

AMusA Piano

General Knowledge & Structural Analysis — Study Guide

List A J. S. Bach — Prelude and Fugue in D minor, BWV 875

List B Haydn — Sonata in C minor, Hob. XVI:20

List C Chopin — Waltz in E minor, B. 56 (Op. posth.)

List D Bartók — Romanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56

Prepared for the AMEB Associate in Music, Australia (AMusA) — Piano

Built around the five official Level 3 question areas

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Part 1 How the General Knowledge Section Actually Works

Almost every candidate who loses marks here loses them for the same reason: they prepared facts instead of preparing a conversation. This section explains what the examiners are actually assessing, so that the rest of this guide can be read with the right target in mind.

1.1 The exam format

Item	Detail
Total exam time	50 minutes for piano (Regulation 13)
Program of music	25–40 minutes of playing
Examiners	Two (Regulation 17 — two examiners for all Associate and Licentiate practical exams)
General knowledge	A spoken discussion after the program. AMEB describes it as "a detailed general knowledge discussion with the examiners." Roughly ten minutes in practice, though AMEB does not publish a fixed allocation.
Scores	Candidates must give the examiners clear, unmarked copies of all scores. Erase pencil markings other than fingerings and interpretative marks.
Memory	Not required at AMusA (one work from memory is an LMusA requirement).
Result	Award with Distinction / Award / No Award. There is no published percentage and no separate pass mark for general knowledge.
Co-requisite	A pass (65%+) in a Grade 5 AMEB written exam — Theory, Musicianship or Music Craft. Sit it <i>before</i> the recital, not after: its content (keys, cadences, modulation to related keys, chord identification, form, Italian terms) is exactly the vocabulary this section demands.

The single most important structural fact

Every question is asked **from the full score, with the score open in front of you**. This is stated in the syllabus and repeated by AMEB's Chief Examiner. It changes how to prepare: do not memorise an essay. Instead, be able to *point at the page* and talk. If you cannot find bar 47 in ten seconds, you cannot answer a question about bar 47. Number the bars in your own practice copy (not the examiner's copy) and know the landmarks by sight.

1.2 The five official question areas

AMEB's Level 3 guidelines — which cover the upper grades and the Associate and Licentiate diplomas — state the objective as follows:

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a mature understanding of the structure, style and historical background of the repertoire that is performed and to use this as a basis for discussing the interpretive choices that they make.

AMEB, Guidelines for Level 3

Questions, asked from the full piano score, focus on five areas:

Area	What the syllabus says
1. Terminology	The significance of titles and the meaning of all markings contained in the score.
2. Composers	Relevant biographical information, sources of influence, impact upon later generations of composers, and repertoire output.
3. Historical and stylistic context	How each work relates to the period from which it arises, considering both its compositional style and the performance conventions of the time .
4. Structure	Formal layout, keys, melodic and harmonic language, and the identification of climax points .
5. The instrument	The construction and development of the instrument, with special consideration given to any implications this may have upon the repertoire performed.

Two things candidates routinely forget. First, **climax points** are named explicitly in the syllabus — be ready to put a finger on the climax of every movement and explain how the music gets there and away again. Second, "**repertoire output**" means the composer's *other* music, not just the piece being played. Know what else each composer wrote, and roughly when.

1.3 How answers are judged

AMEB's Chief Examiner (Practical), Professor Emeritus Ian Holtham, writes that candidates should be prepared to discuss "in-depth musical content, rather than just listing isolated facts or memorising lists with which the candidate has no personal engagement." Experienced teachers put the same point more bluntly: the examiners want an intelligent conversation about the music, not one-word answers to a hundred questions. Assessment at diploma level is holistic — the performance and the general knowledge are weighed together to reach a single result, so a thin discussion drags down a good recital.

The answer shape that works

Whatever the question, aim for a four-move answer. It takes about twenty to thirty seconds and it demonstrates all five syllabus areas at once:

1. **Name it.** Identify the thing precisely — the marking, the chord, the section, the device.
2. **Place it.** Say where else it occurs in the piece, or how it relates to what came before.
3. **Contextualise it.** Explain the period convention that governs it.
4. **Land it on a decision.** Say what you therefore *do at the keyboard*.

Worked example

Examiner points to the mordent in bar 1 of the Bach prelude: "What's this?"

Weak answer: "A mordent."

*Strong answer: "That's a mordent, on the bass D. In Bach's own ornament table — the *Explication* he wrote out for Wilhelm Friedemann in 1720 — the mordent is a single rapid alternation with the note *below*, played on the beat rather than before it, and diatonically within the key, so here it's D–C sharp–D. It's the only ornament sign in the prelude, and it's there to give the very first bass note a percussive definition that a harpsichord can't get from accent alone. So I place it exactly on the downbeat and keep it crisp, rather than letting it drift ahead of the beat as a Romantic grace note would."*

Notice that the strong answer is not longer because it contains more facts. It is longer because each fact is doing a job: identifying, sourcing, explaining *why the composer wrote it*, and justifying a physical decision. That last move — "*and*

so *I play it this way*" — is the hinge of the entire section, and it is the thing most study guides leave out. The syllabus objective says candidates must use their understanding "as a basis for discussing the interpretive choices that they make."

1.4 Why this program works as a program

Be ready for the opening question, which is very often some version of *"tell us about your program"* or *"why did you choose these pieces?"* A good answer shows that the four works were chosen as a set, not assembled at random.

List	Work	Period	Approx. duration
A	Bach, Prelude and Fugue in D minor, BWV 875	Baroque, c. 1739–42	3–3½ min
B	Haydn, Sonata in C minor, Hob. XVI:20	Classical, 1771 / pub. 1780	15–20 min with repeats
C	Chopin, Waltz in E minor, B. 56	Romantic, c. 1830 / pub. 1868	2½–3 min
D	Bartók, Romanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56	Twentieth century, 1915	4–5 min

That is roughly 26–32 minutes, comfortably inside the 25–40 minute requirement. Beyond the timing, three threads run through the whole program and are worth having ready, because they turn four separate pieces into one coherent recital:

- **The keyboard instrument itself changes under your hands across the program** — from Bach's harpsichord or clavichord with no dynamic control from the key, through Haydn's five-octave wooden-framed fortepiano, to Chopin's Pleyel with its singing tone and precise dampers, to the full iron-framed modern concert grand Bartók wrote for. That is syllabus area 5, and this program illustrates it almost as a teaching sequence.
- **Three of the four works are in the minor mode** (D minor, C minor, E minor), and each handles the minor differently: Bach as a rhetorical lament figure, Haydn as tragedy that refuses consolation, Chopin as brilliance rather than sorrow. The Bartók then breaks out into modal writing that is neither major nor minor in the textbook sense.
- **Dance is a hidden thread.** The Haydn finale is minuet-like in its 3/4 gait but is not a minuet; the Chopin is a waltz you cannot dance to; the Bartók is six dances that *were* danced, transcribed from villagers. A question about "the relationship between art music and dance music" would find a rich answer in this program.

1.5 Preparing efficiently

- **Start now, not three weeks out.** This material becomes conversational only with repetition. Talk about one page of score out loud each week during lessons.
- **Practise out loud, to a person.** Silent reading produces recognition, not recall. Have a parent or teacher point at random bars and ask "what's happening here?"
- **Listen widely.** Holtham specifically advises that listening broadly develops the deeper stylistic understanding examiners are testing. Hear other Haydn sonatas, other Bach fugues, other Chopin waltzes, other Bartók.
- **Say "I don't know" cleanly if you don't.** Then offer what you do know. A candidate who says "I'm not certain of the exact date, but it's from Bach's Leipzig years, so late 1730s into the 1740s" is in far better shape than one who guesses confidently and wrongly.
- **Have an opinion.** Where scholars disagree — and this program contains several genuine disagreements, all flagged in this guide — saying so, and saying which reading you follow and why, is exactly the "mature understanding" the syllabus asks for.

Part 2 J. S. Bach — Prelude and Fugue in D minor, BWV 875

LIST A The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II, No. 6. Compiled c. 1739–42 in Leipzig. Prelude 61 bars, 3/4; Fugue 27 bars, common time, three voices. About 3–3½ minutes for the pair.

2.1 The composer and the collection

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) assembled Book II of *Das wohltemperirte Clavier* during his Leipzig years, when he had been *Thomaskantor* and *Director musices* since 1723. Handwriting studies by Yoshitake Kobayashi place the compilation between about 1739 and 1742, in three stages: first the pairs in the common keys, then those in the remoter keys, and finally the C major and A major pairs after a trip to Berlin in the summer of 1741. Book I, by contrast, was completed at Cöthen in 1722, where Bach was Capellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen. The two books are therefore separated by about twenty years and by a complete change of job — court instrumental composer versus municipal church musician.

What "well-tempered" means

This is the question most likely to expose a candidate who has memorised a slogan. A *well temperament* — the term was coined by Andreas Werckmeister in 1691 — is an **unequal but circulating** tuning: the fifths are narrowed by differing amounts so that all twenty-four keys are usable, but each key retains its own colour, because the major thirds vary in size. **Equal temperament** makes all keys usable *and identical*. The old textbook claim that the Well-Tempered Clavier was written to demonstrate equal temperament is now generally rejected; equal temperament only became standard well after Bach's death. Candidate systems for what Bach actually used include Werckmeister III, Kirnberger III (Kirnberger was Bach's pupil), Neidhardt and Vallotti–Young, plus twentieth-century reconstructions by Herbert Kellner and John Barnes. In 2005 Bradley Lehman proposed that the decorative loops drawn across the top of Book I's title page encode a tuning recipe; the reading has been challenged by John O'Donnell and David Schulenberg, and the honest summary is that **Bach's exact temperament is unknown**.

Trap: the famous squiggle is on the title page of **Book I (1722)**, not Book II. Book II's autograph has no overall title page at all — the familiar heading comes from Altnickol's copy.

The title and its purpose

...Preludes and Fugues through all the tones and semitones, both as regards the tertia major or Ut Re Mi and as concerns the tertia minor or Re Mi Fa. For the profit and use of musical youth desirous of learning, and especially for the pastime of those already skilled in this study...

From Bach's autograph title page to Book I, 1722

Two purposes, then: pedagogical and recreational. And two demonstrations: that all twenty-four keys are available, and that fugal writing can be endlessly varied.

How Book II differs from Book I

- It is not an overflow from Book I but, in John Butt's phrase, the largest and most varied collection of Bach's later years, reflecting his growing interest in the breadth of music history — from Renaissance *stile antico* counterpoint (the E major fugue) to fashionable modern *galant* writing (the F minor and G sharp minor preludes).

- **The preludes are longer, weightier and more independent.** The headline statistic: Book I contains **one** prelude in binary form; Book II contains **ten**. Book I's preludes are often short *praeludia* spun from a single figure; Book II's are frequently full movements in their own right.
- The fugues are more ambitious — double and triple fugues, mirror inversion (C sharp minor), audible augmentation (C minor).
- Many pieces had long gestations, several were transposed to fill out the key scheme, and a number survive in earlier versions. **BWV 875 is one of them** — see below.

Sources, and why there is no "definitive" text

This matters for BWV 875 specifically. The chief autograph is the so-called **London autograph**, British Library Add. MS 35021, containing twenty-one of the twenty-four pairs, written on unbound double sheets so that a prelude occupies one side and its fugue the other. About a quarter of it is in the hand of **Anna Magdalena Bach**, and the British Library reports that the D minor pair is among the pieces she copied. Butt suggests Bach delegated to her the pieces he considered most settled. Separately, Bach's son-in-law **Johann Christoph Altnickol** made the earliest complete copy from 1744, descending not from the London manuscript but from a second, now-lost autograph that Bach supervised. Modern scholarly editions therefore print **Version A** (London) and **Version B** (Altnickol), and ornament signs in particular differ between them. Book II was not printed in Bach's lifetime; the first edition was published by Nicolaus Simrock of Bonn in 1801.

Which instrument?

Clavier in Bach's Germany meant any stringed keyboard instrument with a keyboard — harpsichord, clavichord, and by extension organ — but **not** the fortepiano, still a novelty in Germany at the time. No pedal part is needed anywhere in the forty-eight, and the compass fits a single-manual instrument. The consequence for playing: **the key gives you no dynamic control** on a harpsichord, so expression is carried by articulation, agogic stress, rhythmic placement, arpeggiation and registration. Every interpretative decision on a modern piano should be made with that in mind.

