Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy

Volume 31 Article 3

1-1-2017

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Samantha M. Inman

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Courses on form can impart valuable skills in analytic writing through strategic scaffolding of writing assignments. Part I of this article provides six steps toward their first essay: teach the basic theoretical concepts; discuss the process for writing an analytic essay; model good analytic writing; assign the prompt; comment on a draft of the form diagram; and give precise feedback. Part II of this article divides the work of a larger final paper into five tasks: a proposal, a draft of the form diagram, an individual consultation, a rough draft, and the completed paper. Although among one of the most difficult skills to master, analytic writing remains an indispensable tool for synthesizing and applying theoretical concepts. Student gains in depth of understanding of the principles and repertoire at hand merit the time and effort of teaching analytic writing in the undergraduate form classroom.

Introduction

The general challenges of writing combined with the particular difficulties of writing about music intimidate many undergraduates. Even for those students comfortable with the types of research assignments given in a typical music history course, the jump to meaningful discussion about the technical and expressive attributes of a given piece of music proves difficult.[1] Without guidance, student analytic writing tends to lapse into tedious blow-by-blow lists padded with far too much historical information.[2] Transforming a disjunct list of analytic observations about a piece into an essay that forges meaningful connections supporting a focused thesis requires practice. Indeed, developing students' skill in analytic writing benefits from systematic pedagogy.

The undergraduate course in form provides an ideal arena to teach such analytic writing. Previous completion of core music theory ensures that students have already acquired some skill in theory and analysis even as they delve into a deeper understanding of the patterns and procedures of form. Moving beyond the brief excerpts populating the typical core course, the exploration of entire movements opens up numerous possible lines of inquiry, including harmony, rhythm, motive, expression, and text as

1 "Unfamiliarity with the assigned task" is one of the two main causes of poor student writing identified in Gottschalk and Hjortshoj (2004, 4).

2 Music theorists have long noted such weaknesses in student writing. For one such description, see McGee (1993, 87).

well as form. Writing as part of a course in form analysis assists in the application and synthesis of analytic skills, bringing together most concepts from the typical undergraduate tonal theory curriculum. Furthermore, writing encourages moving past the black and white facts about a piece to forge more meaningful connections, possibly entertaining multiple viewpoints and delving deeply into ambiguities. More generally, incorporating writing into the form course embraces the aims of the Writing Across the Curriculum movement, which posits "that writing and thinking are closely allied, that learning to write well involves learning particular discourse conventions, and that, therefore, writing belongs in the entire curriculum, not just in a course offered by the English department."[3] While some instructors have successfully taught writing even in large-lecture classes,[4] the smaller enrollment typical of upper-level form classes even at large public universities makes writing assignments particularly feasible.

Structuring a writing-intensive theory course demands consideration of the progression of writing assignments. After experimenting with different numbers and types of assignments in my form course, I have found that combining one short essay with a detailed prompt with one longer paper with an open-ended prompt works well for my goals.[5] I used to require more short essays, but reducing the number of assignments allows more time for scaffolding and feedback of works in progress, improving the final products without becoming unduly burdensome for either students or instructor. The short essay focuses on a minuet and trio movement, typically one I choose from Haydn's string quartets. This requires the students to demonstrate their fluency with the smaller building blocks of form covered by that point in the course, including motive, sentence, period, binary, and ternary. In contrast, the students select repertoire for the longer paper. As numerous other instructors have done, I strongly encourage the students to pick music written for their instrument, which generally increases student interest in the project.[6] Part I of this article outlines the steps towards writing the short essay, while Part II describes the process for the term

3 McLeod (1992, 6).

4 Everett 2014 presents strategies for incorporating writing specifically into large-lecture theory courses. For a more general resource, see Gottschalk and Hjortshoj (2004, 145-161).

5 My assignments are designed to develop the specific skill of analytic writing. Instructors more concerned with developing general writing skills have more options, including the less formal exercises described in the following: Bakker and Chenette (2014); McGee (1993, 85-104); and Miyake (2014).

6 For a sample assignment with similar repertoire requirements for similar reasons, see McGee (1993, 86).

paper. While the first writing assignment of the semester focuses on teaching the technique of analytic writing, the last assignment emphasizes application of analytical and writing skills to a project tailored to the interests and strengths of each student.

Part I: The Short Analytic Essay

Although the idea of using shorter assignments to prepare students for longer, more complex projects is well known, particular strategies for preparing the students for the very first analytic writing assignment have received less attention. The following commentary specifies the activities in the first third of my course, illustrating the progression towards writing the first analytic essay in six steps. While the details in assignments and organization relate specifically to my course, the principles presented here easily transplant to other courses in form or even other upper-undergraduate level classes organized any number of ways.

