

Grade 3 Music Assessment: Understanding Dynamics

Learning objective: To identify, describe, and apply musical dynamics, understanding how volume changes affect the mood and character of a piece of music.

Read each question carefully. Use the word bank to help you with your answers. Write clearly and show your working for any written explanations.

Max the monkey is listening to a forest concert. During the performance, the music starts as a quiet whisper of leaves, then slowly grows louder as the wind picks up. Suddenly, the drums crash loudly, before fading away into a gentle, soft melody once more. Max notices how these changes in sound make him feel different emotions, from excitement to calmness.

Word bank: Piano · Forte · Crescendo · Diminuendo · Volume · Gradual · Sudden · Tempo

1. 1. What is the musical term for volume? (1 mark) (1 mark)

2. 2. Max hears a section of music that is very quiet. Which Italian term should he use to describe this? (1 mark) (1 mark)

3. 3. Explain the difference between a 'crescendo' and a 'diminuendo'. (4 marks) (4 marks)

4. 4. If a piece of music changes from 'forte' (loud) to 'piano' (quiet) instantly, is this a gradual or sudden change? Give one reason why a composer might choose to do this. (4 marks) (4 marks)

5. 5. Pip the caterpillar is composing a piece of music about a thunderstorm. Describe how you would use dynamics to represent the storm starting, reaching its peak, and then fading away. (5 marks) (5 marks)

6. 6. Imagine a piece of music being played at a very loud volume (forte). Does this always mean the music is fast (tempo)? Explain your answer. (5 marks) (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a visual representation of a 'crescendo' using shapes or patterns. Show how the shapes change from the beginning to the end of your drawing.



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph explaining how you would use dynamics to change the mood of a song if you were performing it for an audience. Total: /25