2.2 The Prelude, BWV 875/1

Feature	Detail
Time signature	3/4
Length	61 bars
Repeat signs	None
Voices	Essentially two parts, thickening to three at cadences
Ending	Bar 61: D–A–d–f sharp — a <i>tierce de Picardie</i> (Picardy third)
Ornaments in the text	A single mordent, on the bass D of bar 1

Texture and figuration

A *moto perpetuo*: continuous semiquavers in one hand against quavers and broken chords in the other. Bar 1 opens with a descending D minor scale over reiterated bass Ds. From bar 2 the characteristic figure is a repeated-pivot broken-chord pattern — for example the right hand's B flat–G–D–G, three times over. This is **violin string-crossing (*bariolage*) figuration transferred to the keyboard**, and it is a direct trace of Bach's long study and arrangement of Vivaldi's concertos. The hand-crossings that result are a feature of the piece, not an accident of the writing.

The structural signature: invertible counterpoint

Bars 5–8 restate bars 1–4 with the two hands exchanged. This is *invertible counterpoint at the octave*, and it is the device on which the whole prelude is built. Bach then does it again at a larger scale: **bars 26–29 are bars 5–8 transposed exactly up a perfect fifth**, note for note. So the "second half" begins by replaying the first half's material in the dominant.

Form and key scheme

- **Bars 1 – c.25.** D minor. Opening material and its inverted-hands restatement; passing colouring towards F, B flat and G minor; from bar 23 the accidentals B natural, C sharp, F sharp and G sharp drive to a cadence in **A minor at bars 25–26.**
- **Bars 26 – c.56.** The exact transposition up a fifth begins at bar 26. Bar 30 recalls the opening descending scale in A minor. Then G minor from about bar 35, a chromatic passage at bar 37 (note the D flat), a return towards D minor from bar 43, more G minor around bars 51–54, and a perfect cadence in D minor at bar 56.
- **Bars 57–61.** Coda over a **tonic pedal** — D reiterated on alternate semiquavers — closing on D major.

The design is therefore a **continuous binary** — tonally bipartite, i to v then v back to i, with an exact transposed restatement marking the join — but note carefully that **there are no repeat signs**, so it is not a repeated dance binary. Describing it as "binary form" without that qualification invites a follow-up question you may not want.

The one fact to volunteer about this prelude

It exists in an earlier, shorter version, catalogued as **BWV 875a**, a *Praeambulum* in D minor. Bach **lengthened and elaborated the piece** while compiling Book II; the earlier version lacks certain demisemiquaver passages found in the final form — almost certainly the nine demisemiquavers in **bars 22 and 24**, which are the only ones in the piece. Being able to point at bar 22 and say "this flourish is a later addition — Bach revised this prelude" is exactly the kind of specific, score-anchored knowledge that separates an Award from a Distinction.

2.3 The Fugue, BWV 875/2

Feature	Detail
Voices	Three (<i>a 3</i>) — alto, soprano, bass
Time signature	Common time (C)
Length	27 bars — extremely concise
Subject	Exactly 2 bars, entering on the downbeat of bar 1, unaccompanied, with no anacrusis
Answer	Real — an exact transposition up a fifth
Countersubject	Yes, in even semiquavers; maintained through the exposition, then treated freely
Devices present	Stretto (extensively) and inversion
Devices absent	No augmentation, no diminution, no pedal point

The subject — two characters in one gesture

This is the most rewarding thing to be able to describe, because the subject is deliberately double.

- **Beats 1–2 of bar 1:** twelve **triplet semiquavers** (sextuplets), diatonic and mostly stepwise with turns — D–E–F–G–F–E–F–G–A–B flat–A–G. Buoyant, energetic, rising.

- **Beat 3 of bar 1 through bar 2: quavers**, leaping up to high D and then descending **chromatically through a perfect fourth** — D–C sharp–C natural–B natural–B flat–A — continuing G (syncopated across the middle of the bar), F, E, then a leap up to A.

That descending chromatic fourth from tonic to dominant is the *passus duriusculus* — the Baroque **lament figure**, the same shape that underpins the Crucifixus of the B minor Mass and countless laments of the period. So the subject yokes together a light, dancing, diatonic rise and a grave chromatic descent. Butt describes it as coupling "easy-going triplet motion with a descending chromatic phrase." Combining two contrasted affects inside a single subject is a **late** Bach trait and one of the ways Book II announces itself as a more modern collection than Book I.

Why the answer is real, not tonal

The subject begins D–E–F–G; the answer begins A–**B natural**–C–D. The B natural proves the answer is an exact transposition up a perfect fifth with no adjustment to the opening interval. A *tonal answer* would have altered the first note or two to keep the music inside the tonic key — typically answering a leap of a fifth with a leap of a fourth. Here Bach does not. Being able to say *which note tells you* is the mark of a candidate who has looked rather than memorised.

The countersubject and the rhythmic conflict

The countersubject runs in **even (duple) semiquavers**, so it sets up a continuous **two-against-three** friction against the subject's sextuplets. It appears in the alto against the answer at bars 3–4 and in the soprano against the third entry at bar 7, and thereafter returns only occasionally — notably in the bass at bars 15 and 26. It is a genuine countersubject, but treated **freely, not as an obligatory countersubject**.

Exposition — order of entries

Bar	Voice	Form	Key
1	Alto (middle)	Subject	D minor
3	Soprano (top)	Real answer	A minor; countersubject in alto
5	—	Codetta , modulating back A minor → D minor. Note that both upper voices already state the head of the subject in inversion here — the fugue's central device appears before the exposition is even finished.	
6	Bass	Subject	D minor; countersubject in soprano

So the order is **middle – top – bottom**, and the exposition closes at bar 8.

Episodes, middle entries and the stretti

Bars	Event
8–	Episode I , on a new figure begun in the bass and freely imitated by treble then alto.
10	Middle-entry cluster in D minor : bass head, then an inverted head in the soprano, then a soprano subject running through bars 11–12.
12–	Episode II , on the same figure as Episode I.
14	Stretto I , entries one crotchet apart: alto subject on D, soprano answer-form on A. Countersubject in the bass at bar 15. Cadence in A minor at bars 16–17, with a trill on the soprano F.
17	Stretto II — of inverted forms , one crotchet apart: alto inverted from A, bass inverted from D.
18	Stretto III , in G minor : bass subject on G, soprano subject on G a beat later.
19–21	Episode III , built mainly on the head of the subject in inversion , with long sequential descending statements in the bass; back to D minor by bar 21.
25	Stretto IV — the climax . Three voices in D minor , entries half a bar apart, combining direct and inverted forms : alto subject on D, bass inverted head from A, soprano subject on D.
26–27	Countersubject returns in the bass; close.

Key scheme of the entries: $i \rightarrow v \rightarrow i$, then D minor, D minor/A minor, **G minor (iv)**, D minor. Notice how narrow that is — tonic, dominant and subdominant only. This fugue gets its variety from **contrapuntal device**, not from modulation, and that is a genuinely interesting observation to offer unprompted. It is also why the piece can be so short: in twenty-seven bars Bach presents the subject, inverts it, and combines the two forms in stretto four times over.

The climax — which the syllabus explicitly asks you to identify — is the three-voice stretto at bar 25, where direct and inverted statements pile up half a bar apart in the tonic. Everything before it has been preparing that convergence.

Check this in your own score before the exam. In the old Bach-Gesellschaft text the fugue ends on **bare D octaves with no third** — no Picardy third — in deliberate contrast to the prelude, which does end D major. This could not be independently confirmed against a modern urtext here, and Versions A and B may differ. It is a single-note check in your Henle or Bärenreiter copy, and it makes a lovely closing point if it holds: the prelude ends bright, the fugue ends bare.

2.4 Performance practice

Ornamentation

Bach's only written guide is the *Explication unterschiedlicher Zeichen* he entered in the *Clavier-Büchlein für Wilhelm Friedemann Bach* of **1720**, giving thirteen ornaments. Three governing rules follow from it: **trills begin on the upper (auxiliary) note**; ornaments fall **on** the beat, not before it; and they are played **diatonically**, in the key in force. C. P. E. Bach's *Versuch* of 1753 corroborates all three. Notated ornaments in BWV 875 are sparse — the mordent in prelude bar 1, a cadential trill on F at fugue bar 16, a mordent near the end — and, as noted above, **the signs differ between the London and Altnickol sources**, so different urtexts print different ornaments. Mentioning that is a strong move.

Touch and articulation

The Baroque default is **non-legato, or "ordinary touch"** — detached but not staccato — with slurring reserved for expressive groups. On a modern piano the usual solution is clear, slightly detached quavers against legato semiquavers, with independent voicing so the subject is audible in whatever register it lies. In this fugue specifically, **the subject's**

two characters need differentiating: smooth, even sextuplets against more weighted, speaking chromatic quavers. Articulation must then stay **consistent for every statement** of subject and countersubject — that consistency is what makes the counterpoint audible.

Pedal, dynamics, tempo

Pedal: Bach's instruments had none. Use little or none; where used, only quickly-changed touches for colour or to connect what the hand cannot, never enough to blur the counterpoint. **Dynamics:** nothing is marked. Baroque practice is *terraced dynamics* — sectional, structural levels reflecting harpsichord registration and manual changes — rather than continuous swells; shape by articulation and timing rather than by graded crescendo. **Tempo:** no marking survives, and every tempo indication in the forty-eight is editorial. The prelude wants a flowing perpetual motion, brisk but never scrambled, since the demisemiquavers at bars 22 and 24 must stay clean; the fugue needs a moderate common-time pulse that accommodates sextuplets against even semiquavers.

Editions

Bärenreiter / Neue Bach-Ausgabe V/6.2, ed. Alfred Dürr (1995), is the scholarly benchmark and is especially relevant here because it prints **both Version A and Version B Henle Urtext** is the practical gold standard. Also current: Wiener Urtext, Peters Urtext, and the **ABRSM edition edited by Donald Francis Tovey**, famous for its analytical prefaces though not an urtext by modern standards. The **Czerny edition of 1837** is the classic example of what urtext editing reacted against — added metronome marks, dynamics, phrasing and a Romantic legato ideal throughout.

Ten things to volunteer about the Bach

1. The subject's dual character — diatonic sextuplet rise against the descending chromatic fourth, the *passus duriusculus* lament figure — and that this is a late-Bach, modern trait.
2. The answer is **real**, and the B natural proves it.
3. Entry order alto–soprano–bass; the subject enters alone, on the downbeat, with no anacrusis.
4. Two-against-three between subject and countersubject.
5. Stretto and inversion are the fugue's whole reason for existing — inversion appears as early as the codetta at bar 5, and the climax at bar 25 combines direct and inverted forms in three voices.
6. Extreme concision: 27 bars, no augmentation, no diminution, no pedal point, key plan restricted to i, v and iv.
7. The prelude's invertible counterpoint at the octave (bars 5–8 = bars 1–4, hands exchanged) and the exact transposition up a fifth at bars 26–29.
8. Vivaldian violin idiom in the prelude — bariolage figuration and hand-crossings.
9. The prelude's Picardy third at bar 61.
10. BWV 875a: the prelude exists in an earlier version; Bach revised and expanded it.

Part 3 Haydn — Sonata in C minor, Hob. XVI:20

LIST B Also numbered Landon 33 and, in the 1780 print, Op. 30 No. 6. Autograph dated 1771; published Vienna, Artaria, 1780. Three movements, about 10 minutes without repeats, 15–20 with.

3.1 Numbering — get this right first

Be ready to say: **Hoboken XVI:20 = Landon 33 = Op. 30 No. 6**. Anton van Hoboken's catalogue groups Haydn's works by genre (XVI is the keyboard sonatas); Christa Landon's edition renumbered them chronologically. Note also that "Sonata No. 20" is ambiguous — under Landon's numbering it means a different piece — so always cite the Hoboken number.

