Mastering Dynamics with Max the Monkey

Learning objective: To understand and identify dynamic markings used to describe volume in music.

Use these flashcards to test your knowledge of musical dynamics. Max the Monkey uses these terms to measure how loud or quiet his jungle drum beats are!

What does the musical term 'Dynamics' refer to?	**What does the Italian term 'Piano' (p) mean in music?**
Dynamics refers to the volume of the music, how loud or quiet the sound is.	Piano means to play or sing quietly.
What does the Italian term 'Forte' (f) mean in music?	**What does the prefix 'Mezzo' (m) mean when placed before a dynamic term?**
Forte means to play or sing loudly.	Mezzo means 'medium' or 'moderately', such as mezzo-forte (moderately loud).
What does a 'Crescendo' symbol look like and what does it mean?	**What does a 'Diminuendo' symbol look like and what does it mean?**
It is a 'less than' sign (<) and it means to gradually get louder.	It is a 'greater than' sign (>) and it means to gradually get quieter.
What is the meaning of 'Fortissimo' (ff)?	**What is the meaning of 'Pianissimo' (pp)?**
Fortissimo means very loud.	Pianissimo means very quiet.
Which dynamic marking would you use to describe playing 'moderately quiet'?	**If Max the Monkey is playing his drums and the music starts to fade away, what dynamic change is happening?**
Mezzo-piano (mp).	A diminuendo.
Why do composers use dynamic markings in their musical notation?	**If you see the marking 'mf' on a piece of sheet music, what does it stand for?**
To tell the performer exactly how loud or quiet to play each section to create emotion and contrast.	Mezzo-forte, which means moderately loud.