, of the first movement of the Third Symphony. (Audio cue 0:00 - 2:49).

- Identify the keys of the two main themes:
 - Theme 1 (Subject) Bars 3 to 14 (0:00)
 - Theme 2 (Subject) Bars 36 to 48 (1:15)
- Discuss the keys with reference to the expected harmonic structure of Sonata Form. What do you observe about Brahms' harmonic writing?
- What other aspect of the second subject breaks with the conventions of Sonata Form?
- Describe the harmony and texture of the second subject (bars 36 to 43).

Listen to the opening of the movement.

- How does the composer create tension and release in the music?
- Identify where the tension of the opening is released.

Study the score of the opening of the Exposition. In bars 1 to 3, the woodwinds and brass present the F-A-flat-F Motto, that will become important throughout the Symphony.

- Identify the other appearances of this Motto in the Exposition (bars 1 to 72). Give bar numbers and instrumentation.
- Describe any variations in pitch (key, inversion) of the Motto Theme.

2. Development

Listen to the Development, bars 77 to 119 (Audio cue 5:47 - 6:33).

- Which subject is heard at the beginning of the Development (bars 77 to 100)?
- How has it been varied from its original presentation?
- Which theme forms the basis of the music in bars 101 to 111 (Audio cue 6:34 - 6:52)?
- Which theme makes an appearance at the end of the Development, in bars 112 to 119 (Audio cue 6:53 - 7:23)?

3. Recapitulation

Listen to the Recapitulation, bars 120 to 182 (Audio cue 7:24 - 9:48).

- Identify and discuss the key of the Second Subject (Bars 149 to 155) (Audio cue 8:25 - 8:49).

4. Coda

Listen to the Coda, bars 183 to 224 (Audio cue 9:49 - 11:32).

- Which themes are used in the Coda?
- Compare your findings of how Brahms has used Sonata Form with the standard Classical Sonata Form. Discuss the variations of Classic Sonata Form that Brahms has employed.

Task 2

In this task, the students will undertake a harmonic analysis of Development section of the first movement.

1. Identify the keys of the following bars in the Development:
 - Bar 77
 - Bar 90
 - Bar 92
 - Bar 94
 - Bar 101
 - Bar 107
2. What is the relationship between the keys in bars 77, 90, 92 and 94?
3. What keys does Brahms move through in bars 112 to 119 before arriving at the tonic key of F in bar 120?
4. What key or harmony might Brahms be expected to use in bars 112 to 119?
5. Identify the keys of the two Subjects in the Recapitulation:
 - 1st Subject (Bar 120)

- 2nd Subject (Bar 149)

Task 3

Write the Clarinet and Bassoon parts in bars 36 to 41 at their sounding pitch.

Optional Extension Task

Watch this video which explains Sonata Form using the first movement Brahms Third Symphony as its example piece:

[Sonata Form Explanation | Classical Music - Brahms' Symphony No. 3](#)

Activity 2: Aural/Score Reading

In this activity, the students will investigate the compositional techniques used by Brahms in the second movement.

Task 1: Aural

Bars 1 to 23 (Audio cue 0:00-1:21)

Listen to the music without reference to the score.

Focus Question: How does the composer use the elements of pitch and tone colour to achieve unity and variety in the opening of this movement?

Scaffolding Questions

1. Identify the performing media used in this passage.
2. Describe how the performing media is used.
3. Describe the structure of the melody.
4. Explain how the composer creates unity and variety between the phrases.
5. Identify where the composer introduces variety in the length of the phrases.

Task 2: Score Reading

Now study the score of the opening twenty-three bars (up to Rehearsal Mark B).

1. List the instruments used in this passage.
2. Comment on the composer's choice of instruments and on the instruments that he has decided will not play in this passage.
3. Explain what happens in the harmonic writing in bars 6 to 9.

Listen to following passage, bars 24 to 30 (Audio cue 1:21-2:17).

1. How does the composer develop or treat the melodic material from the previous passage?

Now listen to bars 85 to 107 (Audio cue 6:01-6:20).

2. How does the composer develop or treat the melodic material from the opening of the movement?

Task 3

Harmonise the following melody:



Now study the score of bars 1 to 15 of the second movement (Audio cue 0:00-0:50).

1. Identify the harmonies in bars 1 to 4.
2. Which chords are presented in inversion?
3. Identify the chords in bars 7 and 8.
4. What is the relationship of these chords to the tonic key of C major?
5. Identify the chords in bars 12 and 13.
6. What is the relationship of these chords to the tonic key of C major?
7. How is the tonic key re-established in bars 14 and 15?

Now study the presentation of the theme at the end of the movement bars 122 to 134 (Audio cue 7:20 - 8:24).

1. Describe the part played by the cellos and double basses in bars 123 to 127.
2. Describe the bassoon parts in bars 123 to 127.
3. What effect does this have on the sound of the music?

