

Glossary



The Interrelated Dimensions of Music	
Pulse	The regular heartbeat of the music; its steady beat
Rhythm	Long and short sounds or patterns that happen over the pulse
Pitch	High and low sounds
Tempo	The speed of the music; fast or slow or in-between
Dynamics	How loud or quiet the music is
Timbre	All instruments, including voices, have a certain sound quality e.g. the trumpet has a very different sound quality to the violin
Texture	Layers of sound; layers of sound working together make music very interesting to listen to
Structure	Every piece of music has a structure e.g. an introduction, verse and chorus ending
Notation	The link between sound and symbol

A-Z of Key Words		First introduced? <small>As key vocabulary in units of work</small>
A Capella	Without accompaniment from instruments, i.e. voices only	N/A
Acoustic Guitar	A guitar that does not require electrical amplification, having a hollow body that amplifies the string vibrations	Y4
Amplifier	An amplifier in music is an electronic device that increases the volume of an instrument or audio signal	Y5
Appraising	Listening carefully and considering aspects of the music	Y5
Arrangements	How voices and instruments are used in a song; where they occur within the song	N/A
Audience	The assembled spectators or listeners at a public event such as a play, film, concert, or meeting	Y1
Back Beats	Beats 2 and 4 in a drum-line or if we are clapping along with the music	Y5
Backing	The accompaniment to a song	N/A
Backing Loops	Pre-recorded audio recordings that musicians use to play along with	Y5
Backing Vocals	A form of vocal accompaniment that supports the lead singer in a song	Y3
Balance	The level of volume at which players or singers play. If the balance is good then everyone can be heard	N/A
Ballad	A gentle love song	Y5
Band	Playing/singing/performing together	N/A
Baroque	Relating to or denoting a style of European architecture, music, and art of the 17th and 18th centuries that followed Mannerism and is characterized by ornate detail. In architecture the period is exemplified by the palace of Versailles and by the work of Wren in England. Major composers include Vivaldi, Bach, and Handel; Caravaggio and Rubens are important baroque artists.	Y1
Bass	1. The lowest adult male singing voice 2. Denoting the member of a family of instruments that is the lowest in pitch	Y1
Bass Line	A low-pitched sequence of notes that provides the foundation for a song's harmony and rhythm	Y5
Big Bands	A large group of musicians playing jazz or dance music	Y5

Glossary



A-Z of Key Words		First introduced? <small>As key vocabulary in units of work</small>
Birdsong	The musical vocalisations of a bird or birds, typically uttered in bursts or phrases for territorial purposes	Y4
Blues	A style of music characterised by its harmonic structure and the notes used to create the melodies	Y1
Bossa Nova	A Brazilian dance music that has syncopated guitar rhythms	Y5
Brass Section	A group of musicians in a band or orchestra who play brass instruments. It's a key section in many ensembles, including orchestras, concert bands, and jazz bands	Y5
Bridge/middle 8	Contrasting section which leads back to main material	Y5
By Ear	To play music without sheet music, meaning you either remembered the music or improvised it	Y4
Call and response	A musical structure where a solo person sings or plays a musical idea and the rest of the performers sing or play a different musical idea	N/A
Chord	More than one note played at the same time	Y6
Choreography	The art of creating or arranging music	Y4
Chorus	A repeated section in a song which gives the main message	Y3
Classical music	This often means all Western art music from the Medieval era to the present. More specifically, it is music composed between c.1720 and 1840, e.g. the era of Mozart, Joseph Haydn, and the young Beethoven	N/A
Coda	Short section which brings the song or piece to an end	N/A
Composing	Creating and developing musical ideas and 'fixing' them	Y1
Composition	The process of writing or creating a piece of music. The piece itself is also called a composition	Y4
Cover	A version of a song performed by someone other than the original artist. It might sound a bit or very different from the original	Y5
Crossover	Can be a mixture of different styles which introduces new music to different audiences	N/A
Decks	Equipment used by DJs, MCs, and Rappers to mix sounds from different records and to make effects e.g. scratching that was first used in the late 1970s	Y1
Digital Sounds	Sound that has been converted into a series of numbers, or bits, that can be stored and played back electronically	Y4
Disco	(short for discotheque) is dance music from the 1970s, characterized by hypnotic rhythm, repetitive lyrics and electronically produced sounds	Y3
Drums	A percussion instrument sounded by being struck with sticks or the hands, typically cylindrical, barrel-shaped, or bowl-shaped, with a taut membrane over one or both ends	Y1
Drum loops	A sequence of sounds/music that is recorded, may be sampled, and is reproduced digitally or electronically	N/A
Dynamics	A musical dimension indicating how loudly or quietly the music is being played	Y2
Electric Guitar	A guitar with a built-in pickup or pickups which convert string vibrations into electrical signals for amplification	Y2
Ending	Short section which brings the song or piece to an end	N/A
Ensemble	A French word used to describe playing, singing or performing together	N/A
Folk tunes/melodies	Music sung or played by people, usually not recorded or performed. Often the music is passed down through families and friends	N/A
Frets	The thin strips of material, usually metal wire, inserted laterally at specific positions along the neck or fretboard of a stringed instrument	Y6

