



Dynamics

DYNAMICS is the technical term for what most people call the loudness or ‘volume’ of a piece of music. Never use the term volume in the GCSE exam.

The specific terms that you need to learn are:

Term	Abbreviation (if applicable)	Meaning
Ffortissimo	<i>ff</i>	Very Loud / Strong
Forte	<i>f</i>	Loud / Strong
Mezzo Forte	<i>mf</i>	Moderately Loud / Strong
Mezzo Piano	<i>mp</i>	Moderately Quiet
Piano	<i>p</i>	Quiet
Pianissimo	<i>pp</i>	Very Quiet
Crescendo	<i>cresc.</i>	Getting Gradually Louder
Decrescendo	<i>decresc.</i>	Getting Gradually quieter
Diminuendo	<i>dim.</i>	Getting Gradually Quieter
		Getting Gradually Louder
		Getting Gradually Quieter

As you can see there are some very similar terms and definitions, you will not **normally** be expected to pick out differences between very similar answers, eg ‘*pp*’ & ‘*p*’ or ‘*dim*’ & ‘decrescendo’.

BUT all of these terms have been used by the WJEC in their exam papers in multiple choice questions. You are also expected to use them in the questions that ask you to write your own sentences e.g. comparison and ‘open-ended’.