One of Mozart’s earliest pieces, this delightful minuet is brief but lovely. It is part of a collection of simple piano pieces that was dedicated to Mozart’s older sister Maria Anna (nicknamed Nannerl), who was also a talented musician.

Table of Contents

1. Score......................................................................................................................2
2. Articulation and Phrasing......................................................................................3
3. Dynamic Contrast..................................................................................................3
4. Rhythm Tempo and Passagework......................................................................4
5. Pedaling..............................................................................................................4
Articulation and Phrasing

- Using the techniques Michael discusses in the Module 2 Instructional Video, discover the best fingering decisions for the Minuet and write them in the score. Do this by playing each hand separately. Try different fingering possibilities until you find the most economical option. Notice opportunities that allow you to keep the fingering consistent: when the hand can stay in one position, when notes are repeated, or when repeated gestures enable sequential fingering.
- Once you find satisfactory fingerings, play each hand individually while focusing on the musical phrasing. Try different phrasing and articulations, and mark the ideal option in the score.
- Like many classical composers, Mozart composed this Minuet in 4-bar phrases. Try phrasing these four bars together, creating an uninterrupted melodic line. Musically, which of these 4-bar phrases seem to pose a question (known as an antecedent phrase) and which seem to pose an answer (known as a consequent phrase) or resolution?
- Looking at both hands, think about how the two voices relate to one another. Play through every 4-bar phrase slowly, hands together, taking care to maintain your fingerings. Decide on a final articulation and phrasing after hearing both hands together.
- After you listen to Brian Zeger’s instruction in Module 2 on how the Italian language impacted composers of the Classical era, look back on your phrasing and articulation markings. Make observations based on your new knowledge!

Dynamic Contrast

- Look at each 4-bar phrase from the perspective of dynamic contrast. Does each phrase go up or down? Apply the principle Michael discusses (going up = get louder, going down = get softer) in his instructional video. Are there any exceptions? Also identify the significant places of tension and resolution that Brian Zeger discusses in the Module 2 Expert Insights video.
- Often, Mozart repeats ideas consecutively, either with exact repetition or with the same motive in a different key (such as a one step up or down), which might mean we can use a crescendo or a decrescendo to keep the music from sounding stagnant. Identify places that could potentially benefit from this type of musical variation.
- Identify any points at which the left hand takes on a more important role than the right hand. Mark these moments in your score. At these times, the left hand may need to be louder than the right hand. Use ghosting to achieve the desired balance between the hands.
- Is there a climax in the piece that can be brought out with dynamic contrast, as demonstrated in the Tom Cabaniss Expert Insights video in Module 3? As you practice, keep Michael’s demonstration from the video in mind. Work on creating dynamic contrast by differing your speed of attack on the key.
- Are there any fingerings that now feel uncomfortable when applying the dynamics? Make sure your hands are always comfortable and that your fingering allows you to have a flexible wrist and relaxed arm.
Rhythm, Tempo, and Passagework

- Practice the piece with the metronome providing a click on every quarter note beat. Play the piece at a slow, medium, and fast tempo. Then, practice the piece with a click on each measure (3 quarter notes per click) at a comfortable speed until you have reached the performance tempo.
- This piece has a rhythmic emphasis on the downbeat of each measure so that we feel a waltz-like rhythm of three-quarters very clearly. Try exaggerating this rhythm in your practice by emphasizing the beginning of each measure and playing lighter on beats 2 and 3.
- Apply rhythmic drills to the piece by changing the written rhythms of each measure. Start by using the long-short and short-long patterns you learned from the course.
- After learning from Rachel Straus in the Module 4 Experts Insights video about how dancers must achieve different rhythms in different parts of their bodies simultaneously, look for instances where you are playing different subdivisions in each hand. Analyze how independent or dependent your hands feel at these moments.

Pedaling

- This Minuet utilizes two types of gestures. The first is the right-hand gesture of the first measure which continues to repeat, and one of them is the “sighing” gesture located in mm. 4, 8, etc. How might you use the pedal to emphasize this gesture?
- Sing the melody to yourself, paying close attention to which notes you emphasize, and to which notes you provide a lighter texture. Use the pedal to help you convey the differences between those textures and gestures. Keep in mind that pedaling can change articulation, dynamics, and color!
- After watching Nico’s discussion about the history of the instrument in the Module 5 Expert Insights video, has your perspective on your pedaling decisions changed? Go back and edit your pedal markings as needed to achieve a sound closer to what Mozart had in mind when he wrote the piece.