

Analysis Project: A Study in Contrasts

NAME: _____

- ▲ **Purpose:** Use the analytical skills you've learned so far to identify and explain contrasting elements in Frédéric Chopin's *24 Preludes*, Op. 28, No. 20 in C Minor.

- ▲ **Project Description:**

Print pages 2 and 3 double-sided, or attach them together; you will turn these in. Put your name on page 2. Then, use Naxos Music Library or another resource to listen to this work. (Do not use YouTube, etc.)

While harmony is a central and pervasive topic in music theory, many other parameters contribute to the overall effect of a musical passage. These include not only melody and rhythm, but also dynamics, texture, voice-leading/contour, orchestration/color, register/range, articulation, tempo, and so on. The interaction, cooperation, and conflicts among these parameters is responsible for the subtle differences in characterization of various pieces of music.

This project will introduce you to a richer, subtler level of music analysis beyond mere harmonic or formal labels, while helping refresh your lead sheet analysis skills (as opposed to Roman Numerals).

For purposes of your analysis, ignore any notes in parentheses.

1. On the sheet music, provide lead sheet symbols above the staff for every new chord in measures 1-8 only. Do **NOT** assign Roman Numerals. Remember to indicate 7ths where appropriate, and mark inversions using “slash chords.”
2. Circle any lead sheet symbols that are not diatonic to the key of C minor. (A list of all diatonic chords in minor is given by Roman Numerals here: <http://openmusictheory.com/triads.html>.)
3. On the following page, address the following questions in a brief essay, comprising two to three paragraphs. Give specific examples from the music for each claim.
 - Compare measures 1-4 to measures 5-8. These two sections are quite similar in rhythm, and in texture (the number of different voices at one time). Despite these similarities, these sections also have contrasting elements. Which elements contrast, and howso?
 - In what ways do these contrasting elements seem to support and correspond to each other? Specifically, why did Chopin choose the bass positions he did for measures 5-8? (How is the bass line different in mm. 5-8 vs. 1-4?)
 - What overall effect does Chopin achieve by using these contrasting elements together?

EXTRA CREDIT: Provide Roman Numerals (below the staff) for measures 1-4. There will be a number of chords we haven't covered yet.

- ▲ **Grading:** (75 points total)

- ▲ 32 – Lead Sheet Analysis
- ▲ 8 – Locating non-diatonic chords (circled)
- ▲ 35 – Brief Essay



Prélude

Op. 28, N° 20

Frédéric CHOPIN
(1810-1849)

Largo

ff

4

p

7

riten.

(a tempo)

pp

10

riten.

Red.

The musical score is written for piano in B-flat major and 3/4 time. It begins with a **Largo** tempo marking and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The first system (measures 1-3) features a melody in the right hand with a descending line and a bass line of chords. The second system (measures 4-6) starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third system (measures 7-9) includes a ritardando (*riten.*) marking and a return to piano (*pp*) dynamics, with a tempo change to *(a tempo)* indicated. The fourth system (measures 10) concludes with another ritardando (*riten.*) and a final chord marked with a fermata and a *Red.* (ritardando) instruction. The score ends with a repeat sign and a fermata over the final chord.