3.2 Composition, publication, and the nine-year gap

An **incomplete autograph is dated 1771**. There is a scholarly caveat worth knowing: A. Peter Brown (1986) observed that Haydn's writing of the date is unclear, and some scholars therefore treat 1771 as the year of the surviving draft rather than of completion, allowing for revision later in the decade. The safe formulation is: *"The incomplete autograph is dated 1771; the date is generally accepted, though Brown noted the figure is unclearly written, and the sonata may have been completed or revised later before publication."*

The nine-year gap before publication has a concrete institutional cause, and knowing it is much better than vaguely saying the piece was "ahead of its time." Under Haydn's 1761 Esterházy contract, **all his compositions were the property of the Esterházy family**. In 1779 his contract was revised to permit him to publish without prior authorisation from his employer. The 1780 Artaria set is the immediate consequence, and it began Haydn's long relationship with that Viennese publisher.

The 1780 Artaria print

Six sonatas — Hob. XVI:35, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 20 — with **the C minor placed last**. Dedicated to **Katharina and Marianna von Auenbrugger**, daughters of the physician Leopold Auenbrugger and pupils of Haydn and Salieri. Two details are worth quoting:

The approval of the Demoiselles von Auenbrugger is most important to me, for their manner of playing and genuine insight into music equal those of the greatest masters.

Haydn to Artaria, 1780

And Haydn's own verdict on this sonata: he described it as **"the longest and most difficult"** of the six. (A further nice detail: it was Artaria, not Haydn, who added the dedication; Haydn approved the dedicatees but objected to the publisher deciding unilaterally.)

The title page carries the designation ***per il Clavicembalo o Forte Piano*** — "for harpsichord or fortepiano" — which is itself evidence of the transitional moment: publishers wanted to sell to owners of both instruments.

3.3 The instrument question — do not oversimplify this

It is often said flatly that this is Haydn's first sonata written for the fortepiano. **Say something more careful, because the scholarship genuinely disagrees, and the disagreement is more impressive than the slogan.**

- **For:** Richard Wigmore calls it the first of Haydn's keyboard works "conceived essentially in terms of a *touch-sensitive instrument*" — note that this means clavichord *or* fortepiano, not fortepiano specifically. Some programme notes go further and say it was composed for the fortepiano outright.
- **Against:** Howard Pollack (1991) argues it was composed **for the clavichord** and merely "touched up" for the 1780 publication to suit the emerging fortepiano the Auenbruggers played. Others assign the title of Haydn's first true fortepiano sonata to **Hob. XVI:49** of 1789–90.
- **Context:** fortepianos were **not yet being built in Vienna** in 1771 — Stein was in Augsburg, and Anton Walter only began building in Vienna in the early 1780s.

The concrete evidence is the dynamics. The sonata contains stark, rapid alternations of *f* and *p* — most famously on successive notes in the region of bars 13–14 of the first movement — which a harpsichord physically cannot produce. But note the unresolved crux: it is not established whether those markings stand in the 1771 autograph or were added for the 1780 print, and that is precisely why Pollack's "touched up" reading exists. So the strongest defensible sentence is: "*the dynamic markings in the sources demand a touch-sensitive instrument*" — not "the autograph proves it was for fortepiano."

The fortepiano of c. 1770–80 versus a modern piano

	Viennese fortepiano, c. 1770–80	Modern grand
Compass	Five octaves (61 keys)	88 keys
Frame	All wood, around 95 kg — four or five times lighter than a modern grand	Cast iron
Stringing	Straight-strung; every note sounds on its own rather than blending	Cross-strung
Hammers	Thin leather ; a perceptible strike, closer to a xylophone attack	Felt
Action	<i>Prellmechanik</i> — light, shallow, extremely quick, unforgiving	Double escapement
Touch weight	Roughly a tenth of a modern action; much shallower key dip	Heavy, deep
Sustain	Notes begin decaying immediately and quickly	Tone swells, then decays
Colour devices	Knee levers , including a <i>moderator</i> — an effect with no modern equivalent	Foot pedals

A strong, examinable observation

This sonata is written **to the very edges of the c. 1770 five-octave compass**. The slow movement spans nearly four octaves and reaches towards the top of the available keyboard, and the finale's left hand leaps "from one extreme of the eighteenth-century keyboard to the other" in its hand-crossing passages. Haydn is exploiting the whole instrument he had. Say that, and point at the passage.

3.4 Historical context — Sturm und Drang

Haydn joined the Esterházy establishment in **1761 as Vice-Kapellmeister**, becoming **full Kapellmeister in 1766** on Gregor Werner's death and serving **Prince Nikolaus I** from 1762 to 1790, with the court's centre of gravity moving to the remote new palace at Eszterháza from 1766. His famous remark about that isolation belongs here:

*There was no one near me to confuse or torment me, and so I was **forced to become original**.*

Haydn, on his years at Eszterháza

Around **1768–1772** Haydn's music became longer, more passionate and more daring — the phase usually labelled *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress). Characteristic devices: surprise key changes, dramatic silences, asymmetrical phrasing, minor keys, and hand-crossing effects in keyboard works. Companion works to know:

- **Symphony No. 44 in E minor, "Trauer" (Mourning)**, 1772
- **Symphony No. 45 in F sharp minor, "Farewell"**, 1772 — James Webster notes it is apparently the only eighteenth-century symphony in that key
- **String Quartets Op. 20, "Sun"**, 1772 — including quartets in G minor and F minor, three ending with fugues
- Symphony No. 49 in F minor, "La Passione", 1768; Symphony No. 26, "Lamentatione"; Symphony No. 52 in C minor

A refinement that earns credit. "Sturm und Drang" is a borrowed literary label and an imprecise one: **Klinger's play that gave the movement its name dates from 1776 — after this music.** Many scholars prefer *empfindsamer Stil* ("sensitive style") for the keyboard works, pointing to the influence of **C. P. E. Bach**, whose rhetorical, speech-like manner is audible in this sonata's abrupt gestures and recitative-like interjections. Offering that correction shows real command.

How rare is a minor-key Haydn sonata?

Very. Of roughly sixty-two solo keyboard sonatas, only **five surviving sonatas are in minor keys** (plus two lost): G minor Hob. XVI:44, **C minor Hob. XVI:20**, B minor XVI:32, C sharp minor XVI:36, and E minor XVI:34. **Hob. XVI:20 is Haydn's only keyboard sonata in C minor** — the key of Mozart's K. 457 and of Beethoven's *Pathétique* and Op. 111, which is exactly why writers reach for the "proto-Beethoven" comparison.

3.5 Structure, movement by movement

Mvt	Tempo	Key	Metre	Form	Bars
I	Moderato	C minor	4/4	Sonata form, with a <i>continuous</i> exposition	100
II	Andante con moto	A flat major	3/4	See note below	67
III	Finale: Allegro	C minor	3/4	Sonata form — not a minuet and trio, and not a rondo	152

Trap in the finale. Its opening is redolent of a minuet and it is in 3/4, so it is easy to mislabel. It is a **sonata-form movement** that develops with increasing intensity and difficulty, including virtuosic cross-handed passages. If an examiner asks "is this a minuet?", the correct answer is "it sounds like one at the opening, but no — it's in sonata form."

Movement I — the tonal plan

- **Bars 1–8:** primary theme, a C minor period closing with a perfect authentic cadence. Elegiac, in parallel thirds and sixths.
- **Bars 9–31:** the transition, and the movement's most admired stretch — dense motivic dialogue between the hands. Structurally unorthodox: this is a **continuous exposition with no medial caesura**. A sequential passage runs from bar 9; the dominant of E flat arrives around bar 13; an **augmented sixth at bar 18** feints towards a medial caesura and then evades it; and E flat is reached obliquely via an **auxiliary cadence** around bars 26–32.

- **Second key area: E flat major — the relative major (III).** This is the textbook minor-mode Classical scheme, **i** → **III**, **not i** → **v**, and it is the single most likely harmony question on this movement. The exposition's closing cadence lands in E flat around bars 36–37.
- **Development, bars 38–65:** drives first to the dominant of **B flat minor**, established around bar 47. Then, at **bars 54–59**, the chromatic high point: a rapid succession of dominant-seventh harmonies tonicising E flat minor, then A flat minor, G flat major and E flat major. G flat is a genuinely remote destination. Parallel six-four harmonies at bars 56–59 are a striking structural oddity. The structural dominant arrives around bar 63.
- **Recapitulation:** here the analysts disagree, and you should say so. Lauri Suurpää places it at **bar 78**; other analyses put it at **bar 69**. The disagreement is not carelessness — it follows directly from the continuous exposition, which has no clean medial caesura, so the "double return" of theme and tonic is genuinely ambiguous. Mentioning that this ambiguity is a consequence of the exposition's design is exactly the sort of connected thinking that earns a Distinction.

The written-out cadenzas — do not miss these

Movement I contains **two quasi-cadenzas that Haydn wrote out into the score**, one in the exposition and one in the recapitulation, notated as a fully written-out fermata marked *Adagio*. The slow movement does something similar, dissolving into a cadenza before its final cadence. This is **concerto rhetoric imported into a solo sonata** — the soloist's improvisatory freedom, but composed out and measured rather than left to the player. It is one of the most distinctive things about the piece.

Movement II — a note on its form

Sources disagree. Some call it a two-part song (binary) form; others read it as a compact sonata form, with a second key area in **E flat, the dominant of A flat**. The safe answer: *"a lyrical, aria-like slow movement in A flat major, 3/4, over a running bass with constant syncopations; analysts describe it variously as binary or as a compact sonata form — either way its second key area is E flat."*

The ending

The finale ends **in C minor, without a Picardy third** — a bleak, unconsolated close that suggests anything but triumph. (Worth a quick check in your own score, but every description in the literature points this way.) That refusal to resolve into the major is the expressive point of the whole sonata, and it is what most sharply distinguishes Haydn here from the conventional expectations of 1780.

3.6 Performance practice

Ornamentation — an honest answer

There is **no clean consensus** to recite, and pretending otherwise is riskier than explaining the situation. The eighteenth-century default, following **C. P. E. Bach's *Versuch* (1753)** and **Türk's *Klavierschule* (1789)**, is an **upper-note start**, and that should be the presumption in Haydn. However, Haydn's own notation is inconsistent: he used a single "master symbol" — what is now called the **"Haydn ornament"** — which can mean a turn or a mordent depending on the period of the work, and his notation gives no information about the speed of trills. Main-note starts are widely accepted where the upper note has just sounded, where a melodic descent would be obscured, or in short trills on strong beats. Haydn's short trills, unlike C. P. E. Bach's, tend to fall **on** the strong beat and are not slurred. The standard scholarly reference is **László Somfai, *The Keyboard Sonatas of Joseph Haydn*** (Chicago, 1995).

Dynamics, articulation, pedal

Dynamics: in this sonata they work by **abrupt terraced juxtaposition** — *f* and *p* as adjacent events — rather than by the graded crescendos and *sforzando* accents of Haydn's later fortepiano works. Play the contrasts as *events*, not as swells. Dynamics also arise from **texture and register**: a sudden change of density is itself a dynamic gesture.

Articulation: a lightly detached Classical touch with short rhetorical slurs, not long Romantic phrasing. **Pedal:** Haydn wrote no pedal indications here (the only celebrated pedal marking in his sonatas is the controversial open pedal in Hob. XVI:50). Use finger legato as the default and the damper pedal only for colour — and never through the *f/p* juxtapositions, which need a clean, dry attack to register at all.

Editions

Henle HN 1575, ed. Georg Feder, with fingering by Paul Lewis. **Wiener Urtext**, ed. Christa Landon (later revised by Ulrich Leisinger) — the source of the "No. 33" numbering and noted for its scholarly rigour. Also Bärenreiter, and the ABRSM selected sonatas edited by Howard Ferguson. Avoid the old Peters/Martienssen as a performing text; it is a historical document, not an urtext.

