

**Describing Music- Things in Common Game  
with useful language for talking about music**

*Try to find habits, feelings, experiences, etc connected to music that you share with your partner(s) and write them in the table below. If you have different opinions, tastes, etc, just leave it out of the table.*

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Useful phrases for responding</b></p> <p><b>Reactions when you are both the same</b><br/>         Me too. – Me neither.<br/>         So can/ do/ have/ am/... I. – Neither can/ do/ have/ am/ ...I.</p> <p><b>Reactions when you are different in some way</b><br/>         Really? I...<br/>         That's interesting. In my case,...<br/>         You surprise me. For me,...</p> |
|---|

| <b>Things in common</b> ("We both/ We all/ Both of us/ All of us/ Neither of us/ None of us...") |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Past</b>  | <b>Present</b> |
|  |                |

*Do the same with the help of the phrases and/ or vocabulary below.*

*Ask about words and then phrases that you couldn't understand or couldn't use, trying to make true sentences each time.*

### Useful phrases for talking about music

- ... gets me going/ pumps me up/ gives me energy – gets me down/ depresses me
- ... is important for me (to/ when...)
- ... is (not) my kind of...
- ... makes me...
- ... means... to me.
- ... moves me (to tears/ to laughter).
- ... puts me in a ... mood
- ... reminds me of/ takes me back to...
- ... was the soundtrack to my...
- At/ In...
- How I feel about... has changed.
- I (absolutely) adore/ love... - I (absolutely) hate/ detest/ despise...
- I (almost) always... - I (almost) never...
- I can't stand/ I can't bear... - I can't get enough of...
- I can play/ write/ judge/ remember/...
- I crank up the volume of... (when...)
- I don't mind...
- I don't understand (the appeal of)...
- I feel...
- I (tend to) find...
- I have (got)...
- I have never...
- I listen to... (a lot) (when/ while...)
- I often/ usually/ regularly... - I rarely/ seldom/ hardly ever...
- I prefer... (to...)/ I'd rather.../ is better than... (when it comes to...)
- I remember... (well/ fondly).
- I saw... (live)
- I spend/ I have spent...
- I think...
- I use... for...
- I used to (look down on.../...)
- I will/ would/ could never grow tired of...
- I'm a (huge) fan of... - I'm not a (huge) fan of...
- I'm (really) into... - I'm not (really) into...
- I'm (not) crazy/ mad/ passionate about...
- I've got used to/ I've grown to like... - I could/ will never get used to...
- I'm fond of/ I have a soft spot for...
- I've lost interest in...
- My attitude to/ My opinion of... has...
- My (all-time) favourite/ My taste in music/ My...
- Nowadays/ These days/ (Right) now...
- Recently/ In the last... (s),...
- (One of) the best...
- There's nothing like... (if/ when/ for...)
- When/ While/ During...

## Suggested music vocabulary

### Genres of music

- ...s music (e.g. 70s music)
- ambient/ chillout
- background music/ elevator music/ muzak
- barbershop/ acapella
- bluegrass/ country/ country and western
- blues
- brass band
- chanson
- choral music
- (Western) classical music (chamber music, string quartets, symphonies, concertos)
- comic songs/ novelty songs
- (traditional) court music
- crooners
- dance (EDM, drum and bass/ jungle, garage, house, trance, techno, etc)
- dubstep
- easy listening
- (traditional) folk music/ folk rock
- funk
- grime
- indie/ alternative/ alternative rock (post-rock, Brit pop, grunge, emo, shoegaze, etc)
- (big band/ acid) jazz/ be-bop/ jazz funk/ fusion
- K-pop
- Latin (salsa, reggaeton, samba, bossa nova, etc)
- love songs
- marching band
- Mersey beat
- (death/ thrash/ nu/ speed/ heavy) metal
- military music
- minimalist music
- musicals/ operetta/ opera
- national anthems/ patriotic songs
- New Age music
- new romantic
- new wave/ post-punk
- (bubble gum/ synth) pop (boy bands, girl groups, etc)
- protest music
- psychedelic
- punk
- rap/ hip hop
- reggae/ ska/ dancehall
- religious music (hymns, Christmas carols, gospel, Gregorian chant, etc)
- (classic/ heavy/ progressive/ prog/ pub/ soft) rock/ MOR/ AOR
- rock'n'roll

- singer songwriters
- skiffle
- soul/ R&B
- top forty music/ chart music/ mainstream music
- world music (African, calypso, flamenco, etc)

### **Positive words to describe music**

- angelic
- anthem/ anthemic
- avant-garde
- blissful
- catchy
- a (cult) classic
- danceable
- deep
- eclectic
- evocative
- exotic
- experimental
- funky
- heartfelt
- hummable
- iconic
- influential
- innovative
- (acknowledged/ undiscovered) masterpiece
- melodic
- moving
- old school
- original/ unique
- relaxing
- rhythmic
- romantic
- simple
- soothing
- timeless
- toe tapping
- underground
- upbeat

