

Music vocabulary

This document lists all of the musical vocabulary introduced in each year of the Charanga Model Music Curriculum Scheme. The Elements of Music feature across all years:

Elements of music (Western music)

Pitch - The property of a sound and especially a musical tone that is determined by the frequency of the waves producing it (highness or lowness of sound) a standard frequency for tuning instruments.

Tone - Tone in music relates to intervals in a scale, specific musical notes, or sound quality. It's also associated with the timbre of different instruments. For example, if a trumpet and a bass guitar play the same pitch, the two instruments will sound very different.

Rhythm - Rhythm is the pattern of sound, silence, and emphasis in a song. In music theory, rhythm refers to the recurrence of notes and rests (silences) in time. When a series of notes and rests repeats, it forms a rhythmic pattern.

Pulse - Pulse is essentially the heartbeat of the music and is also referred to as steady beat - the beat which steadily sits underneath the sounds in a piece of music.

Tempo - Tempo means the speed at which a piece of music should be played. As with many other musical terms, Italian words are used to describe different tempos of music.

Dynamics - Dynamics means how quietly or loudly a piece of music should be played. Dynamics are an important way of conveying the mood of a piece and your use of dynamics is a marked element of your performance. Composers use dynamics to change the mood.

Timbre - Timbre (Pronounced Tam-ber) is the quality of a musical note. It is what makes a musical note sound different from another one. Words like round, brassy, sharp, or bright can be used to describe the timbre of a sound.

Texture - Texture in music refers to the effect of the different layers of sound in a piece of music, and the relationship between them. Layers of sound are the different things which are happening at the same time in a piece of music. There could be a guitar playing, a voice singing, drums playing and a piano too.

Structure - When listening to your favourite songs, you might notice there are different sections in each of them. Structure is the order the different sections of a song or piece of music are played in.

All the musical words introduced in Years 1 and 2 are included in the lists below. Most of these words are revisited in Years 3–6, so only new and important musical words are listed for later years. In Year 1, bold text indicates the most important words to learn, while in Years 2-6, only newly introduced words are in bold.

EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Pulse, singers, percussion, audience, music, rhythm, pitch	<p>Actions, audience, backing singers/backing vocals, ballet, band, bass, bass guitar, bassline, beat, beaters, bells, big band, brass instruments, celeste, cello, chimes, chorus, clap, Classical music, compose, composer, composition, concert, conga drums, copy back, count, count in, Country music, cymbals, dance, double bass, drum kit, drums, drumsticks, electric guitar, electric organ, electronic, fast and slow, film, flute, Funk, glockenspiel, Gospel, groove, guitar, harpsichord, high and low sounds, Hip Hop, imagination, improvise, instrument, introduction, Jazz, keyboard, listen, Lullaby, loud and quiet sounds, maracas, march, marching band, marimba, melody, Musicals, musician, note, nursery rhyme, octobass, orchestra, orchestral, outro, percussion, perform, piano, piano keys, pitch, play, player, Pop, pulse, question and answer, rap, rattle, Reggae, rhythm, Rock, saxophone, section, singer, sleigh bells, smooth and spiky sounds, solo, song, songwriter, Soul, sound, steady, steel pans, string instruments, structure, musical style, Swing, synthesizer, tempo, trumpet, tuba, verse, viola, violin, vocals, voice, Waltz, warm up, words of the song, xylophone.</p>	<p>Accordion, actions, audience, backing singers/backing vocals, ballet, band, bass, bass drum, bass guitar, bassline, bassoon, beat, beaters, bells, brass band, brass instruments, Calypso, canon, cello, choir, Choral music, chorus, clap, clarinet, Classical music, compose, composer, composition, concert, conductor, copy back, cornet, count, count in, cymbals, dance, double bass, drum kit, drums, drumsticks, dynamics, electric guitar, electric organ/Hammond organ, electronic, euphonium, fast and slow, film, Film Music, flute, Folk music, French horn, Funk, glockenspiel, Gospel, groove, guitar, high and low sounds, Hip Hop, horn section (trumpets and trombones), hymn, imagination, improvisation, improvise, instrument, instrumental, introduction, Jazz, keyboard, Kwela, layers of sound, lead singer/vocals, listen, Lullaby, loud and quiet sounds, lyrics, major, maracas, march, marching band, melody, minor, mouthpiece, Musicals, musician, noise, note, oboe, off-beat rhythms, one-man band, opera, orchestra, orchestral, outro, penny whistle, percussion, perform, performance, performer, piano, piano accompaniment, piano keys, pianola, piccolo, pitch, play, player, Pop, production, pulse, question and answer, Ragtime, rap, rattle, recorder, records, reeds, Reggae, rhythm, Rock, Rock 'n' Roll, round, Romantic music, saxophone, scat singing, section, side drum (or snare drum), singer, smooth and spiky/detached sounds, solo, song, songwriter, Soul, sound, steady, steel pans, string instruments, structure and form, musical style, sustain pedal, Swing, symphony, synthesizer, tambourine, tempo, time signature, timpani, trio, trombone, trumpet, tuba, verse, vibraslap, viola, violin, vocals, voice, warm up, woodblock, woodwind instruments.</p>	<p>20th and 21st Century Orchestral music, Appalachian music, articulation, backing singers/backing vocals, backing track, Ballad, bar, barline, Baroque music, bass, Blues, chorus, clef, compose, composition, Country music, crotchet, Disco, dotted crotchet, dynamics, expression, Film & TV Soundtracks, Folk music, forte (Italian musical term for 'loud'), Gospel, Hip Hop, hook, imagination, improvise, intro/introduction, key signature, lead singer/vocals, legato (Italian musical term for 'smooth'), major, melody, minim, minor, Musicals, musical style, Native American music, New Orleans Jazz, notation, ostinato, pentatonic scale, piano (instrument), piano (Italian musical term for 'quiet/soft'), pitch, Pop, pulse, quaver, Reggae, repeats, rests, rhythm, rhythm patterns, riff, Rock, Romantic music, semibreve, semiquaver, scale, Sea Shanty, staccato (Italian musical term for 'detached'), Soul, stave, structure and form, synthesizer, tempo, texture (layers of sound), time signature, tune, verse.</p>	<p>acoustic guitar, alto clef, articulation, backing singers/backing vocals, backing track, Ballad, bar, barline, bass, bass clef, by ear, Choral music, choreography, Classical music, compose, composition, Contemporary R&B, crescendo (Italian musical term for 'gradually getting louder'), crotchet, digital/electronic sounds, diminuendo (Italian musical term for 'gradually getting quieter'), Disco, dotted crotchet, dotted quaver, dynamics, Electronic Dance Music (EDM), Folk music, forte (loud), fortissimo (Italian musical term for 'very loud'), Funk, Gospel, hook, improvisation, improvise, Jazz, key signature, legato (smooth), lyrics, major, Medieval music, melody, mezzo forte (Italian musical term for 'medium-loud'), mezzo piano (Italian musical term for 'medium-quiet'), minim, minor, Musicals, musical style, notation, ostinato, pentatonic scale, pianissimo (Italian musical term for 'very quiet/soft'), piano (quiet/soft), pitch, Pop, pulse, quaver, rap, Reggae, repeats, rests, rhythm, rhythm patterns, riff, Rock, Romantic music, semiquaver, solo, Soul, staccato (detached), stave, structure and form, tempo, texture, timbre (sound quality), time signature, tonality, treble clef, tune, turntables, unison.</p>