Step 1: Teach and apply the basic theoretical concepts

Students need to master basic information and analytic skills before writing. As educator James M. Lang paraphrases cognitive psychologist Daniel Willingham, "you can't think creatively about information unless you have information in your head to think about.... We have to know things...to think critically about them."[7] Furthermore, both Willingham and Lang argue that some lower-level tasks need to be automated in order to free up enough working memory to tackle higher-level tasks.[8] To that end, the first few weeks of the course focus exclusively on engaging with repertoire, discussing examples of each formal category together in class. Most homework assignments I assign at this stage focus primarily on elements that do, given the terminology introduced in class, have fairly objective answers. Asking students to mark cadences, identify sequence types, and name forms of specific movements focuses on acquiring fundamental vocabulary and score reading skills. Such fundamentals must be instilled before attempting more sophisticated analytic projects. Particularly when covering more advanced topics, I often ease students into the new form by having them complete a diagram of a particular piece I have started for them. Such an approach

7 Lang (2016, 18). The quote is in reference to findings in ch. 2 of Willingham 2009, which Willingham summarizes as "Factual knowledge must precede skill" (19).

8 Lang (2016, 75-76).

gives the students enough clues to make progress even while their understanding is of yet incomplete. Later assignments remove these safeguards, assessing how much has been internalized.

Step 2: Discuss the process for writing an analytic essay

Once the students have some understanding of the basic vocabulary and procedure, the next stage involves outlining how to weave the analytic threads they now have the ability to spin into the tapestry of an articulate analytic essay. There are a number of ways an instructor might choose to initially engage this topic, but I typically assign my students to read William Marvin's "Introduction to Writing Analytical Essays" due to its clarity, brevity, and practicality.[9] Marvin's six steps listed in Figure 1 provide a concrete procedure, something the students greatly appreciate.[10] Students generally respond well to the admonition to get to know the piece intimately before attempting any writing, and they particularly appreciate the parallels Marvin draws between analysis and performance. In the end, the students come away with concrete actions to take and, ideally, a dawning realization of how the discipline and art of analytic writing might complement their other musical activities.

1. Learn the piece.
2. Begin to Analyze.
3. Research (when possible).
4. Form a Thesis.
5. Write.
6. Revise, revise, revise!

Figure 1
William Marvin's Steps to Writing an Analytic Essay.

Step 3: Model good analytic writing

As Jonathan Bellman has aptly noted, "In explaining the nature of analysis, strong models will serve better than directives and proscriptions."[11] Indeed, most students need at least one good example to internalize the general concepts and procedure discussed above. Instructors might turn to any number of extant resources as great

9 Marvin (2005, xi-xiv).

10 For the assignments in this undergraduate course, I generally make the research mentioned in Marvin's Step 3 optional for my students.

11 Bellman (2000, 46).

exemplars, including the essays from *Engaging Music* compiled for this purpose or a sample essay from one of the numerous guides to writing about music, among others.[12] However, writing a model essay tailored to a specific course by a specific instructor might be the most efficient approach for two reasons.[13] First, it is much easier to model the desired style, organization, length, topic, and terminology for your particular students. Second, it facilitates integration into the content of the course.

For my purposes, I explicitly model the process leading up to writing through analysis of the second movement of Brahms' Clarinet Sonata Op. 120, No. 1.[14] I ask the students to listen to the work before coming to class, encouraging them to gain some familiarity with the piece, as in Marvin's Step 1. Once in class, we turn to the formal analysis of Marvin's Step 2, identifying cadences and global and nested forms drawing on the technical vocabulary that had been covered in previous meetings. I then have the students help me list the facts we uncovered about the piece, asking how we might effectively organize them for an essay. I ask the students to propose tentative thesis statements based on these groupings, modeling Marvin's Step 4. Last but not least I provide them with a short essay on the movement, giving them a model comparable to the length and sophistication of their upcoming essay assignment. We discuss this model in detail, focusing on the process of turning the raw analytic data we discovered together into a polished essay.

The Appendix contains the sample essay itself interleaved with a detailed commentary. This commentary outlines aspects to consider when writing a model for students and summarizes the lessons I actively discuss with the students, though in a much more orderly and linear manner than a typical class discussion would proceed. Nearly all of the ideas emerge naturally in the class discussion via student observations and questions. I prompt the remainder through strategic questions, getting the students to notice underlying patterns they may have missed on first reading.

