

Grade 3 Music Assessment: The Pulse of Tempo

Learning objective: To identify, describe, and apply knowledge of tempo in musical compositions, demonstrating an understanding of how speed affects the mood of a piece.

Read each question carefully. Use musical vocabulary to justify your answers. Ensure your written responses are clear and use the correct terminology.

Max the monkey is composing a jungle symphony. He wants the opening to sound like a slow, creeping leopard, so he chooses a steady, walking pace. As the scene shifts to a bustling colony of bees, he increases the speed to reflect their frantic energy. Finally, he adds a section where the music gradually slows down as the sun sets over the savannah.

Word bank: Largo · Adagio · Andante · Moderato · Allegro · Presto · BPM · Pulse · Mood · Accelerando · Ritardando

1. Define the term 'tempo' in your own words. Why is it an essential element of music? (2 marks)

2. Max wants his 'leopard' section to feel calm and relaxed. Which tempo marking (Largo, Andante, or Presto) would be most suitable and why? (2 marks)

3. Explain the difference between 'Accelerando' and 'Ritardando'. Provide an example of when a composer might use these in a film score. (3 marks)

4. If a piece of music has a very high BPM (Beats Per Minute), how does this typically affect the listener's emotional response compared to a piece with a low BPM? (3 marks)

5. Compare and contrast 'Allegro' and 'Presto'. Justify which one you would choose for a piece of music representing a thunderstorm and explain your reasoning. (4 marks)

6. Max is writing a piece for Ellie the elephant. He wants to show her journey from a slow, steady walk to a sudden, excited run. Describe how he could use tempo changes to tell this story. Use musical vocabulary such as 'pulse', 'tempo', and 'transition'. (5 marks)

7. What might happen to the overall 'character' of a lullaby if the tempo were changed from Adagio to Presto? Justify your answer. (3 marks)

8. If you were purchasing sheet music for a school concert, and the piece cost £4.50, how much change would you receive from a £10 note? How does the tempo of a piece affect how long it takes to perform? (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a visual representation of a musical crescendo or an accelerando. Use shapes, lines, or symbols to show how the speed or intensity increases across the page.

Extension challenge: Total: /25. Extension Task: Compose a 4-bar rhythm pattern. Write down the tempo marking you would use for it and explain why this specific speed is the 'perfect fit' for your chosen theme.