

James T. Decker, Associate Professor/Music - Trombone  
Texas Tech University  
806-834-8865  
[james.decker@ttu.edu](mailto:james.decker@ttu.edu)

## **Brahms – Symphony No. 4**

### I. Biographical Information

- i. Dates: (1833-1897)
- ii. German Composer born in Hamburg in a Lutheran Family
- iii. Virtuoso Pianist – premiered many of his own works
- iv. Prolific Compositional Output – Composed
  1. Symphonies
  2. Chamber music
  3. Music for Piano
  4. Organ
  5. Choral Works
  6. Voice
- v. Composed for influential people, such as
  1. Clara Schumann - pianist
  2. Joseph Joachim - violinst
- vi. Romantic Composer

### II. Guidelines

- a. Period/Style
  - i. Romantic
  - ii. First performed in 1885
  - iii. Written for a full orchestra – Warm, resonant sound
  - iv. Fourth Movement – Chaconne – Same basic chord progression repeated throughout.
  - v. Unusual Feature – E Major Section within the E Minor Movement
    1. Famous Trombone Chorale appears here
    2. Beautiful progression in Major
- b. Technical
  - i. Make all notes clear and in tune
  - ii. Creating the musical line
  - iii. Matching each other as a section
- c. Context and Challenges
  - i. Ensemble within Trombone Section
  - ii. Tuning
    1. Pitch – Vertical awareness
    2. Key – E Minor
  - iii. Blend
    1. With horns
    2. With Woodwinds