Music Extension (Musicology) 2020 v1.1

IA3 high-level annotated sample response

March 2019

Musicology project (35%)

This sample has been compiled by the QCAA to assist and support teachers to match evidence in student responses to the characteristics described in the instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG).

Assessment objectives

This assessment instrument is used to determine student achievement in the following objectives:

1. apply literacy skills using terminology relevant to genre/style, and use referencing and language conventions
2. evaluate two techniques and/or strategies of best practice
5. analyse music elements and concepts and ideas about music from sources
6. investigate the use of music elements and concepts and ideas about music
7. synthesise analytical information to justify a viewpoint.

Note: Objectives 3 and 4 are not assessed in this instrument.

For all Queensland schools

Instrument-specific marking guide (ISMG)

Criterion: Analysing music

Assessment objective

5. analyse music elements and concepts and ideas about music from sources

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
• analysis of music elements and concepts and ideas about music from a range of relevant sources reveals the interconnectivity between findings	9–10
• analysis of music elements and concepts and ideas about music is detailed and accurate	7–8
• analysis of music elements and concepts and ideas about music from sources	5–6
• description of relationships between elements and features within sources	3–4
• identification of elements and features within sources	1–2
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Criterion: Investigating music

Assessment objective

6. investigate the use of music elements and concepts and ideas about music

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
• investigation gives a summation of information to determine the relationships between primary and secondary sources	9–10
• investigation evidences primary and secondary sources	7–8
• investigation of the use of music elements and concepts and ideas about music	5–6
• selection and description of sources	3–4
• identification of music source/s	1–2
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Criterion: Synthesising information

Assessment objective

7. synthesise analytical information to justify a viewpoint

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
• synthesis of analytical information to discriminate relevant information that enables new understandings or conclusions about a music idea	9–10
• synthesis of analytical information justifies sources for value and relevance to a hypothesis or a music viewpoint	7–8
• synthesis of analytical information to justify a viewpoint	5–6
• organisation of analytical information related to a hypothesis or a music viewpoint	3–4
• inclusion of analytical information	1–2
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Criterion: Evaluating best practice

Assessment objectives

1. apply literacy skills using terminology relevant to genre/style, and use referencing and language conventions
2. evaluate two techniques and/or strategies of best practice

The student work has the following characteristics:	Marks
• evaluation provides evidence of metacognition that informs independent best practice	4–5
• application of literacy skills through articulated ideas, controlled structure and the sequencing of information • evaluation examines the logic of the two selected techniques and/or strategies	3
• application of literacy skills using terminology relevant to genre/style, and use of referencing and language conventions • evaluation of two techniques and/or strategies of best practice	2
• application of literacy skills to describe ideas • identification of techniques or strategies of best practice	1
• does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Task

You will select a music idea. You will investigate, analyse and synthesise stimulus and collected information relevant to your idea. You must then complete an extended response that justifies a viewpoint in relation to this idea.

You will complete a reflective statement that evaluates at least two techniques and/or strategies of best practice that influenced the multimodal extended response.

Frédéric François Chopin, born Fryderyk Franciszek Chopin in 1810, was a highly prominent Polish virtuoso pianist and composer of the Romantic Era, an era which began toward the end of the 18th century. Chopin began piano lessons when he was six, and quickly gained status as a child prodigy when he had composed two polonaises and he gave public concerts by the age of seven.

Chopin created the concept of the 'instrumental ballade'. His major piano works also include mazurkas, waltzes, nocturnes, polonaises, études, impromptus, scherzos, preludes and sonatas. In fact, all of his compositions include the piano (Wikipedia, 2016).

Chopin was a fragile man, and was prone to illness even in his early childhood (Wikipedia, 2016). He was complicated, egotistical, neurotic and very sensitive. His constant battle with illness, primarily tuberculosis, made him even more of a burden to those around him. In 1839, ten years before his death, Chopin said: "It is not my fault if I am like a mushroom which seems edible but which poisons you if you pick it and taste it. I know I have never been of any use to anyone - and indeed not much use to myself" (Duchen, 2009). George Sand was a lover of Chopin's. As Chopin's health declined, she became less of a lover and more of a carer to him. George Sand called him her "third child", a "little angel", a "sufferer" and a "beloved little corpse" (Independent, 2009).

