

A:1 Träumerei

This is a good piece to choose if you are confident with playing a soft legato melody and high notes up to top D and Eb; if you are not comfortable with this, maybe consider choosing another piece.

Before starting work on this piece, try to listen online to a recording of the original piano piece <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zVQk0YviAA> and a saxophone version https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q62_DPhbxAw&list=PLzgg9whgg6t0XpiwIFGJdth958X7oHrXt&index=4&t=0s Please note that this is a performance with orchestra, which is not quite the same as the one with piano accompaniment available as part of your exam downloads; use the code in the back of your book to access these.

Start by getting familiar with the notes, working in four bar phrases and bearing in mind that the phrases start on the last note of a bar. If the top Eb note is new to you, this is played by adding the first left hand palm key in addition to the second one (D). If you don't already have them, a good saxophone key guide can be downloaded from the free resources section of the Masquerade Music website <https://www.masquerade-music.co.uk/freemusic.html> and a clear fingering chart can be found at <https://tamingthesaxophone.com/fingering-chart>

The grace note in bar 8 is called an acciaccatura. It should be played before the beat and tied to the following note, giving the result of the main F sounding just in advance of the third beat of the bar. It may help to approach this by first tonguing both the acciaccatura F and the main F, making sure the main F is on the beat; then when you are comfortable with that, just remove the tongue on the main F.

Then focus on the articulation, making sure that you are slurring the phrases as marked. The tongued notes should be given their full length, moving on to the next note with no break, just a gentle tongue to separate the notes; this is called 'legato tonguing'. Aim to make the four bar phrases flow whether playing slurred notes or tonguing. This may take a bit of practice, so don't worry if you have to work at it.

Once you are familiar with the notes and articulation, practise playing softly before beginning to introduce the other dynamics. See how the phrases have an arch shape with the melody rising and falling, and try to make the top note of each phrase the point that you are aiming for. The strongest points of the piece are the mezzo forte high notes in bar 14 and bar 22, and the softest point is the ending, where you play a diminuendo from bar 22 down to pianissimo for the final three notes.

The use of crescendo and diminuendo following the melody help to give the piece its character. Notice how a rising melodic line is enhanced by a crescendo, for example in bars 1 – 2 and 5 – 6. Similarly, a diminuendo echoes the falling melody, such as in bars 12 and 16; the diminuendo is also used at the end of phrases to bring them to a gentle close, for example in bars 4 and 12. See if you can shape your phrases as if you were speaking or singing them.

Once you are confident with playing the whole piece, add in the *ritenuto* (rit) in bars 8, 16 and 22. The first two of these are followed by an 'a tempo' instruction in the following bar, where you return to your normal speed. The final rit (bar 22) continues to the end of the piece, bringing the piece to a gentle, thoughtful close.

Träumerei means Dreaming, and is one of a group of short piano pieces called Scenes from Childhood (Kinderscenen in German) written by the classical composer Schumann. This is a simple, gentle melody that suggests childhood. Imagine you were singing a lullaby or reading a gentle bedtime story to a child to set the right mood.

You could try playing along with a metronome or metronome app, aiming for a speed of about crotchet = 69, (four beats per bar). Then try playing along with the example track provided, and finally with the piano backing; practise.