LESSON 18

Dynamic Signs

DYNAMIC SIGNS indicate the volume, or how *soft* or *loud* the music should be played. Most musical terms are written in Italian since Italian composers were among the first to write such instructions in their manuscripts.

The word piano in Italian means soft; the word forte means loud.

The most commonly used dynamic signs are:

ITALIAN	SIGN	ENGLISH
piano	${m p}$	soft
forte	f	loud
mezzo piano	mp	moderately soft
mezzo forte	mf	moderately loud
pianissimo	pp	very soft
fortissimo	ff	very loud

Mezzo means moderately; issimo means very.

Dynamic signs arranged in order from very soft to very loud, are: pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff

A Gradual Change in Dynamics

Terms used to indicate a gradual change in volume, from *soft* to *loud* or *loud* to *soft* are:

ITALIAN crescendo or cresc.	SIGN	ENGLISH gradually louder
diminuendo or dim. or decrescendo or decresc.		gradually softer

Exercises

1	Write the Italian word for	f forte	pp pianissimo
	the following dynamic signs:	mp mezzo piano	ff fortissimo
		decrescendo	mf <u>mezzo forte</u>
		p piano	crescendo

Clap the following line, observing the dynamic signs indicated.



Use every dynamic sign learned above at least once to mark the appropriate dynamic signs on the lines beneath the following story.

"Wake up!" whispered Ron to his brother Steven. The boys walked softly out the door. They heard

the moderately soft sound of a distant airplane, which became gradually louder and roared very loudly as it

flew over head, then faded away gradually. Steven said, "Let's play basketball," in a

moderately loud voice. They shouted a loud "Yes!" as they ran to the park.

Tempo Marks

TEMPO is an Italian word meaning "rate of speed." Tempo marks tell how fast or slow the music should be played. Tempo marks are also written in Italian.

_	ITALIAN	ENGLISH
	Largo Adagio	Very slow Slow
	Andante Moderato	Moving along (walking speed) Moderately
	Allegro Vivace	Quickly, cheerfully Lively and fast

Moderato may be combined with other words:
Allegro moderato = slightly slower than Allegro but quicker than Moderato

A Gradual Change of Tempo

© Gradually faster

Slow

Terms used to indicate a gradual change in tempo are:

ITALIAN	TERM	ENGLISH
ritardando	ritard. or rit.	gradually slower
accelerando	accel.	gradually faster

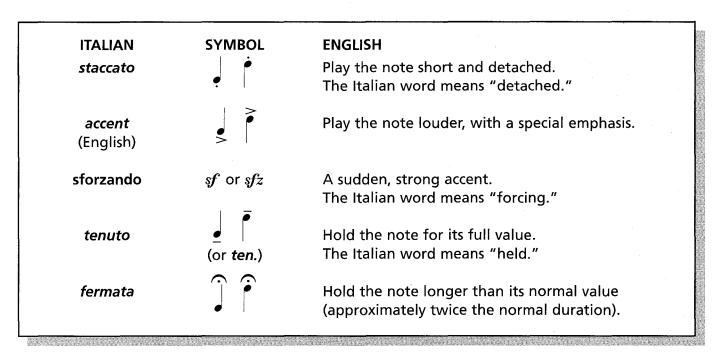
Exercises	
In writing music, tempo marks tell the _	rate of speed
A very slow tempo marking is	argo
A lively and fast tempo marking is	Vivace
Match the Italian term to its English me	aning by writing the correct letter in each blank.
<u> </u>	a. Moderato
<u>d</u> Gradually slower	b. <i>Vivac</i> e
<u>b</u> Lively and fast	c. Adagio
<u>a</u> Moderately	d. <i>Ritardando</i>
_g Moving along (walking speed)	e. <i>Accelerando</i>
f Very slow	f. Largo

g. Andante

h. Allegro

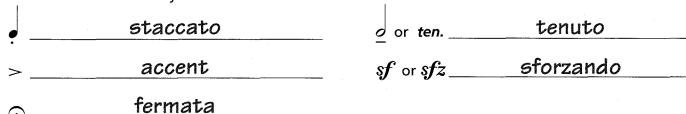
Articulation =

Pages 28 and 29 introduced the words and signs that indicate what speed (slow to fast) and volume (soft to loud) a musical selection is to be played. In addition, notes may be performed in different ways. The manner in which a note is performed is called ARTICULATION. Legato (see page 19) is one form of articulation.