Thesis

Chopin's personality, values and beliefs have certainly influenced the style of his compositions. In particular, the effects of his investment in romantic ideology and nationalism on several of his compositions can be observed through his manipulation of music elements. In his compositions Nocturne in B flat minor (Op. 9, No.1) and Valse de l'Adieu (Op. 69, No.1), the influence of his romantic ideology on the style of the pieces is clear. In his Military Polonaise in A major (Op. 40, No. 1), the effect of his pride for his home country, Poland, can be observed.

Nationalism

Chopin wrote many mazurkas and polonaises, the style of both originating from traditional Polish dances. Because of these compositions, Chopin has been said to have introduced music to a new sense of nationalism (Helman et al. 2008). In fact, he was regarded as a National Bard, which is "a poet or artist held by tradition and popular acclaim to represent the identity, beliefs and principles of a particular national culture". In his case, he 'intuited the past, present and future of his native Poland'.

A particular instance of him displaying these beliefs is when he was filled with anguish when he heard that the Polish Uprising of 1830 against Russia had failed, and his country was not taking vengeance (Wikipedia, 2016). Heinrich Heine stated in 1837 that "Poland gave him a chivalrous soul and the suffering of its history."

Some of Chopin's nationalistic compositions, however, do not evoke despair at the state of his country, but instead triumph and hope. Perhaps he intended to counteract the despair by painting a picture of a confident Poland through his music. Did he believe his music was the antidote to his country's problems?

Military Polonaise

A clear example of triumph and hope is Chopin's **Military Polonaise in A major (Op. 40, No. 1)**. This piece is triumphant and rousing, and can be likened to a military processional. Arthur Rubenstein said that this piece was a symbol of Polish glory. According to Nico Paul (2004), 'the polonaise is a processional dance in triple time, the hallmark rhythm of which comprises an eighth note and two sixteenths, followed by four eighth notes.' Another way of putting this is that the most well known rhythm of a polonaise consists of a quaver, followed by two semiquavers, which are then followed by four quavers. This is seen in the following rhythmic example.

Figure 1: Typical Polonaise rhythm

Chopin uses this rhythm throughout his Military Polonaise, but he puts his own 'spin' on it, like he did with many of his works. In the first bar, he leaves out the first of two semiquavers, essentially creating a dotted quaver and semiquaver pattern that repeats. Then, he plays four semiquavers instead of the last two quavers. In the following bar, he again uses the dotted quaver and semiquaver pattern. At the end of this bar, he adds a semiquaver triplet and two quavers in the left hand as a kind of 'fill' joining it to the next music idea.

Figure 2: Chopin's use of the typical Polonaise rhythm in bars 1 and 2

The similarities to the traditional polonaise rhythm help the piece to stay within boundaries of the genre of the Polish dance, but the deviation from the strict identifying rhythm helps Chopin to make this polonaise his own. This use of augmentation/diminution causes some notes to be played closer together, and in quicker succession. This helps to add more excitement and anticipation to the piece, adding to the triumphant sound. It exaggerates the energy.

Semiquaver triplets are frequently used in the piece, in both the left and right hands. This rhythm mimics a drum roll, which adds to the idea that the piece represents a military procession. This causes the listener to return to the idea of national pride through war.

Figure 3: Use of triplets in bar 2

Figure 4: Use of triplets in bar 15

The piece begins at a forte dynamic, and rarely drops below that volume. Loud dynamics give a sense of triumph and pride, as though the piece is 'not afraid' to be heard. Crescendos are used to build excitement, especially over groups of semiquavers, which further build intensity. The trio section begins fortissimo - even louder than the previous section. This helps the piece to not 'die down' from its striking beginning. The loudest moment in the piece is in bar 65, closer to the end of the trio section, where the dynamics reach fortississimo, or *fff*. This further adds to the impressiveness and grandeur of the piece. Overall, the use of loud dynamics makes for a bombastic performance, and showcases the splendour of Poland 'loud and proud'.

Many of the notes, both in the left and right hand, are played staccato. This causes the notes to be more short and punchy, and takes away any fluidity. This gives a more precise and distinguished sound. In a military setting, precision is highly valued, especially when one pictures a group of marching soldiers, all making the exact same sharp movements. The staccato notes help to mimic military precision, and further add to the nationalistic feel of the piece. If notes, such as those in the left hand in bar 25, were to be played legato, instead of with staccato markings, the piece would have a much more smooth and romantic feeling, which is clearly not the purpose of the piece.

Evaluating best practice [3]
evaluation examines the logic of the two selected techniques and/or strategies

Use of music terminology is relevant to the style. Grammar, paragraphing and sentence structure are clear and ideas are well articulated.

