

Listening Guide

Mozart: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* (A Little Night Music), K. 525

DATE OF WORK: 1787

MEDIUM: String quartet with double bass, or chamber orchestra

MOVEMENTS: I. Allegro; sonata-allegro form, G major
II. Romanza, Andante; sectional rondo form, C major
III. Allegretto; minuet and trio, G major
IV. Allegro; sonata-rondo form, G major

First Movement: Allegro; sonata-allegro form, 4/4 meter, G major

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: Intimate string chamber music style.
Quick-paced movement with 3 themes, sonata-allegro form.
Overall homophonic texture.
First theme is disjunct, marchlike, and ascends quickly (rocket theme);
second theme graceful and conjunct.

(Shorter recordings include first and third movements only.)

EXPOSITION

Theme 1—aggressive, ascending “rocket” theme, symmetrical phrasing, in G major:



Transitional passage, modulating.

Theme 2—graceful, contrasting theme, less hurried, in key of dominant, D major:



Closing theme—instant, repetitive, ends in D major:



Repeat of exposition.

DEVELOPMENT

Short, begins in D major, manipulates theme 1 and closing theme; modulates, and prepares for recapitulation in G major.

RECAPITULATION

Theme 1—in G major.

Theme 2—in G major.

Closing theme—in G major.

Coda—extends closing, in G major.

Second Movement: Romanza, Andante; sectional rondo form, duple meter, C major

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: Gentle, lyrical melodies in slow tempo.
Rondo-like structure, with opening section (**A**) recurring.
A and **B** sections in rounded binary form

A section—lyrical, serene melody in 2 parts, each repeated (**||: a :|| b a :||**):



First violin with faster movement at beginning of second part of **A**:



B section—more rhythmic movement, varies idea of **a**, brings **a** back at end; in 2 sections, each repeated (**||: c :|| d a :||**):



Return of **a** theme (first time).

C section—in C minor, active rhythmic accompaniment; exchanges between violins and cellos; in 2 sections (**||: e :|| f**).

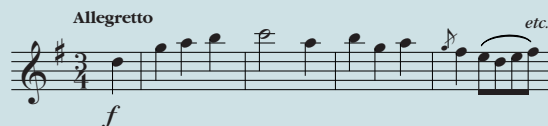
A section—return of first section in tonic, without repeats (**a-b-a**).

Coda—3 loud chords extend the idea of **a**.

Third Movement: Allegretto; minuet and trio form, 3/4 meter, G major

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: Strongly rhythmic dance, in triple meter.
Lyrical, expressive trio.
Regular 4-measure phrases.
Marked contrast between minuet and trio.
Balanced, regular form (minuet returns at end).
Homophonic texture.

Minuet theme—in accented triple meter, decisive character, in 2 sections (8 measures each), both repeated:



Trio theme—more lyrical and connected, in 2 sections (8 + 12 measures), both repeated:



Minuet returns, without repeats.

Fourth Movement: Allegro; sonata-rondo form, 4/4 meter, G major

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR: Light and graceful finale, in homophonic texture.
Rocket theme, quick and spirited.
Contrasting second theme.
Form combines principles of rondo and sonata-allegro.

EXPOSITION

Theme 1—merry, quick-paced rocket theme, symmetrical, 4-measure phrases, each repeated, in G major:



Transition and modulation to dominant key.

Theme 2—begins with downward leap, opposite in character to theme 1, in D major:



Theme 1—returns in varied setting as closing.

Exposition repeated.

DEVELOPMENT

Theme 1—modulates through various keys, ends up in G minor.

RECAPITULATION

Theme 2—returns in tonic.

Theme 1—in tonic, as closing and extension of cadence.

Coda—theme 1 returns as in exposition, in G major.