

MUSIC Appreciation

THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

Properties of Sound

- Pitch:** The highness or lowness of a sound; determined by the frequency of vibration
 - Tone:** A sound with a definite pitch
 - Interval:** The distance between two pitches
- Dynamics:** The loudness or softness of a sound; indicated by Italian terms or symbols

Italian Terms & Abbreviations for Dynamics

Very soft	Soft	Moderately soft	Moderately loud	Loud	Very loud
<i>pianissimo</i>	<i>piano</i>	<i>mezzo piano</i>	<i>mezzo forte</i>	<i>forte</i>	<i>fortissimo</i>
<i>pp</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>mp</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>ff</i>

Italian Terms & Symbols for Changing Dynamics

<i>crescendo</i>	<	growing louder
<i>decrescendo</i>	>	growing softer

- Tone color (a.k.a., *timbre*):** The unique characteristics of a sound; what makes one instrument or voice sound different from another
- Durations:** How long or short a sound is
- Rhythm:** How sounds and silences are organized over time
- Beat:** The regular, underlying pulse in music
 - Accent:** An emphasis on a beat or note by playing it louder or longer
 - Syncopation:** A temporary disruption of the regular accent pattern by accenting weak beats or between beats
- Meter:** How beats are organized into regular groups, called **measures**
 - Duple meter:** Two beats per measure
 - Triple meter:** Three beats per measure
 - Quadruple meter:** Four beats per measure; a.k.a., **common time** because it is the most common
- Tempo:** The speed of the music, measured in beats per minute

Italian Terms for Tempo

<i>adagio</i>	very slow
<i>andante</i>	a moderate, walking pace
<i>moderato</i>	a moderate pace
<i>allegro</i>	fast
<i>presto</i>	very fast

- Metronome:** A practice aid that gives a regular beat at a specified tempo, in clicks or beeps
- Melody:** A tune; a coherent succession of single pitches
 - Phrase:** A segment of a melody ending with a cadence
 - Cadence:** A resting place at the end of a phrase, like punctuation marks in a sentence; a progression of chords that sounds more or less conclusive
 - Theme:** A melody used as a building block by the composer
 - Motif:** A short musical idea; could be a fragment of a theme
- Harmony:** The way chords are constructed and how they relate to each other
 - Chord:** Three or more tones sounding together
 - Dissonance:** A group of tones that sound clashing, unstable, tense, in need of resolution
 - Consonance:** A group of tones that sound pleasing, stable, at rest
 - Scale:** A series of tones arranged in ascending or descending order; the two most common scales in Western music history are **major** and **minor**; they contain different patterns of intervals; generally, pieces based on the major scale sound happy, and those based on the minor scale sound sad; the **chromatic scale**, for example, includes all the notes on the keyboard
 - Tonality:** The organization of a piece around a central note, scale, and chord; the particular scale determines the **key** (e.g., F Major); the first note of the scale is called the **tonic**; music without a key is **atonal**
 - Modulate:** To change keys within a piece of music
- Texture:** How the melodic and harmonic elements of the music relate to each other
 - Monophonic:** One melodic line without accompaniment; could be a single performer or many performers in unison (e.g., Gregorian chant)
 - Polyphonic:** Two or more melodic lines sounding simultaneously; the technique of composing polyphony is called **counterpoint**
 - Homophonic:** A melody with accompaniment (e.g., a singer with guitar or a barbershop quartet)
- Form:** How a piece of music is organized as it progresses; largely influenced by the repetition, variation, and contrast of themes

INSTRUMENTS & ENSEMBLES

Instrument Families

Voice

- Chorus:** A large vocal ensemble; most often music is written for male and female voices in four parts: soprano, alto, tenor, bass
- Choir:** A smaller vocal group; usually connected with a church; performs sacred music

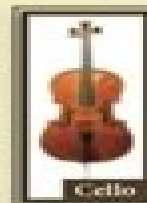
Vocal Ranges

	Female	Male
Highest	Soprano	Tenor
Lowest	Alto (Contralto)	Bass

Strings

Players move a bow across the strings with their right hand or pluck the strings with their fingers; the left hand is used to control the pitch by pressing a string against the fingerboard; the largest group in the orchestra

- Violin:** The highest string instrument in the orchestra; one of the most popular solo instruments throughout history
- Viola:** The alto member of the string family; has a darker sound compared to the violin
- Cello (violoncello):** Known for its mellow, singing tone
- Double bass:** Has a very dark, heavy sound; strings are usually plucked when used in a jazz setting
- Harp:** Strings are plucked with both hands, and pitches can be changed by foot pedals
- Guitar:** Six strings; plucked or strummed with fingers or a pick



Cello



Harp

Woodwinds

Players blow into a tube with holes along its length; pitches are changed by opening and closing the holes with the fingers of both hands via a system of keys; capable of playing very quick notes; originally all made of wood, but now some are metal or plastic

- Flute:** Soprano member of the woodwind family; made of metal; tone is produced by blowing across a hole in the tube
 - Piccolo:** A "little flute"; the highest instrument in the orchestra
- Oboe:** A double-reed instrument; tone is produced by blowing air between two cane reeds tied together; timbre is pastoral and sometimes nasal
 - English horn:** A larger, lower-sounding oboe
- Clarinet:** A single-reed instrument; tone is produced by blowing into a chisel-shaped mouthpiece with the reed attached to it; rich sound, warm in the lower register, shrill and piercing in the upper register
 - Bass clarinet:** A larger clarinet, sounds an octave lower
- Bassoon:** A double-reed instrument; plays in the cello range; timbre varies widely between low and high notes
 - Contrabassoon:** The lowest woodwind instrument in the orchestra; has a very heavy sound
- Saxophone:** A single-reed instrument; made of brass; the newest woodwind instrument; rarely used in the orchestra but common in jazz



Flute



Clarinet

Brass

Players buzz their lips together while blowing into the mouthpiece; pitches are changed by valves or slides; the sound comes out of the bell

- Trumpet:** The highest brass instrument in the orchestra; common in jazz; usually has a brilliant tone; uses three piston valves
- French horn:** Descended from the ancient hunting horn; very rich, mellow tone; blends well with brasses, woodwinds, or strings; the bell points behind the player; wide range; uses four rotary valves operated with the left hand; right hand is inside the bell and can be used to make fine pitch adjustments



Trumpet

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Table of Contents Study Guide Music Appreciation

1. Understanding the eBook Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Study Guide Music Appreciation

- Personalized Recommendations
- Study Guide Music Appreciation User Reviews and Ratings
- Study Guide Music Appreciation and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Study Guide Music Appreciation Free and Paid eBooks
 - Study Guide Music Appreciation Public Domain eBooks
 - Study Guide Music Appreciation eBook Subscription Services
 - Study Guide Music Appreciation Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Study Guide Music Appreciation eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Study Guide Music Appreciation Compatibility with Devices
 - Study Guide Music Appreciation Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Interactive Elements Study Guide Music Appreciation
- 8. Staying Engaged with Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Study Guide Music Appreciation
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Study Guide Music Appreciation
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Setting Reading Goals Study Guide Music Appreciation
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Study Guide Music Appreciation

- Fact-Checking eBook Content of Study Guide Music Appreciation
- Distinguishing Credible Sources

13. Promoting Lifelong Learning

- Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
- Exploring Educational eBooks

14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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