Synthesising information [10]

synthesis of analytical information to discriminate relevant information that enables new understandings or conclusions about a music idea

The analytical information supports the music viewpoint that the polonaise is militaristic. The information is integrated to support the overall viewpoint that the work is nationalistic.

The piece is also played with very little rubato, and instead with a very steady tempo and rhythm. Use of rubato would further decrease the 'military precision' of the piece. Chopin has clearly exploited expressive devices to make the piece sound proud and nationalistic.
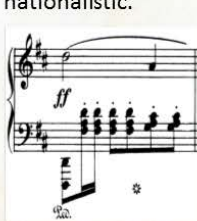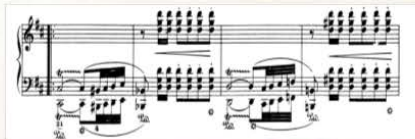

Figure 7: Staccato at bar 25

Figure 8: Use of trills in bar 57 and bar 59

From bar 57, another melody is introduced as part of the trio section. Trills are used multiple times in the left hand, which create a low rumbling sound. Trills consist of a constant undulating between notes, which sounds more wobbly and uncertain than a note that is simply held. These trills may help to demonstrate the uncertainty of war, and the trials that the Polish military may face. On the other hand, the low rumbling sound created may be likened to the rumbling of distant gunfire or tanks, which makes the listener feel like they are in the midst of a battle. Overall, the structure of the piece is ternary, or ABA. Section A consists of three eight-bar phrases, which, according to Dubose (2011), causes the military epithet to be even further enforced, due to the very particular and precise structure.

Section B, often called the trio, consists of a different eight-bar phrase that is repeated four times with slight variation. Eight bars of a different melody is played, and then two more of the original eight-bar trio phrase. The piece then returns to section A. The ternary structure ensures that the original A section is recapitulated, meaning that it will stick in the head of the listener more, and become a familiar anthem, especially to

Polish listeners in the time of the war, where the piece was frequently associated with the war. This feeling of familiarity is exploited by Chopin to make the listener feel more pride upon hearing it, because they remember the theme, and associate it with feelings of national honour.

No introduction is played before section A, but instead, it launches straight into the military theme. This causes the piece to 'begin with a bang', and sound impressive from the start. This increases the feelings of Polish pride and glory that are conveyed to the listener.

Figure 9: The beginning eight-bar phrase

Figure 10: Nine notes played at once at bar 14, which creates a thick texture

The piece has a very large range, from a D#1 at bar 14 to a D7. This large range adds to the feeling of grandeur. Much of the main melody (especially the A section) is played in the mid-to-low range of the piano, which helps the sound to be rich and bright, which makes the melody sound more luxurious and grand and emphasises the noble sound that Chopin intends.

Gallery: Lowest and Highest Notes

analysis of music elements and concepts and ideas about music from a range of relevant sources reveals the interconnectivity between findings

Examination of the interconnectivity between texture and tonality reveals the love Chopin had for his country.

For a single piano, the piece is very densely packed with notes, with up to 9 notes (eg. bar 14) being played at once in chords. This 'thick' sound helps the piece to sound more rich, which assists in creating the feeling of splendour that Chopin wanted so badly for his country and people.

The piece begins in the key of A major. According to Schubart's Affective Key Characteristics (1806), the key of A major represents declarations of innocent love and trust in God. Therefore, the use of this key helps to represent Chopin's love for his home country, and his trust in God that his country would be successful in the war.

Figure 11: The key signature of A major
Figure 12: The key signature of D major at bar 25
Figure 13: A brief inflection of D minor from bar 57

At bar 25, the beginning of the trio section, a key change occurs to D major, which is the subdominant in A major. According to Schubart, D major is 'the key of triumph, of Hallelujahs, of war-cries, of victory rejoicing'. This is very fitting, because Chopin is outwardly demonstrating feelings of Polish triumph and glory throughout the piece. The use of the key of D major helps to further enforce these feelings.

Momentarily in the trio section (at bar 57), the parallel minor key of D major is suddenly inflected - D minor, helping to create a brief moment of tension and worry. This is achieved with the use of a B flat (a note in a D minor scale) and by the removal of the 3rd in D chords (which is the degree that determines whether a chord is major or minor). This is then quickly resolved by returning back to D major. The A section is reintroduced in A major, which completely resolves the piece, helping it to end with a feeling of triumph and contentment.