## Negative words to describe music

- amateurish
- annoying/ irritating
- bland/ boring/ dull
- caterwauling
- cheesy
- childish lyrics
- difficult second album
- flat
- (instantly) forgettable
- manufactured
- melodramatic
- mid-tempo
- mindless
- monotonous
- notorious
- off key
- out of tune
- over the top
- overpriced
- overrated
- predictable
- pretentious
- a racket
- repetitive
- ridiculous/ silly (lyrics)
- rude/ taboo (lyrics)
- screeching
- self-indulgent
- sentimental/ sappy
- tone deaf
- uninspired
- unoriginal
- violent
- weird

### Ways of making music (instruments, etc)

- accordion
- bagpipes
- bass (guitar)
- brass (bugle, trumpet, cornet, French horn, tuba, trombone, etc)
- comb
- electronics (amps/ amplifiers, decks, sampling, scratching, remix, mic/ microphone, loudspeakers/ speakers, etc)
- (12-string/ acoustic/ electric) guitar
- handbell
- harmonica/ mouth organ
- keyboard (synthesizer/ keyboard, piano, grand piano, electric piano, organ, harpsichord, Melodica, etc)
- maracas
- percussion (xylophone, glockenspiel, tambourine, snare drum, bass drum, steel pans, tambourine, cymbals, high hat, castanets, etc)
- spoons
- strings/ string instruments (viola, violin, bass/ double bass, harp, ukulele, banjo, etc)
- using your body (clapping, clicking your fingers, etc)
- using your mouth (humming, whistling, scat/ scat singing, etc)
- washboard
- wine glass
- woodwind (flute, piccolo, recorder, reed instruments such as clarinet, oboe and bassoon)

### Ways of listening to music

- album
- car stereo
- cassette (recorder)/ tape (player)
- CD (player)
- (greatest hits) compilations
- (illegal) downloads
- festival
- gig/ concert
- headphones
- juke box
- juke box musicals
- live
- mp3 (player)
- personal stereo/ Walkman
- pop videos/ music television (MTV, etc)
- (internet/ digital) radio/ DAB
- radio cassette player/ ghetto blaster
- record/ vinyl

- reel to reel (tape recorder)
- single/ seven inch/ seven-inch single
- smartphone
- stereo/ hi-fi
- streaming
- TV talent shows (American Idol, The Voice, The X Factor, etc)

### **People related to music (including groups of people)**

- busker/ street musician (one-man band, etc)
- choreographer
- composer
- conductor
- DJ/ disk jockey
- group (duo, trio, quartet, quintet, choir, etc)
- lyricist
- MC
- music teacher
- musician (percussionist, soloist, violinist, lead guitarist, rhythm guitarist, drummer, bassist, pianist, session musician, etc)
- people behind the scenes (concert promoter, manager/ Svengali, A&R man, recording engineer, etc)
- singer/ vocalist (soprano, falsetto, lead singer, backing singer, choirboy, diva, opera singer, etc)

### **Places related to music/ Places to listen to music**

- ballroom
- cabaret (club)
- church/ cathedral
- club/ disco
- concert hall/ opera house
- concert venue/ music venue
- (outdoor/ music) festival
- at the gym
- music shop
- pub
- (second hand) record shop
- stadium
- studio
- the street
- on transport (in the car, on public transport, etc)
- warehouse

**Other music vocabulary**

- acoustic/ unplugged
- beat/ drumbeat
- chorus
- concept album
- cover (version)
- duet
- earworm
- echo
- (guitar) feedback
- improvisation/ jamming/ jam session
- jingle
- karaoke
- lip-synching
- lyrics
- music documentaries
- overture
- release (date)
- retro
- (guitar) solo
- (movie) soundtracks
- symphony
- tune
- verse
- vocals

*Ask about any vocabulary above you don't understand, trying to make a sentence using it each time. Then ask about the phrases, trying to use them each time.*

**Brainstorming useful words and phrases for talking about music**

*Brainstorm as many suitable words and phrases as you can into each category below.*

**Genres of music**

**Positive words to describe music**

**Negative words to describe music**

**Ways of making music (instruments, etc)**

**Ways of listening to music**

**People related to music (including groups of people)**

**Places related to music/ Places to listen to music**

**Other music vocabulary**

**Phrases for talking about music**

**Reactions when you are both the same**

**Reactions when you are different in some way**

*Use these sub-categories to help with the brainstorm task above, putting them in the right place and then brainstorming examples.*

- alternative rock/ indie
- brass
- dance music
- electronics
- group
- jazz
- keyboards
- Latin
- likes and dislikes
- musicians
- people behind the scenes
- percussion
- pop
- religious music
- rock (including metal)
- strings
- using your body
- using your mouth
- woodwind
- world music

*Compare your ideas as a class. You get one point for each correct expression which isn't on other groups' sheets and/ or isn't on the vocabulary and phrases sheets above.*