Glossary



A-Z of Key Words		First introduced? <small>As key vocabulary in units of work</small>
Funk	Music with strong bass lines and a heavy syncopated beat	YR
Glockenspiel	A musical percussion instrument having a set of tuned metal pieces mounted in a frame and struck with small hammers	Y2
Gospel	Music that is Christian usually sung with rich harmony and often with a call and response structure	N/A
Groove	The rhythmic part of the music that makes you want to move and dance	Y1
Grime	Electronic dance music that emerged in London in the early 2000s. It developed out of a British electronic music style called UK Garage, and draws influences from Jungle, Dancehall, and Hip Hop. It has been described as the "most significant musical development within the UK for decades"	N/A
Guitar	A stringed musical instrument, with a fretted fingerboard, typically incurved sides, and six or twelve strings, played by plucking or strumming with the fingers or a plectrum	Y1
Harmony	Different notes sung or played at the same time to produce chords	Y5
Head	The headstock (or head) is the top part of the ukulele located at the end of the neck	Y6
Hip Hop	Music that developed in the 1970s but remains very popular today. It includes rapping	N/A
Hook	A term used in Pop music to describe a short catchy phrase or riff that we can't stop singing; the bit that 'hooks' us in; the main musical idea from a song that we remember	Y3
Imagination	The faculty or action of forming new ideas, or images or concepts of external objects not present to the senses	Y1
Improvise	To make up a tune and play it on the spot. There is an assumption that it can never be recreated	Y1
Interlude	A passage of music played between the main theme	Y5
Introduction	Music heard at the beginning of a song or piece of music	Y3
Irish Folk	A rich tradition of music, storytelling, and cultural practices that originated in Ireland	Y1
Jazz	A musical style that's characterized by improvisation, syncopated rhythms, and complex harmonies	Y5
Keyboard	An electric instrument played like the piano. It has a range of pre-recorded sounds	Y1
Latin	The genre is known for its fusion of African rhythms and Spanish guitar traditions, driven by the clave rhythm and the use of instruments like the tres guitar, maracas, bongos, and trumpets	Y1
Lyrics	The words of a song	Y4
Melody	Another name for tune	Y1
Melodic	The music has a melody or tune	N/A
Motown	A 1960s label created from Soul music characterised by a rhythm section playing, laying down the groove with a funky bassline and a tambourine sounding over the top. Often brass sections play punchy riff based rhythms and sometimes violins playing long high notes	Y6
Musical Style	The characteristics of a piece of music that distinguish it from others.	Y4
Neck	The neck is the part of certain string instruments that projects from the main body and is the base of the fingerboard, where the fingers are placed to stop the strings at different pitches	Y6

Glossary



A-Z of Key Words		First introduced? <small>As key vocabulary in units of work</small>
Neo-Soul	The style emerged from Soul and contemporary RnB. The instrumentation, arrangement and studio mix are very important. Songs are mixed in the studio to sound as if they are from an older Soul era like the Motown era. The modern way in which the songs are produced, give a timeless Soul feel that has a contemporary edge.	Y6
Notation	Ways to visually represent music	Y4
Note	A note in music is a symbol that represents a musical sound, its pitch, and its duration. Notes are the basic building blocks of music	Y5
Note names	The note names in music are the letters A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. These letters are used to represent the pitch of a note	Y5
Offbeat	The beat that is not the strong beat. If a piece of music has 4 beats in a bar i.e. 1, 2, 3, 4, beats 2 and 4 would be the 'off' beats	N/A
Old-School Hip Hop	The original style of hip hop music, created in the 1970s and 1980s	Y5
Organ	Organ usually refers to church organs but is also used to describe a type of electric keyboard that is large and with 2 or 3 keyboards and foot pedals	Y3
Original	The first ever version of a song	N/A
Ostinato	A short repeated rhythmic or melodic pattern	N/A
Outro	Short section which brings the song or piece to an end	N/A
Pentatonic Scale	A fixed five-note pattern e.g: the five black keys on a piano	Y3
Percussion	Musical instruments played by striking with the hand or with a stick or beater, or by shaking, including drums, cymbals, xylophones, gongs, bells, and rattles	Y1
Performing	Singing and playing instruments for others to hear	YR
Phrase	A musical sentence	YR
Piano	A large keyboard musical instrument with a wooden case enclosing a soundboard and metal stings, which are struck by hammers when the keys are depressed.	Y4
Pitch	A musical dimension that describes the range of high and low sounds	YR
Pop music	A shortened form of 'Popular music'. Pop music constantly changes as we change and the world changes	N/A
Pre-chorus	A short section in a song, before the chorus	N/A
Producer	A record producer or music producer oversees and manages the sound recording and production of a band or performer's music	Y6
Pulse/beat	The heartbeat or steady beat of a song/piece of music	YR
Question and Answer	Question and answer in music is a musical form where one phrase asks a question and another phrase answers it. It's also known as call and response.	Y2
Rapping	A vocal technique in which the performer speaks rhythmically against a steady beat	YR
Recurring theme	A tune that repeats again and again in a piece of music	N/A
Reggae	Developed in the 1970s and originated from Jamaica, Reggae defined by Bob Marley. It has a prominent bass beat and a strong off-beat usually played on the guitar	Y2
Rhythm	A musical dimension that describes the combination of long and short sounds to make patterns	YR
Rhythm Patterns	A rhythm pattern is a repeated sequence of sounds and silences that create the pace and timing of a song	Y4