Chords are used frequently in both hands throughout the piece. The forcefulness that these multiple notes are played with adds to the impressive and rousing sound of the piece, which shows Chopin's deep connection to Polish nationalism.

Tonic chords are used frequently throughout the piece (example: the use of A major chords for the majority of section A). In fact, the piece begins on a rousing and sudden A major chord - the tonic chord of the section, which sets up the piece for an exciting and consequent listening experience with little tension. Indeed, tension was not what the people of war-time Poland wanted to hear, because they wanted to be uplifted and encouraged. It is likely that Chopin makes frequent use of tonic chords for this reason.
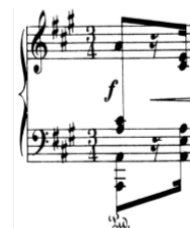

Figure 14: A rousing A major chord that begins the piece
Figure 15: A forceful chord with 9 notes played at bar 14

There is consonance throughout the piece, as rarely any clashing of pitches occurs, despite the large chords used. Dissonance is momentarily created in the low trills of the trio section, but it is quickly resolved by the main theme. Consonance is used by Chopin to create uplifting feelings and to avoid tension.

Figure 16: Momentary dissonance created by low trills at bar 57

Click the speaker button for audio.
This audio can also be accessed at:

- https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/portal/media/snr_music_ext_20_slide_10_1.mp3
- https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/portal/media/snr_music_ext_20_slide_10_2.mp3

In the melodies of the A section, there are many ascending scales in the right hand, and phrases often end on a higher pitch than they started on. For example, the phrase beginning at bar 3 begins on an octave between C#4 and C#5, and ends on a chord that is topped with an E5. Phrases that 'lift up' literally create an uplifting and positive feeling, which allow feelings of happiness to be conveyed to the listener. Happy-sounding ascending phrase endings are utilised by Chopin to further endorse the national pride that is displayed by the piece.

Figure 17: An upward phrase ending from bar 1

The eight bar phrases in the main theme of the trio section also end on a much higher pitch than they started on - they begin on a D5, and end on a C#6.

Figure 18: A D5 at the start of the trio section (bar 25)

Figure 19: A C#6 at the end of the 8 bar phrase (bar 32)

The melody in the A section is quite dense, with many rapid note sequences of quavers and semiquavers, and not many rests. This not only gives the feeling of opulence and splendour, but also the idea that it is quite busy, a metaphor for the people of Poland who are busying themselves to prepare for the war. The melody in the trio (B) section begins much more spread out across the pitch range, which makes for a freer sound. This helps to represent the freedom that Chopin wanted for his country.

Figure 20: Dense melody at bar 5   **Figure 21:** Free melody in the trio at bar 25

In bars such as 25 and 27, there is a 3-note sequence that seems familiar, which is echoed throughout the trio section. This sequence actually appears in Mozart's very popular Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, composed in 1787. This helps the piece to sound more familiar and friendly to listeners, which puts them in a good mood, and also makes the piece sound more dignified.

Figure 22: 3 note sequence at bar 25   **Figure 23:** 3 note sequence at bar 27

Chopin was very romantically driven. At the age of 19, he fell in love with Polish soprano Konstancja Gładowska, and dedicated the larghetto movement of his Piano Concerto No. 1 to her. He said of the movement: "It should be like dreaming in beautiful springtime - by moonlight" (Wikipedia, 2016).

Analysing music [10]

analysis of music elements and concepts and ideas about music from a range of relevant sources reveals the interconnectivity between findings

Examination of the interconnectivity between texture and rhythm provides insight into the lives of the Polish preparing for war and reveals Chopin's hope for freedom.

It is clear that he very frequently became infatuated with women, because he was sensitive to their charm. George Sand said that "his soul, tender and sensitive to all beauty, to each charm and each smile, was incredibly easily impressed, and his heart was full of fire and tenderness to three beauties in the course of one evening." Solange Clésinger accurately stated in 1895 that he was "as tender and passionate as his music" (Helman et al. 2008).

Valse de l-Adieu

This is true, for when the topic of Chopin's music arises, the first words that commonly come to mind are 'romantic', 'sentimental', 'gentle' and 'tender'. This tenderness can be observed through the music elements in his composition **Valse de l'Adieu (Op. 69, No.1)**. The name of the piece can be translated to The Farewell Waltz, so even though the piece is nostalgic and sweet, there is an element of and longing - feelings that Chopin likely felt when saying goodbye to a lover. In fact, the piece was written as a farewell to Maria Wodzińska, a woman to whom Chopin was once engaged.

