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# Dynamics & Tempo

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Drum Table Activity Series

Students with Developmental  
Disabilities & Autism

Lesson 6



## Topic

Communication, Academic, Cognitive, Sensory Motor, Social,  
Performance/Recreational

## Skill Areas

Auditory perception, Receptive language, Nonverbal communication,  
Musical, Sequencing, Memory, Attention span, Gross motor, Sensory  
integration, Teamwork, Impulse control, Imagination/improvisation, Music  
appreciation

## Goals

1. Participants will learn how dynamics and tempos are used in music.
2. Participants will listen and repeat various tempos and dynamics.
3. Participants will learn about fast/slow and loud/quiet playing.
4. Participants will begin listening to tempo and dynamics as cues to follow.

## Objectives

As a result of this lesson participants will be able to:

1. Understand what tempo and dynamics are and how to play them together in a group.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate fast/slow and loud/quiet skills on drum individually and as a group.
3. Begin finding tempo and dynamics in recorded or live music.
4. Be able to follow tempo and dynamic cues verbally and nonverbally and follow along.
5. Be able to start and stop playing drum together.

## Materials

40" Remo Drum Table with Comfort  
Sound Technology and two (2)  
mallets.

Drum Table Activity Series

Lesson 6 Video at:

[comfortsoundtechnology.com/lessons](http://comfortsoundtechnology.com/lessons)

## Music Therapy

The clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.

If you are working with or are a board-certified music therapist, download the [Music Therapy Guideline](#) that accompanies this lesson to explore deeper opportunities for your participant.

## Introduction

Have participants seated or standing in a circle around the drum with room to stand and move around. Have all materials ready. Activity can be done for 15 minutes or longer if needed.

## Instructions:

Introduce activity. Provide simple clear instructions slowly. Model each activity and ask conformational listening questions.

1. Begin by talking with participants about slow and fast and loud and quiet. Ask for examples of loud and soft things, flow and fast things.
2. Begin modeling loud and quiet, fast and slow on the drum table.
3. Speak with participants about the terms tempo and dynamics. Then speak with participants about how they are used in music.
4. Begin speaking about tempo. Counting the beats 1234. Start with a slow tempo and try to have students begin hitting quarter notes 1234, 1234, together in unison. Then talk to students about how to begin playing in tempo together. Explain that before playing a tempo you will count “1234” before everyone plays to show how fast or slow. Then everyone will come in and play the tempo together.
5. Explain that you will also count 1234-Stop to end each playing session. Demonstrate and try with participants. Next try starting and stopping various tempos fast and slow.
6. Next provide more detail about playing loud and soft. Try having everyone play as quietly as possible on the drum and then as loud as possible. Next try counting out a tempo and tell students that we will play very quietly on the drum. Count participants out to stop. Repeat trying a loud dynamic. Next have students listen and watch how loud/quiet you are playing and have them follow you.
7. Have students start a playing soft and gradually in unison get louder and then back to quiet.
8. Focus on tempo again work on starting slow and gradually getting faster and faster. Then fast to slow etc. Cueing verbally and nonverbally.

## Development:

1. Incorporate participants’ favorite music or your own, playing along to tempo and dynamics of the music.
2. Incorporate other body movements (walking, dancing, swaying, clapping, shaking shakers, playing other instruments).
3. Allow participants to lead the group with their tempo and dynamics.
4. Use iPads or cards with images to help cue dynamics & tempo directions.
5. Use other instruments such as a guitar or piano to dictate tempo and dynamics to follow.

## Helpful Resources

American Music Therapy Assn  
(musictherapy.org)

The Comfort Sound  
(comfortsoundtechnology.com)

Remo, Inc. (remo.com)

## Credits

These lessons authored by:

George Thompson  
Director of Music & Performing Arts  
Teri, Inc.

In collaboration with:

Terri Wiener, MT-BC  
Music Therapist  
Teri, Inc.

Remo, Inc.