Working Out the Key

To work out the key of a piece of music:

1) Look at the key signature.

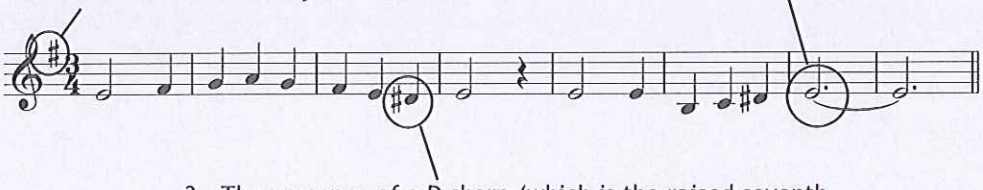
2) Look at the last note - often (but not always) this will be the **tonic note.**

3) Look for the raised seventh of the harmonic minor scale.

For example:

1) This piece has a key signature of one sharp, therefore it is either G major or E minor.

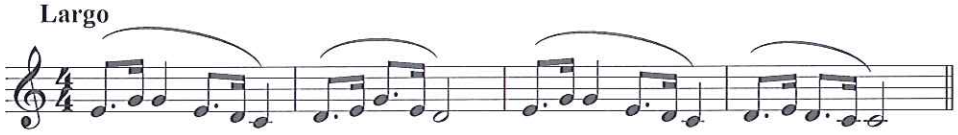
2) The final note is E, so that makes it seem likely that it is E minor.



3 - The presence of a D sharp (which is the raised seventh of E minor) confirms that this piece is in E minor.

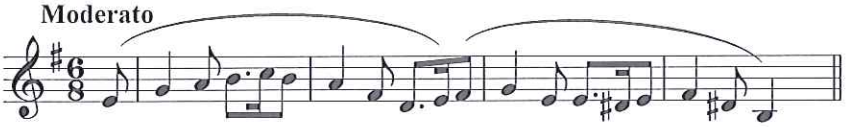
Work out the key of the following classical themes:

Largo



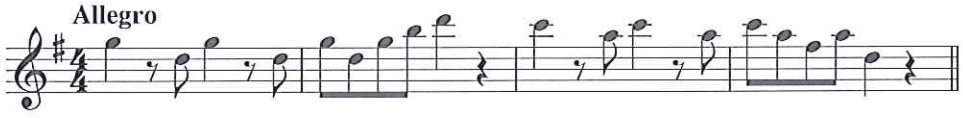
key:_____

Moderato



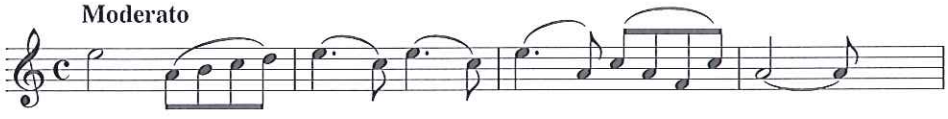
key:_____

Allegro



key:_____

Moderato



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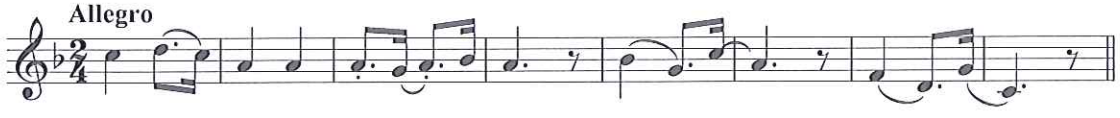
Allegro



key:_____

Sample Worksheet from "Printable Music Theory Books" from the Fun Music Company
Download a free printable and watermark free version

