



BAND IS M-U-S-I-C!

Making music with a family of lifelong friends.

Understanding how commitment and dedication to lead to success.

Sharing the joy and rewards of working together.

Individuals who develop self-confidence.

Creativity – expressing yourself in a universal language.



-Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

GLOSSARY OF COMMON MUSICAL TERMS AND SYMBOLS¹

Learning to read music is like learning to read in a whole new language. As a member of the RMS Band, it is expected that you will not only dedicate yourself to the mastery of your instrument, but also to the mastery of the musical language, as well.

Below is a list of common musical terms that every middle school musician should know. Familiarize yourself with these terms until you have them memorized.

1. **Music Staff** – where musical notes and rests are placed. It has 5 lines and 4 spaces.
2. **Ledger Lines** – short lines above and below the staff. These lines extend the staff so that more notes can be played than just the notes on the staff.
3. **Bar Lines** – vertical lines that divide the staff.
4. **Measure** – the space between two bar lines.
5. **Beat** – the pulse of music. Like your heartbeat, it should remain very steady.
6. **Double Bar** – indicates the end of a piece of music.
7. **Repeat Sign** – Without stopping, play once again from the beginning.
8. **Clef** – indicates the position of note names on a music staff. (**Treble, Bass, etc.**)
9. **Time Signature** – indicates how many beats per measure (top number) and what kind of note gets one beat. (bottom number)
10. **Key Signature** – tells us which notes to play as sharp or flat throughout a piece of music.
11. **Sharp** – makes the note sound higher and remains in effect for the entire measure.
12. **Flat** - makes the note sound lower and remains in effect for the entire measure.
13. **Natural** - cancels a flat or sharp and remains in effect for the entire measure.
14. **Accidental** – Any sharp, flat or natural sign which appears in the music without being in the key signature. Once an accidental appears in the measure, it stays in that measure.



¹ Lautzenheiser, Tim, Paul Lavender, John Higgins, Tom C. Rhodes, Charles Menghini, and Don Bierschenk. Essential Elements 2000, Book 1. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1999.

GLOSSARY OF COMMON MUSICAL TERMS AND SYMBOLS² CONTINUED

15. **Breath Mark** – Take a deep breath through your mouth after you play a full length note.
16. **Duet** – A composition (piece of music) with two different parts being played or sung at the same time.
17. **Fermata** – Hold the note **or** rest longer than normal.
18. **Harmony** – two or more notes played together. Each combination forms a chord.
19. **Pick-up Notes** – One or more notes that come before the first *full* measure. The beats of Pick-up Notes are subtracted from the last measure.
20. **Dynamics** – Tell us how loud or soft to play. Dynamics are usually written in Italian.
21. **Forte** – Play loudly.
22. **Mezzo Forte** – Play moderately loud.
23. **Piano** – Play softly.
24. **Crescendo** – Gradually get louder.
25. **Decrescendo** (diminuendo) – Gradually get softer.
26. **Tempo** – the speed of music. Tempo markings are usually written in Italian.
27. **Allegro** - Fast tempo
28. **Moderato** – Moderate tempo
29. **Andante** – Slow, walking Tempo
30. **Tie** – A curved line connecting notes of the same pitch. Play one note for the combined counts of the tied notes.
31. **Slur** – A curved line connecting notes of different pitches. Tongue only the first note of a slur.
32. **Dot** – Adds half the value of the note to itself.
33. **Accent** – Emphasize the note. You play an accent by tonguing harder NOT blowing harder.
34. **1st & 2nd Endings** – Play through the 1st ending then play the repeated section of music, skipping the 1st ending and playing the 2nd ending.
35. **Theme & Variations** – A **theme** is a primary melody. **Variations** are altered versions of that theme.



² Ibid.



GLOSSARY OF COMMON MUSICAL TERMS AND SYMBOLS CONTINUED

Ms. Murphy has given you a building block for your music vocabulary. As you encounter more glossary terms in your method book(s), you will need to write them in the spaces provided below. As you did with the previous glossary terms, familiarize yourself with these terms until you have them memorized.

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GLOSSARY OF COMMON MUSICAL TERMS AND SYMBOLS CONTINUED

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