

Max the Monkey's Musical Dynamics Flashcards

Learning objective: To identify and understand the terminology used to describe volume (dynamics) in music, as required for Grade 3 Music.

Read the front of the card to test your knowledge of musical volume. Use these cards to quiz a partner or practice your definitions. Max the Monkey thinks these terms are the perfect puzzle pieces for composing a masterpiece!

What does the musical term 'Dynamics' refer to?

Dynamics refers to the variation in loudness and softness of sounds in a piece of music.

What does 'Piano' mean in music?

Piano means to play softly or quietly.

What does 'Forte' mean in music?

Forte means to play loudly or strongly.

What is the meaning of 'Mezzo' when used with other dynamic terms?

Mezzo means 'moderately' or 'medium' (e.g., Mezzo-piano means moderately quiet).

What does the term 'Crescendo' describe?

A crescendo describes a gradual increase in the volume of the music.

What does the term 'Diminuendo' describe?

A diminuendo describes a gradual decrease in the volume of the music.

What is the abbreviation for Fortissimo?

The abbreviation is 'ff', which means very loud.

What is the abbreviation for Pianissimo?

The abbreviation is 'pp', which means very quiet.

If a composer writes 'mf' in the sheet music, what should the performer do?

They should play 'Mezzo-forte', which means moderately loud.

Why do composers use dynamic markings in their compositions?

They use them to add emotion, contrast, and interest to the music so the performer knows how to express the piece.

Compare and contrast 'Crescendo' and 'Diminuendo'.

Both are gradual changes in volume, but a crescendo gets louder while a diminuendo gets quieter.

Explain why a musician might choose to use a sudden 'Forte' after a long section of 'Piano'.

This creates a dramatic contrast or a 'shock' effect to grab the listener's attention and highlight a specific moment in the music.