

Musical Elements

Musical Element	Questions to think about:
Articulation	Do you hear crisp, jagged articulations or soft and smooth ones? What techniques are used to cause notes to sound?
Beat	Is the beat steady or does it change? If it changes, how often and how suddenly does the beat change?
Duration	Do you hear short, quick notes or long and sustained ones?
Dynamics	Is the music soft or loud? Does the volume change or remain constant? If it changes, how often and how suddenly does the volume change?
Form	How many distinct sections do you hear? How many lines, phrases or bars are in each section? Do you hear sections that recur or repeat? What is the overall structure of the piece?
Harmony	What is the feeling, vibe or atmosphere created by the music? What types of scales and chords do you hear predominantly? Would you describe the character of the chords as pleasing and harmonious, clashing and dissonant, or somewhere in between?
Melody	Does the music feature distinct tunes, motifs or themes? What melodic ideas stand out as being particularly memorable?
Meter	What is the time signature of the piece? Does the time signature change? If so, how often does the time signature change?
Pitch	Do you hear low notes, high notes or a combination of different registers? Does the range of the notes you hear remain constant or change throughout the piece?
Rhythm	Do you hear rhythms that are simple or complex? Do you hear much syncopation? Are there many different rhythms or one or two predominant ones? Do you hear much rhythmic layering?
Tempo	Is the speed of the music slow, fast or somewhere in between? Does the music speed up or slow down? If the speed changes, how do you describe the changes?
Texture	Do you hear one single instrument, a few instruments or many instruments layered together? Does the texture change throughout the piece? Is the piece best described as monophonic, homophonic, or polyphonic?
Timbre	What instruments or combinations of instruments do you hear? Are particular families of instruments emphasized? How might you describe the tone colour of the music?