While not every short analytic essay assignment easily lends itself to the five-paragraph layout illustrated here, the model does clearly illustrate how this pattern familiar from English class can be applied to technical writing about music. Each paragraph features a focused topic sentence. Active voice dominates, and precise verbs replace weak linking verbs (such as "is") wherever possible. While student

12 See Stein (2005); Irving (1999, 227-41); and Ch. 3 of Wingell (2001).

13 I am far from the first to advocate such customized modeling. For example, see the model essay on a passage from *Aida* in the handout for Marvin (2014).

14 For a compelling analytic study of this work, see Klorman (2014).

writers often use the composer as the subject of far too many sentences, this essay only mentions Brahms in the introduction and conclusion. Even there, the references serve only to identify the composer and piece, not use Brahms as the primary agent driving the entire analysis. The text also purposefully includes standard abbreviations students should use in their own essays: "m." for "measure," "mm." for "measures," "PAC" for "perfect authentic cadence," and so on. Particularly if future assignments specify page length rather than word count, insisting on use of these abbreviations eliminates another potential strategy for meaningless filler. Furthermore, use of the correct symbols contributes to a more elegant final product free of unnecessary distractions.

Step 4: Assign the prompt

At this point, the students should be ready for a well-crafted essay assignment. Designing an effective prompt starts with selecting a piece of an appropriate level that contains both low-hanging and high-hanging fruit. Figure 2 shows one prompt regarding Joseph Haydn's String Quartet Op. 54, No. 1/III. While the basic form of the movement follows conventions, numerous details of this delightful dance benefit from closer examination. The instructions shown in Figure 2 contain numerous specific reminders about good writing, including the importance of topic sentences, the introduction, and the conclusion. The prompt specifies both the required supporting figures and contains reminders that these must actually be discussed in the body of the essay. This directs the students to think carefully about the relationship between text and supporting material, reminding them that both must be used in conjunction for an effective presentation. The remaining instructions direct their attention to some of the elements unique to this minuet, and the three basic headings suggest one possible means of organization. Given the detail of the provided questions, the main challenge of the assignment involves creating clear topic sentences and assembling the findings of their analysis into a meaningful whole.[15]

15 Two sources deal specifically with the development and use of effective questions in the theory classroom: Dirkse (2014, 69-84); and Rogers (2014).

Write an 800-1,000-word essay on the minuet and trio movement from Joseph Haydn's String Quartet Op. 54, No. 1. Format your typed essay with 12-point font, double-spaced lines, and 1-inch margins on all four sides. Please do not put extra space between paragraphs. Although the organization of your essay is up to you, you must engage each of the following elements. Write for someone who understands the terminology we have been using in class but has not read this essay prompt. Develop a single thesis statement that will serve as the focal point for your discussion. Remember to include a topic sentence in each individual paragraph as well as an introduction and conclusion within the essay.

Required Figures

1. Create a **form diagram** of the movement that shows the following elements:
    - Overall form of the movement
    - Nested forms (the minuet and the trio)
    - Phrases and cadences (with measure numbers)
    - Periods and sentences (only if and where applicable)
    - Note: Do NOT try to force every phrase into a sentence or period.
2. Include an annotated score (See specified items below.)

Required Topics

1. Form

Guide your reader through your form diagram, remembering to include the specific names for the overall form, the form of the minuet and trio, and any nested periods or sentences. Use technical vocabulary without unnecessarily quoting definitions of terms. Do NOT try to regurgitate the entire diagram, but rather use phrases such as "As the form diagram shows" or "Figure 1 indicates." Consider phrase length, thematic return, and proportion between sections.

2. Motive

Identify at least one motive in the minuet and one motive in the trio, and discuss how each is used throughout the movement. Give each motive a name (i.e., motive x and motive y), and bracket each appearance of the motive on the score. Refer to your annotations on the score in your prose.

3. Harmony

Compare the harmonic structure of the minuet with that of the trio. Provide a roman numeral/figured bass analysis of mm. 10-24 and mm. 53-60 on the score. Specifically discuss the relationship between these two digressions, exploring how each prepares for the next section. Consider the impact of both sequence and harmonic rhythm. Refer to your annotated score without regurgitating the entire harmonic progression in your prose. Identify and discuss at least one other harmonic surprise in both the minuet and the trio.

Figure 2
Sample Essay Prompt.

