

Max's Musical Elements Fact-File

Learning objective: To identify, describe, and compare the key elements of music, including pitch, tempo, dynamics, and texture.

Max the Monkey loves turning music into a maths puzzle! Use this fact-file to analyse a piece of music you have listened to in class. Listen carefully to the track and fill in the sections below to explain how the different musical elements work together to create a specific mood.

Word bank: Tempo · Dynamics · Pitch · Texture · Crescendo · Staccato · Legato · Rhythm · Timbre · Melody

1. Tempo and Rhythm: Describe the speed of the music. Is the pulse steady? How does the tempo affect the way you feel while listening? (2 marks)

2. Dynamics: Identify the volume of the piece. Did you hear a sudden change (crescendo or diminuendo)? Explain why a composer might choose to use these changes. (2 marks)

3. Pitch and Melody: Is the melody generally high or low? Describe how the pitch changes throughout the piece. What might happen if the melody stayed on one single note the entire time? (3 marks)

4. Texture and Timbre: Which instruments can you hear? Describe the 'layers' of the music. Is it thin (only one or two sounds) or thick (many instruments playing at once)? (2 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Does the music sound happy, sad, or mysterious? Use evidence from the elements above to justify why the composer chose these specific sounds. (3 marks)

6. Compare and contrast: If you were to change the tempo of this piece to be twice as fast, how would it alter the overall mood? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Creative Challenge: Imagine you are a composer. Write a short paragraph describing a new piece of music you would compose for a scene in a film. You must include at least four musical elements from the word bank to explain how your music would sound.