

Joseph Haydn – Symphony No. 101, second movement ‘The Clock’

Analysis & Questions

This resource explores the second movement of Haydn’s Symphony No. 101, offering a summary of the movement and a bank of quick and in-depth questions aimed at GCSE-level students (it appears on the AQA syllabus). This resource accompanies the London Philharmonic Orchestra’s performance and analysis video of the piece, which can be found on our website. You will need a score of the movement to complete the questions.

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)



Franz Joseph Haydn was born in Austria in 1732. For almost all of his adult life he worked as music master for the richest family in Europe – the Esterházy family. With little else to occupy him except music, he was able to experiment and innovate. Over his years with the family Haydn reinvented every musical structure, creating the rules that define the Classical period. He is now thought of as the father of Classical music.

Symphony No. 101, second movement ‘The Clock’ (1793)

Form: Second movement of a symphony of four movements

In simple duple time: 2/4

Instrumentation: Classical orchestra – 2 of each woodwind, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, 2 timpani & strings

Structure: Extended ternary form (but possible to analyse as various other forms)

Note about bar numbers: bar numbers vary in different editions, depending on how second-time bars are numbered. To check if your edition tallies with ours, your version of the movement should be 150 bars long. If your edition is 152 bars long, use the alternative bar numbers in brackets in the summary below.

Analysis:

Bar 1	A section (mainly in G major) • ‘Ticking’ motif on staccato bassoons and pizzicato second violins, cellos, double basses • Home key: G major
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Bar 2	Melody enters played by first violins: Theme a • Eight bars long • Containing two complementary phrases which each last four bars • The melody is mainly conjunct • Dotted rhythms in the melody provide a contrast to the ‘ticking’ underneath • Theme a moves to dominant (D major) and back to tonic (G major) again • Repeats
Bar 11 (or Bar 12)	Theme b played by arco (bowed) strings • Upward dotted melody in first violins • ‘Ticking’ idea alternating between quiet second violins and loud cellos and double basses underneath melody
Bar 16 (or Bar 17)	Theme b continues • 4-bar rising sequence in upper strings • Inverted dominant pedal on oboe (oboe plays a sustained note D – the dominant – at the top of the texture)
Bar 24 (or Bar 25)	Theme a returns • Flute doubles the violin melody • Violas have triple stopped pizzicato chords
Bar 34 (or Bar 36)	B section (mainly in G minor and its relative major, Bb major) • ‘Minore’ – dramatic minor key episode based on the violin melody from Bar 4. Brass and timpani enter for the first time • Drama intensifies with the use of sforzando (sudden loud emphasis) • Haydn uses dotted rhythms and arpeggios to move through several different keys
Bar 56 (or Bar 58)	• Cellos and basses have a pedal point on D – the dominant of G minor and also G major. This prepares for the return of the A section • Timpani also has drum rolls on D in Bars 58–59 • In Bars 61–62 the first violins play alternating staccato D and C# creating a link to the return of the A section
Bar 63 (or Bar 65)	A2 section (mainly in G major) • The opening of this section uses the same material as the first A section, but it is very quiet (marked <i>pp</i> or <i>pianissimo</i>) with just a small collection of instruments (flute, oboe, bassoon and first violin) • ‘Ticking’ idea is on single flute and a bassoon in thirds • Main Theme b melody played by first violins

Bar 73 (or Bar 75)	Theme b follows with same orchestration
Bar 78 (or Bar 80)	• 4-bar sequence again • Flute has a variant of the dominant pedal from before
Bar 87 (or Bar 89)	Theme a repeats with the same 'thin' orchestration
Bar 97 (or Bar 99)	A silent bar – a musical 'joke'
Bar 98 (or Bar 100)	Theme a repeats in the unusual key of Eb major • No Theme b or return to a in this variation
Bar 112 (or Bar 114)	Theme a returns back in the home key of G major • Includes triplet accompaniment in second violins (in most editions scored as semiquaver sextuplets) which gradually takes over • Full orchestra plays from here until the end of the movement • Mood is grand
Bar 121 (or Bar 123)	Theme b returns with triplets
Bar 135 (or Bar 137)	Theme a returns – very majestic and grand, still with triplets • Abrupt change from pp in previous bar to ff, or <i>fortissimo</i>, for final rendition of Theme a
Bar 144 (or Bar 146)	Coda (ending) • Home key of G major is confirmed with scalar passages, a perfect cadence and three tonic chords played <i>pianissimo</i> in the final two bars

Find the bar

In which bar can you find...

1. The first time the orchestra plays tutti?	
2. An inverted pedal? In which instrument?	
3. The first appearance of semiquaver sextuplets? In which instrument?	
4. The start of the 'Minore' section?	
5. The first appearance of a descending scale of D major over two octaves?	
6. The first appearance of a triple stopped chord?	
7. Offbeat semiquaver thirds? In which parts?	
8. A monophonic passage?	
9. An empty bar?	
10. The first bar of a passage where first violins are accompanied by solo flute and solo bassoon?	
11. When 'Theme a' begins in the key of Eb major?	
12. The start of the coda?	

Quick Quiz

1. What is the tempo marking of this movement, and what does it mean?	
2. What is the name of the ornament in the first violin part in Bar 3?	
3. What key is this movement in?	
4. What is the dot above the notes in the bassoon parts in Bar 1 called? What does this mean to the player, how should the notes be played?	
5. In what key does the Minore section begin? What indications imply this in the music?	
6. What does 'pizz' mean in Bar 1 of second violin and cellos/double basses parts?	
7. What does sf stand for in Bar 14 (or Bar 15), and what does it mean?	
8. Why is 'a 2' written in the horn and trumpet parts in Bar 38 (or Bar 40)?	
9. Which movement of a symphony is this? How many movements does a symphony from this period have, and how would you broadly describe each movement?	
10. In Bar 58 (or Bar 60) the timpani has a minim with dashes in the stem. What does this mean?	

In depth

1. Using musical examples, explain why this movement is nicknamed 'The Clock.'
2. Identify two ways in which Haydn gives the effect of 'ticking.'
3. Why does the clarinet part have a different key signature from the rest of the woodwind section?
4. What features show you that this symphony is from the Classical period?
5. What key does Haydn begin and end in? Describe the harmonic shifts within this movement.
6. How does Haydn use musical elements to create a sense of drama and excitement in this movement?