**Instrumental Music Vocabulary**

**Accelerando**, accel - Gradually play faster.

**Accent** - ( > ) Play the note(s) with more weight (louder).

**Accidental** - A sharp, flat, or natural.

**Adagio** - Slow.

**Allargando**, allarg - Gradually slower.

**Allegro** - Fast.

**Alto Clef** - The clef indicates C as the 3rd line of the staff. Used by the viola.

**Andante** - Medium (walking) tempo.

**Articulation** - The different ways notes can be played, such as: legato, staccato, slurred, etc.

**Arco** - Play with the bow.

**Balance** - The volume of each instrument, or section, to produce the best sound.

**Band** - An instrumental ensemble, made up of wind and percussion instruments.

**Bar Line** - Divides the staff into measures.

**Baroque** - The period 1600-1750.

**Bass Clef** - The clef indicates F as the 4th line of the staff.

**Baton** - Conductor's stick.

**Brass** - Wind instruments including trumpet, cornet, flugelhorn, trombone, tuba, baritone horn, euphonium, and French horn.

**Canon** - The form of imitation where two or more parts have the same melody but start at different points.

**Cantabile** - Singing style.

**Chord** - A combination of two or more tones sounded simultaneously.

**Chromatic Scale** - A scale composed of half steps.
Instrumental Music Vocabulary

Classical - The period 1750-1825.

Common Time - 4/4 meter.

Composer - A person who creates music.

Concert Master - First chair violinist in an orchestra.

Conductor - The person who directs a group of musicians.

Crescendo - Gradually louder.

D.C. AL Fine - Go back to the beginning and play to the fine (ending).

Decrescendo - Gradually softer. Same as diminuendo.

Diminuendo, dim - Gradually softer. Same as decrescendo.

Dolce - Sweetly.

Double Bar - Two lines placed on the staff to indicate the end of a section or the piece.

Double Tonguing - Fast articulation using the front and the back of the tongue (tu-ku-tu-ku, or Deh-Geh-Deh-Geh).

Down Bow - Play from the frog to the tip (right).

Duet - A piece for two players.

Dynamics - Degrees of loud and soft.

Eighth Note/Rest - A note/rest half the length of a quarter note and an eighth the length of a whole note.

Encore - To repeat a piece or play an additional piece at the end of a performance.

Fermata - Hold the note longer than normal.

Fine - The end.

First Ending - Measures played the first time in a repeated section.

Flat - ( b ) Lowers the pitch of a note by a half step.

Form - The design or structure of a musical composition.
Instrumental Music Vocabulary

Forte - Loud.

Fortissimo - Very loud.

Frog - Where the bow is held.

Grand Staff/Great Staff - The G and F clef staves together make the grand (great) staff.

Half Note/Rest - A note/rest one half the length of a whole note and equal to two quarter notes.

Half Step - The closest interval, up or down.

Harmony - The sounding of two or more notes at the same time.

Hooked Bowing - Slurred staccato bowing on notes of uneven rhythm.

Interval - The distance between two notes.

Key Signature - The sharps or flats placed at the beginning of the staff indicate the key of the piece.

Largo - Very slow.

Ledger Lines - Short, temporary lines above or below the staff.

Legato - Smooth and connected.

Lift Sign - (') Reset with a new bow.

Maestoso - Majestically.

Marcato - Emphasized, heavily accented.

Measure - The space between two bar lines.

Medieval - The period 500-1450.

Metronome - Instrument used to indicate beats per minute.

Mezzo - Medium (almost).

Mezzo Forte - Medium (almost) loud.
**Instrumental Music Vocabulary**

**Mezzo Piano** - Medium (almost) soft.

**Middle C** - The note C in the middle of the Grand staff, and near the middle of the piano.

**Moderato** - Moderate speed.

**Musical Alphabet** - A, B, C, D, E, F, G

**Natural Sign** - Cancels a flat or sharp.

**Note** - The symbol which indicates pitch.

**Nuance** - Subtle variations in tempo, phrasing, dynamics, etc., to enhance a musical performance.

**Octave** - The eighth tone above/below a given pitch.

**Open Strings** - Strings are not fingered.

**Orchestra** - An instrumental ensemble, made up of string, wind, and percussion instruments.

**Ostinato** - Repeated melodic or rhythmic pattern.

**Percussion** - Instruments that produce sounds of definite or indefinite pitch when shaken or struck, including drums, rattles, bells, gongs, and xylophones.

**Phrase** - Musical statement.

**Pianissimo** - Very soft.

**Piano** - Soft (whisper).

**Pitch** - The highness or lowness of a note.

**Pizzicato** - Pluck the string. ( + ) = Left-hand pizzicato.

**Quarter Note/Rest** - A note/rest one half the length of a half note and one quarter the length of a whole note.

**Quartet** - A piece for four performers.

**Quintet** - A piece for five performers.

Instrumental Music Vocabulary

**Refrain** - A short section of repeated material which occurs at the end of each stanza.

**Renaissance** - The period 1450-1600.

**Repeat Sign** - ( : ) Play it again.

**Rest** - A symbol used to denote silence.

**Rhythm** - The combination of notes and rests of different length.

**Ritardando**, rit - Gradually slower. Same as rallentando.

**Roll** - On percussion instruments, a sticking technique consisting of a rapid succession of notes:

**Romanticism** - The period 1825-1900.

**Round** - Like a canon, in which two or more parts have the same melody, but different starting points.

**Rudiments** - On drums, the basic sticking patterns.

**Scale** - A series of notes.

**Second Ending** - Measures played the second time in a repeated section.

**Semitone** - A half step.

**Sforzando**, sfz, af - Sudden strong accent.

**Sharp** - ( # ) Raises the note one half step.

**Sixteenth Note/Rest** - A note/rest half the length of an eighth note and a sixteenth the length of a whole note.

**Skip** - Melodic movement greater than a whole step.

**Slur** - A curved indicates that the notes should be played legato; wind players will not tongue, string players use the same bow direction.

**Slurred Staccato** - Two or more notes played with the same bow, stopping between notes.

**Solo** - Performance by one player.
Instrumental Music Vocabulary

**Sostenuto** - Sustaining of notes.

**Spiccato** - The bow begins and ends off the string in a brushing motion.

**Staccato** - Separated notes, indicated by a dot ( . ) above or below the note.

**Staff** - The lines and spaces where the notes are written.

**Syncopation** - Notes played off the beat.

**Tempo** - The speed the music.

**Tenuto, ten** - Hold or sustain a note.

**Theory** - The study of how music is put together.

**Tie** - A curved line connecting notes of the same pitch.

**Time Signature** - The top number indicates beats per measure. The bottom number indicates which note value gets one beat.

**Tip** - The point of the bow.

**Tonguing** - Articulation with the tongue.

**Treble clef** - The clef indicates G as the 2nd line of the staff.

**Trio** - A piece for three players.

**Up Bow** - Play from the tip to the frog.

**Vibrato** - Repeated fluctuation of pitch.

**Virtuoso** - A very skillful performer.

**Vivace** - Lively tempo.

**Whole Note/Rest** - A note/rest equal to two half notes and four quarter notes.

**Winds** - Brass and woodwind instruments.

**Woodwinds** - Wind instruments including flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, and bassoon.