



NAME _____

DATE _____

Musical Opposites: Pitch SAINT-SÄENS Bassoon Sonata in G Major, op. 168, mvt 1

MELODY AND HARMONY

The piece in this episode is one movement from a **sonata**. Sonatas often feature a particular instrument and are written to include two parts: a **melody**, the main theme played by the featured instrument (in this case, the bassoon), and an **accompaniment**, the music played by other instruments that is heard behind the main performer’s melody. Accompaniments are almost always written for the piano.

The accompaniment provides the **harmony** for the melody. Harmony occurs when two or more notes are played together, and when played under a melody, harmony helps the listener understand the melody by giving it a musical setting.

Let’s think about it another way—like a story. You need characters, action, and a setting for a complete story. Musically, we can think of the melody as the main character, and how the melody moves as describing the action in the story. The accompaniment (which plays the harmony) provides the context or setting. Without the setting, the action of the story would not make much sense; without the action, there would be no tale to tell! The two parts need each other to tell the whole story.

SETTING - HARMONY

First, listen to Buddy’s accompaniment part. What images come to mind? Does it remind you of a museum, or being outside, or somewhere else? What city or country are you imagining you are in?

What is the mood of the music? Sad and gloomy, happy and upbeat, mysterious?

Using your answers, fill in the blanks to describe your story setting.

My story takes place in a _____.

(mood)

(setting)



CHARACTER AND ACTION - MELODY

Now listen to the bassoon's melody. What kind of character does this melody make you think of? A person, an animal, or even something else? What kind of mood is this character in?

Based on the music, what do you think this character is doing at the beginning of the story?

What do you think is happening to your character during the middle section? Does the music change? Is your main character more active? Are they in a new setting?

After the middle section, the bassoon repeats the melody heard at the beginning, but has the accompaniment changed? Based on what you hear, describe the end of your story.



LET'S WRITE A STORY

Now that you have the setting, character, and action for the story, it's time to put it all together! Referring to your answers, start by describing your setting and character. Then be sure to include the action at the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