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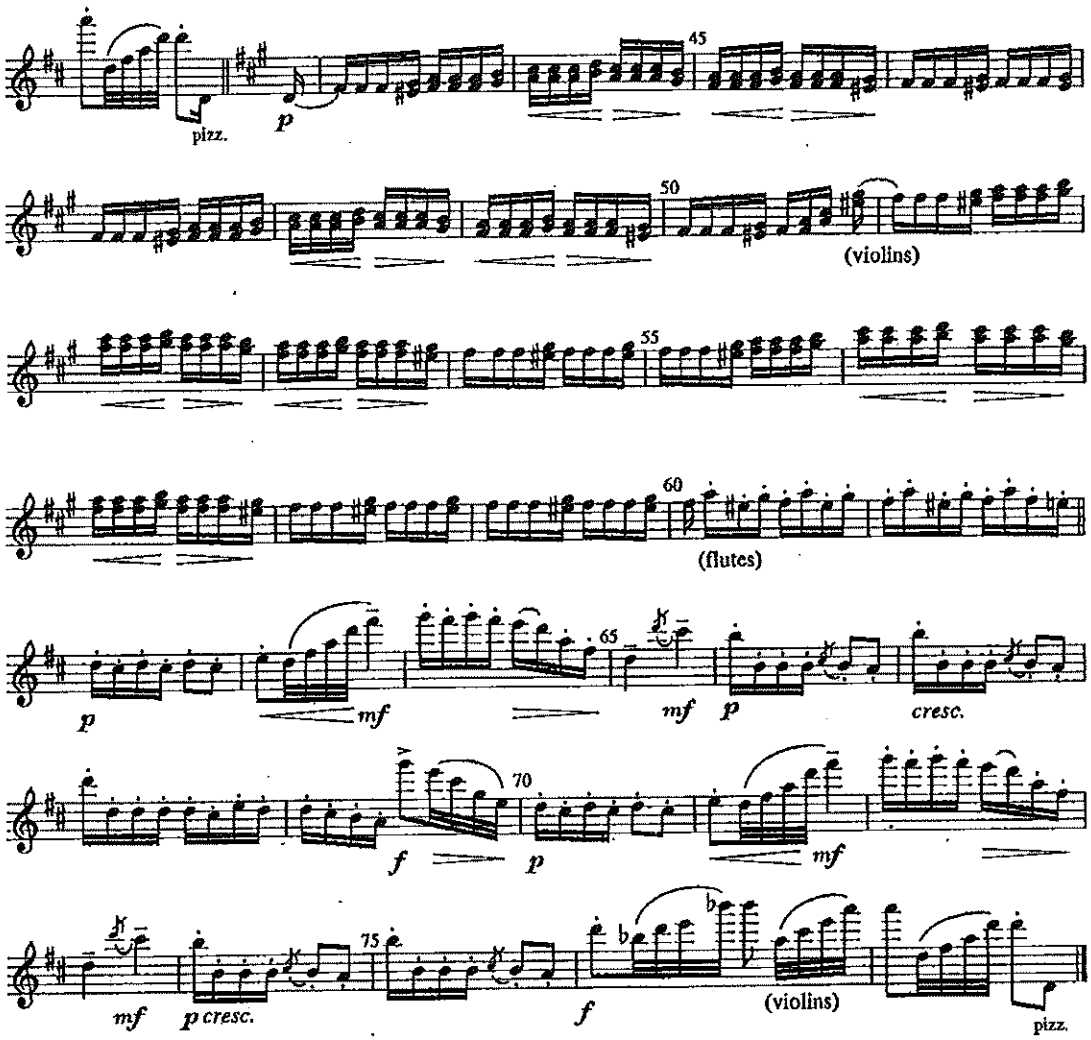