Activity 3: Performance/Score reading

In this activity, the students will learn to play the famous theme from the third movement and investigate the harmonic structure of the movement.

Task 1

Learn to play the theme of the third movement.

Theme from Movt. 3

Symphony No. 3

Johannes Brahms

Poco Allegretto

Flute *express.*

Clarinet in Bb *express.*

Alto Saxophone *express.*

Violin 1 *express.*

Violoncello *express.*

Piano

String Bass *p*

Poco Allegretto
pizz.

p

Cm Fm Cm Fm B^o7 Cm



Fl. 7

Cl.

Alto Sax.

Vln. 1

Vc.

Pno.

S. Bass

Fm/A^b D⁷ G Cm C⁷ Fm/A^b Db/F Fm/A^b B^b Ebm⁷ Fm

The image shows a musical score for a performance, likely from a film score. It includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Clarinet (Cl.), Alto Saxophone (Alto Sax.), Violin 1 (Vln. 1), Viola (Vc.), Piano (Pno.), and String Bass (S. Bass). The score is written in a key with two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. It features first and second endings, fingerings (e.g., 5, 6), and harmonic markings (e.g., Ab, Cm/G, D7/F#, G7, Ab7, G, Cm). The piano part includes a triplet of eighth notes in the first ending.

Task 2

Study the theme using this performance score and answer the following questions:

1. What is the key of the Theme and what is its relationship to the tonic key of the Symphony?
2. How does the composer achieve tension and release in bars 1 to 12 of the Theme?

Now refer to the orchestral score and answer the following questions:

1. What rhythmic device is used in the accompanying parts (violins and violas) in bars 1 to 12?
2. How is further rhythmic interest added in bars 13 to 24?
3. What is the key of the second theme at bar 24 and what is its relationship to the tonic key of the movement?
4. Which harmonic device is used in bars 24 to 28?
5. How does the composer continue to achieve tension and release in the second theme, bars 24 to 40?
6. Compare the three presentations of Theme 1 by the cello (bars 1 to 12), first violins (bars 13 to 24) and flute (bars 41 to 52). What similarities and differences do you observe?
7. What effect do these similarities and differences have on the listener?
8. Listen to the opening of the B Section, bars 53 to 69 (Audio cue 1:55 - 2:19).
9. Describe the rhythm of the woodwind parts in this passage?
10. Identify the harmonies in the first two bars (bars 53 and 54).

11. How is this a reference to the harmonies of the opening bars of the first movement of the symphony?
12. Compare the return of the A section, bars 99 to 163 (3:21 - 5:51) to the original appearance of this section, bars 1 to 52. With reference to the elements of pitch, texture and tone colour, describe any differences in the return.

Task 3

Study this harmonic analysis of the theme from the third movement:

[Harmonic Analysis of Brahms Third Movement Theme](#)

1. What do you observe about the harmonies of Brahms?
2. How do they compare with the harmonies of earlier musical periods, the Baroque and Classical?
3. Explain how Brahms has used harmony to create tension and release in this theme.

Optional Extension Task

Commentator and critic, Antony Hopkins, says that this symphony has no Scherzo. Yet this movement is in a conventional triple metre and it is referred to by others as a Scherzo and Trio by musicologists. Consider the character of the movement. Compare the first and second themes. Decide if the label Scherzo and Trio is one that you would apply to this movement. Support your decision with evidence from the movement.

Teaching Notes

A suggested plan for performing the theme is to follow the pattern of the symphony and have the lowest instrument play the melody first and then have a higher instrument play the melody for the repeat (and so on). In the symphony, Brahms uses cello, violin and then flute – an octave higher each time.

Activity 4: Composition/Aural/Score Reading

In this activity, the students will investigate the structure of the fourth movement, including the composer's use of cyclical material from previous movements.

Task 1

This is the theme that opens the fourth movement. It is initially presented in unison by the strings and bassoons. Harmonise the melody to create an arrangement for three or four instruments of your choosing.

Allegro



Task 2: Listening/Score Reading

Listen to the opening of the fourth movement, bars 1 to 28 (Audio cue 0:00-0:40).

Focus Question: The excerpt is in two sections. Describe the contrast between the two sections with reference to the elements of pitch, duration and texture.

Scaffolding Questions

1. Describe the melody in the first four bars. Refer to range, shape, rhythm and texture.
2. How does the answering phrase in bars 5 to 8 introduce contrast to the opening four bars?
3. How is variety achieved when the theme is repeated?
4. Describe the melody in the second section of the excerpt (bars 19 to 28). Compare this to the first section in terms of range, shape, rhythm and texture.

Task 3: Score Reading

Study the score of the music of Section 1 (Theme 1) bars 1 to 17 (Audio cue 0:00 - 0:23).

