

MUSIC · GRADES 2–4

Rhythm Vocabulary

What every primary teacher needs to teach music

Note values

Note name (US)	Name (UK)	Beats	Looks like
Whole note	Semibreve	4 beats	Open oval, no stem
Half note	Minim	2 beats	Open oval with stem
Quarter note	Crotchet	1 beat	Filled oval with stem
Eighth note	Quaver	$\frac{1}{2}$ beat	Filled oval with stem and flag
Sixteenth note	Semiquaver	$\frac{1}{4}$ beat	Filled oval, stem, two flags

Other words you'll need

1

Beat

The steady pulse you tap your foot to.

Example: Most pop songs have 4 beats per bar.

2

Bar

A small chunk of music — usually 4 beats.

Example: Music is grouped into bars to make it easy to read.

3

Tempo

How fast or slow the music goes.

Example: Marked in beats per minute (BPM).



4

Rhythm

The pattern of long and short notes.

Example: Different from beat — beat is steady, rhythm changes.

5

Rest

A SILENCE in music. Has its own duration like a note.

Example: A whole rest = 4 beats of silence.

