

Musical Vocabulary: Years 1–6

Year 1

Words you need to know: Pulse, rhythm, pitch, rap, improvise, compose, melody, bass guitar, drums, decks, perform, singers, keyboard, percussion, trumpets, saxophones, Blues, Baroque, Latin, Irish Folk, Funk, pulse, rhythm, pitch, groove, audience, imagination.

Year 2

Words you need to know: Keyboard, drums, bass, electric guitar, saxophone, trumpet, pulse, rhythm, pitch, improvise, compose, audience, question and answer, melody, dynamics, tempo, perform/performance, audience, rap, Reggae, glockenspiel.

Year 3

Vocabulary: Structure, intro/introduction, verse, chorus, improvise, compose, pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, bass, drums, guitar, keyboard, synthesizer, hook, melody, texture, structure, electric guitar, organ, backing vocals, hook, riff, melody, Reggae, pentatonic scale, imagination, Disco.

Year 4

Vocabulary: Keyboard, electric guitar, bass, drums, improvise, compose, melody, pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, texture, structure, compose, improvise, hook, riff, melody, solo, pentatonic scale, unison, rhythm patterns, musical style, rapping, lyrics, choreography, digital/electronic sounds, turntables, synthesizers, by ear, notation, backing vocal, piano, organ, acoustic guitar, percussion, birdsong, civil rights, racism, equality.

Year 5

Vocabulary: Rock, bridge, backbeat, amplifier, chorus, bridge, riff, hook, improvise, compose, appraising, Bossa Nova, syncopation, structure, Swing, tune/head, note values, note names, Big bands, pulse, rhythm, solo, ballad, verse, interlude, tag ending, strings, piano, guitar, bass, drums, melody, cover, Old-school Hip Hop, Rap, riff, synthesizer, deck, backing loops, Funk, scratching, unison, melody, cover, pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre, texture, Soul, groove, riff, bass line, brass section, harmony, melody.

Year 6

Vocabulary: style indicators, melody, compose, improvise, cover, pulse, rhythm, pitch, tempo, dynamics, timbre, texture, structure, dimensions of music, Neo Soul, producer, groove, Motown, hook, riff, solo, Blues, Jazz, improvise/improvisation, by ear, melody, riff, solo, ostinato, phrases, unison, Urban Gospel, civil rights, gender equality, unison, harmony.

The Interrelated Dimensions of Music (Dimensions)

- Pulse – the regular heartbeat of the music; its steady beat.
- Rhythm – long and short sounds or patterns that happen over the pulse.
- Pitch – high and low sounds.
- Tempo – the speed of the music; fast or slow or in-between.
- Dynamics – how loud or quiet the music is.
- Timbre – all instruments, including voices, have a certain sound quality e.g. the trumpet has a very different sound quality to the violin.
- Texture – layers of sound. Layers of sound working together make music very interesting to listen to.
- Structure – every piece of music has a structure e.g. an introduction, verse and chorus ending.
- Notation – the link between sound and symbol.