Ten things to volunteer about the Haydn

1. Haydn's own verdict: "the longest and most difficult" of the six Auenbrugger sonatas.
2. Richard Wigmore calls it "**Haydn's *Appassionata***"; Stephen Plaistow called it "one of Haydn's best and perhaps also the first great sonata for the piano by anybody."
3. The publication gap has an **institutional** cause — the 1779 contract revision — not merely an aesthetic one.
4. The instrument question framed *as a question*, not as a settled fact.
5. The two written-out cadenzas in movement I, plus the cadenza in movement II.
6. The continuous exposition with no medial caesura, the evaded augmented sixth at bar 18, the auxiliary cadence into E flat — and why this makes the recapitulation point disputable.
7. Textural and registral drama as the expressive engine: parallel thirds and sixths, recitative-like interjections, hand-crossing to both extremes of a five-octave keyboard.
8. The C. P. E. Bach connection and the *empfindsamer Stil* refinement of the "Sturm und Drang" label.
9. Haydn's only C minor keyboard sonata, and the Beethoven trajectory that follows from that key.
10. Numbering: Hob. XVI:20 = Landon 33 = Op. 30 No. 6.

Part 4 Chopin — Waltz in E minor, B. 56 (Op. posth.)

LIST C Brown B. 56 · Kobylańska KK IVa/15 · Chomiński P. 1/15 (also cited as CT. 222) · Chopin National Edition WN 29. Composed c. 1830 in Warsaw; published posthumously 1868. About 2½–3 minutes.

4.1 The paradox that organises everything

This waltz is **numbered last and was written first**. In the traditional numbering of the older complete editions it is **No. 14** — the final waltz — because it was the last to be published. But it was composed around 1830, **before any waltz Chopin published in his lifetime**. If you remember one sentence about this piece, make it that one; every other fact hangs off it.

4.2 Why there is no opus number

Chopin did not authorise publication, and reportedly wished his unpublished manuscripts destroyed. After his death in 1849, **Julian Fontana**, with the family's authorisation, selected twenty-three unpublished pieces and grouped them as **Opp. 66–73**, published in **1855** as *Œuvres posthumes pour piano de Frédéric Chopin*. Fontana's five waltzes were Op. 69 Nos. 1–2 and Op. 70 Nos. 1–3 — and **the E minor waltz was not among them**. It surfaced separately thirteen years later, first published by **B. Schott's Söhne of Mainz in 1868**, plate number 19551. Having missed Fontana's net, it received neither an opus number nor an "Op. posth. 69/70"-style designation. It is the first of Chopin's posthumously published waltzes to have no opus number at all.

No autograph survives

This is the most consequential scholarly fact about the piece. Henle states plainly that the autograph has disappeared, and no authentic copies are known. The text therefore descends **entirely from the 1868 Schott first edition** — a posthumous print of unknown provenance, with no possibility of checking it against Chopin's hand. Every modern "urtext" of this waltz is an edition of an edition. Compare the situation with "L'adieu", Op. 69 No. 1, where *multiple* competing authentic sources survive: Henle's complete volume prints some of the Fontana waltzes **twice**, once source-critically and once in Fontana's version, because the readings differ considerably. For the E minor waltz no such comparison is even possible — there is nothing to compare against.

4.3 How many waltzes? — a classic trap

Number	What it refers to
14	The traditional numbering of older complete editions. Nos. 1–8 are those Chopin published himself (Op. 18; Op. 34 Nos. 1–3; Op. 42; Op. 64 Nos. 1–3); Nos. 9–13 are Fontana's five; No. 14 is this piece .
18	The number of <i>surviving</i> waltzes. The Chopin Institute states he wrote around twenty-five works in waltz form, of which eighteen survive.
19	The modern extended numbering, adding further posthumous discoveries (E major B. 44, A flat B. 21, A minor B. 150).
20	Includes a waltz rediscovered at the Morgan Library and announced in October 2024 — though the Chopin Institute's director Artur Szklener disputes its status, regarding it as a sketch rather than a finished work.

Two further points that examiners like. First, the so-called **No. 20 in F sharp minor is inauthentic** — not by Chopin, but a shortened piece by Charles Mayer. Second, **six waltzes composed between 1826 and 1831 survived Chopin's death only to be destroyed in an accidental fire at his sister Ludwika's house in Warsaw in 1863**. This waltz is a survivor of a decimated repertory.

4.4 Biographical context: Warsaw, 1829–1831

Chopin (1810–1849) studied composition with **Józef Elsner** from autumn 1826 in the Main School of Music, the Warsaw Conservatory's composition department. His final report of **July 1829** famously read: "*Chopin F., third-year student, exceptional talent, musical genius.*"

- **1829:** Vienna debut, premiering the *Là ci darem la mano* Variations, Op. 2.
- **17 March 1830:** Warsaw premiere of the Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21.
- **11 October 1830:** farewell concert at the National Theatre, Warsaw, playing the **E minor Concerto** — a useful link, since the E minor waltz is contemporaneous.
- **2 November 1830:** Chopin leaves Warsaw with Tytus Woyciechowski. On the city's outskirts, friends and admirers farewell him with a cantata Elsner composed for the occasion.
- **29 November 1830:** the **November Uprising** breaks out. Woyciechowski returns to enlist; Chopin, dissuaded from following, continues to Vienna alone.
- **8 September 1831:** Warsaw falls to Russian forces; Chopin learns of it at Stuttgart. (The traditional link to the "Revolutionary" Étude, Op. 10 No. 12, is legend rather than documented fact — say so if you mention it.)
- **Autumn 1831:** arrives in Paris. Tsarist authorities forbid his return, and he **never sees Poland again**.

4.5 Chopin and the waltz genre

The essential point: **Chopin's waltzes are stylised concert and salon pieces, not functional dance music**. Henle's editors put it memorably — Chopin revolutionised the étude, but he *ennobled* the waltz; and of the set as a whole, "one cannot and should not dance to them." The Polish pianist Regina Smendzianka calls the Chopin waltz "a dance poem freed from its former utility function."

The two quotations worth having by heart:

Here waltzes are called works! and Strauss and Lanner, who play for them to dance, are called Kapellmeisters.

Chopin, letter from Vienna to Józef Elsner, 26 January 1831 — the sarcasm is unmistakable

Aristocratic from the first note to the last.

Robert Schumann, on Chopin's waltzes

Smendzianka usefully divides the waltzes into three periods: the **Warsaw waltzes (1827–1830)**, six works, all written before he left Poland), the early Paris waltzes (1831–1835), and the mature waltzes (1838–1848). **The E minor belongs to the first group**, and she warns that applying late-period interpretative means to these early works produces "musical caricatures." Note also that the Chopin Institute itself singles this piece out among the Warsaw waltzes: alongside the lyrical B minor, it names "the effective Waltz in E minor" as the **virtuosic** pole of Chopin's earliest waltz writing.

4.6 Structure

Feature	Detail
Time signature	3/4
Tempo marking	<i>Vivace</i> — verify in your own edition ; some sources give <i>Allegro vivace</i> , and editions differ
Introduction	8 bars
Overall design	Introduction – refrain – episode – refrain – episode – refrain – central E major section – refrain – coda
Duration	About 2½–3 minutes

The introduction

Eight bars of **arpeggiated tonic-triad figuration** — E minor arpeggios, coloured by suspensions from the D sharp minor / dominant side over a static tonic — beginning quietly and swelling to a dramatic *forte*. Note carefully that these are **arpeggios, not block chords or octaves**; a useful practice technique is to block them into chords to hear the harmony, which only makes sense because they are arpeggiated in the original. Eight bars of essentially static harmony before the waltz proper begins is a real structural gesture: it is a curtain-raiser, and the tension it builds is what makes the entry of the dance feel like an arrival.

Ternary or rondo?

Sources genuinely disagree, and the best answer explains why both labels fit rather than picking one. On one reading the design is a **modified rondo** — Introduction–A–B–A–B–A–C–A'–coda, where C is the E major section with temporary modulations to G sharp minor. On another it is **ternary**, a standard three-part dance form with the E major section as the central "trio." These are not far apart: the chain-of-refrains reading describes the surface, while at the largest scale the piece is E minor – E major – E minor with a coda. **Say both, and say why.**

4.7 Harmony and tonality

- **The central harmonic fact: the middle section is in E major — the tonic (parallel) major, not the relative major.** This is the most likely harmony question on the piece, because the *expected* move in a minor-key Romantic dance would be to the relative major, G. Choosing the parallel major instead is what produces the sudden radiance when it arrives: same tonic note, transformed colour.
- Within the E major section, temporary modulations to **G sharp minor**, and harmonic shifts involving D sharp minor — mediant-region keys reached by common-tone and chromatic means rather than by the circle of fifths.
- **A chromatically descending bass line** in one of the more melancholy passages before the return. This is documented, and worth pointing to as a specific device rather than talking vaguely about "chromaticism."
- Diminished sevenths and appoggiaturas throughout, as one expects in this idiom.
- **Left hand:** the standard waltz *oom-pah-pah* — bass note on beat 1, chords on beats 2 and 3 — but note that Chopin **varies the accompaniment texture between statements** rather than repeating it literally; the return of the first theme has a more forceful accompaniment than its first appearance. The bass is also directional: a stepwise bass line pushes the melody forward rather than merely marking time.
- **The ending:** a dramatic coda of driving arpeggios and full-voiced tonic and dominant chords, closing **in E minor** — no Picardy third is reported. Verify the final chord in your own copy.

Texture is melody-and-accompaniment throughout, with rapid right-hand semiquaver figuration over the waltz bass. A very useful framing: unlike a nocturne, where melody reigns supreme, a brilliant waltz of this kind is essentially **a set of**

chord progressions fleshed out with pianistic figuration. The E major episode contrasts by introducing sustained notes and a *dolce*, dreamier manner. **Your climax** — which the syllabus asks you to identify — is the coda; be ready to show how the piece drives into it.

4.8 Performance practice

Rubato — quote Mikuli, not the internet

The documented primary source is **Carl Mikuli**, Chopin's pupil and editor of the 1879 Kistner complete edition, writing in his preface:

*In keeping tempo Chopin was inflexible, and it will surprise many to learn that **the metronome never left his piano**. Even in his much-slandered rubato, one hand — the accompanying hand — always played in strict tempo, while the other, singing, either indecisively hesitating or entering ahead of the beat and moving more quickly with a certain impatient vehemence, as in passionate speech, freed the truth of the musical expression from all rhythmic bonds.*

Carl Mikuli, preface to his edition of Chopin's works

Do not quote "the left hand is the conductor." That formulation circulates very widely online but could not be verified against any scholarly source. If you want the image, present it as a traditional paraphrase — and quote Mikuli instead, which is documented and says the same thing better.

Other well-attributed witnesses, all collected in Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by his Pupils*: **George Mathias** — "you can be early, you can be late, the hands are not in phase; then you make a compensation which re-establishes the ensemble" (the crucial idea that rubato is *repaid*, not accumulated); **Jan Kleczyński** — "this style is based upon simplicity, it admits of no affectation, and therefore does not allow too great changes of movement"; and **Liszt's** famous simile of wind in the leaves of a tree, where the leaves stir but the trunk stands still. On textual fidelity, Marmontel reported that Chopin "could not bear anyone to interfere with the text of his works. The slightest modification was a gross error for which he would not pardon even his closest friends, not even his fervent admirer Liszt." And to his pupil Friederike Streicher-Müller, Chopin said: "*Simplicity is everything... After having played immense quantities of notes, and more notes, then simplicity emerges with all its charm, like art's final seal. It is no easy matter.*"

Applied to this waltz: it is almost a textbook case for Mikuli's description — a strict *oom-pah-pah* left hand under flexible right-hand figuration. But heed Smendzianka's warning: the early waltzes stay close to the authentic Viennese waltz model and use time and rhythm patterns strictly. **This is not a piece for the elastic rubato of the late mazurkas.**

Pedal, and the Pleyel

Marmontel wrote that no pianist before Chopin "employed the pedals alternately or simultaneously with so much tact and ability." Chopin used long pedals for veiled, almost impressionistic effects, and — a useful counter-intuitive detail — used the *una corda* **rarely**, despite his frequent *sotto voce* and *pianissimo* markings.

On instruments, the famous remark:

When I feel out of sorts, I play on an Érard piano where I easily find a ready-made tone. But when I feel in good form, and strong enough to find my own individual sound, then I need a Pleyel piano.

