

THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

Victorian Curriculum F–10

rhythm

long sounds and short sounds
combined with silence in
patterns

beat

the underlying pulse
of a piece of music,
like a heartbeat

pulse

regular

metre

the organisation of
beats into groups

1234...1234

tempo

the speed of a
piece of music

speed

time

form & structure

the plan or design of a piece of music

things
that are
the same

things
that are
different

the order of
ideas in the
piece

ternary (ABA)

repetition

variation

structure

binary (AB)

rondo (ABACA)

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melody

higher and lower pitches
sung or played one
after another

harmony

higher and lower pitches sung
or played at the same time

pitch

the highness or
lowness of sound

the tune

chord

different pitches
played at the
same time

accompaniment

supports the melody by using notes
from chords

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expression

using dynamics and articulation to create an effect

dynamics

the softness or loudness of sounds

forte f (loudly)

piano p (softly)

articulation

the way higher and lower sounds are sung or played to create an effect

staccato (detached)

legato (smooth and connected)

accented



VICTORIAN CURRICULUM
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timbre

the particular tone, colour or quality of sounds

ways to describe tone colour or tone quality

bright melody

warm vocals
piercing flute

raspy trumpet
foreboding drums

texture

the layers of sound in a musical work and the relationship between them

ways to describe texture or layers of sound

thick (with many layers or parts)

thin (with few layers or parts)

unison (all the instruments or voices on the same line)