

# Max's Musical Dynamics Investigation

*Learning objective: To identify, describe, and compare dynamics in music using appropriate terminology.*

Max the monkey is listening to a symphony and needs your help to document the changing volume of the music. Listen to your chosen piece of music carefully. Use the word bank to describe the volume changes (dynamics) you hear. Complete the sections below to explain how these changes affect the mood of the piece.

*Word bank: piano (soft) · forte (loud) · mezzo-piano (moderately soft) · mezzo-forte (moderately loud) · crescendo (getting louder) · diminuendo (getting quieter) · subito (suddenly) · gradual*

**1. Identify the primary dynamic level at the beginning of the piece. Justify your choice by describing the instruments you hear. (3 marks)**

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**2. Describe a moment where a 'crescendo' or 'diminuendo' occurs. Explain why the composer might have chosen to change the volume at this specific point. (4 marks)**

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**3. Compare and contrast a section that is 'piano' with a section that is 'forte'. How does the change in volume alter the emotional impact on the listener? (4 marks)**

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**4. What might happen to the mood of the music if a section marked 'forte' were played 'piano' instead? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)**

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**5. If you were composing a piece about a thunderstorm, how would you use dynamics to represent the arrival of the storm? (3 marks)**

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**6. Evaluate the effectiveness of the dynamics in your chosen piece. Do the volume changes help tell a story? Use evidence from the music to support your view. (5 marks)**

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*Extension challenge: Creative Challenge: Create a 'Dynamic Map' of your piece. Draw a line that rises and falls to represent the volume. Label your line with the correct dynamic terms (e.g., crescendo, forte) at the exact moments they occur. If you could add one 'subito piano' moment to the piece, where would you place it and why?*