1. What is the key signature?
2. What is the scale of the melody in bars 1 and 2?
3. Consider the scales of the melody in bars 1 and 2. What harmony is implied for each bar?
4. How has the composer introduced variety in bars 5 to 8?
5. Compare bars 9 to 17 with bars 1 to 8.

6. How has the composer created variety in the presentation of the Theme?
7. Identify the harmonies in bars 9 to 13 and compare them to the harmonies implied in bars 1 to 4.
8. Identify the harmony in bar 17 and its relationship to the tonic key.

Study the score for the music of Section 2 (Theme 2) bars 19 to 28 (Audio cue 0:23 - 0:40).

1. Identify the key of this section and describe its relationship to the tonic key.
2. Complete an harmonic analysis of bars 19 to 28.

Task 4: Aural

Listen now to bars 149 to 194 (Audio cue 3:11 - 4:11).

Focus Question: Discuss how the composer has used the opening material to create the climax of the movement.

Scaffolding Questions

1. Which is the more important element, duration or pitch, in this excerpt?
2. Describe the texture of the first half of the excerpt, bars 149 to 171 (Audio cue 3:11 - 3:42).
3. Which pitch motifs dominate in the second half of the excerpt?
4. Describe the texture of the second half of the excerpt, bars 172-193 (Audio cue 3:43 - 4:11).

Optional Extension Task

Listen to the music of bars 252 to 309 (Audio cue 5:23 - 7:46).

Focus Question: How does the composer achieve the release of tension in this passage?

Scaffolding Questions

1. Describe the texture of this passage.
2. Are the predominant note values short or long?
3. There are dynamic changes in the excerpt. Are the louder dynamics sustained?
4. Is the harmonic tension sustained or resolved?
5. The string instruments play semiquavers throughout. How do these contribute to the release of tension?

Activity 5: Score Reading/Musicology

In this activity, the students will investigate the cyclic nature of the Third Symphony.

Task 1

The Third Symphony is labelled a “cyclic” Symphony, with material from not one, but two previous movements playing a major role in the finale. Study the following passages in the fourth Movement and identify the sources of the melodic material:

- Bar 19
- Bar 149
- Bar 271
- Bar 284
- Bar 301

Task 2

Research other examples of cyclic symphonic writing by composers such as Berlioz, Dvorak, Schumann and Tchaikovsky. Compare and contrast the use of cyclical material with that of Brahms in Symphony No. 3.

Task 3

Like the other Romantic composers, Brahms was affected by a variety of influences, including literature, folk tales and nature. Read the article, *Secrets of the Rhine*, which explores the different influences on Brahms:

[Secrets of the Rhine](#)

Optional Extension Task

Hopkins, referred to earlier, says that “*Brahms has accomplished the difficult feat of putting essentially romantic ideas into a classical mould*” (The Concertgoer’s Companion, 1986, J.M. Dent, London, p. 140).

Identify some of the romantic ideas observed in the symphony and explain the meaning of the classical mould referred to in the quote.

Brahms was a figure of musical controversy in his lifetime. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘war of the Romantics’. Research the reason for this with reference to those considered as progressive composers in the Romantic period.

Teaching Notes

- Examples of cyclic symphonies may include Berlioz *Symphonie Fantastique*, Dvorak *Symphony No. 9 (The 'New World')* and Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 5*.
- Here is another extended quote, from Jessica Duchon, describing the Classical/Romantic tension in the personality and music of Brahms: "Brahms can seem the strictest, most structure-driven composer of the late 19th century. A perfectionist – he burned many works with which he was not satisfied – he adhered to principles of form and counterpoint that would have been familiar to Beethoven, even to Bach (e.g. the closing passacaglia of *Symphony No. 4*). Yet the spirit he encases in these forms remains Romantic. The Brahms style, his personal voice, is rich in texture: soaring, impassioned, raw in its tenderness." (<https://www.classical-music.com/articles/brahms-style-guide>)

Suggested Answers

Activity 1

Task 1

Listen to the Exposition section, bars 1 to 72 of the first movement (Audio cue 0:00 - 2:49).

1. Theme 1 begins in F minor but in bar 3, F major (the stated tonic key) is clearly outlined. Theme 2 (bars 36) is in A major.
2. There are two aspects of the music that do not conform to the traditional harmonic relationships of sonata form. The first is the tension between F major and F minor in the first subject. Rather than establishing the tonic key, the tonality is ambiguous. The second is the key of the Second Subject. Instead of the related keys of C major (dominant) or D minor (relative minor), the Second Subject is in the unrelated key of A major. However, the use of a key a third away from the tonic, a mediant relationship, is found in other Romantic works, such as the first movement of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony. Brahms uses an enharmonic modulation via D flat (C sharp) to achieve this.
3. The change of time signature of the Second Subject from $\frac{6}{4}$ to $\frac{9}{4}$ breaks with the conventions of Sonata Form. Normally, both subjects would remain in the same time signature.
4. The second subject begins with a simple, homophonic texture. The clarinet melody is harmonised by the bassoon in thirds, while the lower strings and flute play fifths. A pedal point on the first beat of the bar continues throughout this passage.
5. Tension is created mostly by the harmonies. The opening chord is F major (bar 1). The second chord (bar 2) is an F diminished chord.
6. There is a short release of tension in the cadence between the Motto Theme and the beginning of the First Subject (bars 2 and 3) but the tension soon returns, with the tonality changing again from F major to F minor in bars 3 and 4. The syncopated rhythm in the violas adds rhythmic tension. This is followed by an augmented form of the syncopated rhythms in bars 11 to 14. The tension is finally resolved in bar 14, where the F major tonality is finally established. Once again, Brahms does not let the music rest, as the chromaticism in bars 17 and 18 reintroduces harmonic tension and the syncopated rhythm returns in the second violins and violas.
7. Motto Theme.

