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# Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.5: IV. Finale

[https://youtu.be/WOrFyZrU8c8?si=gWFBmjHt5iby\\_kgG&t=564](https://youtu.be/WOrFyZrU8c8?si=gWFBmjHt5iby_kgG&t=564)

Make sure your students can only hear the clip; this is designed to be a listening task. We recommend starting at 9:24 for the finale!

## Wider Listening Task Answers

**Which period is this music from?** ★ Romantic (c.1780-1910)

Romantic music was developing during the Classical period, so there is an overlap in dates. Think of Beethoven's music; his early works are Classical, but his later music was beginning to sound more characteristic of the Romantic period. Bonus point if they get close to the year of composition: 1888.

**Who might have composed this piece of music? Why do you think it could be this composer?**

Acceptable answers may include any suitable composer from the Romantic era, such as: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Johannes Brahms, Richard Wagner, Gustav Mahler, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Hector Berlioz, Edward Elgar, Felix Mendelssohn, Robert Schumann, Anton Bruckner, Johann Strauss II, Antonin Dvorak, Edvard Grieg, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov etc.

Suitable reasoning linked to key elements of Romantic music: emotional and expressive melodies; large/expanded orchestra; wide range of dynamics; rich harmonies and chromaticism for drama; leitmotifs and thematic melodies; the music is programmatic; or any other acceptable answer.

**Which section of the orchestra plays the main theme, and when? Who is accompanying?**

9:24 - Strings play the main theme, whilst woodwinds playing a scalic/chromatic triplet accompaniment, and brass play a dotted quaver cross rhythm

9:50 - Flutes and first bassoon join the main theme with the high strings, low strings and second bassoon continue the triplet movements with triplet interjections from the trumpet, and everyone else plays a chordal accompaniment

10:10 - Trumpets and oboes take the tune, with flutes and upper strings playing scalic semiquavers, and everyone else playing a steady chordal accompaniment

10:29 - Homophonic; the whole orchestra play as one unit

10:48 - Presto tempo; the energetic and dramatic ending begins to build

11:22 - Molto meno mosso; a shift in tempo and time signature - 6/4 - take us to the very end, guided by a brass fanfare (played by the trumpets, french horns, and oboes!)

If you're interested in learning more about how Tchaikovsky develops his main theme in this piece, take a look at the video below:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1k8-a6of58s&list=RD1k8-a6of58s&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1k8-a6of58s&list=RD1k8-a6of58s&start_radio=1)

Under each of the headings below, write down some key words to describe what you can hear. We have done a couple to get you started:

Melody	Harmony and tonality	Texture and rhythm	Instrumentation	Character
Scalic	Perfect cadence	Polyphony	Orchestral	Dramatic
Arpeggiated	Major	Antiphony	Strings	Regal
Conjunct	Consonant	Contrapuntal	Violin (two sections)	Majestic
Disjunct	Diatonic	Cross rhythms	Viola, Cello, Double-	Proud
Counter melody	Chromatic	Dotted rhythms	Bass	Powerful
Cyclical	Dynamic contrast	Triplets	Woodwind	Passionate
Motif/Leitmotif	Chordal		Flute, Oboe, Clarinet,	Programmatic
Lyrical	Homophonic		Bassoon	
Arco strings			Brass	
Brass fanfare			French Horn,	
Long phrases			Trumpet, Trombone,	
			Tuba	
			Percussion	
			Timpani	

This list is a starting point; there are many more features of this music and acceptable words that you and your students may come up with.

### Some more about Tchaikovsky...

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in Russia in 1840, and grew up to become one of the greatest and most beloved composers in history. His works are some of the best known and most performed of all time, but he is most famous for his ballets - such as *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty* - and his six symphonies which express his innermost feelings and thoughts.

Tchaikovsky's Symphony No.5 does exactly that. It has four movements with the expected structures within a symphony, but Tchaikovsky uses the same tune - the 'fate theme' - in each movement, changing it to fit different moods. In doing so, he manages to tie all the movements together, which makes the piece as a whole easier to understand as a listener. The technical term for this is cyclical (meaning it has a recurring theme.)

