

RWS CONCERT STRINGS SERIES

Grade: 3

Conductor Score: RWS-2688-01

**Prelude in B Minor**  
(Solo Cello or Cello Section Feature)

Frédéric Chopin

Transcribed by

Ben Hawkins

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CONCERT STRINGS SERIES

**RWS** MUSIC  
COMPANY

# Prelude in B Minor

(Solo Cello or Cello Section Feature)

**Frédéric Chopin**

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## INSTRUMENTATION

Conductor Score.....	1
Violin 1.....	8
Violin 2.....	8
Viola.....	6
Cello Solo/Soli.....	5
Cello.....	5
Double Bass.....	5

## PROGRAM NOTE

As the label suggests, a “prelude” originally served as an introductory piece, a preamble to something more substantial. With the collection of Opus 28 (1839), the Polish Romantic composer Frédéric Chopin revolutionized the genre. Not only did he assert his preludes as independent pieces, each capable of standing alone, he conceived of each one as embodying a specific, distinct emotion. Originally a Piano piece, the solo voice Cellists are the “left hand,” and the others are the accompaniment to this gorgeous melody spanning the range of the cello. The *Prelude in B Minor*, No. 6 of this groundbreaking collection of pieces, is like its companions, in that it is quite short, and explores only a single emotional world. Enter that little world and decide what you find and feel in it.

## NOTES TO CONDUCTOR

At the outset, you and your Cellist(s) will want to spend time working out the feature part. The other parts are much less challenging and should not require nearly as much rehearsal time.

Note the use of scordatura in the featured Cello part; the C string is to be tuned down to B. Notes played on that string are notated with diamond-shaped noteheads. The first one appears on the downbeat of measure 13. These notes are to be fingered as if they were regular notes on the C string; however, they will sound a half-step lower than written. This may be a bit confusing at first, but I have used this piece in performance, and my student found it engaging. Everyone is riveted by that open B!

I hope you enjoy working and presenting what I consider a small, brilliant gem.

Please visit my composer page at [rwsmusic.com](http://rwsmusic.com) to connect! *Ben Hawkins*

## ABOUT THE COMPOSER



**Ben Hawkins** retired as Professor Emeritus from Transylvania University in 2024. His 39-year service at Transylvania followed five years of public school teaching in Virginia and Texas. Throughout his career, he has conducted both bands and orchestras, and taught courses in music education, music theory, and conducting, as well as writing for first-year students in the university’s liberal arts curriculum. He has guest conducted, adjudicated, and presented in most regions of the United States, as well as in Australia and Mexico. Dr. Hawkins currently serves as Orchestra Editor for RWS Music Company. He and his wife Cyndee, a retired public school band director, have two adult sons, two lovely daughters-in-law, and two perfect grandchildren.

To Gregory Partain, artist and friend

# PRELUDE IN B MINOR

(Solo Cello or Cello Section Feature)

Frédéric Chopin

Conductor Score

RWS-2688-00

Trans. by Ben Hawkins (ASCAP)

Lento assai  $\text{♩} = 56$

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Cello Solo/Soli  
Cello  
Double Bass

u.h.  
pp  
pp  
pp  
p  
l.v. pizz.  
pp  
pp

Tune C string to B. Notes on C string (diamond shape) will sound 1/2 step lower than notated/fingered.

4x 2x 4x  
-1 4x 2x 4x  
1 -1  
III I

1 2 3 4

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vc. Solo/Soli  
Vc.  
D.B.

L1 1  
mp  
-1 L2 3 H2  
III  
mp  
I  
mp  
-4 -4  
IV  
mp  
II  
1/2  
1 2 -2x 0 4x  
I  
mf  
1 2 3  
II  
mp  
mp

5 6 7 8



PRELUDE IN B MINOR

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc. Solo/Soli

Vc.

D.B.

0 4 -1 2x 1 0 2 -2 4

18 19 20 21

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vc. Solo/Soli

Vc.

D.B.

*mf* *mf* *mf* *f* *mf* *pp* *pp* *pp* *p* *p*

-3 -1 4 3 1 0

I II V

22 23 24 25 26