



SWGS KS3 VOCABULARY LIST: MUSIC

This list consolidates key vocabulary in the subject, making it easier for you to know, understand and use it accurately. This may be provided as a pre-filled glossary or a word list to complete. Your teachers will use this vocabulary frequently, and you will encounter it in reading. You will be expected to learn meanings and spellings.

The Musical Elements

Articulation	A lot like punctuation in music. It tells you how to play a specific note or chord such as a slur, staccato or an accent
Dynamics	Volumes of sound in music
Harmony	The sounding of two or more notes at the same time
Instrumentation	The particular combination of musical instruments used in a composition
Melody	A collection of musical notes to a rhythm, often called a 'tune'
Metre	This describes the number of beats in a bar – it is how we identify the pulse or count the steady beat in a piece of music
Pitch	The term for how high or low the note sounds
Rhythm	The arrangement of notes of different lengths
Structure	The order the different sections of a song or piece of music are played in
Tempo	The speed at which a piece of music is played
Texture	The effect of the different layers of sound in a piece of music and the relationship between them
Timbre	The specific tone or quality that a certain instrument or voice has
Tonality	The overall sound of a piece of music as defined by the key it is played in

Music Theory

Accelerando	Getting faster
Adagio	Slow
Allegro	Fast
Andante	At a walking pace
Bar	A segment of music on a score bounded by vertical lines
Barline	A vertical line through the stave on a score, to mark the music into sections, each with a set amount of beats within
Bass	Describes notes of low pitch
Beat	A basic unit of time in music
Chord	The sounding of two or more notes at the same time
Clef	The symbol drawn at the beginning of each stave, indicating the pitch of the notes that follow it.
Crescendo	Gradually louder
Crotchet	A note that lasts for 1 beat
Diminuendo	Gradually softer
Dotted	A dot written after note lengthens it by half its value
Forte	Loud
Key signature	An instruction at the beginning of written music telling the performer which sharps or flats are used, indicating what the key the piece is in
Ledger line	A short line added for notes above or below the range of a stave

Mezzo Forte	Moderately loud
Mezzo Piano	Moderately quiet
Minim	A note that lasts for 2 beats
Piano	Quiet
Pulse	The steady beat that underlies a piece of music
Quaver	A note that lasts for half a beat
Rallentando/Ritardando	Getting slower
Rest	A type of symbol that indicates that a the musician should not play
Semibreve	A note that lasts for 4 beats
Semiquaver	A notes that lasts for a quarter of a beat
Time signature	An instruction written at the beginning of written music, indicating how many beats there are in the bar.
Treble	Describes notes of high pitch
Triad	A chord containing 3 notes, usually the 1st, 3rd and 5th notes of the scale it is named after