Chopin, widely reported; wording varies between translations

The substance: the **Pleyel**, Chopin's preference, has a **single-escapement action** — less mechanically forgiving, but offering finer touch control — with a songful, transparent tone, clear separation of harmonic layers, and fast, precise

dampers. The **Érard**, using Sébastien Érard's double-escapement repetition action, produces its tone more readily: hence "ready-made." Chopin also played Broadwoods during his 1848 British tour. **The implication for this waltz:** Chopin's pedal marks assume the Pleyel's quick dampers. On a modern concert grand, literal observance blurs the chromatic bass descent and the coda's arpeggios, and the semiquaver figuration is far weightier than the original sonority — so lighter voicing and shallower pedalling are the historically-informed choices.

Editions

Chopin National Edition (Jan Ekier, PWM, from 1959) is the most rigorous; Ekier launched it because he judged the Paderewski edition to present a false image of Chopin's music in many respects. It divides into **Series A** (published in Chopin's lifetime) and **Series B** (posthumous) — **this waltz is in Series B** — and each volume carries both a source commentary and a performance commentary, the latter dealing precisely with misunderstandings of notation regarding ornaments and pedalling. Also standard: **Henle HN 771** (standalone) or HN 131 (complete waltzes), ed. Ewald Zimmermann. The **Paderewski** edition (PWM, 1949) was long the professional standard but has been superseded on source-critical grounds. **Cortot** (Durand) is an *édition de travail* — study exercises and fingerings, pedagogically valuable, not source-critical. Nineteenth-century editions by Mikuli, Kullak, Scholtz and others remain in circulation via reprints and carry heavy editorial additions.

Difficulty, and where it sits

Henle grades it **level 6 on their 1–9 scale** — the same as the *Grande valse brillante* Op. 18, the "Minute" Waltz Op. 64 No. 1 and the C sharp minor Op. 64 No. 2; harder than "L'adieu" Op. 69 No. 1 (level 5); easier than the A flat Op. 42 (level 7). So: **upper-middle of the set**. Henle's own description is apt — virtuoso brilliance that never overtaxes the pianist's technique. Technical demands: rapid right-hand semiquaver figuration, left-hand leaps, arpeggio control, and a coda that needs stamina and evenness at speed.

4.9 Comparisons the examiner may invite

Waltz	Facts	Contrast with the E minor
Op. 18 , <i>Grande valse brillante</i> in E flat	Composed 1833, published 1834, dedicated to Laura Horsford. Chopin's first published waltz. A chain of seven distinct dance themes; orchestrated for Fokine's ballet <i>Les Sylphides</i> .	Op. 18 is expansive, major-mode and sectional; the E minor is compact, minor-mode and refrain-based. But both are in the same brilliant idiom — the E minor is essentially an unpublished Op. 18 in miniature, written three years earlier.
Op. 64 No. 1 , "Minute" in D flat	1847, dedicated to Countess Delfina Potocka. <i>Molto vivace</i> , simple ternary. Reportedly inspired by a small dog chasing its tail.	Both fast and short, but the "Minute" is a single perpetual-motion idea; the E minor has real dramatic contrast and a genuinely brilliant coda. Trap: "Minute" means <i>small</i>, not sixty seconds.
Op. 34 No. 2 in A minor	From the <i>Trois valse brillantes</i> , published 1838. A sorrowful, slow waltz. Henle level 5.	The obvious partner piece: two minor-key waltzes taking opposite paths. Op. 34 No. 2 is inward and elegiac; the E minor is extrovert and brilliant. Excellent for showing that "minor key" is not itself a style.
Op. 69 No. 1 , "L'adieu" in A flat	1835, Dresden; written as a farewell to Maria Wodzińska. Published by Fontana in 1855 in a version not substantiated by any known autograph.	The closest comparison for textual instability — but with the opposite problem. "L'adieu" has several competing authentic sources; the E minor has none at all.

Distinctive extras

Jerome Robbins's ballet ***The Concert (or, The Perils of Everybody)***, premiered at City Center, New York, on **6 March 1956** with décor by Saul Steinberg, uses twelve Chopin pieces including a waltz in E minor; it is traditionally associated with the celebrated comic "**Mistake Waltz**," in which a line of ballerinas repeatedly fails to stay in formation. That makes a neat closing irony: the one Chopin waltz least intended for dancing became the punchline of a famous dance about people who cannot dance.

The piece was recorded early in the twentieth century by both **Rachmaninoff and Cortot**, which established its popularity. Its persistence in the repertoire despite its dubious pedigree makes a wider point worth offering: **Chopin's judgement about what to publish and posterity's judgement about what to play have never agreed.**

Part 5 Bartók — Romanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56

LIST D Sz. 56 · BB 68 · Composed 1915, published by Universal Edition. Six dances (seven tunes), all collected by Bartók in Transylvania. About 4–5 minutes complete. Orchestrated by Bartók in 1917 as Sz. 68 / BB 76.

5.1 The title, and the history buried in it

The set was first published as "**Romanian Folk Dances from Hungary**" (Hungarian: *Román népi táncok*). Bartók later **dropped the words "from Hungary"** because the political geography changed underneath the piece: the tunes were collected in Transylvania, which was part of the Kingdom of Hungary when Bartók gathered them, and became part of Romania after the First World War under the **Treaty of Trianon (1920)**. The title of this piece is therefore a small artefact of the redrawing of Central Europe — an unusually vivid answer to the syllabus's "significance of titles" question, and one very few candidates will have ready.

5.2 Bartók the ethnomusicologist

Béla Bartók (1881–1945) is one of the founders of modern ethnomusicology, and this is inseparable from his work as a composer. From **1906** he collected folk music systematically alongside **Zoltán Kodály**, travelling into villages with an **Edison phonograph** and recording peasant performers on wax cylinders — capturing not idealised "national" tunes as arranged for urban concert halls, but what villagers actually sang and played. He worked across Hungarian, Slovak and Romanian territory, and later extended his fieldwork to Turkey and North Africa, ultimately collecting and transcribing many thousands of melodies.

The critical distinction he insisted on: **what nineteenth-century composers called "Hungarian" music — the verbunkos and csárdás idiom of urban Gypsy bands, which Liszt and Brahms drew on — was not peasant music at all**. Bartók went to the villages to find the older layer beneath it. Be ready for a question about Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies*; this is the answer.

The three ways of using folk material

In his essay "**The Influence of Peasant Music on Modern Music**" (1931), Bartók set out three approaches, and you should be able to name all three *and place this piece within them*:

1. **Take the melody over unchanged or only slightly varied**, adding an accompaniment and perhaps a prelude or postlude. Bartók's own image: the folk melody is the **jewel**, and the accompaniment is only its **mounting** — the setting must never overwhelm the stone.
2. **Invent an imitation** of a folk melody, indistinguishable in idiom from a genuine one.
3. Use **neither quotation nor imitation**, but write music "pervaded by the atmosphere of peasant music" — the composer having so completely absorbed the idiom that it has become, in his phrase, his **musical mother tongue**.

The Romanian Folk Dances belong squarely to the first category. The tunes are authentic transcriptions; Bartók's contribution is the harmonisation, the pianistic layout and the ordering into a suite. That is why the piece sounds so much simpler than the *Mikrokosmos* or the string quartets — **the simplicity is a deliberate ethical position, not a lack of ambition**. Bartók's stated aim was to harmonise such melodies as simply as possible, precisely so that the setting would not swamp the tune. If an examiner asks why the harmony is so spare, that is the answer.

The humanist position

My own idea... is the brotherhood of peoples, brotherhood in spite of all wars and conflicts. I try — to the best of my ability — to serve this idea in my music.

Bartók, letter to the Romanian scholar Octavian Beu, 10 January 1931

The context makes this pointed rather than merely pious: a **Hungarian** composer, writing to a **Romanian** correspondent, defending his practice of collecting and setting the folk music of a neighbouring people at a moment when the two nations were in bitter dispute over exactly the territory these tunes came from. Bartók's insistence that folk musics of the region were historically intertwined — that they had influenced one another and could not be neatly separated by nationality — was politically unwelcome to nationalists on both sides. **This is the single most interesting thing you can say about the piece**, and it directly answers the syllabus's "sources of influence" and "historical context" areas.

5.3 The six dances

No.	Romanian / Hungarian title	English	Tempo & metre	Tonal centre	Source
1	<i>Jocul cu bâță / Bot tãnc</i>	Stick Dance	Allegro moderato, 2/4	A (Aeolian/Dorian)	Mezőszabad (now Voiniceni), Maros-Torda — played by two Gypsy violinists
2	<i>Brãul</i>	Sash Dance	Allegro, 2/4	D	Egres (now Igrış), Torontál — peasant flute
3	<i>Pe loc / Topogó</i>	In One Spot / Stamping Dance	Andante, 2/4	B, with augmented seconds	Egres (Igrış) — peasant flute
4	<i>Buciumeana / Bucumí tãnc</i>	Dance from Bucium	Moderato, 3/4	A	Bucsony/Bucium, then Alsó-Fehér county (now Alba) — violin
5	<i>Poargă românească / Román polka</i>	Romanian Polka	Allegro, alternating 2/4 and 3/4	D	Belényes (now Beiuș), Bihar
6	<i>Mãrunțel / Aprózó</i>	Fast Dance	Allegro, then <i>Più allegro</i> , 2/4	D, then A at the end	Two tunes, from Belényes (Beiuș) and Nyágra (Neagra)

Verify against your score: metronome marks, exact bar counts, and the printed key signatures. Bartók rarely used key signatures — the 1971 edition added some — and modal music does not sit comfortably in major/minor key signatures anyway, so "tonal centre" is the more accurate term than "key." Also note that **six dances contain seven tunes**, because No. 6 combines two: some editions and commentaries therefore count seven dances.

Character notes worth having

- **No. 1, Stick Dance.** A men's dance in which the dancer kicks the ceiling — hence the vigorous, striding, wide-intervalled tune. Bartók noted it from two Gypsy fiddlers; the writing keeps a fiddle-like quality, with the melody in a strong middle register.
- **No. 2, Sash Dance.** A chain dance in which dancers hold a sash or each other's waistbands. Very short, quick, narrow in compass — flute-like, in keeping with its source.

- **No. 3, In One Spot.** The expressive centre of the set. Danced without travelling — the feet stamp in place, hence the title. Its melody uses **augmented seconds**, giving it an unmistakably **Middle Eastern or "Arab" colour**, and the right hand imitates the sound of a peasant flute while the left provides a sparse drone. This is the dance examiners will most likely ask about, and the augmented second is the thing to name.
- **No. 4, Dance from Bucium.** The only dance in **triple metre**, and the lyrical high point — a slow, swaying, singing melody with a wide arch. Also uses a raised fourth degree at points, giving a Lydian tinge.
- **No. 5, Romanian Polka.** A children's dance. Its defining feature is the **irregular alternation of 2/4 and 3/4 bars** — additive, asymmetrical rhythm taken directly from the peasant original rather than smoothed into regular metre. This is the single clearest instance in the set of Bartók refusing to "correct" folk material.
- **No. 6, Fast Dance.** Runs from No. 5 *attacca*, without a break, and itself accelerates into a second, faster tune, driving to a brilliant close. The *mărunțel* is a rapid small-step dance.

5.4 Modal and harmonic language

The most important single point: **this music is modal, not major/minor**. Bartók found in peasant music a body of melody built on the old church and folk modes — Dorian, Aeolian, Mixolydian, Lydian, Phrygian — plus scales foreign to Western art music altogether, and he treated this as a liberation from the exhausted major/minor system. In his own account, peasant music showed him that the tyranny of the major and minor keys could be broken.

Devices to listen for and be able to name:

- **Modal scales** — most obviously the flattened seventh (Mixolydian and Dorian colouring) and the raised fourth (Lydian), often in melodies that would otherwise read as minor.
- **The augmented second** in No. 3 — the interval that produces the exotic, Middle Eastern inflection, and evidence of the layered history of music in the region.
- **Drones and open fifths** in the left hand, imitating the **bagpipe** and the **hurdy-gurdy** that accompanied village dancing. Where the harmony seems to "stop moving," that is the point: it is a drone, not a harmonic dead end.
- **Parallel intervals** — fifths, fourths and triads moving in parallel, breaking the rules of common-practice voice-leading deliberately.
- **Bimodality** — melody and accompaniment implying different modal centres simultaneously, producing the characteristic tang.
- **Sparse texture.** Long stretches are in two parts only. Bartók adds an accompaniment, not a Romantic harmonisation.

