

LMusTCL Section A Question ii Exercise & answer – sample

Comment on this extract. You should suggest an approximate date of composition, and a composer who you think is likely to have written the music, pointing to the evidence which supports this, including....

The image shows a musical score for a song. The top system consists of four staves: two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and two piano accompaniment staves (Right and Left Hand). The tempo is marked 'Allegro giocoso'. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: 'Brau - ner Bur - sche führt zum Tan - ze'. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with syncopation and triplets. The bottom system continues the piano accompaniment with triplets and a 'ben marc.' marking. The lyrics for the second system are: 'sein blau - ä u - gig schö - nes Kind,'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'f' and 'Red *'.

In the first four bars of the song, only primary chords are used, and there is a neat imperfect cadence at the end. This, and the simple rhythm, might suggest a folk song. The clear articulation and the cadential 6/4 could suggest a Classical composer. However there is a chromatic dominant seventh in the introduction, and the second line of the song begins unexpectedly in F# major, a chromatic mediant of the opening key, D major. Such chromatic harmony, along with the unusual rhythm of the accompaniment (including syncopation, and both semiquaver and quaver triplets, causing 2:3 cross-rhythms) and the shaded dynamics, point to a Romantic composer. Such complexity is also evidence that no ordinary “hackwriter” has written this. The lyrics of the song suggest a German-speaking composer. It is in fact a setting by Brahms of a Gypsy folk song, from his *Zigeuner Lieder* op.103, composed in 1887-8. The rhythms and harmonies described are typical of Brahms, a Romantic composer noted for the use of Classical features in his style, and while we might associate the composer mostly with “serious” works like symphonies and sonatas, he wrote many songs, and his Hungarian Dances were very popular; he was not Hungarian, but travelled in Hungary, and enjoyed a close friendship with Hungarian violinist ...