TONALITY

The piece is in A flat major, which according to Schubart (1806) is a 'key of the grave'. Despite the major key, which helps the piece to sound sweet, the use of A flat major helps to give the slight feeling of sorrow - the type of sorrow that comes with saying goodbye.

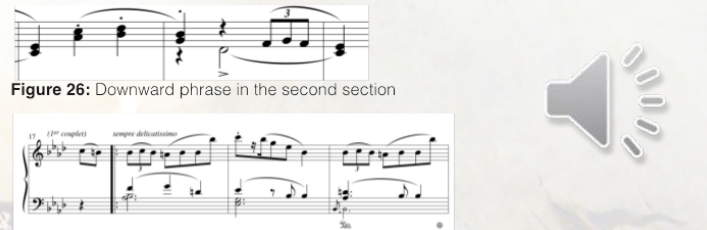**Figure 25:** Downward phrase in the first section

Figure 26: Downward phrase in the second section

Figure 27: Rising and falling in the third section, marked sempre delicatissimo

MELODY

After an anacrusis, the piece begins on a D flat, the subdominant note of A flat major. Until very the end of the first section, no phrases end on the tonic note, but instead on notes such as a C (the mediant), a B flat (the supertonic), an E flat (the dominant) and an F (the submediant). This is seen in gallery 3.1. This causes phrase endings to be constantly antecedent, or questioning, until the end of the piece.

This creates a feeling of incompleteness and slight uncertainty, - feelings which would come from losing a loved one. Phrases in the first (fig. 25), second (fig. 26) and third sections also always end by descending, which gives the feeling that one is downcast, because the phrases mimic the downward direction of one's body/mood when they are disappointed or sad. After the third section, a brief fourth part is played which builds gradually up in pitch, which contrasts from the rest of the piece, and therefore adds hope, and displays heightened emotion.
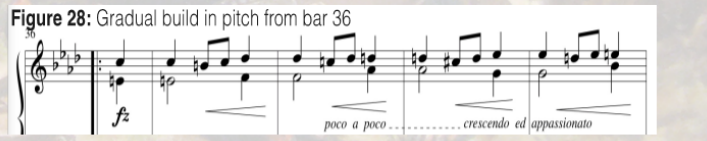

Figure 28: Gradual build in pitch from bar 36

Investigating music [10]

investigation gives a summation of information to determine the relationships between primary and secondary sources

The connection between the secondary source and the Valse de l'Adieu reinforces Chopin's emotional state.

Synthesising information [10]

synthesis of analytical information to discriminate relevant information that enables new understandings or conclusions about a music idea

The function of the melodic ambiguity in the source creates a feeling of uncertainty which justifies the viewpoint.

The second section is made to sound more playful and light as a result of the higher pitch, and also because of the shape of the phrases. The phrases continually rise and fall (fig. 27), instead of just falling like the previous section, which gives the feeling of a couple playfully dancing and whirling around a room. The section is marked *sempre delicatissimo*, meaning 'always delicate'. This adds to the light and playful sound of the section.

HARMONY

The piece is consonant throughout, which helps it to sound sweet and tender. The only chromaticism and slight tension created is in the fourth section from bar 36, where chords increase in pitch by a semitone each time to build to a climax. This tension helps to increase feeling of passion.

Figure 30: Diminuendo at bar 8

Figure 31: Diminuendo at bar 8

EXPRESSIVE DEVICES

A moderate amount of dynamic variation occurs at points in the piece. The first section begins piano, and mostly remains that way apart from a diminuendo at bar 8 and a crescendo at bar 15 as the section ends. The second and third sections also remain soft, which helps the sound to be peaceful and reflective.

It is not until the beginning of the fourth section, at bar 36 that a sforzando is played, which is followed by 6 successive crescendo markings, building up to fortissimo, a dynamic which is in great contrast with the rest of the piece. The louder dynamics add feelings of passion to the piece. The third theme is then played again, and the dynamics suddenly return to piano, which reinstates the overall peacefulness of the piece. In the recording, it can be observed that a significant amount of rubato is used, which further adds to the peaceful and romantic sound of the piece.

Figure 32: Sforzando at bar 36 followed by 6 crescendos to *fortissimo*, which then returns to *piano* at the end of bar 44.

STRUCTURE

The piece is in rondo form - ABACDA, with some sections repeated. In this form, the main A theme is constantly reintroduced, and not a lot of new material is introduced, which keeps the feeling of the piece simple. This makes the piece sound like a simple 'goodbye' instead of a rush of different emotions.