Second listening

1 Which of these instruments plays a solo at bar 19?

cor anglais | trumpet | cello

2 Which of these words describes the bass, during the middle section?

walking | ostinato | off-beat | drone

3 When music A reappears as A^2, is it exactly the same as at first, or does Tchaikovsky make any important changes?

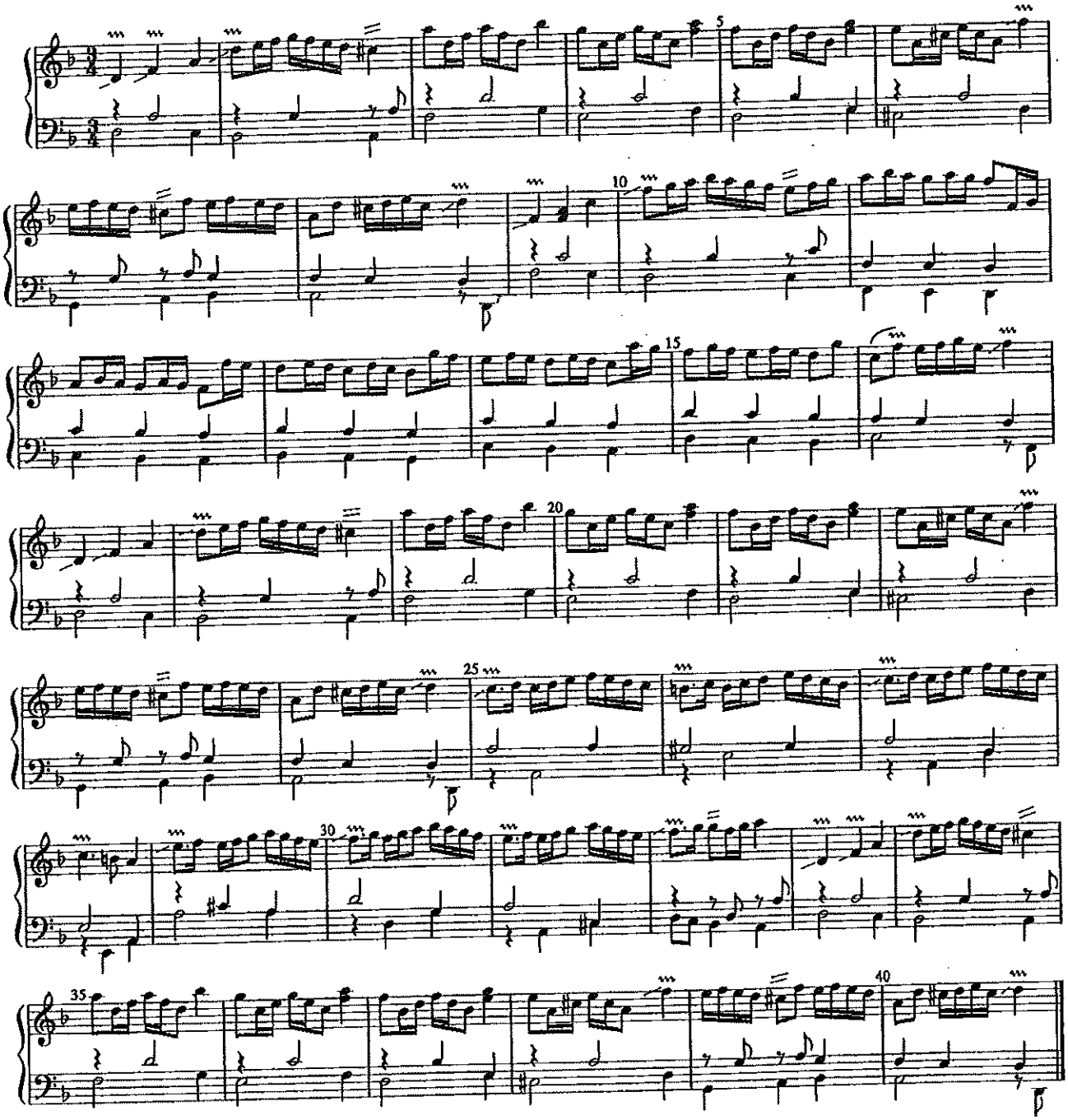
Third listening

1 Mention two important differences between the tune of music A and the tune of music B.

2 Describe any other noticeable contrasts (differences) between music A and music B.

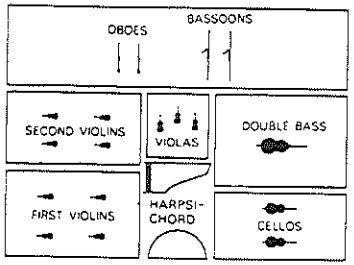
Play or listen to this rondo by Purcell. He composed it as part of the incidental music to a play called *Abdelazer*. Discover:

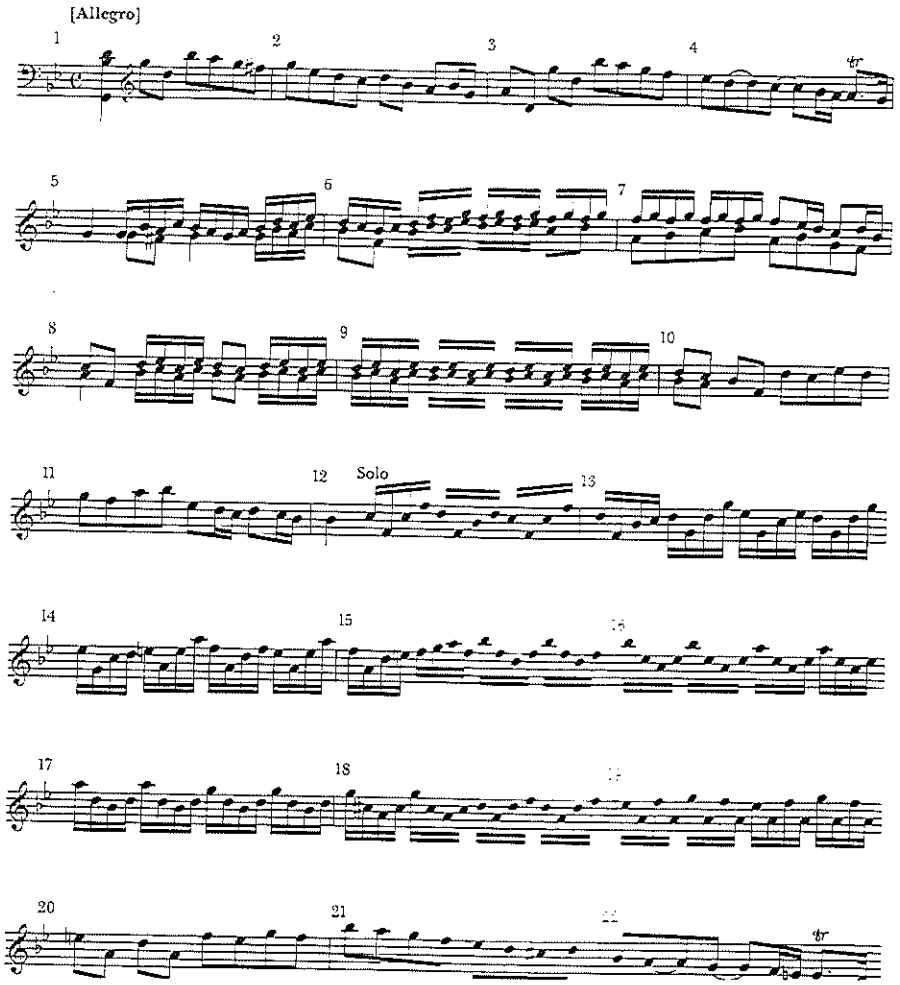
- how many times the main rondo tune is heard;
- how Purcell structures bars 3–6 of his main tune;
- how many episodes there are, and where each one begins.



