

Max's Tempo Investigation Journal

Learning objective: To identify, describe, and compare different musical tempos using correct terminology.

Join Max the monkey as he investigates the speed of music! Listen to three different pieces of music chosen by your teacher. For each piece, identify the tempo and explain how it makes you feel. Use the musical vocabulary provided in the word bank to justify your descriptions.

Word bank: Adagio (slow) · Andante (walking pace) · Allegro (fast and lively) · Presto (very fast) · BPM (beats per minute) · pulse · rhythm · steady · accelerando (speeding up) · ritardando (slowing down)

1. Piece 1: Identify the tempo and justify your choice. What specific instruments or rhythms helped you decide? (3 marks)

2. Piece 2: Compare and contrast this piece with Piece 1. Is it faster or slower? How does the change in tempo alter the mood of the music? (4 marks)

3. Piece 3: If this piece of music were a character moving through the jungle, how would they move? Explain why you think this. (3 marks)

4. Creative Challenge: If you were to compose a piece of music to represent a thunderstorm, which tempo markings would you use and why? Justify your sequence of speeds. (5 marks)

5. Critical Thinking: What might happen to the meaning of a song if the composer decided to play it at Presto instead of Adagio? Give an example. (4 marks)

6. Deeper Analysis: Explain why a conductor needs to be aware of the tempo at all times. How does their role ensure the ensemble stays together? (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Choose a favourite song and research its tempo in BPM. Create a short 'tempo map' for the song, marking where the music uses accelerando or ritardando to build excitement or tension.