Step 5: Comment on a draft of the form diagram

Requiring students to submit a form diagram for commentary before the essay is due both lessens the difficulty of the assignment and improves the quality of the final product. The form diagram draft all but forces the students to analyze the piece before attempting to write, thus ensuring that the first two steps from Figure 1 are indeed the first actions the students take. I award these a small completion grade (usually 10% of the essay), which encourages submission while making it clear that the point of the activity is for me to provide feedback useful for the final version, which will be graded on quality. On these drafts, I circle errors and comment on concepts that the particular student has misunderstood without making the corrections for them. Students receive their marked form diagrams a week before the essay is due. This provides students with the opportunity to refine the basic elements of the analysis and clarify any conceptual issues before turning to the challenge of writing their ideas about the piece.

Step 6: Give precise feedback and pointers for improvement

Effectively grading the completed essays requires providing feedback in three areas. First, students need an assessment of the validity of their analytic claims. Fundamentally, misunderstandings regarding terminology need clarification, and mistakes in identifying cadences or harmonies or formal divisions need correction. Higher-level comments assess the strength of evidence presented in favor of a particular interpretation. Second, mechanics and style must be taken into account. Even students generally using correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar occasionally lapse into awkward word choices or sentence constructions. Many grasp the difference between passive and active voice only when shown examples in their own writing, and most need to continue pursuing more precise language, particularly when use of synonyms could easily reduce clunky repetitions of the same word. Two other common traps include making the composer the topic of nearly every sentence and overuse of personal pronouns. Third, students need feedback on the clarity of their topic sentences and the efficacy of the essay's overall organization. Giving each student extensive comments on this initial foray into analytic writing teaches valuable skills that the students can apply in future writing both within the course and beyond.

Some strategies aid in providing commentary in a timely manner. First and foremost is to prioritize the types and nature of feedback. Of the three categories mentioned above, correcting conceptual misunderstandings demands the most attention given

their importance to student success later in the course. Notes on mechanics and style can be productively limited to a few strategic examples of types of errors, perhaps commenting extensively on a single paragraph or a few sentences that contains types of problems that recur throughout.[16] Feedback on organization requires one or more specific examples, perhaps showing how a particular paragraph would have worked more effectively in a different place. Second, most learning management systems have a dropbox feature. Requiring the students to submit papers through this dropbox simplifies organization and streamlines providing feedback through typed comments, which for me at least take far less time to produce than the same comments written by hand. Third, whether or not to use a rubric with a set number of points assigned to different elements to assign the final grade depends on the individual instructor, as convincing arguments have been made both for and against this practice.[17] My own attempts to craft a detailed rubric usually result in grades lower than what I think the students deserve, so I prefer to assess the essay more holistically. Regardless of the chosen method of grade calculation, the goal is to instruct the student in skills that will transfer to future writing.

Part II: The Term Paper

While the specific requirements of the short essay allow the students to focus on writing technique, the longer paper encourages greater creativity and depth. I release the prompt for the final project about two-thirds of the way through the semester, after the students have received feedback on the short essay and after we have covered rondo, sonata, sonata-rondo, and concerto form in class. Specifications include writing an analytic paper with 1,500-2,000 words on one or more complete movements or works. The entire process involves five tasks: a proposal, a draft of the form diagram, an individual consultation, a rough draft, and the completed paper. This progression guides the student to think about the motivation for the project, get to know the piece well before writing, and start the writing process before the

16 For a warning against turning grading into time-consuming copy editing, see Gottschalk and Hjortshoj (2004, 51-52).

17 Two quotes illustrate this divide. “Avoid mathematical systems…Such systems, in design and execution, are at best arbitrary, and the categories rarely can be cleanly separated” [Gottschalk and Hjortshoj (2004, 57)]. “Rubrics…were one of the handiest aids to educators since the invention of the blackboard. They save us hours of time when used for grading while providing timely, meaningful feedback to our students” [Stevens and Levi (2005, vii)].

final product is due, thus infusing the steps listed in Figure 1 into the structure of the project.[18] The first four tasks are low-stakes completion assignments (5% of the project grade each) that involve feedback, while the final product is graded for quality.

Task 1: Proposal

Students sometimes need assistance finding a topic of appropriate scope, so requiring a brief proposal allows the instructor to head off major problems before they begin. While far less formal than a conference paper proposal, this task involves a typed paragraph that specifies title and composer of the chosen work(s), motivation for writing about this repertoire, and preliminary observations regarding the basic form of each movement to be discussed. Grading these takes little time and helps me identify the handful of students who need assistance at this early stage. Most student selections are appropriate; instrumentalists often chose the first movement of a concerto they are learning, while vocalists often compare three songs from the same cycle or opera. Some percussionists, saxophonists, and brass players need reminding that transcriptions provide an important resource for pertinent common-practice repertoire. Typically, one or two of the weakest students in the class propose something that is either far too long or too short for the specified length of paper, but a brief meeting in my office is usually all that is needed to redirect the student to something more feasible.