Bar 7 A new, extremely important motive is heard in the clarinets, bassoons, and horns. It resembles the A flat-F Motto. This time it is in a four-note form in C minor, with the major third added as the fourth note.

Bar 11 The syncopated chords in the lower strings and the winds play a version of the Motto starting on B flat, but with the downward leap moving to E, the "leading tone" in F major.

Bar 19 The Motto beginning on A in the cellos and basses, doubled by the bassoons.

Bar 21 The woodwinds and high brass, along with first violins, play the harmonized F-A flat-F Motto, punctuated by triplet arpeggios in the cellos and second violins against syncopated violas.

Bar 29 The Motto is played by the high woodwinds over the Alberti strings. The D flat of bar 27 is now C sharp, followed by E and then the high C sharp as the key signature changes to A major in bar 31.

Bar 49 The meter changes back to $\frac{6}{4}$ and a version of the Motto beginning on A is played by the oboe over a soft bassoon and string background. This version of the Motto, however, leaps down not to the raised third, but to D sharp, the leading note of E major, the dominant key of A major.

Bar 61 While the flutes, bassoons, and violins play the second subject melody, the clarinet and horns play rapidly rising and falling statements of the Motto beginning on A. The Motto is also suggested in the arpeggios of the melody itself.

Bar 70 The violins play a descending arpeggio that “fills in” the Motto.

1. The Second Subject is heard at the beginning of the Development section in C sharp minor.
2. It is transformed from its $\frac{9}{4}$ version into the original $\frac{6}{4}$ time signature.
3. The music in bars 101 to 111 is based on the Motto Theme. The key signature changes to E flat major. The horn plays the Motto Theme (G-B flat-G). The Motto is extended and becomes an actual melody, the horn adding a new descending line. As the horn reaches its cadence, it is interrupted by a new statement of the Motto with its melody, now doubled by the oboe in bar 105. This statement is on B flat-D flat-B flat and moves the key to G flat major. The horn repeats the descending extension phrase in bars 109 to 111.
4. In bars 112 to 119, the low strings and bassoons play a pared back version of the first subject without any accompaniment. The key is E flat minor. Oboes and clarinets join after one bar, then the flutes and the upper strings. The main descending gesture of the theme continues over the course of four bars, with the use of a crotchet rest and the duple pairing of crotchets in the violins and violas (bars 116 to 119) cancelling out a true sense of the $\frac{6}{4}$ pulse.
5. Bars 120 to 182. The key of the Second Subject is D major. This is the tonic major key of the relative minor of F major. It may also be considered another example of the mediant or thirds relationship.
6. At bar 183, the First Subject returns, back in F major. The Motto theme appears in bar 216, played by the horns, soon joined by the woodwinds, to close out the movement.
7. The most obvious difference, as discussed earlier, is the key of the Second Subject. Instead of the related keys of C major (dominant) or D minor (relative minor), the second subject is in the unrelated key of A major. This is not really resolved in the Recapitulation, where the Second Subject appears in D major – again only a distantly related key in the Classical tradition. The use of two themes in the First Subject, the Motto Theme and the descending arpeggio theme is typical of the Romantic period. Composers of Classical Sonata Form works would usually only have two distinct subjects but subject groups became more common during the Nineteenth Century. The change of time signature for the Second Subject in both the Exposition and Recapitulation is another unusual feature of Brahms’ writing in this Symphony.
8. There is also the matter of the fluctuating modality of the first subject. Commentator Carl Dahlhaus says that the firm establishment of the tonic key is fundamental to Sonata Form. The failure of Brahms to do so in a number of works, leads to the contention that Brahms is subverting Sonata Form in his writing. Dahlhaus uses terms such as ‘wandering’ and ‘floating’ tonality – terms borrowed from Schoenberg, who would eventually abandon the conventions of tonality all together.

