

Terms and Signs for Grade 5 Theory

Lesson 1

Dynamics

fortissimo	ff	very loud
forte	f	loud
mezzo forte	mf	moderately loud
mezzo piano	mp	moderately quiet
piano	p	quiet
pianissimo	pp	very quiet
fortepiano	fp	loud, then immediately quiet
sforzando/sforzato	sf / sfz	forced / accented

> (above or below notes) accented - play it with emphasis



(Witches' hat accents)

more accented than >
often called "marcato" or "marc."

crescendo (cresc.) gradually becoming louder

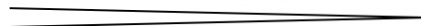
also



decrescendo (decresc.) - gradually becoming quieter

diminuendo (dim.) - gradually becoming quieter

also



a niente		to nothing (eg dim. a niente)
morendo		dying away
perdendosi		dying away
rinforzando	rf, rfz	reinforcing
smorzando (smorz)		dying away
sotto voce		in an undertone (literally under the voice)

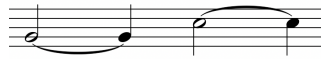
Articulation

legato
legatissimo

smoothly
very smoothly



slur (written beneath and above) - play or sing smoothly



tie (written beneath and above) - play as one note for the value of both

staccato (stacc.)

detached



staccatissimo

very detached



tenuto - give the note slight pressure, slightly held



slightly separated - sometimes called semi-staccato




also semi-staccato

Terms concerning repeats

da capo (D.C.)

repeat from the beginning

dal segno (D.S)

repeat from the sign 

fine
al fine
da capo al fine

the end
up to the end
repeat from the beginning up to the end.

al coda

to the "coda" or ending shown by 



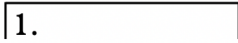
repeat the section between the "repeat bars"
If the first sign is missing, repeat from the beginning

Lesson 2

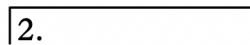
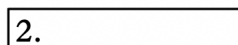
More symbols concerning repeats



repeat the section between the “repeat bars”
If the first sign is missing, repeat from the beginning



first-time bar - in a repeated section play
this the first time



second-time bar - in a repeated section play
this the second time

And where a bar needs to be repeated the following is useful
especially in orchestral music where some instruments will
be repeating patterns



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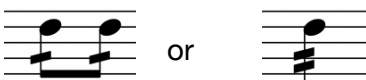


especially if repeated several times!

In orchestral music rather than music for piano you may find the following symbols used to repeat
a note



is shorthand for



or

is shorthand for



Is shorthand for



Italian terms for speed - “Tempo”

RUNNING

prestissimo	very fast
presto	fast (quicker than allegro)

WALKING (fast or brisk walk)

vivace/vivo	lively - quick
con brio	with vigour / lively
con moto	with movement
allegro	quick
allegretto	fairly quick

STROLLING/AMBLING (slower walk)

moderato	at a moderate speed
andante	at a medium or walking speed
andantino	usually slightly faster than andante but used by some as slightly slower than andante

SLOW (even slower!)

adagio	slowly - broadly
lento	slow (slower than adagio)
largamente	broadly
larghetto	rather slow
largo	slow and stately, maybe slower than lento

DEAD SLOW (funeral march speed)

grave	very slow, solemn
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comodo/tempo comodo	convenient / at a comfortable speed
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rubato / tempo rubato	with some freedom of time
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più mosso	more movement, quicker
meno mosso	less movement, slower

accelerando (accel.)	gradually becoming quicker
stringendo	gradually getting faster

rallentando (rall.)	gradually becoming slower
ritardando (ritard. or rit.)	gradually becoming slower
ritenuto (riten. or rit.)	getting slower, held back
allargando	becoming broader, broadening

a tempo	literally “in time” - resume the original speed
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Lesson 3

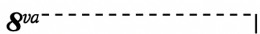
A few more stave symbols



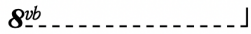
pauses (above and below): wait a little on the note or rest



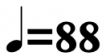
rest for the number of bars indicated (usually seen on orchestral band music parts)



perform an octave higher than written



perform an octave lower than written



metronome mark - Play at a tempo of 88 crotchets per minute

Italian terms for different moods

affetuoso	tenderly
agitato	agitated
amabile	pleasant
animato	animated, lively
appassionato	with passion
cantabile	in a singing style
cantando	singing
con dolore	with grief
con forza	with force
con spirito	with spirit
deciso	with determination
dolce	sweetly
doloroso	sorrowful
energico	energetic
espressivo (espress.)	expressive
giocoso	playful, merry
grazioso	gracefully
leggiero	lightly
alla marcia	in the style of a march
maestoso	majestic
marcato (marc.)	emphatic, accented
mesto	sadly
misterioso	mysterious
molto	very, much
non troppo	not too much

pesante	heavy
poco	a little
poco a poco	little by little, gradually
risoluto	bold, strong
ritmico	rhythmically
scherzando	playful, joking
semplice	simple, plain
sonoro	with resonance
sostenuto (sost.)	sustained
tranquillo	calm
triste, tristamente	sad, sorrowful

ad libitum (ad lib)	at choice
alla breve	with a minim beat (rather than crotchet or quaver)
assai	very (eg Allegro assai - very quick)
attacca	go straight on to the next part of the music without a break
ben	well
col, con	with
come prima	as before
e, ed	and
ma	but
meno	less
non	not
più	more
prima/primo	first
quasi	as if, or resembling
sempre	always
senza	without
simile	in the same way
subito (sub.)	suddenly
troppo	too much

French terms	German terms	meaning	Italian equivalent
animé	lebhaft	animated, lively	animato
douce		sweet	dolce
lent	langsam	slow	lento / adagio
modéré	mässig	at a moderate speed	moderato
retenu		held back	ritenuto
vite	schnell	quick	allegro
	ruhig	peaceful	tranquillo
	traurig	sad	mesto