While the main function of the proposal is to ensure a smooth beginning to each project, the secondary function is to provide me with information useful to tailoring the last few weeks of class meetings. The last third of the semester often is a bit eclectic, exploring topics such as ritornello forms, fugue, variation, song cycles, aria forms, and popular songs. Given that time often prohibits probing all of these, I adjust the selection, order, and time of these final topics according to which will benefit the most students on their final projects.

Task 2: Form Diagram Draft

As with the short essay, requiring submission of form diagrams of all chosen movements for the final paper insists that students begin with analysis well before writing. Given the variety of repertoire selections, I typically have to allocate at least a week to work through all of these in detail. Students are responsible for providing

18 Many general guides on teaching writing advocate a similar division of tasks, including Gottschalk and Hjortshoj (2004, 110-117).

me with a score with measure numbers. This both saves me time needed to track down scores I do not happen to have on hand and also allows me to quickly identify where a student misnumbered measures, which happens all too frequently. In addition to correcting errors in the diagram, I often briefly note one or two facets of the piece the student might pursue in depth in the paper. Such commentary is particularly helpful to students who become so fixated on correctly categorizing the large-scale form that they forget elements such as sequences, motivic development, unusual key relations, text painting, orchestration, and any number of other features that also contribute to the shape of the work.

Task 3: Individual Consultations

At this stage in the process, individual meetings serve as the most effective means of providing substantial assistance to each student. I schedule these after providing students with feedback on their diagrams, instructing students to come to their ten-minute appointment with specific questions. Replacing two or three class meetings with these consultations both gives the instructor sufficient time to meet with each student and gives each student time to continue working on their projects without having to grapple with new concepts in class. In my experience, students come reasonably well prepared for these meetings and leave with greater direction and confidence.

Task 4: Rough Draft Peer Review

Requiring students to submit a partial rough draft for peer review has several benefits. As with any rough draft, this assignment requires students to start writing earlier than the day before the final paper is due, thus encouraging them to save some time for revision. Using peer review provides feedback to the students on their writing with minimum necessary involvement from the instructor. Given that students already receive extensive feedback directly from me on their form diagrams and in their meetings, shifting reading of drafts to peers allows flexibility without significantly lengthening the total time needed to complete the project. This allows the option of using the same week for both individual meetings and peer review. While peer review can be done in person, I recently tried grouping students into trios through my school's learning management software.[19] Each student was required to

19 For further information on options for peer review, see Gottschalk and Hjortshoj (2004, 71-75). I followed their advice to use groups of three so "no one gets stuck with just one, possibly ineffective or

post at least two and a half pages of prose as well as diagrams and a score on a discussion board. Two days later, each student was responsible for posting a paragraph of commentary on each of the two other drafts in their assigned group, noting at least two strengths and two weaknesses. Students were awarded points both for submitting their own materials on time and for the quality of their comments on drafts of their peers. This activity was generally successful, with students reminding each other to avoid excessive historical context, to organize topically, to transition smoothly, and to proofread thoroughly. Each student benefitted not only from direct feedback from their peers, but also through seeing additional models for how to approach writing.

Task 5: Final Paper

All of the preceding assignments serve to increase the quality of the final paper, the last component of the course. Given the extensive scaffolding and the opportunity to write on a piece they love, most students do well on this assignment. As with the essay, I require students to submit the final paper through a dropbox. In addition to reducing the time necessary for grading as mentioned above, the dropbox provides a platform through which students can receive feedback without having to physically return to my office, something that is always a concern at the end of the semester. The act of writing the final paper teaches students how to connect concepts from the course to the repertoire they encounter in their everyday lives as musicians, which constitutes perhaps the most important lesson of the course. On a practical level, the finished paper serves as a good writing sample, potentially useful for those students applying for graduate study.

Conclusion

Courses on form can impart valuable skills in analytic writing through strategic scaffolding. In my experience, a short essay with detailed questions adequately prepares students for the formidable challenge of writing a longer analytic paper on a piece of their choice. Regardless of the total number of writing projects in a given course, the six steps presented in Part I provide a framework for systematically introducing students to the elements needed to maximize learning from their first attempt in this idiosyncratic genre. The five tasks towards the final paper presented

irresponsible, reviewer." (73).

in Part II illustrate one approach to guidance through a lager project that could be easily modified to suit different classes and preferences.[20] Although among one of the most difficult skills to master, analytic writing remains an indispensable tool for synthesizing and applying theoretical concepts. Student gains in depth of understanding of the principles and repertoire at hand merit the time and effort of teaching analytic writing in the undergraduate form classroom.

