

Musical Elements

Tempo(s) - literally 'speed.' Using Italian **terminology**, how fast or slow is this cue? Are there changes in the tempo? Are they gradual or abrupt changes? Do you feel the tempo is appropriate for the lyrics or mood? If not, should it be faster or slower?

Dynamic level(s) - literally 'volume'—how loud (*forte*) or soft (*piano*) is this cue? (using the Italian **terminology** we'll learn) Dynamics tend to fluctuate a lot in music, so how does this particularly cue progress? Are changes sudden or gradual? What Italian terms are appropriate? Do the dynamics enhance the cue's meaning?

Italian Tempo Terms:

Adagio	Slow
Andante	Walking Speed
Moderato	Moderate
Allegro	Fast
Presto	Very Fast
Accelerando	Speed up gradually
Ritardando	Slow down gradually

Italian Dynamic Level Terms:

Pianissimo	Very soft
Piano	Soft
Mezzopiano	Somewhat soft
Mezzoforte	Somewhat loud
Forte	Loud
Fortissimo	Very loud
Crescendo	Grow gradually louder
Diminuendo	Grow gradually softer

Quick changes in dynamics or tempo are called **subito** (sudden)

Rhythm - Is the rhythm prominent? Is the beat steady? (Are your toes tapping?) Can you tell what the **meter** is? Do you notice other rhythmic devices, such as **dotted rhythms** or **syncopation**?

Medium (Timbre / Tone Color) - the performers needed for the cue (both vocal and instrumental!)

Harmony – does the music sound **consonant** (stable) or **dissonant** (unstable/jarring)?

Mode - is the mode (scale/key) **major** or **minor** in this cue? Does it change at all? Is the mode appropriate for the situation?

Melody - we will discuss the terms '**conjunct**' and '**disjunct**'—which would apply? Does the melody seem memorable? What contour does the melody have? (I.e. Does it go particularly high or low, or does it stay in the middle of the singer's range?) Is there more than one recognizable melody? How do they differ? How long are the **phrases**?

Texture(s) - we will discuss several textures in class: '**monophony**', '**homophony**', and '**polyphony**' (a.k.a. **counterpoint**), both imitative and non-imitative. Does the texture change at any point in the piece? What's the most prominent texture in the song? Does the music make use of **ostinato**?

Style - does the music seem to fall under a particular style label (i.e. jazz, swing, rap, ballad, rock, operatic, etc.)? What other elements create this style? (Instrumentation, etc.)

(If the cue consists of a song:) - how would you describe the poetry? Is it continually changing, or do you hear a lot of **repetition** of text? Do the words seem 'important,' or is the emphasis on the melody?