Task 2

1. Identify the keys of the following bars in the Development:
 - Bar 77 C-sharp minor (E major)
 - Bar 90 A major
 - Bar 92 D major
 - Bar 94 G major
 - Bar 101 E-flat major
 - Bar 107 G-flat major
2. The keys in bars 77, 90, 92 and 94 are all part of the cycle of fifths. This is a conventional form of modulation, once again demonstrating the influence of Classicism on Brahms, despite the unusual key relationships in the Exposition.
3. The keys that Brahms moves through in bars 112 to 119 are:
 - Bar 112 E-flat minor
 - Bar 116 B-flat minor
 - Bar 118 C-minor. At bar 118, there is an F pedal point established in the low strings, supported by a timpani roll. It is unclear whether the low F is functioning as a preparatory “dominant” in the key of B-flat, creating an F minor 7th harmony, or establishing the tonic key of F prior to the recapitulation.
4. Brahms might be expected to use harmonies related to C major, the dominant of F major in bars 112 to 119.
5. The keys of the two subjects in the Recapitulation are:
 - 1st Subject F major
 - 2nd Subject D major

Task 3

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4.

- System 1:** The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a half note B4, and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment starts with a half note G3, followed by a quarter note A3, a half note B3, and a quarter note A3. The marking *p grazioso* is present.
- System 2:** The vocal line continues with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a half note B4, and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment continues with a half note G3, followed by a quarter note A3, a half note B3, and a quarter note A3. The marking *pp* is present.
- System 3:** The vocal line continues with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a half note B4, and a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment continues with a half note G3, followed by a quarter note A3, a half note B3, and a quarter note A3. The marking *pp* is present.

Optional Extension Task

- Brahms' famous F-A-F Motto. Brahms' friend and biographer Max Kalbeck identified F-A-F as a musical cipher for "frei aber froh"—"free but happy"—which was Brahms' response to his friend Joseph Joachim's F-A-E, which stood for "frei aber einsam"—"free but lonely."
- The main idea that forms the basis of the first subject melody is actually a quotation from a passing phrase in Schumann's Rhenish Symphony, and its rushing, surging character. Rhenish is the adjectival form of the name of the Rhine River in Germany.
- Brahms includes an allusion to the music of Wagner, who had died just months before Brahms wrote the Symphony. The harmonies just before the second theme arrives are adapted from the "Siren's Chorus" from *Tannhäuser*, in which beautiful women sing "Approach the shore! Approach the land, where, in the arms of glowing love, let blissful warmth content your desires!"
- The new theme that Brahms introduces immediately after the Wagner allusion is similar to the melody of song by Franz Liszt, which is the setting of a poem about the Lorelei by Heinrich Heine.
- The second movement begins with another lyrical melody for clarinet that many have likened to a German folksong. The chorale-like texture of the accompaniment also recalls traditional hymns.
- Brahms scholar Malcolm MacDonald has suggested that the ornamentation of the third movement theme imitates Romani (gypsy) music.
- Brahms' contemporaries also heard the influence of Romani music in the contrasting central section of the third movement.

- The Finale begins in F minor. This F minor is inflected with the augmented seconds of Romani music, as well as evocative orchestration featuring clarinets and cimbalom-like strings.

Activity 2

Task 1

Focus Question

The repeated use of limited timbres/tone colours and the repetition of the opening bar in multiple phrases creates unity in this excerpt. The use of clarinets and strings as the main performing media creates variety in tone colour and pitch. The melodic material of each phrase introduces pitch and rhythmic variety.

The opening of this movement comprises of a series of call and response phrases featuring the clarinets and lower strings. This pattern is repeated five times, creating unity. The higher pitch of the clarinet contrasts with the lower pitch of the strings, creating variety.

The clarinet is accompanied by the other woodwind instruments and horn, which introduces further variety in the tone colour of the excerpt.

The first four phrases begin almost identically, creating unity. The third phrase begins one note higher, with the same melodic shape, creating both unity and variety. The rest of each phrase introduces rhythmic variety to the first bar. The second half of each phrase adds further variety through the use of dotted notes.

The winds phrases are not all the same length. This feature is also heard in the strings phrases. This creates variety in the structure but also in the pitch, as the melodic phrases are extended and new pitch material is introduced in the fourth and fifth phrases.

Scaffolding Questions

1. Only the woodwinds, horns and lower strings are used. (Flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, violas, cellos and double basses.) No violins.
2. The clarinets begin, accompanied by the bassoons, the flutes and horns join in and then the lower strings play a one-bar response. This call and response pattern is repeated five times. The wind and string parts generally overlap at the beginning and end of each phrase, creating a continuous passage.
3. The five phrases of the melody are uneven in length. The first two phrases are four bars in length, with the winds playing three bars and the strings playing the fourth. The third phrase has the winds playing four bars, answered by a two-bar response in the strings. The fourth phrase is five bars in the winds and one bar in the strings. While the fifth phrase is two bars of winds and one bar of strings, both beginning with an anacrusis, introducing further imbalance.
4. Three of the first four phrases begins with the same melodic pattern. The third iteration has the melody played one note higher than 1, 2 and 4. Each phrase then introduces rhythmic variety – usually dotted notes – for the second half of the phrase. The repetition creates unity, while the rhythmic and pitch changes at the end of each phrase creates variety. The fourth phrase is extended with a new two-bar addition. This is repeated as the fifth phrase, creating both unity and variety. The clarinets and lower strings carry most of the melodic interest, creating unity, while the flute and horns add timbral variety.
5. The extended string response in bars 13 and 14 and the subsequent six-bar phrase in the clarinets introduce variety in the phrase length.