TIMBRE

The relatively high pitch of the melody helps the piece to sound sweet. The mid-to-low pitch of the left hand adds warmth to the piece.

Figure 33: Beginning of the A section at bar 1

Figure 34: Beginning of the B section at bar 17

Figure 35: Beginning of the C section at bar 27

Figure 36: Beginning of the D section at bar 36

TEXTURE

The melody of the piece has quite a thin texture, with mostly one note being played at a time. This helps the piece to sound light and gentle. If a more chordal melody was used, the piece may be too overpowering.

Figure 37: 3/4 time signature

Figure 38: Semiquaver octuplet at bar 11

DURATION

The piece is in 3/4, which is a typical time signature for a waltz - a romantic dance. The waltz feel of the piece adds to the romantic feeling of the piece.

Numerous quaver triplets are used throughout the piece. They help to make the rhythm more relaxed, because they cause some notes to be on offbeats. If all notes were played straight, the piece would lose its romantic and peaceful feeling. Triplets also help to mimic the way that a couple would turn when they are dancing.

A semiquaver octuplet is used in bar 11, which consists of notes that are very rapidly played in contrast to the rest of the piece. This tuplet could represent a sudden rush of passion or emotion for one's lover. The rhythm after this quickly returns to the simple way that it was before, which helps piece to sound more gentle and tender, which shows a part of Chopin's romanticism.

Figure 39: A quaver triplet in bar 1

Figure 40: A quaver triplet in bar 3

Analysing music [10]

analysis of music elements and concepts and ideas about music from a range of relevant sources reveals the interconnectivity between findings

Examination of the interconnectivity between rhythm and metre reveals the gentle and tender emotions Chopin holds for Poland.

Nocturne in B flat minor

Some of his compositions do not evoke feelings of warmth and nostalgia, but instead haunting thoughts of lost or unrequited love. With such sensitivity toward female charm, Chopin would have felt these brooding emotions regularly, and as a result, channeled them into his music, which can particularly be observed in his composition Nocturne in B flat minor (Op. 9, No.1).

TONALITY

The piece is in B flat minor, which according to Schubart (1806) represents "a quaint creature, often dressed in the garment of night. It is somewhat surly and very seldom takes on a pleasant countenance." The use of this key for a nocturne is very appropriate, because a nocturne is a composition that is often evocative of the night. The use of the minor key makes the piece have a sad and "unpleasant" sound, which promotes the idea of lost or unrequited love. At bar 19, the beginning of the middle section, the key changes to D flat major - the relative of the original key of B flat minor. Schubart (1806) described D flat major as "a leering key, degenerating into grief and rapture". From this, it can be seen that even though it is a major key, and it makes the sound sweeter, the feelings of grief generated by the key instead bring about the feeling of sweet sorrow - a feeling that is felt when love is unrequited - the sweetness that comes from loving someone, and the sorrow that comes from the knowledge that they don't love you back. The use of the major key also helps the section to sound more contemplative instead of brooding. In fact, in the middle section, music critic Jean Kleczynski felt "as though the soul were sinking beneath the weight of thought and the heat of a summer's night." (Chopin Society, 2011). Chopin would have indeed heavily contemplated his latest romances, and would have channeled these weighty thoughts into his compositions.

Figure 41: B flat minor

Figure 42: Key change to D flat major at bar 19

Figure 43: Large group of semiquavers climbing rapidly down

MELODY

Even though the melody doesn't have much of a pattern, it can still be seen that many phrases end by descending (gallery 4.2), such as the phrase from the beginning anacrusis to bar 2, and the similar phrases in bar 12, 13 and 14. The large groups of semiquavers also rapidly descend (figure 43). Downward phrases are used by Chopin to mimic the downward motion of the body/mood of a sad person, which adds to the overall sadness of the piece

Sometimes, such as in bar 1, 4 and 9, three crotchet notes are repeated - sometimes an F, sometimes a B flat (gallery 4.1). The repetition of these notes helps to create a throbbing sound, almost like the beating of a heart, or like a relentless thought that keeps nagging.
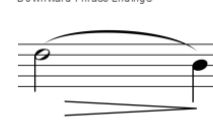

Three Repeated Crotchet Notes   Bar 1

Downward Phrase Endings   Bar 12

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This audio can also be accessed at:

- https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/portal/media/snr_music_ext_20_slide_15_1.mp3
- https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/portal/media/snr_music_ext_20_slide_15_2.mp3

analysis of music elements and concepts and ideas about music from a range of relevant sources reveals the interconnectivity between findings

Examination of the interconnectivity between harmony and tonality to convey hope.

