

THE SAYLOR FOUNDATION'S GUIDED LISTENING 3: BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN C MINOR

Introduction: The most famous of Beethoven's symphonic compositions is without a doubt the outstanding *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor*, Op. 67 (see [the Philadelphia Orchestra's program notes for the Fifth Symphony](#)*). From the arresting opening "Fate knocks at the door!" motif to its triumphant ending, the work conveys the ideas of struggle, soul searching, and grappling with one's destiny. This listening exercise will aid you in completing Guided Listening Exercise 3 on Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.

* Terms of Use: Please respect the copyright and terms of use displayed on the webpages above.

Instructions: Follow each of the four listening charts below as you view each movement on YouTube. This will help guide you through the sequence of ideas and events in the four-movement symphony. To help you follow the progress of Beethoven's themes and to clarify the structure of particular themes movements, you may wish to review the material in Subunit 2.3, Melody; Subunit 3.2, Sonata-Allegro Form, and Subunit 3.3, Theme and Variations.

First Movement

Web Media: YouTube: The London Classical Players' Performance of the First Movement Allegro con brio from Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67.

Link: YouTube: The London Classical Players' Performance of the [First Movement Allegro con brio from Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67](#).

Instructions: Please begin by watching this first YouTube video (approximately 8 minutes). The London Classical Players, conducted by Roger Norrington, was a British orchestra specializing in historically informed performances of the classics on period instruments.

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Time (approx.)	What to Listen For
0.00	EXPOSITION “Fate knocks at the door” motive in minor key: three short notes and a long note
0.10	Motive gets louder (crescendo), builds to climax and three chords Last of three chords is held
0.25	Transition to second theme-uses rhythmic motives
0.54	Lyrical second theme (major key)-strings, woodwinds
1.16	Closing theme
1.35	Repeat of Exposition
3.10	DEVELOPMENT “Fate” motif re-introduced by horn and strings, echoed by woodwinds And strings
3.51	Short fugue-like passage using transition motif
4.24	RECAPITULATION “Fate” motive announces itself
4:40	“Fate” motive returns and builds momentum
5.00	Relaxed oboe solo interrupts progress of the recapitulation
5.17	Recapitulation continues, motive returns and builds to climax
5.36	Quieter second theme, with motive below
6.05	Closing theme
6.25	CODA Motive pounded fortissimo, rising higher, counterpoint passages, new motif (alternates between strings and woods)—almost like second development section
7.29	Hammering on single note, then motive as at beginning
7.50	Abrupt chords end movement

Second Movement

Web Media: YouTube: The Dresden Staatskapelle’s Performance of the Second Movement Andante from Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67*.



Link: YouTube: The Dresden Staatskapelle's Performance of the [Second Movement Andante from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67.*](#)

Instructions: Please view the YouTube video in its entirety (10:31 minutes). This performance was conducted by Herbert Blomstedt.

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Time (approx.)	What to Listen For
0.00	THEME Low strings (violas and cellos) play beginning of theme 1
0.30	Woodwinds play middle of theme 1
0.50	Violins play end of theme 1
1.07	Clarinets, bassoons, and violins play theme 2
1.30	Brasses play theme 2 – fanfare style
1.50	Pianissimo
2.20	VARIATION 1 Low strings vary opening of theme by changing rhythm (sixteenth notes), Theme 1 played by woodwinds, strings, brasses
3.41	Theme 2 with variations in orchestra
4.00	Pianissimo returns
4.28	VARIATION 2 Low strings ornament theme 1, pounding repeated chords, rising scales,
6.39	Theme 2 played by full orchestra
7.11	Woodwinds play opening of Theme 1 in minor key
9.17	CODA Tempo increases—bassoons play snippet of Theme 1 Violins play snippet of theme 2, woodwinds and strings play theme 1
10.19	Ending-repeats rhythm of opening of movement.



Third Movement

Web Media: YouTube: The Dresden Staatskappelle's Performance of the Third Movement Allegro from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor*, Op. 67.

Link: YouTube: The Dresden Staatskappelle's Performance of the [Third Movement Allegro from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor*, Op. 67.](#)

Instructions: Please view the next section of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5* in the YouTube video (8:55 minutes). This performance was conducted by Herbert Blomstedt.

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Time (approx.)	What to Listen For
0.00	A SCHERZO Cellos and basses introduce theme 1, and pass it onto high strings
0.10	Theme 1 repeats
0.23	Theme 2-French horns
0.40	Themes 1 and 2 alternate, develop
1:48	B TRIO Fugue subject, played by low strings, bassoons, violins, imitations of subject, repetitions
3.06	A and B sections repeat
7:12	BRIDGE TO FOURTH MOVEMENT Long held notes in strings, big crescendo with timpani beating below, lead onto the movement without a pause

Fourth Movement

Web Media: YouTube: The Dresden Staatskapelle's Performance of the Fourth Movement Presto from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor*, Op. 67.



Link: YouTube: The Dresden Staatskapelle's Performance of the [Fourth Movement Presto from Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67.](#)

Instructions: Please view the final section of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5* in the YouTube video (8:55 minutes). This performance was conducted by Herbert Blomstedt.

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Time (approx.)	What to Listen For
0.00	EXPOSITION Theme 1-full orchestra
0.39	Transition theme-French horns
1.06	Theme 2-strings
1.33	Closing theme
1.56	DEVELOPMENT Loud strings-tremolo
2.01	Fragments of theme 2 in different keys; double basses, trombones, woodwinds add countermelody
3.45	Theme from scherzo (third movement) appears with a more "spooky" sound
4.21	RECAPITULATION Theme 1-full orchestra
4:59	Transition theme
5.29	Second theme-strings
5.55	Closing theme-woodwinds
6.28	CODA Second theme-violins
6.59	Transition, loud chords, sounds like cadence (ending)
7.03	Transition theme continues
7.50	Tempo change-presto (very fast)
8.11	Brasses bring back theme 1 (twice as fast)
8.20	Pounding tonic-dominant chords-cadence