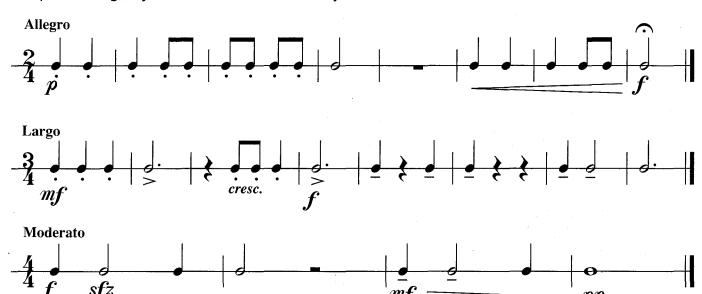


Exercises -

Name the articulation symbols below:



Say the following examples using the syllables "ti" for 8th notes, "ta" for quarter notes, "ta-ah" for half notes, "ta-ah-ah" for dotted half notes and "ta-ah-ah" for whole notes. Observe all tempo markings, dynamics and other musical symbols.



D.C., D.S., Coda and Fine

To reduce the amount of music needed to notate a piece, several additional Italian words and symbols are used by composers to indicate repeats.

ITALIAN	SIGN	ENGLISH
Da Capo	D.C.	Repeat from the beginning
Dal Segno	D.S.	Repeat from the sign $\%$
Fine	Fine	The end
Coda*	•	An added ending

*When the Coda sign appears in the music, it means to skip directly to the Coda, which is an added ending usually marked with the same sign.

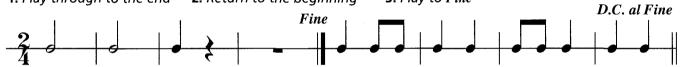
The Italian words and symbols for repeating are frequently combined.

SIGN **ENGLISH**

Repeat from the beginning and play to the end (Fine). D.C. al Fine

1. Play through to the end 2. Return to the beginning

3. Play to Fine



D.S. al Fine Repeat from the sign % and play to the end (Fine).

1. Play through to the end 2. Return to % 3. Play to Fine



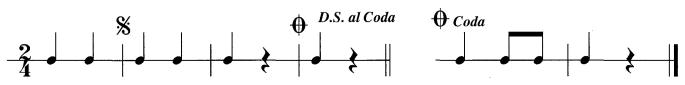
D.C. al Coda Repeat from the beginning and play to θ , then skip to the θ Coda.

3. Play to \oplus **4.** Skip to \oplus Coda and play to the end. 2. Return to the beginning 1. Play to D.C. al Coda



D.S. al Coda Repeat from % and play to \oplus , then skip to the \oplus Coda

2. Return to % 1. Play to D.S. al Coda **3.** Play to \oplus **4.** Skip to \oplus Coda and play to the end.



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EAR TRAINING FOR LESSONS 18-21

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Track 24

Listen to the example and place the following dynamic markings where applicable: f, mf, ff

Symphony No. 9 ("From the New World"), Op. 95

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904)



In the example above, circle the appropriate tempo marking: Largo (Allegro) Andante

Track 25
Listen to the example and notate where the *ritardando (rit.)* and *accelerando (accel.)* occur.



Track 26

Listen to the example and place the following markings in the appropriate places: Fermata (\bigcirc) Sforzando (sfz)



Track 27

Listen to the example and mark accents (>) under the notes that are played accented.

Rondo Alla Turca (from "Sonata in A Major, K. 331")

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)



In the example above, circle the appropriate tempo marking: Vivace Adagio Moderato

Track 28

Listen to the example and write staccato (·) marks under the appropriate quarter notes.



Track 29

Listen to the example and place the following two markings in the appropriate places: sfz

