

Max's Musical Tempo Challenge

Learning objective: To understand, identify, and describe different tempos in music, relating them to pulse and beats per minute.

Max the monkey is putting together a jungle rhythm band! Help him organise his songs by answering these 10 questions about tempo. Read each question carefully and circle the best answer.

Answer Key: 1. A (Tempo); 2. True; 3. Presto; 4. B (Slow); 5. False; 6. Accelerando; 7. Ritardando; 8. C (Steady beat); 9. True; 10. Beats per minute (BPM).

Word bank: Tempo · Largo · Presto · Pulse · Beats per minute · Moderato · Accelerando · Ritardando

1. 1. What is the musical term for the speed of a piece of music? A) Tempo* B) Volume C) Pitch D) Rhythm (1 mark)

2. 2. True or False: 'Largo' describes a very slow and broad tempo. (1 mark)

3. 3. If Max plays his drums very fast, which word describes his tempo: Presto or Largo? (1 mark)

4. 4. Which of these tempos is most likely to be used for a sleepy lullaby? A) Presto B) Largo* C) Vivace D) Allegro (1 mark)

5. 5. True or False: Tempo and volume are exactly the same thing. (1 mark)

6. 6. When a piece of music gradually gets faster, what is this called? (1 mark)

7. 7. When a piece of music gradually slows down, what is this called? (1 mark)

8. 8. What does 'Moderato' mean? A) Extremely fast B) Silence C) A moderate, medium speed* D) A loud crash (1 mark)

9. 9. True or False: A steady pulse is essential for keeping the tempo consistent. (1 mark)

10. 10. What does the abbreviation 'BPM' stand for in music? (1 mark)

Draw: Draw a musical scene showing a tortoise playing a drum at a 'Largo' tempo and a hare playing a tambourine at a 'Presto' tempo. Add musical notes around them to show the difference in speed!



Extension challenge: Greater Depth Challenges: 1. Explain why a composer might choose to use 'accelerando' during a suspenseful part of a story. 2. Compare and contrast 'Largo' and 'Presto'; how do they make the listener feel differently? 3. Justify why a drummer needs to keep a consistent BPM during a live performance. 4. What might happen if a whole orchestra ignored the conductor's tempo? 5. If you were writing a song about a thunderstorm, how would you change the tempo throughout the piece? 6. Design a rhythmic pattern that starts slow and speeds up; write the instructions for a friend to perform it.