

Activity 3: Exploring dynamics

The orchestra will play **Mussorgsky's A Night on the Bare Mountain**.



Listen out for the instructions during the lesson. While the orchestra plays, listen carefully to the first eight bars.

What dynamics do you think the music starts with?

- a) Very quiet – gets louder – then quiet – then loud - then quiet again
- b) Loud – gets louder – then quieter
- c) Very loud – gets quieter

During the lesson we'll be introducing you to simple dynamic markings, and how different dynamics can influence the mood and feel of a piece of music.

Here's a useful table of some dynamic markings and what they mean:

SYMBOL	WORD	MEANING
<i>f</i>	forte	loud
<i>p</i>	piano	quiet
<i>ff</i>	fortissimo	very loud
<i>pp</i>	pianissimo	very quiet
<i>mf</i>	mezzo-forte	quite loud
<i>mp</i>	mezzo-piano	quite quiet
	crescendo	getting louder
	diminuendo or decrescendo	getting quieter

Extended activity after the lesson:

Now that you know what each dynamic marking means, try adding them to your composition. Think about how you want your composition to feel, and what dynamics would help get that mood across. You can try writing out your full composition in the space below:

And remember, you don't have to use musical notation if you're a beginner. Try using words to convey the rhythm, and writing down the letters of the notes for the melody.