



How was music used in the Maya civilisation?

Applying Past Knowledge

This learning links to:

Year 3: Using rhythms to create an Anglo Saxon monster composition.

Year 4: Understanding how Ancient Egyptian music was used and composing disaster music using dynamics and pitch.

Year 5: Composing using dynamics, pitch and tempo on a space theme and for a mythical creature like the Firebird.

Key Vocabulary

Dynamics: Volume

- ⇒ Forte: Loud
- ⇒ Piano: quiet.
- ⇒ Diminuendo: getting quieter
- ⇒ Crescendo: getting louder

Tempo: Speed

- ⇒ Largo: slow
- ⇒ Andante: steady
- ⇒ Presto: quick

Rhythm: the pattern of the notes

Melody: the combination of pitch and rhythm

1. How do we know music was used in the Maya civilisation?

- Music was important and it was played during many celebrations and events.
- Paintings of Maya playing instruments have been found on vases.
- Drums were made of wood, hides and turtle shells.
- Conch shells were used as trumpets.
- Flutes made from clay have been found.

2. How was Maya music structured?

- Instruments would start and play at different times during the music.
- As more instruments enter:
 - ⇒ the **dynamics** increase.
 - ⇒ the **tempo** increases.

3. How can I create a melody for a Maya piece?

- Put combinations of the notes FACE & EGBDF in different orders to create a melody.
- Include a rest.

4. What rhythms could I use with my melody?

- Create rhythms using the syllables in topic vocabulary
- Combine the rhythms with notes to create a melody.

5. Can I compose a piece of music in the style of the Maya?

- Combine your melody and rhythms together.
- Decide which instruments will start and how you will structure your composition.
- How will you change dynamics and tempo?

