MUSICAL NOTATION

Long ago, musicians realized that they needed a way to write music. They invented “notation” to express tones and how long each was supposed to last. There is a different symbol for a note depending on whether it is a whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, thirty-second, or sixty-fourth note.

Musical notes are written on a staff. A staff is made up of five horizontal lines and the four spaces between the lines. Each move upward, to the next line or space, represents a move to the next higher note. The lines and spaces are named after the first seven letters of the alphabet: A B C D E F G. From one C to the next is what is called an “octave.” The pattern of notes up and down the staff is what determines the sound of melody.

The clef is a sign placed on the staff to indicate the pitch of the notes. The treble clef indicates that the second line is G above middle C. A staff that has a treble clef is used in music for instruments with a higher range, like a violin or flute. A staff that has a bass clef, which indicates the line on which the F note is located, is used in music for instruments with a lower range, like a trombone or a cello.

The vertical lines on the staff are called “bars.” The space between two bar lines is called a “measure.” All music is divided into measures. If a piece of music is written in ¾ time, there are three beats to a measure, and a quarter note gets one beat. In musical notation, double bars mean “the end.”

Directions: Find the words listed below in the word search puzzle. Words may be spelled left to right, right to left, top to bottom, bottom to top, and slanted in all directions. Use a pencil to darken each letter in every word. Then place the unused letters in the blanks at the bottom. Be sure to bring the letters down in order, left to right, line by line, from top to bottom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>TREBLE</th>
<th>MUSIC</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
<th>LINES</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCTAVES</td>
<td>SPACES</td>
<td>STAFF</td>
<td>BEATS</td>
<td>TONES</td>
<td>BARS</td>
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<tr>
<td>SYMBOLS</td>
<td>MELODY</td>
<td>RANGE</td>
<td>PITCH</td>
<td>BASS</td>
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 is a system that expresses and how each should last.

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RHYTHM AND TEMPO

All music, fast or slow, has rhythm. Rhythm is the steady flow of music in time. Place the index and middle fingers of one hand on the underside of the opposite wrist. Find your pulse. That steady beat you feel is a basic form of rhythm. As a matter of fact, rhythm is the element in music most like the physical action of the human body. Not surprisingly, rhythm has been called the “heartbeat” of music.

Human beings tend to hear sounds in patterns of strong and weak beats. When we tap our feet to music, we are tapping to the beat. An accented beat, usually the first beat of a measure, is played slightly louder. Accented beats make a rhythm more interesting. When the accent comes on some other beat of the measure, the rhythm is called “syncopated.” Much jazz music is syncopated.

Tempo refers to how fast or slow the rhythm is. A tempo that is “largo” is very slow, while a tempo that is “presto” is very fast. In between largo and presto are “adagio” (slow), “andante” (moderately slow), “moderato” (medium), “allegretto” (a little faster than moderate), and “allegro” (fast but not as fast as presto). A composer uses tempo to indicate mood. Music with an adagio tempo is usually gentle. Music with an allegro tempo often is happy and cheerful. Music with a presto tempo gives the listener a sense of lively action.

Directions: Use facts about rhythm and tempo to fill in the crossword puzzle below.

Across
1. Heartbeat of music
5. Very fast tempo
7. Very slow tempo
8. Moderately slow tempo
9. A composer uses tempo to indicate

Down
1. When accent is not on first beat
3. How fast or how slow a rhythm is
4. Slightly louder beat
6. Between largo and presto
MELODY AND HARMONY

At its most basic, a melody is simply several notes played one after the other. What we usually mean when talking about a melody, however, is a “good melody.” A good melody is a series of notes that is highly memorable and that feels complete when we listen to it from start to finish. A good melody must be pleasing and interesting, and it must come to a logical conclusion. Often a good melody can produce a strong emotional response in a listener. It may seem to ask a question and then to answer it.

Harmony is what you hear when two or more musical notes are played at the same time. Usually the harmony provides a background for the melody. It gives greater depth to the music. One basic difference between the music of Europe and America (Western music) and the music of Asia (Oriental music) is that Western music uses harmony while Oriental music relies on melody.

A series of notes played at the same time produce a chord. A musical notation, a chord is written with notes one on top of the other on the musical staff. The most common chord in music is known as a “triad” because it is a combination of three notes.

Counterpoint is a way of producing harmony by playing or singing one or more extra melodies that create harmony with the main melody. One of the simplest forms of counterpoint is the round. In a round, people sing the same melody, but they start the song at different times. Classical music makes use of more complicated counterpoint.

Directions: The word “melody” can help you fill in some facts about how notes form music.

1. Gives greater depth to music
   __ __ M __ __

2. A triad is a combination of ___ notes.
   __ __ E __

3. A good melody feels ___.
   __ __ L __ __

4. Simple form of counterpoint
   __ O __ __

5. Produced by a series of notes played at same time
   __ __ D __

6. Oriental music relies on ___.
   __ __ __ Y __
TONE COLOR AND DYNAMICS

Each musical instrument has its own tone color, sometimes called "timbre." An instrument's tone color gives a particular feeling to a piece of music. For example, a flute gives a sense of brightness while a double bass darkens the mood of the music.

Think about one of your favorite songs. Imagine someone playing the song on an electric guitar. Then think about someone else playing the song on the violin, and yet another person playing it on the trumpet. All three instruments will play exactly the same notes, but your song will sound different in each case because each instrument has its own tone color.

Anyone who writes music has to keep tone color in mind. Composers must select the instruments to play at any given moment. This process of selecting instruments and combining them in a musical composition is called "orchestration." The right orchestration gives a piece of music the tone color it should have to express the composer's meaning.

Composers must also think about how loudly or softly each instrument should be played. "Dynamics" is the term for describing different levels of loudness. Composers use the following Italian words to indicate the dynamics they want.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pianissimo (very soft)</th>
<th>Forte (loud)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piano (soft)</td>
<td>Fortissimo (very loud)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mezzopiano (medium soft)</td>
<td>Crescendo (gradually louder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mezzoforte (medium loud)</td>
<td>Decrescendo (gradually softer)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:** The word "timbre" can help you fill in some facts about tone color and dynamics.

1. **Gives a sense of brightness to music**
   
   --- T ---

2. **Soft**
   
   --- I ---

3. **Different levels of loudness**
   
   --- M ---

4. **Double ____ darkens mood of music**
   
   B ---

5. **Loud**
   
   --- R ---

6. **Gradually louder**
   
   --- E ---