

**Please note: an earlier version of these notes included a citation (also found in the Kostka/Payne text) for the song "Oh, Susannah" by Stephen Foster. It was recently brought to my attention that one of the since-rewritten verses in that song contains racist language, so the citation has been removed. -November 2021**

## MUS 233 Form I

**Form:** *The shape of a musical composition as defined by all of its pitches, rhythms, dynamics, and timbres...a loose group of general features shared in varying degrees by a relatively large number of works, no two which are exactly the same.*

*The New Harvard Dictionary of Music.* Randel, Don Michael, ed. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986. P. 320.

**Binary Form:** A **two part-form** where the sections are equivalent, but not necessarily equal in length; as long as they balance each other in some sense. Each part usually repeats. The second half is longer and usually touches on other keys (X) before returning to the tonic.

**Balanced:** In a *binary form* where the A and B sections **end** in a parallel (same melodic/harmonic material) way, but not necessarily in the same key. (Please disregard the Kostka/Payne definition, which relates the term to merely the length of each section).

**Sectional:** The first part ends in tonic harmony (i.e. an authentic cadence on the original tonic).

Thematic material	: A	:  : B	:
Harmonic content	(maj) I-----I	V-----(X)-----I	
	(min) i-----i	V, V/III, III--(X)---i	

**Continuous:** The first part ends in something other than tonic harmony (like on V, or on the tonic of a new key).

Thematic material	: A	:  : B	:
Harmonic content	(maj) I-----V -----(X)-----I		
	(min) i-----V, V/III, III--(X)---i		

**Two reprise:** A term used when the sections repeat (either written-out repeats or not).

**Ternary Form:** A three-part (ABA') form: ||:A :||: B A' :||  
(repeats **not** required)

- A and A' need not be 100% identical
- Often the B section material is thematically related to the A section material.
- Ternary forms, like binary ones, can be *continuous* or *sectional*. They can also be (and often are) *two-reprise* forms.
- The *balanced* factor is not relevant to ternary or rounded binary forms because the A material returns)

**Rounded Binary:** Like a ternary form, but the final /returning A section is **half** as long as the initial A section.

||:A :||: B 1/2A :||

Typically a part of the Classical era, the first A section is a 2-phrase parallel period (a HC followed by a PAC); the final (1/2) A section is comprised of just one phrase ending in a PAC.

||:A :||: B 1/2A :||  
||:---- a ----HC ---- a' ----PAC :||: ----b ----HC/AC ---- a' ----PAC :||

Examples:

**Binary:** *Greensleeves*  
• two-reprise, closed, balanced  
**J.S. Bach:** *French Suite No. 5, Gavotte*  
• two-reprise, continuous,  
*Cello Suite No. 3, all movements but the Prelude*

**Ternary:** **Haydn:** *Minuet*  
• two-reprise, continuous  
*Trio*  
• two-reprise, sectional  
\* *The overall form of the minuet and trio is a composite ternary form (ABA)*

**Rounded Binary:** **Porter:** *Night and Day*

**Mozart:** *Sonata, K.331, I* *K.284, III*  
• two-reprise, sectional  
**Bach** *Minuet in G BWV Anh. 116* • two-reprise, continuous  
• two-reprise, sectional