

Music Vocabulary Progressions

Students should build their music vocabulary in a cumulative way, widening their repertoire of known and used words as they progress through the EYFS and the primary phases.



Reception

- **Pitch:** high, low
- **Duration:** long, short, steady beat
- **Dynamics:** loud, quiet and silence
- **Tempo:** fast, slow
- **Timbre:** instrument, basic instrument names, voice
- **Texture:** one sound, many sounds
- **Structure:** sequence, pattern, same, different
- **Singing:** talk, chant, sing, song
- **Playing:** body percussion words (e.g. clap, tap, click), tap, shake, scrape
- **Rehearsing and performing:** start, stop, wait, repeat
- **Notating:** signs, symbols



Year 1

- **Pitch:** high, middle, low
- **Duration:** long, short, steady beat
- **Dynamics:** Loud, moderate, quiet, silence
- **Tempo:** fast, moderate, slow
- **Timbre:** wood, metal, skinned, seeded, tap, shake, scrape, instrument names
- **Texture:** solo, layers
- **Structure:** openings and endings (AB), beginning-middle-end, echo, response, repeated pattern (ostinato)
- **Singing:** chant, sing, rhyme, song
- **Playing:** body percussion words (e.g. clap, tap, click), tap, shake, scrape
- **Rehearsing and performing:** improve, perform
- **Notating:** sign, symbol, graphic notation

Year 2

- **Pitch:** higher, lower, steps, leaps, repeated notes, melody, tune, tuned
- **Duration:** steady beat, rhythm pattern, counting
- **Dynamics:** getting louder, getting quieter
- **Tempo:** getting faster, getting slower
- **Timbre:** wood, metal, skinned, seeded, tap, shake, scrape
- **Texture:** solo, layers, accompaniment

- **Structure:** question and answer, verse and chorus, ABA, repeated pattern (ostinato)
- **Singing:** chant, sing, rhyme, song, breathing, posture, accompaniment
- **Playing:** untuned, tuned, pitched, left and right
- **Rehearsing and performing:** improve, reflect, develop, rehearse, perform
- **Notating:** symbols, graphic notation, pitch, rhythm

Year 3

- **Pitch:** steps, leaps, repeated notes, melody, scale, pentatonic
- **Duration:** steady beat, rhythm pattern, metre
- **Dynamics:** loud (forte), quiet (piano), getting louder (crescendo), getting quieter (diminuendo)
- **Tempo:** allegro (lively), slow (largo), getting faster (accelerando), getting slower (rallentando)
- **Timbre:** strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, guitars, keyboards, names of other instrumental families
- **Texture:** solo, unison, layers
- **Structure:** binary (AB) and ternary (ABA), introductions and codas (endings), ostinato
- **Singing:** rounds, partner songs, accompaniment, layers
- **Playing:** improvising, composing
- **Rehearsing and performing:** improve, reflect, develop, rehearse, practice, perform, stage craft
- **Notating:** graphic notation, stave, treble clef, time signature, crotchet, quaver, minim

Year 4

- **Pitch:** melodic shape, scale, pentatonic, major and minor
- **Duration:** steady beat, rhythm pattern, metre
- **Dynamics:** forte, mezzo (medium) forte, mezzo piano, piano, crescendo, diminuendo
- **Tempo:** allegro, moderato (medium), largo, accelerando, rallentando
- **Timbre:** soprano, alto, tenor, bass, name and family of non-percussion (e.g. trumpet- brass family)
- **Texture:** solo, unison, rhythmic ostinato, harmony, drone, melodic ostinato parts, chords
- **Structure:** Rondo (ABACADA), theme and variations
- **Singing:** phrasing, expression, rounds, partner songs, layers
- **Playing:** names for instrumental skills and techniques e.g. plucking, bowing, picking, strumming (stringed instruments)
- **Rehearsing and performing:** improve, reflect, develop, rehearse, practice, perform, stage craft, applause, bow, notation.
- **Notating:** graphic notation, stave notation words from Y3 adding semi breve, rest

Year 5

- **Pitch:** scale, pentatonic, major, minor and could also include: chromatic, modes
- **Duration:** steady beat, rhythm pattern, metre

- **Dynamics:** fortissimo (very loud), forte, mezzo (medium) forte, mezzo piano, piano, pianissimo (very quiet), crescendo, diminuendo
- **Tempo:** presto (fast), allegro, moderato (medium), largo, accelerando, rallentando
- **Timbre:** soprano, alto, tenor, bass, name and family of less obvious non-percussion (e.g. piccolo - woodwind family)
- **Texture:** harmony, consonant, dissonant note clusters, chords, accompaniment
- **Structure:** ABA, Rondo, 12 bar blues, theme and variations, Leitmotif
- **Singing:** phrasing, context, style, part songs
- **Playing:** articulation, slurring
- **Rehearsing and performing:** improve, reflect, develop, rehearse, practice, perform, stage craft applause, bowing, notation
- **Notating:** graphic notation, stave notation from Y4 adding bar line, time signatures

Year 6

- **Pitch:** scale, pentatonic, major, minor and could also include: raga, chromatic, modes
- **Duration:** steady beat, rhythm pattern, metre
- **Dynamics:** fortissimo (very loud), forte, mezzo (medium) forte, mezzo piano, piano, pianissimo (very quiet), crescendo, diminuendo, subito (suddenly)
- **Tempo:** prestissimo (very fast), presto (fast), allegro, moderato (medium), largo, accelerando, rallentando
- **Timbre:** soprano, alto, tenor, bass, name and family of more obscure non-percussion (e.g. – sitar string family), names of different types of ensembles e.g. orchestra, big band, brass band, pop band
- **Texture:** harmony, chord, ostinato, drone, descant, bass line
- **Structure:** ABA, Rondo, 12 bar blues, theme and variations, Leitmotif
- **Singing:** phrasing, context, harmony, interpretation, style
- **Playing:** articulation, slurring, staccato (short notes), legato (playing smoothly)
- **Rehearsing and performing:** improve, reflect, develop, rehearse, practice, perform, stage craft applause, bowing, notation
- **Notating:** graphic notation, stave notation from Y5 adding repeat, double bar line