Task 2

1. The instruments used in this passage are:
 - Flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoon, horns in C, violas, cellos and double basses.
2. The horns are often combined with the woodwind instruments in Classical and Romantic music. The woodwinds occupy the upper pitches in the texture. Brahms, therefore, does not use the violins. The woodwinds, especially the clarinets, give the music a folksong quality. The lower strings provide a balance to the bright quality of the woodwinds.
3. Chromaticism is introduced in bars 6 to 9 as the music modulates from the tonic key of C major to the dominant key of G major.
4. In this passage, the clarinet and violas play a version of the opening theme. Alberti semiquavers in the strings, flute and oboe introduce variety.
5. The flute, clarinet, and bassoon play a rhythmically altered version of the opening theme. The melody begins on the upbeat or the fourth beat of the preceding bar but by altering the length of the second and third notes, Brahms has achieved the same effect as beginning the theme on the downbeat with the faster rhythm on the original falling figure. From this point, the theme continues as expected from its second bar, but with a different orchestral presentation. The winds play the alternating chords and the Motto-like dotted rhythm, still with horn and trombone harmonies. The strings share a semiquaver figure first heard in bars 24 to 32. The subsequent phrases appear, from bar 89, with the full woodwind section presenting the Theme against the semiquaver patterns in the strings. However, the low string response is changed to an answer led by clarinets with bassoons and re-entering horns.
In the third phrase, the response is played by the bassoons and horns instead of low strings. By the fourth phrase, in bar 99, the accompanying string figures are reduced to isolated statements on the second and fourth beats in first violins and violas, before they slow from semiquavers notes to triplets, again being passed back and forth. The extension of the melodic phrase is played by the woodwinds, closely matching the exposition. Again, the "echo" is in horns and bassoons. The strings thin even more, with the second violins and violas slowing to even quavers.

Task 3

Possible harmonisation



1. Identify the harmonies in bars 1 to 4.
2. Bar 1 second beat G7 fourth beat F, Bar 3 second beat C
3. Bar 8 D7, Bar 9 G
4. The chords are the chromatic chord II and the dominant G.
5. Bar 12 E, Bar 13 A minor

6. E major is the chromatic mediant. A secondary dominant resolving to the relative minor key of A minor.
7. A perfect cadence re-establishes the tonic key in bars 14 and 15.
8. Dominant pedal point.
9. The bassoon plays a descending chromatic line in sixths.
10. This descending line moves the music gently towards the tonic note, which is heard as a pedal point beneath these bars.

Activity 3

Task 2

1. The key of the theme is C minor. It is the dominant minor. This is not a common, related key.
2. The composer achieves tension and release in bars 1 to 12 of the theme by the use of dissonance and dynamics. The melody note often creates a dissonance with the underlying harmony. This may be in the form of a second or ninth, a seventh or augmented 4th. The dissonance is emphasised by a small crescendo on the same (usually the first) beat. This is followed a diminuendo as a consonant harmony releases the tension.
1. Cross rhythm or two against three is the rhythmic device is used in the accompanying parts. The violins play semiquaver triplets, while the violas play even semiquavers.
2. The clarinets introduce a new syncopated rhythm in the harmony part, adding rhythmic interest in bars 13 to 24.
3. The key of the second theme at bar 24 is C major. This is the tonic major key.
4. Pedal point is used in bars 24 to 28.
5. The cello melody in bars 24 to 40 continues to use dissonance, often a suspended 4th. Instead of a dynamic accent or emphasis, Brahms uses an anticipating rhythm, tied notes across the bar line in the melody to create the tension. Brahms also continues to use additional, dissonant notes in the harmony bars 24 to 40 to create tension. For example, the A which is used with the dominant G harmonies, creating a major second. There is also harmonic tension between these dominant harmonies and the C tonic pedal point.
6. The melody of each presentation is the same, but an octave higher than the previous presentation. The harmonies remain the same but the accompanying texture changes, becoming thicker and more rhythmically complex each time.
7. The repetition of the melody creates unity, while the changing pitches and increasing texture create both interest and an uplifting sense of anticipation for the listener.
8. Everything is metrically displaced, with the upbeats acting like downbeats.
9. To E-flat, in syncopation, with E-flat serving as the “dominant” note.
10. The woodwinds alternate chords on A-flat minor and A-flat major, with the major chords on the first beat of the bar – which is the second beat of each three-beat phrase. Against these woodwind chords, the cellos play a descending fourth, A-flat.