20 For instance, in classes smaller than mine, class presentations might easily replace peer review of rough drafts.

Appendix: Sample Essay with Commentary

Italics = Sample Essay; Regular Font = Commentary

The Classical Romantic: Brahms and the Clarinet Sonata Op. 120, No. 1/II

Two important lessons appear before the reader even reaches the first complete sentence. First, there is a title. As someone who has enjoyed crafting titles for each and every writing activity since grade school, I used to be surprised at the number of my students who submit this assignment with either "Essay 1" or nothing at the top of the page. Titling the model essay encourages the students to do the same for their own work, reminding them that creativity can be in play even in this detail. Second, this title effectively executes the most important task of a title: encapsulating the topic at hand. Indeed, this single line specifies the composer, the piece, and the main binary that will drive the discussion before even reaching the first complete sentence.

> *The music of Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) abounds with references to formal processes of earlier eras. Sometimes this involves conscious modeling on a particular composition, such as in the well-known references to Ludwig van Beethoven's Symphonies No. 5 and No. 9 in Symphony No. 1 by Brahms.*[21] *Other compositions may lack a specific model while retaining the clarity and hierarchy of classical form. Exemplifying this strategy, the second movement of Brahms' Clarinet Sonata Op. 120, No. 1 combines a staunchly classical design with a thoroughly romantic use of harmony and rhetoric.*

A well-formed essay requires a well-formed introduction, something many students find difficult to write. The two most important concepts here are clarity and economy: by the end of paragraph 1, the reader should know the topics at hand and the basic structure of the body of the essay. Often, novices in analytic writing are tempted to include extraneous information, typically in the form of excessive historical context. This model eschews a summary of Brahms' career or a copious commentary of his clarinet works, both of which would be inappropriate in an essay of this length and type.

Perhaps more than in any other part of the essay, each sentence of the introduction must contribute something essential to establishing the main themes of the text. In the provided model, Sentence 1 announces the composer at hand, alluding to Brahms' historical consciousness in formal procedures. Sentence 2 reinforces this concept by

21 See the "Orchestral works and concertos" section of Bozarth and Frisch (2016).

citing the most well-known examples, symphonies that most undergraduate music majors have heard if not played or studied by junior year. Turning toward the specific topic of the essay, Sentence 3 introduces a variant of this broad principle. Most importantly, Sentence 4, the topic sentence, names the specific piece under discussion and clearly articulates the classical vs. romantic binary that drives the remainder of the essay.

> *This slow movement constitutes a simple sectional ternary form as summarized in Figure 3.*[22] *The outer sections are not identical; alterations for A' include softer dynamics, a lower register for much of the clarinet line, and additional arpeggios in the piano's texture. However, with the exception of a one-bar phrase extension at the very end of A', these subtle adjustments preserve the length and cadences from the opening. Sections A and A' thus share the same design, namely a parallel interrupted period with nested sentences. The B section envelopes a parallel progressive period with nested sentences, a formal plan differing only in harmonic type from that used in A and A'. In the retransition, the piano twice attempts to imitate the clarinet's main melody from A, each time breaking off into a melisma of sixteenths and proving unable to regain the tonic key until the arrival of A' in m. 49. The short coda contains echoes of both main thematic blocks; mm. 71-74 return to material from the opening of section B, while mm. 75-81 contain one final statement of the melancholy clarinet line from A over a tonic pedal.*

While brief, this paragraph models several basic principles. First, the opening sentence directs readers to the form diagram, something that many students neglect. The lesson here is that the reader needs to be told not only to look at any visual materials but also what specifically the reader should learn from looking at said figures. In this case, the form diagram provides an overview essential for understanding the classical elements of the composition unpacked in this paragraph. Second, strategic use of technical language enables succinct communication. Terms such as "simple sectional ternary" and "parallel progressive period with nested sentences" replace what could have been laborious (and boring) longwinded descriptions. Also, clarifying that this essay is intended for literate musicians renders regurgitations of term definitions unnecessary. All too many students succumb to this temptation, either out of uncertainties regarding their analysis and their understanding of the technical vocabulary or as part of a strategy to take up space. Third, this single paragraph deals with the form of the entire movement with maximum efficiency, departing from the chronology of the piece where expedient. For example, the A and A' sections are

22 The terms used in this essay follow definitions from Laitz (2016).

discussed together, enabling brief commentary on their differences without requiring restatement of identical principles. The commentary on section B and the coda likewise emphasizes their connections to A. Mentions of specific measures are kept to a minimum, as the job is to clarify and supplement the ideas represented in the form diagram rather than duplicate all of its information in prose.