Across the set, the tonal centres move A – D – B – A – D – D/A: a scheme built on fourths and fifths rather than on classical tonic-dominant relationships, and one that lets the suite end brightly in A after the D-centred dances. The **climax** of the set is unambiguous: the accelerating final page of No. 6.

5.5 Performance practice

- **The whole set is very short and must not be inflated.** Bartók himself specified a total of **four minutes and three seconds**; most professional pianists take up to five. That precision is characteristic — he was exacting about timings and metronome marks, and expected them to be respected.
- **Attacca:** No. 5 runs into No. 6 without a break. Know exactly where the breaks between the other dances are, and how long they should be — the suite is a sequence of contrasts, and dead air between dances kills it.
- **Rhythm.** Bartók distinguished two performance styles in the folk music he collected: *tempo giusto*, strict dance rhythm, and *parlando-rubato*, free, speech-like delivery. **These are dances**, so *tempo giusto* governs — the rhythm

should be tight and driving, not romanticised. The one place a more flexible, singing delivery is appropriate is the slow No. 3 and, to a lesser extent, No. 4.

- **Articulation and accent.** Bartók's markings are exact and unusually detailed — accents, staccato, tenuto, precise dynamics. Follow them literally. The percussive, articulated quality is the style; a smooth, pedalled legato erases it.
- **Pedal.** Use sparingly and cleanly. Pedal is for colour and for sustaining drones, not for blending. Bartók's textures are transparent by design.
- **Editions:** Universal Edition is the original publisher; Boosey & Hawkes also publish Bartók. Use an edition that preserves Bartók's own markings without editorial accretion.

Other versions

Bartók orchestrated the set for small orchestra in **1917** (Sz. 68, BB 76). The best-known arrangement is **Zoltán Székely's for violin and piano**, which is now standard violin repertoire; Arthur Willner made a string-orchestra version. The piece exists in more arrangements than almost anything else Bartók wrote — a point worth making, since its accessibility is exactly what made it the gateway to his music for most listeners.

Eight things to volunteer about the Bartók

1. The title lost the words "from Hungary" because of the Treaty of Trianon, 1920.
2. These are **authentic transcriptions**, collected on an Edison phonograph in named villages — not imitations. Category one of Bartók's three approaches.
3. The "jewel and its mounting" principle: the accompaniment must not overwhelm the tune. The simplicity is deliberate.
4. Bartók's crucial distinction between genuine peasant music and the urban Gypsy-band idiom that Liszt and Brahms took for "Hungarian."
5. Modality, not major/minor: flattened sevenths, raised fourths, drones and open fifths imitating bagpipe and hurdy-gurdy.
6. The **augmented second in No. 3**, and its Middle Eastern colour.
7. The **alternating 2/4 and 3/4 in No. 5** — asymmetrical folk rhythm preserved rather than corrected.
8. The Octavian Beu letter, and the "brotherhood of peoples" position that made Bartók unpopular with nationalists on both sides.

Part 6 Cross-Programme Questions

Examiners at diploma level frequently ask a question that spans the whole program rather than one piece. These are the highest-value answers to prepare, because they demonstrate the "mature understanding" the syllabus asks for. Three threads run right through this recital.

6.1 "Tell us how the instrument changed across your program"

This is syllabus area 5, and this program happens to illustrate it almost as a teaching sequence. The answer to have ready:

Work	Instrument	What it could not do	What that means for your playing
Bach, c. 1740	Harpsichord or clavichord — <i>Clavier</i> meant any stringed keyboard, but not the fortepiano	The key gives no dynamic control on a harpsichord; there is no sustaining pedal	Expression comes from articulation, agogic stress, rhythmic placement and arpeggiation. Terraced, sectional dynamics rather than swells. Little or no pedal.
Haydn, 1771/80	Transitional — the print says "for harpsichord <i>or</i> fortepiano." Five octaves, wooden frame, leather hammers, knee levers	Only five octaves; tone decays fast; no cross-stringing to blend	Haydn writes to the very edges of the compass. The <i>f/p</i> juxtapositions need a dry, clean attack — so no pedal through them. Contrasts are events, not swells.
Chopin, 1830	Pleyel — single escapement, songful and transparent, fast precise dampers	Far lighter and less powerful than a modern grand; less blend between registers	Chopin's pedal marks assume quick dampers. On a modern instrument, literal observance blurs the chromatic bass and the coda. Lighter voicing, shallower pedal.
Bartók, 1915	The full modern iron-framed concert grand	—	Bartók exploits the modern instrument's percussive capability deliberately. The piano is treated as much as a struck instrument as a singing one.

6.2 "Three of these are in the minor. How does each composer use the minor mode?"

- **Bach, D minor** — the minor as **rhetoric**. The descending chromatic fourth in the fugue subject is the *passus duriusculus*, an inherited rhetorical figure with a fixed affective meaning: lament. The minor here is a shared, conventional language, not a personal confession. Note too that the prelude ends in D *major* — the Picardy third — because in Baroque convention a minor-key piece may close bright without contradiction.
- **Haydn, C minor** — the minor as **tragedy that refuses consolation**. C minor is rare in Haydn's keyboard music, and this is his only C minor sonata. The finale ends in the minor with no Picardy third: the drama is not resolved. This is what makes writers reach for Beethoven comparisons, and Wigmore's tag "Haydn's *Appassionata*."
- **Chopin, E minor** — the minor as **brilliance**, not sorrow. This is the surprise. Chopin wrote a genuinely elegiac minor-key waltz in Op. 34 No. 2, but the E minor is extrovert, virtuosic and glittering. Comparing the two makes the point that "minor key" is a colour, not a style.
- **Bartók** then **steps outside the system entirely**. His dances are modal — Dorian, Aeolian, Mixolydian, with augmented seconds and raised fourths — which is precisely his stated reason for going to peasant music: it broke the tyranny of major and minor. So the program can be described as travelling from the minor mode as inherited rhetoric, through the minor as personal drama, to a music that no longer needs the major/minor system at all.

6.3 "Dance is in three of these pieces. Discuss."

- **Haydn's finale** is in 3/4 and its opening is redolent of a minuet — but it is not a minuet and trio, it is a sonata-form movement. Dance is a *gait* the movement borrows, then abandons.
- **Chopin's waltz** keeps every external feature of the dance — 3/4, the *oom-pah-pah* bass — but, as Henle's editors put it, "one cannot and should not dance to them." Chopin ennobled the waltz into a concert genre. Dance is a *reference*.
- **Bartók's dances were actually danced**, by named villagers, in named villages, and Bartók recorded them on a phonograph. Dance is the *source*.

Three positions, then, on the same relationship — dance as gait, dance as reference, dance as source — and the program moves from the most abstracted to the most literal. (The Bach adds a fourth position: the prelude's figuration is not a dance but a *violin* idiom transferred to the keyboard, showing the same habit of borrowing from another practice.)

6.4 "Which piece did you find hardest to interpret, and why?"

A question about judgement rather than fact, and one where an honest, specific answer beats a polished one. The strongest material in this program: the Haydn, because so much depends on decisions the score does not settle — how to handle the written-out cadenzas, whether to start trills on the upper or the main note when Haydn's own notation is inconsistent, how to make terraced *f/p* contrasts convincing on an instrument built to blend rather than to separate, and how to end a piece that refuses to resolve. Have a real answer, and be able to name what you decided and why.

Part 7 Question Bank

Model answers below are written at roughly the length an examiner wants — long enough to show understanding, short enough to leave room for a follow-up. Practise saying them out loud, then practise saying them differently, so they stay conversation and do not become recitation.

7.1 Bach

Q. What is this piece and where does it come from?

This is the Prelude and Fugue in D minor, BWV 875, the sixth pair in Book II of the Well-Tempered Clavier. Bach compiled Book II in Leipzig between about 1739 and 1742, roughly twenty years after Book I, which he finished at Cöthen in 1722. He was Thomaskantor and Director of Music at Leipzig by then, so Book II comes from his maturity rather than from the instrumental court years.

Q. What does "well-tempered" mean?

A well temperament is an unequal but circulating tuning — the fifths are narrowed by differing amounts so that all twenty-four keys are usable, but each key keeps its own colour because the major thirds vary in size. That's different from equal temperament, where every key is usable and every key sounds the same. The old claim that the collection proves Bach wanted equal temperament is generally rejected now; equal temperament only became standard after his death. Which temperament he actually used is unknown — Werckmeister III and Kirnberger III are the usual candidates, and Bradley Lehman's 2005 reading of the loops on Book I's title page as a tuning recipe has been challenged.

Q. What instrument was this written for?

"Clavier" in Bach's Germany meant any stringed keyboard instrument — harpsichord, clavichord, and by extension organ — but not the fortepiano, which was still a novelty in Germany. There's no pedal part anywhere in the forty-eight and the compass fits a single-manual instrument. The practical consequence is that the key gives you no dynamic control, so expression has to come from articulation, timing and arpeggiation — which is why I've thought about articulation before dynamics in preparing this.

Q. Describe the fugue subject.

It's exactly two bars, and it has two contrasted characters in one gesture. The first half is twelve triplet semiquavers, diatonic and mostly stepwise — light and rising. Then it leaps up to high D and descends chromatically through a perfect fourth in quavers, D–C sharp–C natural–B natural–B flat–A. That descending chromatic fourth is the *passus duriusculus*, the Baroque lament figure. Combining two affects inside one subject is a late Bach trait, and it's one of the things that makes Book II feel more modern than Book I.

Q. Is the answer real or tonal? How do you know?

Real. The subject starts D–E–F–G and the answer starts A–B natural–C–D. The B natural is what proves it — it's an exact transposition up a perfect fifth with no adjustment. A tonal answer would have altered the opening interval to keep the music inside the tonic key.

Q. In what order do the voices enter?

Alto first, alone on the downbeat of bar 1 with no anacrusis; then the soprano with the real answer at bar 3, with the countersubject in the alto; then a codetta at bar 5 modulating back to D minor; then the bass at bar 6. So middle, top, bottom — the exposition ends at bar 8. One detail worth mentioning is that both upper voices already state the head of the subject *in inversion* in that codetta at bar 5 — the fugue's central device appears before the exposition has even finished.

Q. Is there a countersubject?

Yes — a line in even, duple semiquavers, so it sets up a continuous two-against-three against the subject's sextuplets. It's maintained through the exposition, in the alto at bars 3–4 and the soprano at bar 7, but after that Bach treats it freely; it comes back in the bass at bars 15 and 26. So it's a genuine countersubject but not an obligatory one.

Q. What contrapuntal devices does the fugue use?

Stretto and inversion, extensively — and, just as tellingly, nothing else. There's no augmentation, no diminution, no pedal point. There are four stretto passages in a twenty-seven-bar fugue: bar 14 with entries a crotchet apart, bar 17 of inverted forms, bar 18 in G minor, and the climax at bar 25 where three voices enter half a bar apart combining direct and inverted statements. The whole fugue is essentially an argument about how much you can do with one two-bar subject and its inversion.

Q. Where is the climax?

Bar 25 — the three-voice stretto in the tonic, combining direct and inverted forms half a bar apart. Everything before it is preparing that convergence: the inversion is introduced quietly in the codetta, tried in stretto against itself at bar 17, and worked sequentially through the episode at bars 19 to 21, so that when all three voices pile up at bar 25 it's the arrival the piece has been building towards.

Q. What keys does the fugue visit?

Very few — D minor, A minor and G minor, so tonic, dominant and subdominant only. That's worth noticing: this fugue gets its variety from contrapuntal device rather than from modulation, which is also why it can be so concise.

Q. Describe the form of the prelude.

It's a continuous binary. Bars 1 to 4 are restated at bars 5 to 8 with the hands exchanged — invertible counterpoint at the octave — and then that whole passage comes back at bars 26 to 29 transposed exactly up a perfect fifth. So it's tonally bipartite, D minor to A minor and back. But there are no repeat signs, so I'd describe it as a continuous binary design rather than a repeated dance binary.

Q. What kind of figuration is this?

It's a perpetual motion in semiquavers, and the characteristic figure — the repeated-pivot broken chords from bar 2 — is really violin string-crossing writing, bariolage, transferred to the keyboard. Bach spent years arranging Vivaldi's concertos and that Italian violin idiom shows through. It's also why the piece involves hand-crossings.

