Max’s Musical Tempo Challenge

Learning objective: To understand and identify different tempos in music, including allegro, moderato, and lento, and how they change the mood of a piece.

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of musical speed to help Max the monkey solve these rhythm puzzles.

Word bank: Tempo · Allegro · Moderato · Lento · Beat · Pulse · Accelerando · Ritardando

1. Max is listening to a very fast, lively song that makes him want to jump around. Which Italian musical term best describes this fast tempo? (1 mark)

2. If a piece of music starts at a steady, walking pace and then gradually gets slower, what is the musical term for this slowing down effect? (1 mark)

3. Explain the difference between 'Moderato' and 'Lento'. How would you move your body differently to each of these tempos? (3 marks)

4. Max hears a song that starts slowly and speeds up. If the tempo is increasing, is the music performing an 'accelerando' or a 'ritardando'? (1 mark)

5. Think of a piece of music you know. Describe its tempo. Is it constant throughout the whole song, or does it change? Explain why a composer might choose to change the tempo during a piece. (4 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Max the monkey dancing to a piece of music. If the music is 'Allegro', draw him moving quickly with lots of energy. If it is 'Lento', draw him moving slowly and gracefully.

Extension challenge: Listen to three different pieces of music at home. For each piece, write down the title, guess the tempo (Lento, Moderato, or Allegro), and describe the mood it creates. Does the fast music make you feel happy or excited? Does the slow music make you feel calm or sleepy?