> *While sentences typically propel the music forward, pointing undeniably to their conclusion, the sentences within sections A and A' seem unusually hesitant, partially due to harmony and phrase length. Eschewing the typical I-V-I harmonization common in the presentation stage of a typical classical sentence, mm. 1-4 contain a chord progression that shifts ever so slightly with each bass note added, as shown in Figure 4. Two of these bass notes seem displaced; as shown with diagonal lines, the B♭ in m. 1 anticipates the root of the chord in m. 2, and the A♭ in m. 3 anticipates the arrival of the fm^{7} in m. 4. The proliferation of sevenths combined with the tonicization of the submediant contributes to the mellow nature of this opening. A four-measure presentation most often leads to a four-measure continuation, but this continuation beginning in m. 5 lasts longer than expected, meandering into the dominant key. The music attempts to cadence in m. 10, yet substitutes a deceptive cadence for the expected authentic cadence. After this setback, the clarinet attempts to recover the situation by reiterating its motive from m. 9 in m. 11, this time successfully leading to the PAC of m. 12. The consequent phrase replays much of this drama in tonic, complete with the tentative deceptive cadence in m. 20 being corrected to the PAC of m. 22.*

The second body paragraph again picks up the idea of sentences, using this basic element as a springboard to a detailed discussion of harmony, phrase length, and cadences in the A and A' sections. The overview of the form earlier in the essay frees this paragraph to isolate features unique to this piece. The annotated musical example allows quick isolation of the most interesting harmonic aspects of the passage, avoiding tedious listing of numerous Roman numerals in the prose. Specific analytic data grounds each observation regarding affect and narrative, rendering the latter far from arbitrary.

> *Other harmonic processes create delightful moments of disorientation within section B and the retransition. The B passage opens in D♭ Major, selecting the subdominant key common for the middle sections even in much earlier ternary forms. The beginning harmonic progression, however, is clearly nineteenth-century. Figure 5 shows the opening sequence. The model serving as the first basic idea in mm. 23-24 ends on a back-relating dominant (BRD), and the entire segment is transposed down a major second for the second iteration of the basic idea. The continuation opens yet another whole step lower, soon breaking*

> *the chromatic sequence. The phrase concludes on a G♯ major chord in m. 30, which is really functioning as an enharmonic A♭ Major triad marking a HC in D♭ Major. The consequent then opens with material parallel to the antecedent in a different orchestration, with the piano and clarinet trading parts. However, further enharmonic games soon create more pronounced differences from the antecedent. While the PAC in m. 41 is spelled in E major, this passage functions as respelled F♭ major, ♭VI in the context of the entire movement. Thus, even the concluding key of the passage emphasizes a chromatic mediant key favored in the nineteenth century. The retransition (RT) continues the emphasis on motion by equal intervals, modulating from E major and minor down by major third to C major and minor down by major third again to reach A♭ major for the start of Section A'.*

The third body paragraph resembles the second, this time focusing on the B section and the retransition. The specific topics pertinent to the B section differ from those in the A section, and the prose reflects this accordingly. The discussion of harmony emphasizes sequence, back-relating dominants, and traces modulations without getting bogged down in individual chords. The prose stresses the significance of the particular harmonic relations uncovered, clearly connecting each idea back to the thesis of the essay.

> *Brahms' Clarinet Sonata Op. 120, No. 1/II features a delicately Romantic work built on a stable Classical scaffold. Eighteenth-century elements include the use of sectional ternary, periods with nested sentences, and the subdominant key for the beginning of the middle passage. Nineteenth-century elements include the use of tall-tertian sonorities, the lack of clear V-I resolutions early in phrases, phrase extensions, deceptive resolutions, chromatic sequence, enharmonicism, and the use of the flattened submediant key. These elements combine with deft use of orchestration and thematic recall to create a movement of surpassing beauty and nostalgia, breathing new character into old forms.*

The conclusion reviews and clarifies the entire argument of the essay. Since many students are tempted to skip writing a conclusion or to treat it as a throwaway passage, it can be helpful to illustrate the important work this paragraph achieves. The opening sentence constitutes the expected restatement of the thesis, but a colorful metaphor enlivens what could have been a pedantic reshuffling of words. The lists of elements both review the highlights from the analysis while clearly sorting factors into the two categories underpinning the entire essay. The final sentence—often one of the most difficult to write in an essay—combines further review with a clear expression of the writer's enjoyment of the piece that motivates the essay.

