

Area of Study 1: Musical Forms and Devices

Dance of the Reed Pipes – Student Sheet

Taken from the ballet The Nutcracker
Music by Pyotr Llyich Tchaikovsky

This piece employs a TERNARY FORM (A B A) structure:

A	42 bars	$2 + (4 + 4 + 4 + 4) + 6 + 2 + (4 + 4 + 4 + 4)$
B	19 bars	$4 + 4 + 4 + 5 + 2$
A1	16 bars	$4 + 4 + 4 + 4$

The Nutcracker is a two-act ballet with a score by the Russian composer Tchaikovsky. The libretto is adapted from a story by E. T. A. Hoffman entitled The Nutcracker and the Mouse King. It was given its premiere at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on Sunday the 18th of December 1892.

Although the original ballet was not a success, the twenty-minute suite that Tchaikovsky extracted from the ballet was. However, the complete Nutcracker has enjoyed enormous popularity since the late 1960's and is now performed by countless ballet companies all around the world, primarily during the Christmas season.

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1) How are the lower string instruments played during the opening bars of the piece?
(Underline one).

Arco (using the bow) Pizzicato (plucking the strings)

2) During Section A, which of the following woodwind instruments plays the main melody most of the time?

Flute Oboe Clarinet Bassoon

3) What pitch range does this instrument cover during Section A?

Less than an octave An octave More than an octave

4) What type of articulation is demonstrated during Section A?

Legato (smooth and connected) Staccato (short and detached)

5) Identify the tonality of Section A.

Minor Major

6) During Section B, which of the following brass instruments plays the main melody most of the time?

Trumpet French Horn Trombone Tuba

7) Which statement best describes the shape of the melody during Section B?

The melody is disjunct (angular) and contains wide intervals

The melody is conjunct (stepwise) and contains narrow intervals

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8) What type of bass line accompanies the main melody during Section B?

A walking bass (notes on the beat moving in small steps)

An ostinato (a repeating musical idea)

A drone (a single note, played continuously)

9) Identify the tonality of Section B.

Minor

Major

10) Which section of the piece (A, B or A1) contains the loudest dynamic?

A

B

A1

11) Identify the type of texture used throughout the piece.

Monophonic

(a single melody line)

Homophonic

(melody and chordal accompaniment)

Polyphonic

(independent melodies)

12) Identify the percussion instrument that plays during the final chord of the piece.

Tambourine

Snare Drum

Triangle

Cymbal

Total / 12