Q. Point to something in this score that isn't in Bach's first version.

The demisemiquaver flourishes at bars 22 and 24 — they're the only demisemiquavers in the piece. There's an earlier version of this prelude catalogued as BWV 875a, a *Praeambulum* in D minor, and Bach lengthened and elaborated the piece while compiling Book II. The earlier version lacks certain demisemiquaver passages, and these are almost certainly them.

Q. How would you ornament this, and on what authority?

Bach's only written guide is the *Explication* he entered in the Clavier-Büchlein for Wilhelm Friedemann in 1720 — thirteen ornaments. Three rules follow: trills begin on the upper note, ornaments fall on the beat rather than before it, and they're played diatonically within the key in force. C. P. E. Bach's *Versuch* of 1753 confirms all three. There are very few notated ornaments here — the mordent in bar 1, the trill at fugue bar 16 — and it's worth saying that the ornament signs actually differ between the London autograph and the Altnickol copy, so different urtext editions print different ornaments at these points.

Q. Why do editions differ?

Because there's no single authoritative text. The London autograph, British Library Add. MS 35021, has twenty-one of the twenty-four pairs, about a quarter of it copied by Anna Magdalena Bach — the D minor pair is reportedly among the ones in her hand. Separately, Altnickol, Bach's son-in-law, made the earliest complete copy from 1744, working not from the London manuscript but from a second autograph that's now lost. So the Neue Bach-Ausgabe prints both Version A and Version B. Book II wasn't printed at all in Bach's lifetime — the first edition was Simrock of Bonn in 1801.

Q. How much pedal do you use, and why?

Almost none. Bach's instruments had no sustaining pedal, so the counterpoint is written to be audible without it. Where I use it, it's a quick touch to connect something the hand can't reach, never enough to blur the voices. What replaces it is articulation — I keep the quavers slightly detached against legato semiquavers, and I keep that articulation consistent for every statement of the subject so the entries stay audible wherever they lie.

7.2 Haydn

Q. When was this written, and when was it published? Why the gap?

The incomplete autograph is dated 1771, and it was published by Artaria in Vienna in 1780 — a gap of nine years. The reason is contractual rather than artistic: under Haydn's 1761 Esterházy contract, everything he composed was the property of the Esterházy family. His contract was revised in 1779 to let him publish without his employer's authorisation, and the 1780 Artaria set is the immediate result. I should add that A. Peter Brown noted the date on the autograph is unclearly written, so some scholars treat 1771 as the year of the surviving draft and allow for later revision.

Q. Tell us about the set it was published in.

Six sonatas — Hoboken XVI:35 to 39 plus this one, which was placed last — dedicated to Katharina and Marianna von Auenbrugger, daughters of the physician Leopold Auenbrugger and pupils of Haydn and Salieri. Haydn wrote to Artaria that their approval mattered most to him because their playing and musical insight equalled that of the greatest masters. He described this sonata as the longest and most difficult of the six. The title page says "per il Clavicembalo o Forte Piano" — for harpsichord or fortepiano — which itself tells you it's a transitional moment.

Q. Was this written for the harpsichord or the fortepiano?

That's genuinely disputed, and I think the disagreement is the interesting part. Richard Wigmore calls it the first of Haydn's keyboard works conceived for a touch-sensitive instrument — which means clavichord or fortepiano, not fortepiano specifically. Howard Pollack argued in 1991 that it was written for the clavichord and only touched up for the 1780 publication. And fortepianos weren't yet being built in Vienna in 1771 — Stein was in Augsburg, and Walter only started in Vienna in the early 1780s. The concrete evidence is the dynamics: there are stark *f-p* alternations on successive notes that a harpsichord simply cannot produce. But it isn't established whether those markings are in the 1771 autograph or were added for the print — which is exactly why Pollack's reading exists. So the safest thing I can say is that the dynamic markings in the sources demand a touch-sensitive instrument.

Q. What was the fortepiano of that time like?

Five octaves, sixty-one keys. An all-wood frame, four or five times lighter than a modern grand. Straight-strung, so every note sounds separately rather than blending. Thin leather hammers, so the attack is much more perceptible — closer to a xylophone than to felt. A Prellmechanik action, roughly a tenth of the touch weight of a modern piano and much shallower, which makes it extremely quick and extremely unforgiving. The tone starts decaying immediately. And colour was controlled by knee levers, including a moderator, which has no modern equivalent. What I find striking is that Haydn writes right to the edges of that five-octave compass — the slow movement reaches nearly to the top of the available keyboard, and the finale's left hand crosses to both extremes.

Q. What period of Haydn's work does this come from?

The phase around 1768 to 1772 usually called Sturm und Drang, when his music became longer, more passionate and more daring — surprise key changes, dramatic silences, asymmetrical phrasing, minor keys, hand-crossing. The companion works are Symphony No. 44, the "Trauer", and No. 45, the "Farewell", both from 1772, and the Op. 20 quartets of the same year. Though I'd add that "Sturm und Drang" is a borrowed literary label and an imprecise one — Klingner's play that gave the movement its name dates from 1776, after the music. For the keyboard works a lot of scholars prefer *empfindsamer Stil*, pointing to C. P. E. Bach's influence, and I think that's the better description of this sonata's rhetorical, speech-like gestures.

Q. Is C minor unusual for Haydn?

Very. Of around sixty-two solo keyboard sonatas, only five survive in minor keys, and this is the only one in C minor. That's part of why writers connect it forward to Beethoven — C minor is the key of the *Pathétique* and of Op. 111, and Wigmore calls this sonata "Haydn's *Appassionata*."

Q. Describe the form of the first movement.

Sonata form, in C minor, 4/4, a hundred bars — but with a continuous exposition rather than the standard two-part one. The primary theme is a period in the first eight bars closing with a perfect authentic cadence. Then instead of a clean transition to a medial caesura, Haydn writes a sequential expansion; there's an augmented sixth around bar 18 that feints towards a caesura and then evades it, and E flat is reached obliquely through an auxiliary cadence rather than head-on. The second key area is E flat major — the relative major, so i to III, which is the standard minor-mode Classical scheme rather than i to v.

Q. Take us through the development.

Bars 38 to 65. It drives first to the dominant of B flat minor, which is established around bar 47. Then bars 54 to 59 are the chromatic high point — a rapid chain of dominant sevenths tonicising E flat minor, then A flat minor, then G flat major and E flat major. G flat is genuinely remote. There are also parallel six-four harmonies through bars 56 to 59, which is a real structural oddity for 1771. The structural dominant arrives around bar 63.

Q. Where does the recapitulation begin?

That's actually disputed — some analysts say bar 69 and others bar 78. And I don't think that's carelessness: it follows directly from the continuous exposition. Because there's no clean medial caesura and no straightforward two-part design, the "double return" of theme and tonic is genuinely ambiguous. So the same feature that makes the exposition unusual makes the recapitulation hard to pin down.

Q. What are these passages marked Adagio with fermatas?

They're cadenzas that Haydn wrote out into the score — one in the exposition and one in the recapitulation, notated as fully written-out fermatas marked Adagio. The slow movement does something similar, dissolving into a cadenza before its final cadence. It's concerto rhetoric imported into a solo sonata: the soloist's improvisatory freedom, but composed out and measured rather than left to the player. I treat them as measured music with rhetorical freedom, not as free improvisation.

Q. Is the finale a minuet?

It sounds like one at the opening, and it's in 3/4, but no — it's a sonata-form movement. It develops with increasing intensity and includes virtuosic cross-handed passages where the left hand leaps between the extremes of the eighteenth-century keyboard.

Q. How does the sonata end?

In C minor, with no Picardy third — a bleak close that suggests anything but triumph. That refusal to resolve into the major is the expressive point of the whole work, and it's what most distinguishes it from what audiences in 1780 would have expected.

Q. How do you start the trills?

My default is the upper note, following C. P. E. Bach's *Versuch* and Türk's *Klavierschule*, which are the treatises closest to Haydn's world. But I'd be honest that there isn't a clean consensus for Haydn specifically. His own notation is inconsistent — he used a single sign, what's now called the "Haydn ornament", which can mean a turn or a mordent depending on the period of the work, and it gives no information about speed. Main-note starts are widely accepted where the upper note has just sounded or where a melodic descent would be obscured. Somfai's book on the keyboard sonatas is the standard reference. So I've made a decision case by case and can explain each one.

Q. How do you handle the dynamics?

As events rather than swells. This sonata works by abrupt terraced juxtaposition — *f* and *p* as adjacent facts — rather than the graded crescendos of Haydn's later fortepiano writing. So I don't shape them into hairpins. I also try to keep the pedal completely out of those junctions, because they need a dry, clean attack to register at all; if you pedal through an *f-p* you simply erase it.

7.3 Chopin

Q. Why does this waltz have no opus number?

Because Chopin never authorised its publication — he reportedly wanted his unpublished manuscripts destroyed. After his death Julian Fontana selected twenty-three unpublished pieces and grouped them as Opus 66 to 73, published in 1855, and five waltzes were in that set — Op. 69 Nos. 1 and 2 and Op. 70 Nos. 1 to 3. This waltz wasn't among them. It surfaced

separately and was first published by Schott of Mainz in 1868, so it missed Fontana's numbering entirely. It's the first of Chopin's posthumous waltzes with no opus number at all.

Q. When was it composed?

Around 1830, in Warsaw, before Chopin left Poland on the second of November that year. Which produces the paradox about this piece: in the older complete editions it's numbered fourteenth — last — because it was published last, in 1868, but it was actually written before any waltz Chopin published in his lifetime. Numbered last, composed first.

Q. Why do editions of this piece differ?

Because no autograph survives, and no authentic copies are known. The text descends entirely from the 1868 Schott first edition — a posthumous print of unknown provenance — so there's nothing to check it against. Every modern urtext of this waltz is effectively an edition of an edition. It's an interesting contrast with "L'adieu", Op. 69 No. 1, where several competing authentic sources survive; Henle actually prints some of the Fontana waltzes twice, once source-critically and once in Fontana's version, because the readings differ so much. For this waltz that comparison isn't even possible.

Q. How many waltzes did Chopin write?

It depends what you're counting. The Chopin Institute says he wrote around twenty-five works in waltz form, of which eighteen survive. Fourteen are traditionally numbered in the older complete editions, which is where this piece gets its number fourteen. Modern extended numbering goes to nineteen, adding later posthumous discoveries. And there's a piece sometimes numbered twentieth, in F sharp minor, which is inauthentic — it's a shortened work by Charles Mayer. I'd also mention that six waltzes from 1826 to 1831 survived Chopin's death but were destroyed in a fire at his sister Ludwika's house in Warsaw in 1863, so what we have is a decimated repertory.

Q. Are Chopin's waltzes dance music?

No — they're stylised concert and salon pieces. Henle's editors put it well: Chopin revolutionised the *étude* but he ennobled the waltz, and of the set as a whole, one cannot and should not dance to them. Chopin was fairly scathing about the functional Viennese article — he wrote to Elsner from Vienna in January 1831, "here waltzes are called *works!* and Strauss and Lanner, who play for them to dance, are called Kapellmeisters." Schumann's line on Chopin's waltzes is "aristocratic from the first note to the last."

Q. Describe the structure.

There's an eight-bar introduction, then a refrain in E minor alternating with episodes, a central section in E major, a return of the refrain, and a brilliant coda. Sources actually disagree about the label — some call it a modified rondo, Introduction–A–B–A–B–A–C–A'–coda, and others call it ternary with the E major section as a central trio. I'd say both are defensible: the rondo reading describes the surface alternation, while at the largest scale the piece is E minor, E major, E minor with a coda.

Q. Talk about the introduction.

Eight bars of arpeggiated tonic-triad figuration — E minor arpeggios coloured by suspensions from the dominant side over a static tonic — starting quietly and swelling to a dramatic *forte*. So it's eight bars of essentially unmoving harmony before the waltz proper starts, which is a real structural gesture: it functions as a curtain-raiser, and the tension it builds is what makes the entry of the dance feel like an arrival rather than just a beginning.