11. The alternating major and minor tonalities is a reference to the tension created by the F minor and F major harmonies used concurrently in the opening bars of the first movement of the Symphony.
12. The statement of the theme is now given to a solo horn instead of the cellos. The string accompaniment is mostly as it was at the beginning, except that the cellos, now freed from the melody, add a wide upward arpeggio. The oboe plays the second appearance of the melody instead of the first violins. The bassoon plays the Second Theme, from bar 24, instead of the cellos. The scoring of the third appearance is much thicker than before, with the melody played by first violins and cellos spread over three octaves. The clarinets now join the second violins and violas with the triplet accompaniment. The Coda, bars 150 to 163, uses material from the Main Theme, not the "Trio."

Task 3

- Brahms has added more notes to form extended chords.
- Brahms has used dissonance to make the music more expressive.
- The music modulates to more distant keys than those used by composers in the Baroque and Classical periods.
- The added notes in the extended chords create harmonic tension and tension between the melody and harmony layers.

Activity 4

Task 1

This is a suggested three-part arrangement loosely based on Brahms' harmonisation in bars 9 to 16.

Allegro

The musical score is written for three staves in F minor (three flats) and 4/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The first system shows a unison melody in the treble clefs of the first two staves, starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The bass staff provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. The second system shows the melody moving to the third staff (treble clef) and being harmonized in the first two staves. The melody is marked with 'dim.' (diminuendo) and features a gentle fall and rise. The bass staff continues with the accompaniment.

Task 2

Focus Question

The two sections of the excerpt contrast in pitch and texture. The first section is based on a four-bar theme in F minor, which moves rapidly in scalar motion. It is presented in unison by the strings and bassoons. This is answered by a harmonised four-bar phrase, which moves in dotted rhythm and intervals of a third. This theme is repeated, played an octave higher by the woodwinds. The repeated version is harmonised, and extra layers of rapid arpeggios are added. The second section is a chorale-like passage, with homophonic texture in A flat major. It has a melody with a narrow range that also moves in step wise motion. The note values are double that of the first section. The change of modality, melody, note duration and texture created contrast with the first section of the excerpt.

Scaffolding Questions

1. The first four bars are a unison melody. The melody moves by step with many rapid notes. It has a range of a seventh (about an octave). It has an undulating shape, with a gentle fall and rise.
2. In the second phrase of section one, a harmony of thirds is introduced. The rhythm is dotted, and the melody moves mostly by thirds.
3. Starting in bar 9, we hear a variation of the first 4 bar phrase. The melody is an octave higher and more richly harmonised. The harmonised theme is played by the

woodwinds, providing a variation in tone colour. The lower strings introduce a rising arpeggio pattern in the accompaniment.

4. From bar 19, the music is a chorale-like, homophonic passage. It is in the relative major key of A flat. The augmented note values contrast with the quavers of the opening theme. The melody is static, with many repeated notes and moving only by step within the range of a fourth. The music begins on the second beat of the bar – a rhythmic device often used by Brahms.

Task 3

1. The key signature is F minor. This is the tonic minor of the Symphony's key.
2. Bar 1 infers a dominant C harmony. The B natural is the leading note in the C harmonic minor scale. Bar 2 infers a tonic F minor harmony. While these are regulation harmonies, beginning with the dominant, especially in the minor form, creates an unsettling mood in the music.
3. The composer introduces harmony, in the form of thirds, together with the dotted rhythm and the majority of thirds in the melodic intervals creates variety in bars 5 to 8. There is further variation in the dynamics, with accents and dynamic shading in contrast to the *piano* and *sotto voce* dynamic of the first four bars.
4. In bars 9 to 17, the theme from bars 1 to 8 is repeated an octave higher.
5. The melody of the first four bars is more richly harmonised. The harmonised theme is played by the woodwinds, providing a variation in tone colour. The melody includes a melodic augmentation, so that the motif that appeared on the downbeat of bar 2 is now on the third beat of bar 10. The lower strings introduce a rising arpeggio pattern in the accompaniment. Each element of the variation is a new contrast. Brahms is introducing several contrasts elements at once in a manner typical of the Romantic period. The balancing phrase in bars 14 to 17 is at a lower pitch.
6. Up until bar 9, the music has implied the tonic and dominant harmonies of F minor and C. Bar 9 begins with C major. Then a D flat major chord is followed with a B flat minor 7th chord, E flat major and Ab major, the relative major (IV, ii⁷, and V respectively in Ab major). In bar 12, the second melodic extension starts on A flat major, the remote chord of G flat major. (Gb major isn't really in the key of Ab major, but it is the Neapolitan (bII) of F minor.) The Gb is followed by the G diminished chord and a C major chord, hinting much more strongly at a bII-ii^o-V-i cadence in F minor. Instead, the phrase ends on C major reinforced by the use of the dominant of G major (bar 17).
7. The harmony in bar 17 is a G major (7th) to C cadence. C is the dominant of the tonic key of F minor.

