

Year 4 Music Assessment: The Power of Dynamics

Learning objective: To understand and apply the concepts of dynamics (volume) in music, including Italian terminology and expressive performance.

Read each question carefully. Use musical vocabulary to explain your answers. Ensure your written responses are clear and justify your reasoning.

Max the monkey is composing a symphony for the jungle animals. He wants the music to tell a story: starting with a quiet, creeping leopard, building up to a loud, roaring thunderstorm, and finally fading away as the sun sets over the trees.

Word bank: Piano · Forte · Crescendo · Diminuendo · Mezzo-piano · Mezzo-forte · Volume · Intensity

1. Define the term 'dynamics' in your own words. Why are dynamics important when performing a piece of music? (2 marks)

2. Max wants the leopard to sound very quiet. Which Italian musical term should he write on his score? Explain what it means. (2 marks)

3. If a piece of music gradually gets louder, what is the correct musical term for this? Describe how a musician would achieve this effect on a drum. (3 marks)

4. Compare and contrast 'Mezzo-piano' and 'Mezzo-forte'. How would you describe the difference in intensity between these two levels? (3 marks)

5. Imagine a piece of music that starts with a sudden loud crash and then immediately drops to a whisper. Explain why a composer might choose to use such a dramatic contrast. (4 marks)

6. If a musician ignores all dynamic markings and plays every note at the same volume, what might happen to the listener's experience? Justify your answer. (3 marks)

7. Max's storm is approaching! Write a short paragraph (5 marks) describing how you would use dynamics to represent a thunderstorm. Include at least three Italian terms and explain the emotional effect you want to create for the audience. (5 marks)

Draw: Draw a visual representation of a 'crescendo'. Use shapes or patterns to show how the sound grows from a soft whisper to a powerful, loud roar.



Extension challenge: Total: /25. Extension Task: Imagine you are composing a piece about a busy marketplace. Create a dynamic 'map' of the piece, choosing where to place 'forte' and 'piano' sections. Explain why the chaotic nature of a market requires frequent changes in dynamics.