

## MUSIC GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**\*BEAT-** the constant marking of time in a piece of music – it can be fast, slow, get slower or get quicker but always remains constant. The terms ‘heart beat’ or ‘pulse’ may also be used.

**\*RHYTHM-** patterns of long and short sounds.

**\*PITCH-** low high or low a sound is.

**SCALE-** a series of notes ascending and descending in a set pattern (of tones and semitones.)

**Major scale-** sounding the same as the 8 white notes on a piano or tuned percussion, starting on C. (A scale can start on any note, but sharps and flats have to be added to make the sequence the same).

**Minor scale-** a series of 8 notes, but the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> notes of the major scale are flattened.

**Pentatonic scale-** a scale of 5 notes where the semitones are omitted, resulting in a pattern of notes which all blend well together. Starting on C, the notes are CDEGA.

**CHORD-** a chord is a group of notes (3 or more) played together. Usually formed by playing the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> notes above the named note e.g. in the chord of C the notes CEG would be played together. The chord of F is FAC. The chord of G is GBD.

**IMPROVISATION** - a spontaneous performance without specific preparation i.e. making it up on the spot.

**12 BAR BLUES-** a sequence of chords over 12 bars, creating the basis of a jazz blues composition: in the key of C it would be one bar each (of four beats) of the following chords:

<b>C</b>	C	C	C	
<b>F</b>	F	C	C	
<b>G</b>	F	C	C	:


**\*DYNAMICS-** how loud or quiet a sound is.

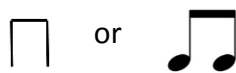

**\*TEMPO-**the speed of the beat.


**\*TIMBRE-** the quality of the sounds of individual instruments/voices or instruments/voices in a group. Sometimes called 'tone colour'.

**\*DURATION-** the length of sounds.

**NOTATION-** written music. In the earlier levels, 'stick notation' may be used where there are no noteheads (see below.) The following musical language is generally used:

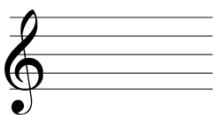
| or  = ta - a crotchet = 1 beat (without the notehead, this is stick notation)

 or  = te-te - quavers = ½ beat each

 = ta-aa - minim = 2 beats

 or  = tiri tiri - semiquavers = ¼ beat each

**STAVE-** the five lines that music is written on. A number of different clefs can be used: treble, bass, alto and tenor. In primary school, we would use the treble clef.



**UNTUNED PERCUSSION-** instruments that can be hit, scraped, shaken or tapped. A tune cannot be played on them, only a rhythm. Includes: tambourine, tambour, triangle, guiro, woodblock, drum, maraca, bells, agogo.

**TUNED PERCUSSION-** percussion instrument that produces different pitched sounds when it is struck with beaters. Includes: glockenspiel, xylophone, chime bars, pitched handbells.

**BODY PERCUSSION-** sounds made by clapping, rubbing, tapping etc. different parts of the body.

**GRAPHIC SCORE**- using pictures, shapes, lines etc. to represent the sound of vocal/percussive/ instrumental sounds. These images are put together, sequenced, repeated etc. and recorded visually to produce a 'score' – the musical equivalent of a map telling people when to play.

**SOUND STORY**- using instruments/body sounds/found sounds/voices to describe some events or feelings in a picture, a story or a poem.

**RHYTHM BANK**- using words e.g. colours/shapes/ topic words/ names to make rhythm patterns, played in time to a regular beat, usually in groups of 4 beats.

e.g. 'Red' – one clap; 'Yellow' – two claps; 'Square' – one clap; 'Oblong' – two claps; 'Triangle' – three claps etc.

1.	2.	3.	4.	or	1.	2.	3.	4.
Red	Yellow	Oblong	Square		Fish and	Chips and	Chilli pepper	Sauce
[Ta	te-te	te-te	ta]		[te – te	te – te	tiri - tiri	ta]

**OSTINATO**- a pattern of notes (or a rhythm) which is repeatedly played in a composition.

**CONDUCTOR**- a person who directs an ensemble of singers and/or players.

**COMPOSER**- a person who writes music.

**\*FORM**- the way a piece of music is structured.

**Binary form:** contrasting sections of music are labelled A and B. A is idea 1 and B is idea 2  
e.g. verse, chorus- **AB**.

**Ternary form**- a piece of music in three sections **ABA** where the third section is a repeat of the first.

**Rondo form**- an extension of the forms above **ABACA**. A piece in this structure will have a main melody , then some different music will be introduced and played , next is a return of the main melody, followed by another new tune, ending with a return of the main melody.

\* denotes a key element of music.