

Year 4 Music: Exploring the Rhythms of the World

Learning objective: To identify, compare, and analyse musical traditions, instruments, and rhythmic patterns from diverse cultures around the globe.

Read each question carefully. Use your musical vocabulary to provide detailed, thoughtful answers. Max is looking for accurate maths in your rhythms, while Finn is interested in where these sounds originate on the map!

Music is a universal language. Across the globe, cultures use sound to tell stories, celebrate, and mark important events. From the interlocking metallic patterns of an Indonesian Gamelan orchestra to the resonant, hand-played beats of a West African Djembe drum, every region possesses a unique musical identity. By studying these traditions, we learn how history, geography, and community shape the way we listen to and perform music.

Word bank: Djembe · Tempo · Pulse · Gamelan · Polyrhythm · Pentatonic · Texture · Syncopation · Tradition

1. Define the term 'polyrhythm' and explain why it is a key feature in many West African musical traditions. (2 marks)

2. Max the monkey is listening to a Gamelan orchestra. He notes that the tempo changes suddenly. Why might a composer choose to change the tempo and dynamic level during a performance? Justify your answer. (3 marks)

3. Name one traditional instrument from the Gamelan ensemble and describe its specific timbre (the quality of the sound). (2 marks)

4. Compare and contrast the sound of a stringed instrument, such as an Indian Sitar, with a percussion instrument like a Djembe. How do the methods of producing sound differ? (4 marks)

5. If you were to compose a piece of music to represent a rainforest, which instruments would you choose to include and why? Explain how your choice of texture would reflect the environment. (4 marks)

6. Explain why music is considered an important part of cultural heritage. What might happen to a community's identity if their traditional music stopped being taught or performed? (5 marks)

7. Zara is designing a new instrument. She wants to create a sound that is 'bright' and 'shimmering'. Would she choose materials like wood or metal? Explain your reasoning. (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a diagram of a traditional instrument you have studied. Label the parts that vibrate to create the sound and write a sentence explaining how the player changes the pitch.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an explorer like Finn. You have travelled to a remote island where the people use ocean sounds to create music. Write a short journal entry (100 words) describing the 'Pulse' and 'Tempo' of their music and how it makes you feel. Total: /25