



# MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: What is TEMPO?

**Age Range:** Elementary

**Learning Objective:** Students will demonstrate awareness and understanding of tempo through correct use of terms and playing and moving in response to tempo prompts.

## ENGAGE students

**WATCH.** Watch the [Class Notes Video: Fast or Slow Means Tempo](#). (3 min.)

## EXPLORE sounds

**DRAW.** Have students draw a blank tempo spectrum chart, like the one [here](#). List the eight tempo markings mentioned in the video from slowest to fastest. If desired, add the descriptors of “slowest, medium, super duper fast, etc” to help students understand. (If you prefer to have the chart ready for the students, download our [Tempo Chart Worksheet](#).)

**BRAINSTORM.** “Underneath each tempo draw a picture of something that often moves at that speed. A snail or turtle might be at the slow end of your chart. A cheetah might be at the fast end. Vehicles, like bikes, cars and airplanes, work well too.”

**PLAY.** Play a game of Tempo Olympics! Create a set of tempo flashcards (or print our [Tempo Flashcards](#).) Begin with just three: [largo](#), [moderato](#) and [presto](#). These represent the slow, middle and fast end of the spectrum. Invite students to pick an activity, such as push-ups or jumping jacks. Pick a flashcard and, all together, perform the designated activity at that tempo. Pick a different card and try the activity at a different tempo. Notice how largo jumping jacks feel very different than presto jumping jacks!

## EXTEND learning

*Choose one or more activities to extend learning.*

**REVIEW.**

- *Younger Students:* Focus on just two tempi with younger students with [this silly video](#) about presto and largo.
- *Older Students:* Designate two sides of the room – one as largo and one as presto. Listen to Bartok’s *Evening in Transylvania* (embedded in web version of lesson) and ask students to change sides of the room when the tempo changes.

**LISTEN.** Use the playlists on the next page to explore the various tempi (the plural of tempo). While listening, students can move, draw, or journal.



# MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: What is TEMPO?

## EXTEND learning

### Recommended selections:

#### Largo:

- S. Rachmaninov, "[Elegie](#)" from *Morceaux de Fantaisie*
- F. Price, "[Largo](#)" from Symphony No. 1
- P. Smith, "[Nunc Dimittis](#)"

#### Moderato:

- S. Roehm, "[Hey Fellas](#)"
- S. Matuzungidi, "[Malembe](#)"
- Traditional (arr. The OK Factor), "[Shenandoah](#)"

#### Presto:

- B. Smetana, "[Dance of the Comedians](#)" from The Bartered Bride
- A. Vivaldi, "[Presto](#)" from "Summer"
- N. Rimsky-Korsakov, "[Flight of the Bumblebee](#)"