4. In the Hall of the Mountain King
Peer Gynt is a Norwegian fairy tale and was used as inspiration for Henrik Ibsen’s play Peer Gynt.

Ibsen asked composer, Edvard Grieg to write music for his play. He did this and created 26 movements to accompany the play.

Grieg then selected some of the movements and created two suites of music. Each suite has four movements.

Suite No. 1 Movements:
1. Morning Mood
2. The Death of Ase
3. Anitra’s Dance
4. In the Hall of the Mountain King

Suite: A Suite is an instrumental piece consisting of several shorter pieces.
Program music is a style of composition which describes a literary idea, legend, description of landscape, a scene or a story about people, places or relationships.

This style of writing became popular in the Romantic era 1780 – 1910, and is still used in modern compositions.

In the *Hall of the Mountain King* tells a story through music. The listener can imagine the story.

Other example of program music:

**DUKAS** *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*. This music was used in Disney’s movie *Fantasia*.

**KETELBY** *In a Persian Market*

**Program Music**: Music that tells a story.
Imagine:
The music begins slowly and softly.
Peer Gynt enters the Mountain King’s Royal Hall.

The music is getting louder and faster.
As Peer Gynt gets closer there is a large crowd and the Mountain King is sitting on his throne. The Kings wants Peer Gynt to marry his daughter but to do this he must become a troll.

The music is playing very fast and loud.
Peer Gynt refuses, the crowd roars and chases him. Peer Gynt runs faster and faster and is almost captured but at the last moment he hears the church bells, he follows the sound and escapes.

Very loud chords complete the movement.
The trolls all disappear within the mountain and the mountain collapses.

LISTEN and WATCH
YouTube Video: In the Hall of the Mountain King
The French horn begins with a single note.

The unusual sound is made by placing the right hand well inside the bell so almost no sound comes out. This is called a *stopped note*.

In the music, the sign to play a note *stopped* is a + above the note.

**French Horn:** The French Horn is a member of the Brass Family.
The Beginning

Listen to the opening where the melody is played by the low sounding instruments – celli, double basses and bassoons.

The music begins very softly and slowly.

Pizz (pizzicato): Pluck the strings with the fingers

Alla marcia e molto marcato \( \text{\textit{pizz.}} \)

Violoncello

\( p \) piano play softly

Like a march and very marked

Tempo is 138 beats per minute

Bass Clef: Clef used by low sounding instruments.
The lines from bottom to top are G,B,D,F,A. The Spaces are A,C,E,G
The bassoon is the largest and lowest sounding instrument in the woodwind family. The bassoon is made of wood. Metal keys cover the holes along the instrument.

The mouthpiece is made of a metal pipe called *the crook* and a double reed.

A reed is made of a piece of bamboo or cane. The cane is carved and shaped with a very sharp knife until the cane is very thin. A clarinet uses a single reed and when attached to the mouthpiece and blown the reed vibrates and creates a sound.

The oboe and bassoon use a double reed which is two pieces of cane tied together. Both pieces of cane vibrate when air passes through them.

*Contra Bassoon is also a double reed instrument and larger than the bassoon.*
Gradually more instruments join in the repeated melody.

Violins and violas, partnering with oboe and clarinet now play the melody at a higher pitch.

**Stringed Instrument technique.** There are different ways of making sounds on the violin, viola, cello and double bass.

**Pizzicato:** Pluck the strings with the fingers instead of using the bow.

**Arco:** Draw the bow across the strings to make them vibrate.
Accompaniment patterns

The accompaniment is made up of three rhythmic patterns. Different combinations of instruments take turns playing chords on these rhythmic patterns.

Rhythm 1  
\[\text{C} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} :\text{ll}\]

Rhythm 2  
\[\text{C} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{ll} :\text{ll}\]

Rhythm 3  
\[\text{C} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{ll} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{Z} \quad \text{Z} :\text{ll}\]

The instruments take turns at the melody and the accompaniment during the piece. Listen for these rhythmic patterns and identify which instruments are playing the melody and which are playing the accompaniment.

**Treble Clef:** Clef used by high sounding instruments.
The lines from bottom to top are E,G,B,D,F. The Spaces are F,A,C,E.
The last seven bars of the music has no melody. All instruments play chords to this rhythmic pattern. Note the two bars of rests.

Clap or play the rhythm on a percussion instrument. Count 9 beats before playing the last bar.

**Cymbals** are a percussion instrument. The Italian name for cymbals is piatti, which translates as *plates*. 
Timpani are a set of drums and are members of the percussion family. A skin is stretched over a large bowl traditionally made of copper.

During the two bars of rests, the only instrument to play is the timpani. The timpani plays a roll which is the rapid alternating of the beaters to make a continuous sound.

The timpani roll starts piano (p) soft and crescendos to fortississimo (fff) very, very loud. The whole orchestra plays the last chord.
Dynamics and tempo

Tempo and dynamics are very important in *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. The piece starts slowly and softly and gradually increases in volume and speed until the end when the piece finishes very fast and very loud.

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<td>Largo very slow</td>
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<tr>
<td>mp mezzo piano</td>
<td>Lento slow</td>
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<tr>
<td>mf mezzo forte</td>
<td>Adagio slow, at ease</td>
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<td>f forte</td>
<td>Andante at an easy walking pace</td>
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<td>ff fortissimo</td>
<td>Moderato at a moderate speed</td>
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<tr>
<td>fff fortississimo</td>
<td>Allegro lively and fast</td>
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<td>Crescendo</td>
<td>Vivace quick and lively</td>
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<td>Decrescendo</td>
<td>Presto very fast</td>
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*Dynamics*: The level of sound in a piece of music

*Tempo*: The speed at which a piece of music is played.
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