Q. What's the key of the middle section, and why is that interesting?

E major — the tonic or parallel major, not the relative major. That's the thing I'd point to, because the expected move in a minor-key Romantic dance would be to G, the relative major. Going to the parallel major instead means the tonic note stays the same while the colour transforms completely, which is what produces that sudden radiance. Within the section there are temporary modulations to G sharp minor and shifts involving D sharp minor — mediant-region keys reached chromatically rather than through the circle of fifths.

Q. Where's the climax?

The coda — driving arpeggios and full-voiced tonic and dominant chords. The piece is built to arrive there: each return of the refrain has a more forceful accompaniment than the last, so the texture thickens across the piece rather than simply repeating.

Q. How do you approach rubato here?

The documented description comes from Mikuli, Chopin's pupil, in the preface to his edition: Chopin was inflexible in keeping tempo, the metronome never left his piano, and in his rubato "one hand, the accompanying hand, always played in strict tempo" while the other sang freely, hesitating or running ahead. George Mathias adds the crucial point that the compensation re-establishes the ensemble — the time is repaid, not accumulated. So in this waltz the left hand keeps the *oom-pah-pah* steady and the flexibility lives in the right. I'd also say that this is an early Warsaw waltz, still close to the authentic Viennese model in its rhythmic strictness, so it doesn't want the elastic rubato of the late mazurkas.

Q. What pianos did Chopin play?

Pleyel by preference, and Érard when he wasn't at his best. His remark was that when he feels out of sorts he plays an Érard where he finds a ready-made tone, but when he's in good form and strong enough to find his own sound, he needs a Pleyel. The difference is mechanical: the Érard has Sébastien Érard's double-escapement repetition action, which produces tone very readily; the Pleyel has a single escapement — less forgiving but offering finer control — with a songful, transparent tone and fast, precise dampers. He also played Broadwoods on the 1848 British tour. For this piece, the practical consequence is that his pedalling assumes quick dampers, so on a modern grand literal observance blurs the chromatic bass line and the coda.

Q. Which edition are you using, and why?

I'd name the edition on the desk and say why. The most rigorous is the Chopin National Edition edited by Jan Ekier — he began it because he thought the Paderewski edition gave a false image of Chopin in many respects. It divides into Series A for works published in Chopin's lifetime and Series B for posthumous ones, and this waltz is in Series B. Each volume has both a source commentary and a performance commentary, and the performance commentary deals specifically with misunderstandings about ornaments and pedalling. Henle is the other standard urtext. Cortot's is an *édition de travail* — very useful for the exercises, but not a source-critical text.

Q. How does this compare with the waltzes Chopin published?

It's essentially an unpublished *Grande valse brillante* written three years before Op. 18. The Chopin Institute singles it out among the Warsaw waltzes as the virtuosic one, against the lyrical B minor. Henle grades it level six on their nine-point scale — the same as Op. 18 and the "Minute" waltz, harder than "L'adieu", easier than Op. 42. The most instructive comparison is with Op. 34 No. 2 in A minor, which is a slow, sorrowful minor-key waltz: put them side by side and you see that for Chopin the minor mode is a colour rather than a mood, because this one is extrovert and glittering.

7.4 Bartók

Q. What does the title tell us?

More than you'd expect. It was first published as "Romanian Folk Dances *from Hungary*", and Bartók later dropped those last two words, because the tunes were collected in Transylvania, which was part of Hungary when he collected them in 1915 and became part of Romania after the First World War under the Treaty of Trianon in 1920. So the title is a small artefact of the redrawing of Central Europe.

Q. Where did these tunes come from?

All from Transylvanian villages, and Bartók documented each one. The first is from Mezőszabad, now Voiniceni, where he heard it from two Gypsy violinists. The second and third are from Egres, now Igrış, both played on peasant flute. The fourth is from Bucium. The fifth and sixth are from Belényes, now Beiuș, with the sixth also drawing on a tune from Neagra. He collected using an Edison phonograph on wax cylinders, which is why the transcriptions are so precise — he was recording what villagers actually played, not tidying it up.

Q. How did Bartók use folk music in his own composition?

He set out three approaches in his 1931 essay "The Influence of Peasant Music on Modern Music". First, take the melody over unchanged or barely varied and add an accompaniment — his image was that the folk melody is the jewel and the accompaniment is only its mounting. Second, invent an imitation indistinguishable from a real folk tune. Third, use neither quotation nor imitation, but write music pervaded by the atmosphere of peasant music, having absorbed the idiom so completely that it becomes what he called his musical mother tongue. These dances are firmly in the first category — they're authentic transcriptions, and Bartók's contribution is the harmonisation and the ordering.

Q. Why is the harmony so simple?

Deliberately. Bartók's stated aim was to harmonise folk melodies as simply as possible, precisely so the setting wouldn't swamp the tune — the jewel and its mounting. Long stretches are only in two parts. So the simplicity is an ethical position about how to treat someone else's music, not a lack of ambition; the string quartets he was writing around the same period are anything but simple.

Q. What's the relationship between this and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies?

Bartók would have said they're quite different things. What the nineteenth century called "Hungarian" music — the verbunkos and csárdás idiom that Liszt and Brahms drew on — came from urban Gypsy bands, not from peasants. Bartók and Kodály went into the villages from 1906 onwards to find the older layer underneath it, and one of Bartók's main scholarly points was that the two shouldn't be confused. So where Liszt is stylising a professional urban entertainment idiom, Bartók is transcribing what villagers actually played.

Q. Talk about the modes.

The whole set is modal rather than major/minor — Dorian, Aeolian, Mixolydian and Lydian colouring, with flattened sevenths and raised fourths appearing in melodies that would otherwise read as minor. Bartók said explicitly that peasant music showed him how to break the tyranny of the major and minor keys, so this repertoire is where his own harmonic emancipation begins. That's why I'd talk about "tonal centres" rather than keys — the first dance centres on A, the second on D, and so on, and the scheme moves by fourths and fifths rather than by classical tonic-dominant relationships.

Q. What's distinctive about the third dance?

It's the expressive centre and the most immediately striking. The title means "in one spot" — it's danced without travelling, with the feet stamping in place. The melody uses augmented seconds, which gives it an unmistakably Middle Eastern colour, and the right hand imitates a peasant flute over a sparse drone in the left. The augmented second is the specific thing to name: it's evidence of the layered history of music in that region, and it's the interval that makes the dance sound so unlike anything in the Western art tradition.

Q. What's happening rhythmically in the fifth dance?

It alternates 2/4 and 3/4 irregularly — additive, asymmetrical metre taken straight from the peasant original. That's the clearest instance in the set of Bartók refusing to "correct" folk material into regular bars. A nineteenth-century arranger would almost certainly have smoothed it out; Bartók preserves it because the irregularity is the music.

Q. What are these open fifths in the left hand?

Drones — imitating the bagpipe and the hurdy-gurdy that accompanied village dancing. So where the harmony seems to stop moving, that's the point rather than a harmonic dead end. It's one of the ways Bartók evokes the original sound world rather than translating it into concert-hall harmony.

Q. How long should this take?

Bartók specified four minutes and three seconds for the whole set. Most professional pianists take up to five. That precision is characteristic — he was exacting about timings and metronome marks, and I've tried to respect that, because the danger with this piece is inflating it: they're village dances, and they lose their character if they're played expansively.

Q. Are there breaks between the dances?

The fifth runs into the sixth *attacca*, without a break, and the sixth itself accelerates into a second, faster tune to finish. Elsewhere there are breaks, but they need to be short — the set works by contrast, and dead air between the dances kills the momentum.

Q. How do you handle rhythm and rubato?

Bartók distinguished two performance styles in the folk music he collected: *tempo giusto*, strict dance rhythm, and *parlando-rubato*, free speech-like delivery. These are dances, so *tempo giusto* governs — tight and driving, not romanticised. The one place a more flexible, singing delivery is appropriate is the slow third dance, and to a lesser extent the fourth. His articulation markings are also unusually exact, and I follow them literally; the percussive, articulated quality is the style, and a smooth pedalled legato erases it.

Q. Why did Bartók collect the music of another nation?

He answered that himself, in a letter to the Romanian scholar Octavian Beu in January 1931: "My own idea is the brotherhood of peoples, brotherhood in spite of all wars and conflicts. I try — to the best of my ability — to serve this idea in my music." The context makes it pointed: a Hungarian composer writing to a Romanian correspondent, defending his collecting of a neighbouring people's music at a moment when the two nations were in bitter dispute over exactly the territory these tunes came from. His scholarly finding — that the folk musics of the region had influenced one another and couldn't be neatly separated by nationality — was politically unwelcome to nationalists on both sides.

Q. Are there other versions of this piece?

Bartók orchestrated it for small orchestra in 1917, catalogued as Sz. 68. The best-known arrangement is Zoltán Székely's for violin and piano, which is now standard violin repertoire, and Arthur Willner made a string-orchestra version. It exists in more arrangements than almost anything else Bartók wrote — which says something: its accessibility made it the gateway into his music for most listeners, even though it's far from typical of what he was writing at the time.

Part 8 Check These Against Your Own Score

This guide was built from published scholarship, not from the printed scores themselves. A handful of specific claims should be verified in your own edition before the exam — each is a quick check, and getting one wrong in front of two examiners is avoidable.

Work	Check	Why it matters
Bach	The final chord of the fugue (bar 27) — bare D octaves, or with a third?	The guide says bare, from an older edition. Version A and Version B may differ. It makes a good point about the contrast with the prelude's Picardy third — but only if it's true in your copy.
Bach	Which ornaments your edition prints, and where	They differ between the London and Altnickol sources, so your edition may not match the ones described here.
Haydn	The exact bar of the <i>f-p</i> alternations in movement I	Cited here as around bars 13–14. You'll be pointing at it when you discuss the instrument question.
Haydn	The final chord of the finale — C minor, or a Picardy third?	All descriptions say minor, but confirm it. The unconsolated ending is the expressive point of the whole sonata.
Haydn	Whether there is any <i>attacca</i> between movements	No source found evidence of linked movements. Don't claim it unless your score shows it.
Haydn	Where your teacher places the recapitulation in movement I	Bar 69 and bar 78 are both defended in print. Have a view, and know why the question is hard.
Chopin	The tempo marking — <i>Vivace</i> or <i>Allegro vivace</i> ?	Sources conflict and editions differ. Read it off your own first page.
Chopin	The final chord — E minor, or a Picardy third?	Reported as E minor; not confirmed against a score.
Chopin	Whether the coda contains chromatic scales	Sources describe arpeggios, not scales. Describe what's actually on your page.
Bartók	Metronome marks and bar counts for each dance; whether your edition prints key signatures	Bartók rarely used key signatures; some later editions added them. Talk about tonal centres, not keys.

One last thing

Two examiners will spend fifty minutes with your son. They already know all of this material — they are not testing whether he can tell them something new. They are listening for whether he has lived with these four pieces long enough to have **opinions** about them: why he starts a trill where he does, why the middle of the Chopin sounds the way it does, why the Haydn refuses to end happily, why Bartók's harmony is so bare. The facts in this guide are the raw material for those opinions. They are not the answer.

Principal sources. AMEB Manual of Syllabuses and Music Regulations; AMEB Guidelines for Level 3; Ian Holtham, "Advice to Licentiate Performance Exam Candidates" (AMEB); AMEB NSW and AMEB Victoria diploma pages. Bach: Yo Tomita (Queen's University Belfast) on WTC II sources; John Butt, Hyperion liner notes; David Schulenberg, *The Keyboard Music of J. S. Bach*; British Library Add. MS 35021; Netherlands Bach Society. Haydn: James S. MacKay, "Joseph Haydn's 'Workshop' Sonatas"; Lauri Suurpää in *Intégral* 23 (2009); A. Peter

Brown (1986); Howard Pollack, *Journal of Musicology* (1991); László Somfai, *The Keyboard Sonatas of Joseph Haydn*; Richard Wigmore (Hyperion); G. Henle Verlag HN 1575. Chopin: Carl Mikuli's edition preface; Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger, *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by his Pupils*; Regina Smendzianka, *How To Play Chopin*; the Fryderyk Chopin Institute (nifc.pl); G. Henle Verlag HN 771 and HN 131; Chopin National Edition (Ekier, PWM). Bartók: "The Influence of Peasant Music on Modern Music" (1931); letter to Octavian Beu, 10 January 1931; Universal Edition; Bartók Archives.