

Max's Musical Elements Challenge

Learning objective: To identify and define the key elements of music, including pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, and timbre.

Use these flashcards to test your knowledge of musical vocabulary. Max the monkey has hidden a maths-like logic behind every sound! Read the front, think of your answer, and flip to reveal the definition.

Pulse

The steady, underlying 'heartbeat' of the music that stays the same throughout.

Rhythm

The pattern of different note lengths and silences that sits on top of the pulse.

Pitch

How high or low a sound is, determined by the frequency of vibrations.

Tempo

The speed of the music, which can be fast (presto) or slow (largo).

Dynamics

The volume of the music, ranging from very quiet (pianissimo) to very loud (fortissimo).

Timbre

The unique 'tone colour' or quality of a sound that helps us distinguish between different instruments.

Texture

How many layers of sound are happening at once; whether the music is thick or thin.

Duration

The length of time that a musical sound or silence lasts.

Staccato

A style of playing notes in a short, detached, and bouncy manner.

Legato

A style of playing notes smoothly, flowing from one to the next without gaps.