

Vocabulary

Accelerando – Gradually getting faster.

Compose – Creating an original piece of music.

Glissando – A 'slide' between different notes.

Improvise - Making up a melody as you go along.

Next-door notes – Moving in step up or down without leaving a gap in the pitch.

Orchestrate – To choose which instruments should perform which parts of the music.

Tempo – The speed of the music.

Tuned percussion - percussion instruments that can play different pitches – xylophones, glockenspiels, chime bars etc.

Untuned percussion - percussion instruments that can only make a limited number of sounds – drums, shakers, claves, tambourines.

Night on the Bare Mountain – Modest Mussorgsky

How can music be used to represent characters?



About the composer:

Modest Mussorgsky was part of a group of Russian composers called 'The Five' who all tried to write music that sounded Russian by using traditional stories and folk tunes as their starting point.

Mussorgsky was from a rich, powerful family who had connections to royalty. His mother was a pianist and Modest had his first lessons with her.

By the age of 10, he was good enough to go to a special music school and at 12 he started writing his own pieces.

But Mussorgsky had a sad adult life with little fame and a lot of illness. Tragically his music became much more popular after his death.

Born: 1839 / Died: 1881 / Nationality: Russian

Prior learning

Work in KS1 on tuned and untuned percussion, listening to and appraising the music of composers from different countries and time periods.

Interesting ideas:

A Night On The Bare Mountain describes a short story in which St John sees a witches' Sabbath on the Bald Mountain near Kiev in the old Russian Empire.

It's a wild and terrifying party with lots of dancing but when the church bell chimes 6am and the sun comes up the witches vanish.

Modest Mussorgsky wrote a number of different versions of this piece of music. When he was finally satisfied with it, his music teacher told him it wasn't good enough so he put it aside for years.

Useful links:

Follow this link to watch a performance of 'A Night on The Bare Mountain':

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/ten-pieces/primary-music-ks2-mussorgsky-night-on-bare-mountain/zvw2t39>