Pulse: the regular heartbeat of the music; its steady beat.

Rhythm: long and short sounds or patterns that happen over the pulse.

Pitch: high and low sounds.

Tempo: the speed of the music; fast or slow or inbetween

Riff: a short repeated phrase, often played on a lead instrument such as guitar, piano or saxophone.

Syncopation: when the offbeats - beats 2 and 4 in 4/4 time - are given a greater degree of emphasis than the main beats - beats 1 and 3 in 4/4 time. Rhythms that fit in between the beats of a bar can be described as syncopated.

Blues: a style of music characterised by its harmonic structure and the notes used to create the melodies.

Jazz: a music genre that originated in the African American communities of New Orleans, United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with its roots in blues and ragtime.

Improvisation/ Improvise: to make up a tune and play it on the spot. There is an assumption that it can never be recreated.

Melody: another name for tune.

Compose: creating and developing musical ideas and ‘fixing’ them.

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