HARMONY

Not a lot of dissonance occurs in the A section, but sometimes in the B section it is briefly inflected. The second chord played in bar 19 consists of a D flat, an A flat, an F flat and an A double flat. This creates a Db diminished chord, as well as a semitone clash between the A flat and the A double flat. The tension is reduced slightly, however, because these notes are not all played together, but instead with an arpeggio in the left hand. Some tension is still created though, but is quickly lifted by the consonance of the next bar. This also occurs, for example, at bar 25, bar 33 and bar 39.

In bar 83, a lot of chromaticism is used, and notes that are only a tone apart, such as a G and an A, are played together. These clashes add to the confusion and unsettling feelings that the piece creates.

The piece ends on a B flat major chord, which is unusual because the ending section is in B flat minor. This device is called a Picardy third, where in a minor key, the major version of the tonic chord is instead played. This causes the feeling piece to change very suddenly, and makes it sound like it ends without a proper resolution. This further adds to the unsettling and brooding feelings that come with the piece. However, the use of the major chord indicates that something good may be yet to come, which gives the listener hope.

EXPRESSIVE DEVICES

There is a great amount of dynamic variation in the piece. It begins piano, with several crescendos leading to forte at bar 15. The dynamics then return to pianissimo at bar 19 - the beginning of the middle section. The majority of the middle section is played softly, but a great amount of dynamic variation occurs. Fortepianos (fp) and Sforzando pianos are played, for example, at bar 25, bar 33, bar 38, bar 41, and bar 46. Short crescendos leading to a forte mark also occur, for example, at bars 34 - 35 and 42 - 43. The main theme returns, and reaches fortissimo at bar 79, returns to piano at bar 80, then is fortissimo again at bar 82. The piece then ends pianississimo at bar 84. Such dynamic contrast throughout the piece adds large amounts of passion and desperation, especially when dynamics change greatly in such a short amount of time. These feelings were known by Chopin when he lost a love, and he has clearly shown them in the composition, which can be seen through the dynamics.

The constant use of slurs in both hands makes the piece sound very smooth, which helps it to have a haunting sound. If the notes were played detached, the piece could still have an intense sound, but it wouldn't be sorrowful and brooding like the sound created by the use of legato in the piece.

Figure 44: Db diminished chord in bar 19

Figure 45: Chromaticism in bar 83

Figure 46: Ending B flat major chord - a Picardy third

Figure 47: Fp at bar 25

Figure 48: sFp at bar 38

Click the speaker buttons for audio.
This audio can also be accessed at:

- https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/portal/media/snr_music_ext_20_slide_16_1.mp3
- https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/portal/media/snr_music_ext_20_slide_16_2.mp3

Figure 49: *Piano* at the beginning of the piece

Figure 50: *Forte* at bar 15

Figure 51: Short crescendo leading to a forte mark at bar 34 to 35

STRUCTURE

The piece is in the simple ternary form of ABA - the lengthy B section beginning at bar 19, and returning to section A at bar 70. The lengthy B section allows for a lot of emotional development, and the return to the A section recaptures the main theme, and reminds the listener of the original feeling of the piece.
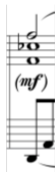

Figure 54: A high F7 at bar 11

Figure 55: A maximum of 4 notes are played at a time (53)

TIMBRE

For most of the piece, the melody is quite high pitched, reaching a very high F7 in bar 11. The high pitch helps to mimic crying or wailing, which one would certainly do if they lost a lover, or if their love was unrequited.

TEXTURE

Not a lot of chords are used in the piece, with a maximum of four notes played at a time (fig. 55). The thin texture that is maintained helps the piece to have a pensive and haunting sound. If the texture was thick, the sound would be overpowering, and would not cause the piece to be haunting through its simplicity.

DURATION

The piece is in the triple time signature of 6/4, meaning that there are 6 crotchet beats played in each bar. This gives the feeling of an intensely slow waltz, because usually a waltz would be in 3/4 or 7/8. The slow feeling of the piece is also caused by it being played larghetto, meaning 'fairly slow', with a 108 bpm. This slowness causes a slight feeling of downcast lethargy, almost like one is too 'lovesick' to function properly. This helps to represent the great affects that Chopin's romantic nature had on his mood, because of how sensitive he was to female charm.

