

1. What do we mean by "the music never lies?"

2. Why is it important to not only listen to the vocal line but the accompaniment or underscore?

Emotional Qualities

Every piece of music needs to affect you and the audience emotionally.

The music gauges the character's emotional experience.

As the emotional quality of the song changes, so does the mood. It could change from section to section or change when reprised.

Listen to the songs you sing and make a list of adjectives that describe how it makes you feel. Write the adjectives in your score where they apply. Notice the change in emotional terrain of the song based solely on the musical information you're given. Try to resist imposing your prior knowledge of lyrics and situation.

Activity:

Listen to just the melody of your song and note its melodic shape by using hand gestures. This will help you physicalize the shape of the song.

Are there places where the melody changes in small or large leaps?

What's the musical terrain?

Does it change?

**What does this suggest to you about the emotional state and journey of the character?
Are their clear melodic phrases that repeat, change key or vary slightly from each other?**

Tempo quality and changes

All songs are sung in tempo. The tempo may set a mood; a change in that tempo will create a shift in the emotional experience the character is feeling. A character could go through a realization or change of mind and the tempo reflects it.

Activity:

Look at the sheet music of your songs and see if the composer indicated any tempo changes.

What do the changes in tempo or steady tempo throughout suggest to you?

Try slowing the song down or speeding it up. What does that do to the emotional meaning?

Rhythmic quality

Always be aware of rhythm and when it changes. It is common for rhythm to change at different sections of the song. Rhythmic changes also convey different aspects of the character's experience.

Musical key

The key a song is written in can elicit a certain mood (major or minor or even where it falls in the voice.) Sometimes the key is changed to flatter a voice or to place the dramatic highpoint at a certain orientation.

Modulations = key changes

Key changes are often done to change the dramatic mood. Could be influenced by style or to create a sense of growing excitement or enthusiasm on the part of the character. They could also shift the key down which creates a very different emotional journey.

Activity:

Go through your songs and note any key changes.

What do these changes suggest to you?

Tension and release

The changes in tension and release are another barometer of your character's thoughts and feelings.

Verse = tension chorus = release

bridge = tension chorus = release

Musical accents

Hits, twinkles and booms

present in music can identify:

- **physical actions**
- **shift in attention or thoughts**

Don't ignore accents!

Musical dynamics

Dynamics are the range of volume levels in a song.

Composers write dynamic markings in music, but other times there are none. Use clues from lyrics to make artistic decisions dynamically.

Other musical qualities

Musical idioms: using words and styles that fit the setting of the show

Musical character quality:

Music that suggest intelligence or personality