Note ≠ Pitch

As a clear distinction is rarely made, many out there will frequently misapply—or even interchange—the term ‘note’ for ‘pitch’ during such times when the context clearly relates to the latter.

Vocabulary:
Pitch – Speed of sound.
Note – Duration of sound.

Pitch is the rate at which a sound wave moves, whereas note is the length of time in which the movement of the sound wave is sustained.

Analogy I:
Pitch is how fast you drive your motor vehicle, whereas note is the time it takes to total it.

Analogy II:
Pitch is the temperature of a clothes dryer, whereas note is the length of time you spend gazing at another’s undergarments tumbling about.

The faster the rate, the higher the pitch. The slower the rate, the lower the pitch.

Example I:

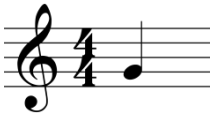
If A_5 is a sound wave moving at 880Hz and A_3 is a sound wave moving at 220Hz, then A_5 would be perceived as a higher pitch than that of A_3, since 880Hz is a faster rate than 220Hz.

The shorter the duration, the smaller the note. The longer the duration, the larger the note.

Example II:
If ♪ is an eighth (⅛) of one bar and 𝅗𝅥 is a half (½) of one bar, then the duration of ♪ being sustained would be shorter than that of 𝅗𝅥, since an eighth is smaller than a half.

Note and pitch combined, ultimately, allows one to begin organizing such information needed to successfully derive music.

Application:



The position of ♩ on the staff indicates that G_4—or a sound wave moving at 392Hz—is to be sustained for a fourth (¼) of one bar.