

Max's Musical Metronome: Mastering Tempo

Learning objective: To understand, identify, and describe different tempos in music and their effect on the mood and energy of a composition.

Read each question carefully. Use your knowledge of musical terminology to answer. Max the monkey is ready to solve these musical puzzles with you!

Word bank: Largo · Adagio · Andante · Moderato · Allegro · Presto · BPM (Beats Per Minute) · Pulse

1. Max is listening to a piece of music that makes him want to sprint through the jungle. If the music has a very fast tempo, which Italian term from our word bank would best describe it? Explain your choice. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast 'Largo' and 'Presto'. How does the change in tempo influence the listener's heart rate and emotional response? (3 marks)

3. If a piece of music is set at 60 BPM, it feels like a steady walking pace. If the composer suddenly increases the tempo to 140 BPM, what might happen to the character of the music? (2 marks)

4. Justify why a composer might choose an 'Adagio' tempo for a scene in a film where a character is feeling sad or reflective, rather than using an 'Allegro' tempo. (3 marks)

5. Look at the list of terms. If you were conducting an orchestra playing a lullaby, which tempo would you choose and why? Use the correct musical vocabulary in your answer. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a 'Tempo Map' of a journey. Use symbols or patterns to show where the music is 'Presto' (fast and jagged) and where it is 'Largo' (slow and smooth). Include labels for your chosen tempos.



Extension challenge: Compose a short rhythm pattern of four bars. Write it out using standard notation or symbols. Then, write two versions of how this same rhythm would sound: one at 60 BPM (Largo) and one at 160 BPM (Presto). Write a paragraph explaining how the 'feel' of the rhythm changes when the tempo is altered, even though the notes remain the same.