

The Deserted Garden



Composer: Florence Price (1887–1953)

Nationality: American

Date: 1933

'The Deserted Garden' was originally written for violin and piano by American composer and pianist Florence Price. The piece contains a variety of themes, combining western classical traditions with the blues music of the American South.

Florence Price was born in 1887 to a mixed-race family. She was initially taught music by her mother, giving her first piano performance at just four years old and having her first published composition when she was eleven. Price then went on to compose a variety of works, including orchestral pieces, solo and chamber works, and music for silent films and radio advertisements.

Performance Notes



The beautiful opening melody requires a *legato* bow stroke and a calm but rich *vibrato*. To avoid awkward string changes, plan your fingering pattern wisely to enable well-placed position shifts, for example, try shifting up to the final note of bar 3 to stay on the G string, avoiding crossing over to the D string mid-phrase. Once you have secured your finger patterns throughout, you can experiment with the speed and timing of your shifts. Try keeping the shift speed slower than normal to deliver expressive and nuanced phrasing.

As well as frequently changing dynamics, the tempo also varies across the sections. At bar 9, the *piu mosso* requires a change in energy. Try experimenting with a narrower and faster *vibrato*, along with a lighter bow hold, to give the feeling of a change in pace. Be careful not to rush the *poco rit.* in bars 16 and 24, instead aiming for a gradual easing of the tempo. The music comes to a dramatic conclusion with a final *crescendo*. Along with a slightly faster bow speed, move the bow closer to the bridge and apply a little extra arm weight for each of the accented notes.

Audio Access

Audio for this book can be accessed via the **QR code** on the right (*requires a compatible smartphone or tablet*) or by using the **URL and download code** shown on page 5.



The Deserted Garden

By Florence Price

Andante con espressione

Musical notation for measures 1-5. Measure 1 starts with a *mp* dynamic. Measure 2 has a *mf* dynamic. Measure 5 starts with a *p* dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. A *mf* dynamic appears in measure 4. A *V* (vibrato) marking is present in measure 4. A fermata is placed over the final note of measure 5.

più mosso

Musical notation for measures 6-8. Measure 6 starts with a *mf* dynamic. Measure 7 has a *mp* dynamic. A fermata is placed over the final note of measure 8.

poco rit.

Musical notation for measures 9-12. Measure 9 starts with a *mf* dynamic. Measure 10 has a *p sub.* dynamic. A fermata is placed over the final note of measure 12.

a tempo

Musical notation for measures 13-20. Measure 13 starts with a *mf* dynamic. Measure 14 has a *mp* dynamic. A fermata is placed over the final note of measure 20.

poco rit.

Musical notation for measures 21-24. Measure 21 starts with a *mf* dynamic. Measure 22 has a *p sub.* dynamic. A fermata is placed over the final note of measure 24.

Tempo primo

Musical notation for measures 25-29. Measure 25 starts with a *mp* dynamic. Measure 26 has a *mf* dynamic. Measure 28 starts with a *p* dynamic and a *cresc.* marking. A fermata is placed over the final note of measure 29.

Musical notation for measures 30-32. Measure 30 starts with a *(cresc.)* marking. Measure 31 has a *mf* dynamic. Measure 32 starts with a *f* dynamic. A *V* (vibrato) marking is present in measure 32. A fermata is placed over the final note of measure 32.

Technical Exercises

There are three groups of technical exercises at Grade 4:

- Group A: Scales
- Group B: Arpeggios
- Group C: Technical Studies

For groups A and B, the examiner will request a selection from each group to be performed. For group C, you may choose **one** technical study to perform from the three listed in the grade book.

Group A: Scales

All scales must be played:

- Unaccompanied (recommended minimum tempo: ♩=70)
- Ascending and descending across the number of octaves as shown for each example

Major and minor scales:

- Must be played with separate bows, **or** slurred with two **or** four quavers to a bow (**examiner choice** – the examiner will state which with each requested scale).
- Can be played with 'even notes' (quavers) **or** 'long tonic' rhythms. Scales are shown with 'long tonic' for illustrative purposes only (**candidate choice** – see page 6 for further information).

Major Scales

A^b major, two octaves



B major, two octaves



E major, two octaves



Improvisation & Interpretation

In the exam, you have a choice between either a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask you which one you wish to choose before commencing. Once you have decided you cannot change your mind.

In the Improvisation & Interpretation test, the examiner will give you a twelve-bar chord progression in the key of C major or A minor. Tests in C major may contain the following non-diatonic chords: C⁷, F⁷, D⁷ and Fm. Tests in A minor may feature an E⁷ chord. In both tests, slash chords and inversions may occasionally be shown. You will first be given 90 seconds to practise, after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is for you to practise and the second time is for you to perform the final version for the exam. For each playthrough, the backing track will begin with a one bar count-in. The tempo is ♩ = 90.

- You will need to improvise a melodic line to complement the backing track.
- During the preparation time, you will be given the choice of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.
- The backing track is continuous, so once the first playthrough has finished, the count-in of the second playing will start immediately.

Improvisation & Interpretation | Example 1

Country Rock ♩ = 90

C

F⁷ G⁷

C Am D⁷ G⁷ C

5

9

Please note: The tests shown are examples: The examiner will give you a different version in the exam.

Improvisation & Interpretation | Example 2

Blues Rock ♩ = 90

Am C/E F C/E Am C/E F C/E

Dm C/E F G

Am C/E F C/E Am C/E F C/E

5

9

Please note: The tests shown are examples: The examiner will give you a different version in the exam.