Glossary



A-Z of Key Words		First introduced? <small>As key vocabulary in units of work</small>
Riff	A short repeated phrase, often played on a lead instrument such as guitar, piano or saxophone	Y3
Rock music	Came from Rock'n'roll of America in the 1950s and 1960s. It is characterised by loud guitars and drums due to the heavy amplification, strong bass line and driving rhythms	Y2
Roots Reggae	Music that deals with social and racial issues and references elements of Rastafari	N/A
Sampling	Record a sample of music, a small section, and re-use it in another piece of music or song. Used frequently in hip-hop and other Pop music	N/A
Saxophone	A member of a family of metal wind instruments with a reed like that of a clarinet, used especially in jazz and dance music	Y1
Scratching	A DJ technique that involves moving a vinyl record back and forth on a turntable to create rhythmic sounds	Y5
Secular	Not connected with religious or spiritual matters	N/A
Singing	The activity of performing songs or tunes by making musical sounds with the voice	Y1
Solo	An Italian word to describe playing, singing or performing of one person or on our own	Y4
Soul	A kind of pop music incorporating elements of rhythm and blues and gospel, performed especially by black American musicians. Characterized by an emphasis on vocals and an impassioned improvisatory delivery	Y5
Sound Hole	A sound hole is an opening in the body of a stringed instrument that allows sound to escape.	Y6
Strings	Flexible, stretched structures that vibrate to produce sound. They are found on stringed instruments like violins, guitars, and pianos	Y5
Structure/form/shape	How the sections (verses and choruses etc.) of a song are ordered to make the whole piece	Y3
Strumming	Strumming is a way of playing a stringed instrument. A strum or stroke is a sweeping action where a finger or plectrum brushes over several strings to generate sound.	Y6
Style	The type of music e.g. Blues or Rock	N/A
Style Indicators	Identifiers that show us the genre of the music	Y6
Swing	A type of rhythm often associated with Jazz. Notes in the rhythm pattern are made longer and shorter to create a syncopated effect	N/A
Syncopation	Music with lots of rhythmic variety, often quite difficult. The strong beats occur in unexpected places	Y5
Synthesizer	An electric instrument that looks like a keyboard and has pre-recorded and created sounds	Y3
Tag	(Usually) a short ending, tagged on to the main part of the song	Y5
Tempo	A musical dimension that describes how fast or slowly the music is played	YR
Texture	A musical dimension that describes the layers of sound in music	Y3
Timbre	A musical dimension that describes the quality and character of the sound of the instruments used	Y5
Trumpet	A brass musical instrument with a flared bell and a bright, penetrating tone. The modern instrument has the tubing looped to form a straight-sided coil, with three valves	Y1
Turntables	(typically 2) are used by DJs to manipulate sounds and create new music, sound effects, mixes and other creative sounds and beats	Y4

Glossary



A-Z of Key Words		First introduced? <small>As key vocabulary in units of work</small>
Tune/Head	"tune" refers to the melody of a song, while "head" is a jazz term for the main part of a song's melody	Y5
Tuning Keys	Tuning keys are knobs or pegs that adjust the tension and pitch of strings on an instrument	Y6
Ukulele	A small four-stringed guitar of Hawaiian origin	Y6
Unison	Everyone plays or sings the same music at the same time	YR
Urban contemporary	Modern music that uses elements of Soul, Hip Hop, Funk, Jazz and RnB	N/A
Values	Values refer to the length of time, or duration, of a note. These values are also known as note values or time values.	Y5
Verse	A section in a song which has the same tune but different words	Y3