

# Listening Guide for Beethoven's Pathétique Sonata

## Introduction

Pieces written in the sonata form usually start with the first theme, but the Pathétique has an introduction before the first theme comes in. Listen to the opening (m. 1-10) and answer these questions:

1. What is the mood of the introduction? (Circle all words that apply)

- Sad
- Cheerful
- Dramatic
- Gloomy
- Joyful
- Carefree
- Serious
- Happy

2. What elements do you hear in the opening?

- a. chords
- b. octaves
- c. scales
- d. all of the above
- e. none of the above

3. What is the key (mode) of the introduction?

- a. Major
- b. Minor

## Exposition

After a fast chromatic scale, the exposition begins in measure 11. This is where the composer usually introduces the first theme, a transition, the second theme, usually more lyrical, in a dominant or relative major key, and a coda.

1. What is the speed of the exposition?

2. What is the key of the first theme?

- a. Major
- b. Minor

3. What does the left hand play during the first theme?

- a. long chords
- b. Alberti bass pattern
- c. Fast-paced broken octaves that sound like tremolos
- d. Rests

4. The second theme comes in measure 51, after a transition section modulates into the new key, ending with a short series of cadences. Some grace notes and trills make this theme sound more lyrical than the first theme. Is it in a major or a minor key? Discuss with your teacher the relationship between the keys of the first and second theme.

5. To end the exposition, Beethoven adds a closing, or a coda, which begins in measure 89. Describe the musical elements used here. Is the mood the same or has it changed?

### **Development**

This section takes the material introduced in the exposition and reworks it in many different ways. Music may go through many different keys and usually uses lots of accidentals.

1. Before the development starts in measure 139, which section makes a short return?

- a. The introduction
- b. The first theme
- c. The second theme

2. The development uses ideas from which sections of the exposition?

- a. The introduction
- b. The first theme
- c. The second theme
- d. B and c
- e. None of the above

3. Which interesting technique is Beethoven using in the development?

- a. The chords that were staccato are now legato.
- b. Material that was in the left hand is now in the right hand.
- c. The key signature changed.
- d. A and b
- e. B and c

## **Recapitulation**

This is where the main theme returns, usually in the tonic key, as in the exposition. Afterwards, there is usually no modulation and the second theme and the coda are also in the tonic key.

1. The return of the first theme begins the exposition in measure 197. Is it in the tonic key?
2. The second theme comes back in measure 223, but does not start in the tonic key. Can you find the measure where it returns to C minor?
3. Before ending with a coda, Beethoven inserts a short snippet of the introduction yet again in measure 297. How has it changed compared to the opening?
4. Which theme is worked into the coda of the first movement?