

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction to the Elements of Music

When you listen to a song or piece of music, what do you hear? Is somebody singing? Are there instruments? Is the music fast or slow? Loud or soft? What about the rhythm? Now think about the music you enjoy listening to and answer those same questions. Those things that you're thinking about are called elements of music.

There are five elements of music that we will talk about in class. The six elements are tempo, pitch, rhythm, tone color, texture, and dynamics. Write the definition of each below.



1. Tempo \_\_\_\_\_
2. Pitch \_\_\_\_\_
3. Dynamics \_\_\_\_\_
4. Texture \_\_\_\_\_
5. Tone Color \_\_\_\_\_



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### Pitch – The Highs & Lows in Music



**Pitch** is used to describe the highs and lows of music. Some music is made up of mostly high sounds; other music is made mostly of low sounds. Most music has a combination of both. When listening to our favorite music, there's often a part that we listen to and either hum or sing along. That is called the **melody**. Melody is the part of music that "sings" or is memorable to us.

The best way to describe pitch is by listening to different instruments. Take a listen to the instruments below and identify if they have high or low pitch (please circle).

Example 1: <a href="#">Flight of the Bumblebee</a> (Piccolo)	High or Low
Example 2: <a href="#">Funeral March</a> (Taglharpe)	High or Low
Example 3: <a href="#">The Elephant</a> (Bass & piano)	High or Low
Example 4: <a href="#">Queen of the Night</a> (Soprano)	High or Low

In addition to highs and lows, pitch can also set the mood of a piece of music. When a song sounds happy, we call it \_\_\_\_\_. When a song sounds sad, we call it \_\_\_\_\_. What do you prefer to listen to? Do you enjoy songs written in a major or minor key?

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### Dynamics – The Louds and Softs in Music

Dynamics are used to describe how loud or soft (quiet) music is. Some people enjoy loud music at concerts or in the car. Others enjoy softer, quieter music at home while reading or studying. There are six levels of dynamics, listed below:

1. Pianissimo: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Piano: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Mezzo piano: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Mezzo forte: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Forte: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Fortissimo: \_\_\_\_\_

Each dynamic has an abbreviation to make it easier to read. Those abbreviations can be copied below.

Pianissimo	Piano	Mezzo-Piano	Mezzo-Forte	Forte	Fortissimo

There are frequently moments in music where dynamics change. Sometimes they change quickly, and other times they change slowly over time. When they change gradually, we use different words to describe them.

Crescendo: \_\_\_\_\_

Diminuendo: \_\_\_\_\_

**THINK ABOUT IT!** When you're listening to music, what is the best dynamic level to help you focus? What is the best dynamic level to help you relax? Believe it or not, it can be different levels for different people.

What is your favorite relaxation song? \_\_\_\_\_

What song helps you focus? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Elements of Music Project 1 – Dramatic Poetry

Let's take what we've learned about the Elements of Music and apply it! There are three poems at the end of this packet. Your job is to choose a poem to perform. You will perform it keeping two of the three elements of music we've learned so far in mind.

- Tempo – you will choose how fast or slow you will perform the poem. There is a place to write down the tempo at the beginning of the poem.
- Dynamics – on each line of the poem, you will write down how loud or soft you will perform the line. You can use any of the dynamics, including crescendo and diminuendo.

First, choose a poem. Once you have chosen your poem, decide what your tempo will be. Write down the tempo in the place indicated. Finally, choose a dynamic for each line of the poem. Take a look at Mr. April's example below.

<p><b><u>Last Night</u></b> Written by Jack Prelutsky</p>
Tempo: <u>Largo</u>
<p><b>(mp)</b> Last night I dreamed of chickens, there were chickens everywhere! <b>(f)</b> They were standing on my stomach; they were standing on my hair. <b>(crescendo)</b> They were pecking at my pillow, they were hopping on my head, <b>(f)</b> They were ruffling up their feathers, as they raced around my bed.</p>

Once you have chosen a tempo and given a dynamic marking to each line of the poem, you should then practice reading the poem with the tempo and dynamics you wrote down. You will perform your poem, with the musical choices you made, for the class. You will be graded based on the following criteria:

<b><u>Movie Extra (1)</u></b>	<b><u>Supporting Role (2)</u></b>	<b><u>Oscar Nominee (3)</u></b>	<b><u>Oscar Award Winner (4)</u></b>
- Your poem is missing either a tempo or dynamic markings. - You read the poem without any of the dynamic or tempo choices.	- You choose a tempo and dynamics for the poem. Dynamics are not varied. - You perform your poem with some of the dynamics you chose. - You start your poem at the tempo you chose, but speed up/slow down.	- You choose a tempo and varied dynamics for the selected poem. - You perform the poem at the tempo you chose, mostly using your chosen dynamics.	- You make careful dynamic and tempo choices that fit the poem. - You dramatically and effectively perform the poem using all of the markings you chose.

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**Last Night**

*Written by: Jack Prelutsky*

Tempo: \_\_\_\_\_

Last night I dreamed of chickens, there were chickens everywhere!

They were standing on my stomach; they were standing on my hair.

They were pecking at my pillow, they were hopping on my head,

They were ruffling up their feathers, as they raced around my bed.

They were on the chairs and tables, they were on the chandeliers,

They were roosting in the corners; they were clucking in my ears!

There were chickens, chickens, chickens, for as far as I could see,

When I woke today, I noticed there were eggs on top of me.

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**Screamin' Millie**

*By Shel Silverstein*

Tempo: \_\_\_\_\_

Millie McDeevit screamed a scream

So loud it made her eyebrows steam.

She screamed so loud her jawbone broke,

Her tongue caught fire; her nostrils smoked.

Her eyeballs boiled and then popped out,

Her ears flew north, her nose went south.

Her teeth flew out, her voice was wrecked,

Her head went sailing off her neck –

Over the hillside, 'cross the stream,

Into the skies it chased the scream.

And that's what happened to Millie McDeevit

(At least I hope all you screamers believe it!)