

### 3. Intensity

The force of sound



## BLOCK 1 MUSICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS. LISTENING

### 1.1. INTENSITY

1. Listen to these four fragments from the film *Gladiator* and see if you can detect the differences in intensity in the dialogues.

**Listening 1** *General Maximus' speech to his troops*

**Listening 2** *Conversation between Commodus and his sister*

**Listening 3** *Meeting in the Senate*

**Listening 4** *In the circus arena*



- a. After listening to the four exercises, place them in the right order, from more intensity to less intensity.

1. *In the circus arena*
2. *General Maximus' speech to his troops*
3. *Meeting in the Senate*
4. *Conversation between Commodus and his sister*

- b. Now look at the pictures from each scene.



## 1.2. LOUD AND SOFT SOUNDS

2. Listen to the sounds of the following instruments. Each of them produce a sound with a certain intensity. Complete the blanks below with an *f* if it sounds loud and a *p* if it sounds soft. Write the name of the instrument as well.

	INSTRUMENT	INTENSITY 1	INTENSITY 2
Listening 5	<i>piano</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>F</i>
Listening 6	<i>congas</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Listening 7	<i>clarinet</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>F</i>



## 1.3. DYNAMICS AND DYNAMIC MARKINGS

3. Fill in the blanks below with the right abbreviation and the right definition of how it is played.

*dim.* / *ff* / accenting each note / *mf* / increasing gradually in intensity  
 / *sfz* / medium loud / medium soft / decreasing gradually in intensity /  
*cresc.* / very loud / *mp*

	Abbreviation	Interpretation
• mezzo piano	<i>mp</i>	<i>medium soft</i>
• crescendo	<i>cresc.</i>	<i>gradual increase in intensity</i>
• fortissimo	<i>ff</i>	<i>very loud</i>
• diminuendo	<i>dim.</i>	<i>gradual decrease in intensity</i>
• mezzo forte	<i>mf</i>	<i>medium loud</i>
• sforzando	<i>sfz</i>	<i>accenting or stressing the note</i>

4. Write in the right terms from the exercise above in their corresponding intensity.

## Stable intensity

*mezzopiano**fortissimo**mezzoforte*

## Variable intensity

*crescendo**diminuendo**sforzando*

5. a. Identify the name of 6 types of dynamic markings in this letter soup.



- b. Now classify these dynamic markings depending on whether they indicate:

1. A stable intensity or volume: *forte, piano, pianissimo, fortissimo*

2. A variable intensity or volume: *diminuendo, crescendo*

6. From the dynamic markings used in this score, say which ones indicate changes in intensity and explain what change is indicated.



*1st mf: mezzoforte (medium loud); 2nd hairpin: crescendo (gradually increasing in intensity); 3rd f: forte (loud); 4th hairpin: diminuendo (gradually decreasing in intensity); 5th p: piano (soft)*

7. Explain “dynamic marking” and “dynamics”.

*The term dynamic marking refers to the signs that normally use abbreviated Italian words to indicate changes in intensity.*

*Dynamics refers to the intensity or volume at which a piece of music should be played.*

8. Listen carefully to the following tracks and answer the questions.

**Listening 8** *Oberto* G. Verdi

Identify the dynamic marking used in this work. *f: (forte - loud)*

**Listening 9** *Larghetto from Symphony No. 5* G. Mahler

Identify the dynamic marking used in this work. *pp: (pianissimo - very soft)*

**Listening 10** *La Traviata* G. Verdi

- Do you think there is a change in intensity, or does the intensity remain stable throughout this fragment? *Yes. There is a change in intensity.*
- If you think there is a change in intensity, say whether it is sudden or gradual. *Soft.*
- Write the dynamic markings you think are right for the four pieces below.

*f**p**f**p*

**Listening 11** *Dido and Aeneas* H. Purcell

- Do you think the dynamic change in this piece is the same as the preceding one, or is the change more sudden? *The change is more sudden.*
- Listen to this piece carefully and complete the boxes with *p* or *f* as you hear the changes in intensity.

*f**p**f**p**f**p**f**p**f**p**f**p**f**p**f**p**f**p**f**p*








**Listening 12** *In the Hall of the Mountain King* E. Grieg

- Do you think the intensity remains stable or does it vary? *The intensity varies.*
- Write the term and the sign used to indicate the intensity of this fragment. *Crescendo (cresc.)*



9. The Czech composer Bedrich Smetana musically recreates different scenes of the Moldau river along its 430 km course through Bohemia, in his tone poem called *The Moldau*. This work is rich in dynamics, used by the composer to describe in music all the different scenery through which the river passes, from its source to its mouth. Listen to each fragment carefully and write in the right dynamic marking.