Throughout the entire piece (except the last three bars), the left hand plays constant quavers in groups of six. This may create a steady feel, but even more so, the rhythm in the left hand is relent- less, like the constant romantic feelings and thoughts Chopin would've had for his numerous love interests.
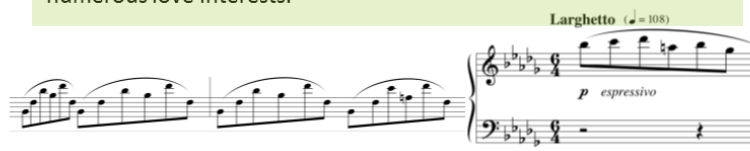
Synthesising information [10]

synthesis of analytical information to discriminate relevant information that enables new understandings or conclusions about a music idea

The analytical information supports the music viewpoint that Chopin's composition evoked feelings of unrequited love. The analysis of tempo and meter is coherently combined to support the viewpoint.

In contrast, the melody of the right hand has a free rhythm, and even includes large groups of semiquavers (eg. 22 at bar 4, 11 at bar 10). These semiquaver groups are played over the left hand, which is playing constant quavers on the beats. Playing these together creates polyrhythm (such as 22:24 at bar 4, 11:12 and bar 10 and 7:6 at bar 75. Polyrhythms are more complex and confusing, so they help to add feelings of confusion and uncertainty to the piece, which adds to the brooding sound.

22:24 polyrhythm in bar 4   11:12 polyrhythm at bar 10

Not a lot of rhythmic patterns can be identified in the free melody, which helps to represent the ever-changing romantic feelings of Chopin toward his lovers.

From this investigation, it is clear that Chopin's romantic nature and nationalistic pride had a profound effect on his compositions. In particular, the effects of his values can be observed through the musical elements of his compositions Nocturne in B flat minor (Op. 9, No.1), Valse de l'Adieu (Op. 69, No.1) and Military Polonaise in A major (Op. 40, No. 1).

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evaluation examines the logic of the two selected techniques and/or strategies

Three key strategies are evidenced and evaluated in the statement:

Strategy 1 — Being immersed in a wide range of sources

Strategy 2 — Refocusing research and thesis to be more specific

Strategy 3 — Aurally analysing recordings to choose music that reflected the different aspects of Chopin's life

As I develop as a musician, I have noticed that much of my work reflects my personality, values, experiences, likes and dislikes. As an early career musician my style is still developing; I am continually learning new ways of manipulating the music elements as I explore, listen to, and play the work of notable composer's throughout history. As such, my musicological research has concentrated on the possibility that notable musicians are also influenced by their personality, values and beliefs.

In order to first prove, then secondly to support the accuracy of my thesis, I needed to immerse myself in a wide range of sources. In order to access these sources, I discussed my options with the School Librarian. She directed me to the University of Queensland (UQ) Music library and the State Library of Queensland. Our school is a member of the *UQL Cyberschool* community which means that I could access their extensive range of books. Then, as a State Library member, I could access the online database of academic journals.

Why Chopin?

When I began researching, I realised that my thesis was too broad and it was impossible to be comprehensive within the word limit and time frame allocated. It became clear quite quickly that I needed to refocus my research (and thesis) on one composer.

To decide on a composer, I asked myself the following questions:

What period, genre or style of music provoked my interest?

Who where the notable composers of that period, genre or style?

Which composer inspires me the most?

Whilst I acknowledge that many composers throughout history have been referred to as complicated, neurotic, sensitive, creative musical genius', I focused my search within the emotive music of the Romantic Period. To me, the music of this period is special as it captures the diversity of the human experience. As a pianist, it made sense to focus on the piano compositions of the period. My final decision was based on Chopin's passion despite affliction.

What next?

Once I knew more about Chopin's passion for his country, his love of women, and his troubled health, the next logical step was to choose music for analysis that reflected these aspects of his life. Because of the sheer amount of compositions produced by Chopin, my initial selection was based on simple aural analyses of recordings of his music. It enabled me to create a manageable short list of music to analyse in significant detail. These analyses formed a significant part of my reflective practice documentation and ultimately enabled me to select the three best possible compositions to support my thesis.

Evaluation of Strategy 2 provides evidence of logic through the decision to refocus the thesis topic in order to write within the word limit.

Evaluation of Strategy 3 is logical and the statement provides evidence about the notion of using aural analysis of recordings to create a short list of music, from which to choose three to analyse in detail.