Study the music of section 2 (Theme 2) bars 19 to 28 (Audio cue 0:23-0:40).

1. The harmony of Section 2 is A flat major, the relative major of F minor. This is introduced by two E flats (bar 18), the dominant of A flat.
2.
 - Bar 19 – A flat major
 - Bar 20 – The harmonies move from A flat to D flat minor (I-iv-I) over a tonic A flat pedal.

- Bar 21 – D flat minor, still with the A flat pedal (2nd inversion), followed by A flat with a G flat (creating an unresolved dominant seventh). There is both tension and harmonic ambiguity here.
- Bars 22-23 – After another two E flats, the music moves to C minor, the mediant of Ab major.
- Bars 24 and 25 – C minor in first inversion. The C minor is confirmed with its own dominant, G major.
- Bar 25 – A sudden return to A flat major again along with its major subdominant, D flat major.
- Bar 26 – The major subdominant of D flat major, G flat major; relative to A flat major, the IV of IV.
- Bar 27 – Ab major, with a G flat, forms an A flat 7th chord, followed by D flat.
- Bar 28 – Concludes with a D flat to A flat imperfect cadence. Fulfilling the suggestion of modulation from bar 21.

Task 4

Focus Question:

The composer used motifs based on the two themes from the opening of the movement to build the climax. The rhythm of the various motifs in the important element, combining with texture and dynamics to create the excitement in the excerpt. The excerpt begins with a triplet and minim motif based on the second theme. This is presented in call and response between the woodwinds and brass. It is accompanied by triplet figures based on the First Theme. From bar 172, the middle of the excerpt, motifs based on the two contrasting phrases of the First Theme take over. The rhythmic energy of the dotted rhythm combines with an off-beat, three note fragment of the opening theme along with a syncopated bass figure and chords in the winds and brass are used to propel the music forward. The contrasting rhythms of the first half of the excerpt make way for a homophonic texture, which combines with the rising pitch and increasing dynamic to build to the climax of this excerpt.

Scaffolding Questions

1. Duration is the more important element, with the repeated triplet and minim rhythm dominating, while the triplet figures in the strings provide further momentum.
2. There are two main layers, the call and response in the woodwind and brass and the continuous triplets in the strings. Both are based on the two themes from the opening of the movement. The string figures, feature the turning motif from bar 1.
3. The second half of the excerpt is dominated by a fragmented motif from the first theme (bars 1 and 2) and a motif based on the dotted rhythm and intervals from bars 5 to 7.
4. The homophonic texture combines with the rising pitch and increasing dynamic to build to the climax of this excerpt.

Optional Extension Task

The thinner texture, softer dynamic and harmonic stability of this passage release the tension of the previous section of the movement. The key changes to F major halfway through the passage (bar 267), further releasing the harmonic tension. The repetition of semiquaver figures in the strings create a gentle, flowing accompaniment. The thirds harmony in the woodwind presentation of the First Theme add to the consonant character of the music. The appearance of the Second Theme re-introduces longer duration notes, adding to the calm ending of the movement.

Scaffolding Questions

1. The texture of this passage is light. Single melodic lines are accompanied by pizzicato strings.
2. While most of the note values are short, they create a continuous, flowing line, which contrasts with the aggressive rhythms of the earlier sections.
3. The louder dynamics are not sustained. They quickly return to a softer dynamic.
4. The harmonic tension is resolved, with increasingly sustained harmonies and finally a tonic pedal for the last twelve bars. The key has returned to the Symphony's tonic key of F major.
5. The string semiquavers create a continuous, flowing line, which contrasts with the aggressive rhythms of the earlier sections. The string parts are repetitive, creating a relatively static foundation for the melodic material based on the two themes.

Activity 5

Task 1

Bar 19 The Chorale Theme played by strings, lower winds, and horns is actually the Second Theme of the second movement, the one that was omitted from its recapitulation. It was first heard in that movement at bar 41.

Bar 149 The chorale theme again – originally from the second movement – appears in A minor.

Bar 271 As the phrase concludes, the low strings and the woodwinds exchange statements of the opening turn figure from the opening theme of the fourth movement. Then the oboe plays the familiar and important four-note version of the Motto from the first movement, originally heard at bar 7. It is played on B-flat in the form heard in the first movement at bar 11.

Bar 284 In pure F major, the second movement (chorale) theme crescendos forth, now in the wind instruments, moving through the slow triplet rhythm and repeating it as the strings continuously play their now mostly consistent figuration.

Bar 301 With the Motto reaching up, the main theme of the first movement follows.