*pp* / *p* / *mf* / *f* / *ff* /  $\angle$  /  $\triangleright$

	Listening Exercise	Dynamic marking
	<b>Listening 13</b> The Source of the Moldau River. The flute and the clarinet imitate the sounds of two springs that flow out of the mountain.	<i>pp</i>
	<b>Listening 14</b> The course of the river. The waters of the Moldau flow peacefully down the course of the river.	<i>p</i>
	<b>Listening 15</b> The hunt in the woods. We can hear the sounds of a hunt along the banks of the river.	<i>f</i>
	<b>Listening 16</b> The peasant wedding. Some peasants are celebrating a wedding on the meadows near the river, singing and dancing.	<i>mf</i>
	<b>Listening 17</b> Moonlight. The dawn is coming and the sounds of a new day can be heard little by little.	$\angle$
	<b>Listening 18</b> The rapids. Near the rapids of St John the water flows furiously through the narrow gorge with a thundering sound.	<i>ff</i>
	<b>Listening 19</b> The river flows out to the sea. After passing the old castle, the river continues along its wide course, fading out onto the horizon.	$\triangleright$

#### 1.4. NOISE POLLUTION

10. a. Draw up a list of sounds you can hear in your town or city and classify them as harmful or not harmful. *Free answer.*
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Can you think of any solution to avoid this type of noise pollution? *Free answer.*
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Identify the ambient sounds you can hear or the objects producing the sounds and give the approximate decibel level of each sound. You might want to look at the table in your Student's Book for help.

	Sound	Decibel level
<b>Listening 20</b>	<i>People murmuring</i>	<i>10-20 db</i>
<b>Listening 21</b>	<i>Night sounds</i>	<i>5 db</i>
<b>Listening 22</b>	<i>Heavy traffic</i>	<i>70-80 db</i>
<b>Listening 23</b>	<i>Jackhammering on metal</i>	<i>115 db</i>





## CHECK YOUR LEARNING

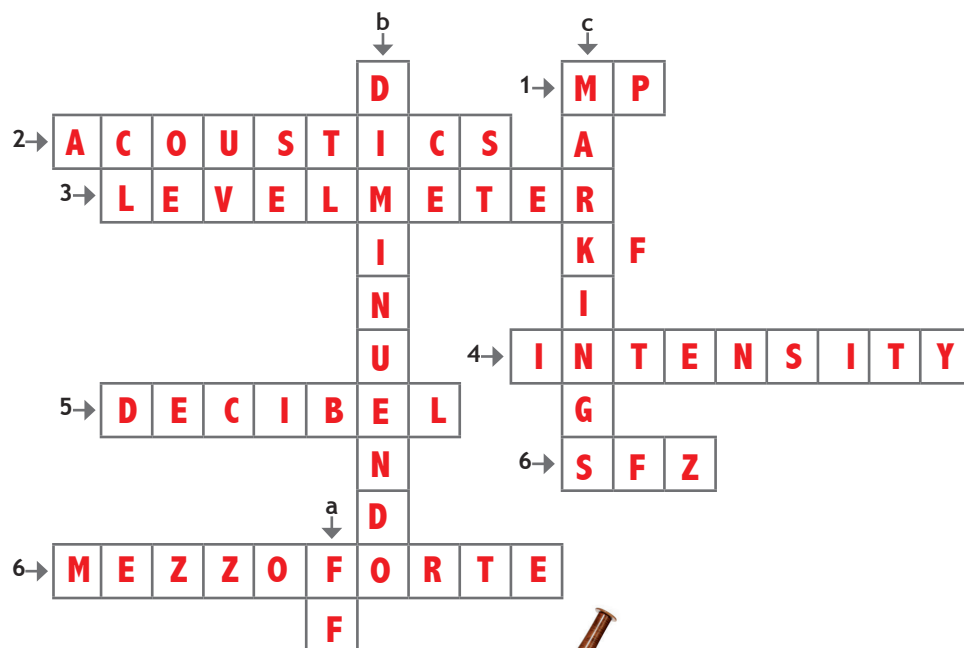
11. Complete the following crossword using the questions below and you'll get a summary of the material from this unit.

