

Musical Characteristics | Notes

Dynamics

- P = piano = soft
- M = mezzo = moderately
- F = forte = loud
- Crescendo = gradually get louder
- Diminuendo = gradually get softer

Articulation

- How to sing or play the notes
- Accents indicate a note should sound strong
- Staccato = short, detached notes.
- Marcato = stressed, accented notes
- Legato = smooth

Tempo

- Grave = slow and solemn
- Largo = slow and broad
- Larghetto = not quite as slow as largo
- Adagio = slow
- Lento = slow
- Andante = walking pace
- Moderato = medium
- Allegretto = not as fast as allegro
- Allegro = fast
- Vivo/vivace = lively
- Presto = very fast
- Poco = a little
- Molto = a lot
- Piu = more
- Meno = less

Texture

- How many layers of music

Monophonic

- One melodic line
- No harmony
- Only rhythmic accompaniment that has one pitch

Homophonic

- One clear melodic line
- Accompanied

Polyphonic

- More than one melody played at the same time

Cadences

- Stopping or resting point
- Made up of two chords
- 4 types;
- Perfect = 5-1
- Plagal = 4-1
- Imperfect = 1/2/4-5
- Interrupted = 5-6

Rhythm

- Syncopated
- Dotted
- Complex
- Simple
- Strict
- Steady
- Polyrhythm
- Ostinato

- Waltz-like
- Triplet
- Free rhythm

Key Signatures

- C major/A minor = no flats or sharps
- G major/E minor = 1 sharp
- D major/B minor = 2 sharps
- A major/F# minor = 3 sharps
- E major/C# minor = 4 sharps
- B major/G# minor = 5 sharps
- F major/D minor = 1 flat
- Bb major/G minor = 2 flats
- Eb major/C minor = 3 flats
- Ab major/F minor = 4 flats
- Db major/Bb minor = 5 flats

Words That Describe A Melody

- Repeated notes
- Stepwise motion
- Interval leaps
- Ascending
- Descending
- Triadic
- Arpeggio
- Countermelody
- Descant