Section	A									
	a (antecedent)					a' (consequent)				
	BI	BI	continuation			BI	BI	cont.		
mm.	1	3	5	10	12	13	15	17	20	22
Cadence				DC	PAC				DC	PAC
Key	A♭M			E♭M		A♭M				
	I			V		I				

Section	B							RT	
	b (antecedent)			b' (consequent)				a"	a"
	BI	BI	cont.	BI	BI	cont.			
mm.	23	25	27	30	31	33	35	41	45
Cadence				HC				PAC	
Key	D♭M							EM (F♭M)-em	CM-cm
	IV							♭VI ♭vi	III♮-iii

Section	A'									Coda		
	a (antecedent)					a' (consequent)				b"	a"'	
	BI	BI	cont.			BI	BI	cont.				
mm.	49	51	53	58	60	61	63	65	68	71	75	81
Cadence				DC	PAC				DC	IAC	IAC	
Key	A♭M			E♭M		A♭M						
	I			V		I						

Figure 3
Brahms, Op. 120, No. 1/II, Form Diagram.

While possible formats for form diagrams abound, students benefit from seeing models of the layout preferred by the instructor. The vertical alignment illustrated in Figure 3 conveys a great deal of information in a small amount of space. Once students have seen this presentation and completed a homework assignment that involves finishing such a diagram that I have started for them, they typically have few difficulties constructing similar diagrams for other pieces in the remainder of the course. Sections, subsections, and cadences are usually quite straightforward, though the representation of key areas occasionally proves more difficult for some. Towards the end of the semester, I usually have at least one student who is still struggling with the concept of using a roman numeral to represent a key area rather than a specific chord. However, insisting on this representation reinforces the significance of key relationships in a tonal work, contributing to the overall technique of summarizing the main features of a movement in a diagram.

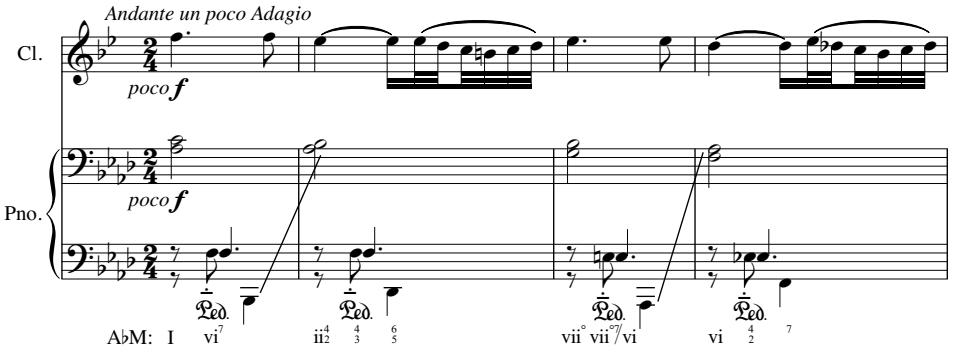

Figure 4
Brahms, Op. 120, No. 1/II, Section A, mm. 1-4.

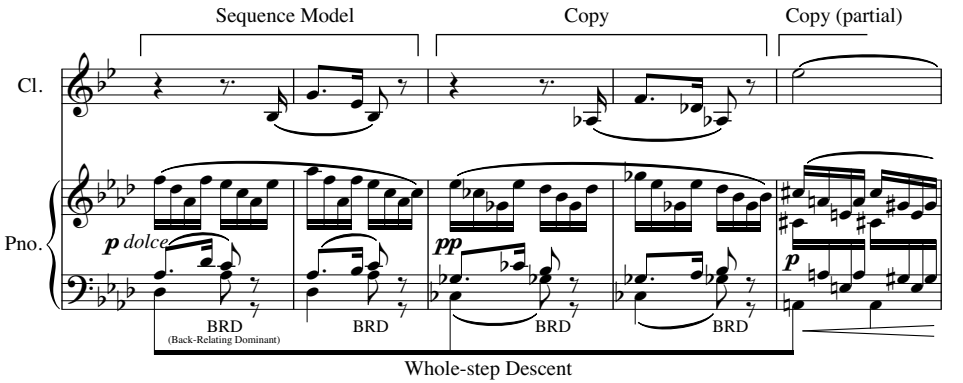

Figure 5
Brahms, Op. 120, No. 1/II, Section B, mm. 23-27.

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