

Composition Masterclass with Zara the Zebra

Learning objective: To understand the key elements of musical composition and terminology used in Class 5 music.

Read the front of the card to identify the musical term or concept. Flip the card mentally (or use a partner) to check if your definition matches the one provided by Zara the Zebra.

Tempo

The speed at which a piece of music is played, often measured in beats per minute.

Dynamics

The volume of the music, ranging from very quiet (piano) to very loud (forte).

Pitch

How high or low a note sounds, determined by the frequency of the sound waves.

Rhythm

The pattern of long and short sounds and silences in music.

Structure

The way a piece of music is organised or put together, such as verse-chorus form.

Melody

The main tune of a piece of music, created by a sequence of notes.

Ostinato

A short, repeated musical pattern or phrase that continues throughout a section of music.

Texture

The layers of sound in a piece of music, describing how thick or thin the music feels.

Timbre

The unique quality or 'colour' of a sound that distinguishes one instrument from another.

Crescendo

A musical instruction meaning to gradually get louder.

Diminuendo

A musical instruction meaning to gradually get quieter.

Rest

A symbol in musical notation that indicates a period of silence.