When I went to the SLO Symphony rehearsal this Saturday, I was going to try to recognize what keys each of the pieces were in, along with the rhythm timings. Upon listening to the first piece however, I realized that there was no way I could keep up. Having never had any music experience before this class, I could not easily recognize anything.

The first song, "Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun", was the first live classical piece I had ever heard. To me it sounded like it was mostly in some major key because it sounded happy and cheerful most of the time. In the beginning of the song it was mostly wind instruments playing, although I don't know which exact ones were playing at the time. The introduction part also sounded like it was in a minor key but then it seems like it slowly progresses into a major key because it sounds happier as it goes on. The harp was also a large component of the introduction, which gave it a mystical feel. Also, judging by the conductor's hands, it looked like the piece was mostly in a 1-2-3 or 1-2 rhythm. I was able to notice how the conductor would tell which part of the orchestra to start playing and when to stop. This was interesting because before this class I had no idea how large of a role the conductor played in the music. I also noticed that there were lots of violins playing throughout the middle of this piece, and then they would be combined with winds to give it a mystical forest type feel. I did enjoy seeing all of the violin bows moving up and down in near unison as they were playing each part. I could always tell when the violins were about to come in because I would see all of the bows go up into the air.

The next song was called "Lincoln Portrait". Apparently it was made to be a musical representation of Abraham Lincoln, and it definitely sounded like it near the end. It sounded a lot like I would imagine music sounded like back when Lincoln was president, so it was fitting. There was also a narrated piece in the middle of the song by David Selby, introduced as a Lincoln scholar. As he spoke, the instruments would play along with the words which was interesting to see. This song was most likely played in a major key, because it sounded victorious most of the time.

The third song was "Elegy for Cello and Orchestra" by John Williams, whose name I recognized from Star Wars. I didn't notice anything in particular about this piece, other that it was played mostly in a minor key.

The last song was the "Cello Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85" by Edward Elgar, and judging by the name, It was definitely in a minor key, E to be exact. The interesting part about this piece was that they introduced a Cello soloist by the name of Lynn Harrell. It was interesting seeing one person sit above everyone else and closer to the audience, when I thought of classical music it always seemed like a group.

Overall it was an interesting experience going to my first classical music concert. I could definitely appreciate it more now that I have had some music theory experience.