

Glossary

A cappella: Singing with no accompaniment.

Accelerando: Gradually getting faster beat.

Accent: Louder beat with emphasis.

Audiation: Ability to hear and understand music without the sound being physically present.

Authentic assessment: Information about student performance that is found in real world situations.

Autoharp: Stringed instrument used to accompany songs.

Beat: see steady beat.

Bordun: An accompaniment with first and fifth tone of the scale sounding together or in a pattern.

BPM: Beats per minute. Similar to M.M. (metronome marking).

Call and response: Form of singing or chanting. Soloist sings a phrase and is answered by the group.

Chant: Words spoken in rhythm.

Chord: The sounding together of three or more notes.

Chorded zither: Instrument similar to Autoharp with a flat sounding box and 30-40 strings.

Classroom instruments: Typical instruments include recorders, recorder-type, Autoharps, mallet instruments, simple percussion, fretted (e.g., guitar, banjo), keyboards, and electronic instruments.

Clef: Symbol at beginning of staff to indicate where the pitches are on the staff.

Commonly used clefs are treble and bass.

Coda: Italian for ending. A section at end of a piece of music.

Common time: Four beats to a measure and a quarter note receives one beat.

Crescendo: Gradually becoming louder.

Cricothyroids: (CT) Muscles that control how long and stiff the vocal bands become.

Decrescendo: See diminuendo.

Diatonic: Scale comprised of 8 tones, e.g., C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C.

Diminuendo: Gradually becoming softer.

Dissonance: Sounds that are dischordant or jarring to a listener.

Dulcimer: String instrument with 3-4 strings usually held across lap (often in hourglass shape. Also call Appalachian or mountain dulcimer.

Duration: Relative longness or shortness of sound.

Dynamics: The nuance or degrees of loudness and softness.

Echo singing, playing: Group or person sings or plays back what is sung or played.

Elemental style: Orff method music with ostinati, bordun, pentatonic scales, and/or layering of parts.

Elements of music: Rhythm, pitch, timbre, harmony, dynamics, texture, form.

Experience: A purposeful activity based upon an objective or objectives.

Expression or expressively: With nuances of dynamics, phrasing, style, and interpretation. Related to emotion.

Falsetto: High pitched voice.

Form: Overall structural organization of music. For example, a section (A), a contrasting section (B), and section A is ABA form (ternary). Other simple forms include AB (binary) and Rondo (e.g., ABACA, ABACADA).

Forte: Loud.

Glissando: Playing or singing a series of consecutive pitches (usually fast).

Half step: Smallest interval on keyboard instrument, e.g., C to C#.

Hand signs: A sign language for pitches (e.g., do, re, mi).

Harmony: Two or more tones played simultaneously.

Improvisation: Performing music spontaneously from imagination. To make-up music on the spot rather than from a written score or from memory.

Interval: Distance from one pitch to another pitch.

Key: See tonal center.

Legato: Smooth, connected.

M.M.: Metronome marking. Similar to BPM.

Macro: (beat). The larger overall steady beat.

Measure: The area between two vertical bars (bar lines) in music notation.

Melisma: In singing the use of one syllable for two or more pitches.

Melody: Arrangement of pitches into a sequence. Linear aspect of music.

Meter: Grouping of steady beats. Duple, triple, or a combination of 2s and 3s.

Metronome: A device to produce various tempi (speeds of steady beat). Abbrev. = m.m.

Micro: (beat). The smaller steady beat; faster than the macro beat.

Middle C: The C nearest to the mid point of the piano keyboard.

Mnemonics: Speech sounds assigned to rhythm durations.

Mother tongue: Learn music as you would learn language (Suzuki & Kodály).

Note: See pitch. Common note durations in common time include eighth (1/2 count), quarter (1 count), half (2 counts), and whole (4 counts).

Orff instruments: The collection of melodic percussion bar instruments developed by Carl Orff in the 1920s.

Ostinato: (Ostinati, pl.). Repeated harmony, rhythm and/or melodic patterns.

Pedal tones: A held out or repeated tone on the tonic (key center).

Pentatonic: Scales comprised of five tones. The most common in folk songs is the gapped pentatonic scale.

Percussion: Pitched and unpitched. Unpitched are instruments such as triangle, finger cymbal or woodblock that sound an indefinite pitch. Pitched sound a definite pitch such as middle C.

Phrase: A musical thought or idea. Similar to a sentence in language.

Piano: Soft. Also a musical instrument.

Piggyback songs: Songs with the same melody but different words.

Pitch: Name for a musical tone. Used interchangeably with note. Also the highness or lowness of a sound.

Prereading: Used to refer to experiences that prepare children for later reading experiences.

Program music: Music that depicts or suggests nonmusical incidents, ideas, or images, e.g., *Peter and the Wolf* is based on a story.

Pulse: See steady beat.

Range: Highest and lowest notes of a piece of music, voice, or instrument.

Register: A range of pitches of a voice or instrument.

Rest: A music symbol indicating silence.

Ritardando: Gradually slower.

Root: Also tonic, home tone. Lowest pitch of a chord.

Scale: A series of pitches (see diatonic, pentatonic).

Skip: Interval of pitches more than one alphabet letter name away from another (e.g., C to F).

Solfa: See solfège. Sometimes called tonic solfa.

Solfège: Also solfa, solmization. Using do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti for pitches.

Solmization: See solfège.

Staccato: Crisp, detached manner. Short sound.

Staff: Music notation system. Five spaced horizontal lines.

In percussion music can be one or two horizontal lines.

Steady beat: Also beat, pulse, heartbeat, tempo. Recurring pulse of the music.

Stick notation: Simple shorthand for rhythmic notation.

Syncopation: Accent on a beat or part of beat not ordinarily accented.

Tempo: Speed of the steady beat.

Thyroarytenoids: (TA) Muscles that control the amount of opening between the vocal bands.

Timbre: Tone color. Quality of tones.

Time signature: Two numbers at beginning of music that indicate the number and note value of a measure.

Tonal center: Also key center. The first pitch of a scale or the home pitch. Melodies often gravitate toward the tonal center.

Tonic: The pitch that is the tonal center.

Triad: Three pitches sounded simultaneously. Types include major, minor, and augmented. Each type has a distinctly different sound.

Vocal ligament: Part of vocal apparatus required to develop singing range. Also referred to as the true vocal cord structure.

Vocal register: Term used to describe what we think is physically happening inside the larynx when we hear changes in the quality of tone in a voice. Also registration events, or shifts, or breaks.