Final Movement from Concerto Grosso, Opus 3 No. 1

Handel

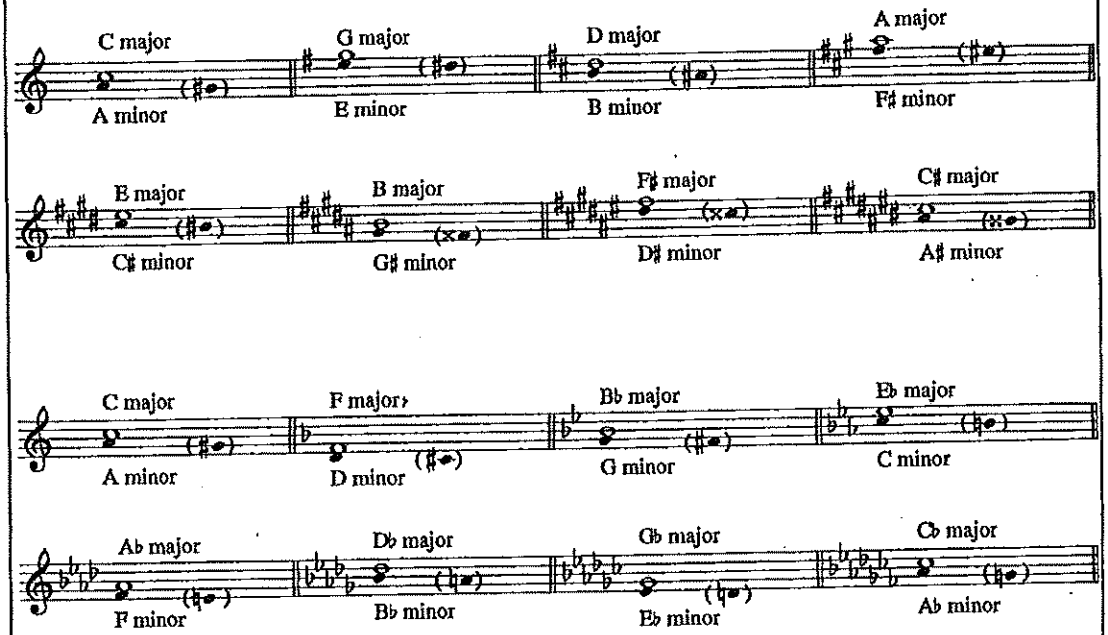




Chapter 5
Major, minor, and pentatonic

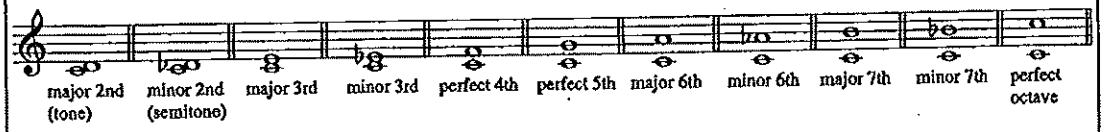
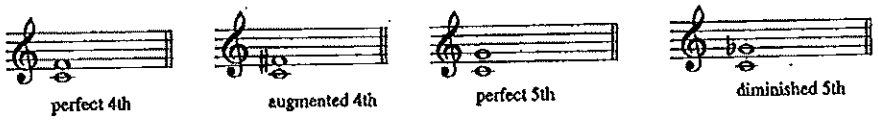
Key signatures

In each of the examples below, the white note shows the tonic of the major key, and the black note shows the tonic of the relative minor – the minor key which shares the same key signature. The leading-note of each minor key is shown in brackets. (This is 'extra' to the key signature and, where necessary, needs to be written in the music as an accidental.)



Intervals

An interval is the distance, or difference, in pitch between two notes. The notes may be sounded together, or one after another. (Top and bottom notes are included in the count).



If perfect or major intervals are increased by a semitone, they become **augmented** ('made larger').If perfect or minor intervals are reduced by a semitone, they become **diminished** ('made smaller').