**Horizontal**

1. Abbreviation of a dynamic marking indicating a medium soft sound. MP
2. Science that studies phenomena related to sound. Acoustics
3. Device used for the precise measurement of the intensity of sound. Level meter
4. Word referring to changes in the volume of sound. Intensity
5. Unit of measurement of sound intensity. Decibel
6. Abbreviation of a dynamic marking that means that a note should be stressed heavily. SFZ
7. The dynamic marking that indicates the opposite of medium piano. Mezzoforte

**Vertical**

- a. Abbreviation used to indicate a very loud sound. FF
- b. Dynamic volume marking indicating a gradual decrease in intensity. Diminuendo
- c. Name for the signs that normally use abbreviated Italian words to indicate changes in intensity in a musical piece. Markings



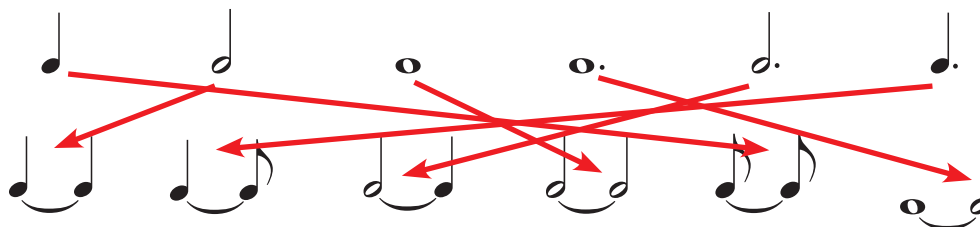


## BLOCK 2 MUSICAL CREATION AND PRACTISE

### 2.1. RHYTHM CREATION



1. Note correspondence.



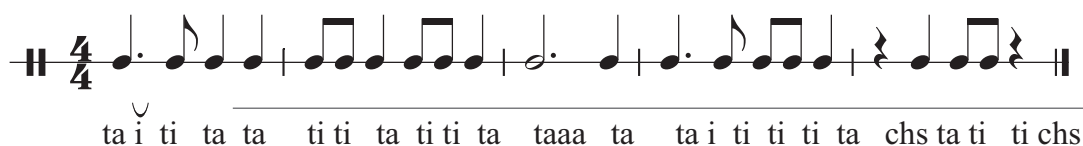
2. Write the number of beats corresponding to the duration of each note.



3. Complete the bars with the notes you think are appropriate.



4. Draw in bar-lines. Now write in the rhythmic syllables for each note.



5. Interpret the rhythms (you can use rhythmic syllables to help). Now listen to them and put them in the right order. Remember that some of these rhythms are in the song *Y punt!*, and it will help you to prepare this exercise.

Listening 24

Listening 25

Listening 26

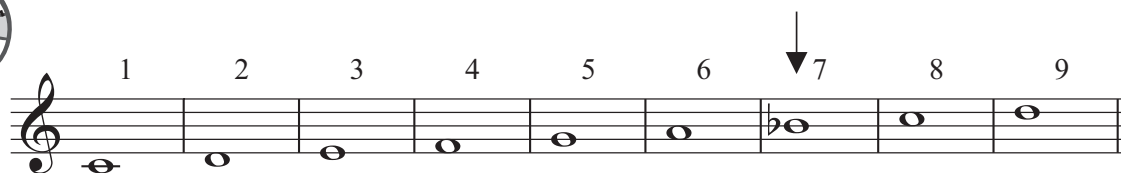
Listening 27



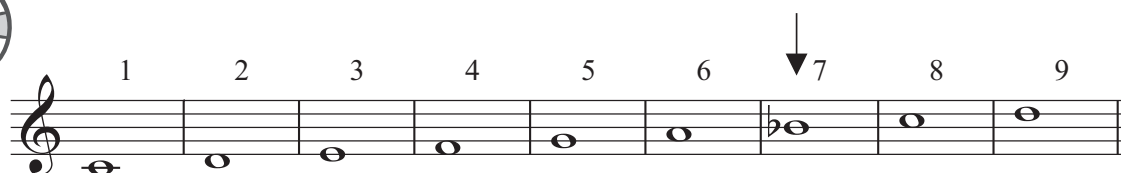
3				
1				
4				
2				

**2.4. MELODY CREATION**

- 6. COMPOSITION.** Continue practising with Bb. Compose a new melody to play over this musical accompaniment, trying to use all the notes you know.



- 7. IMPROVISATION.** Improvise a melody using the sounds you've learned in this unit. The sounds are presented in an orderly manner, but you can interpret them in any order you want. As for notes, although semibreves are used in the scale given here, you can use notes of different duration in your interpretation, as this will make it more varied.

**MUSIC AND TECHNOLOGIES**

The CD ROM provides a series of activities in which you can practise what you've learned in this Unit. .