



West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District
Choir
Grade 8

Unit 1: Choir

Content Area: Music

Course & Grade Level: Choir, Grade 8

Summary & Rationale

Music is an academic subject with its own special body of knowledge, skills, and unique way of knowing and thinking. It is an integral part of other curricular areas. Music creates a bridge between the school and the community. Musicianship is knowledge-based and is developed through practicing, critical listening, performing, and creating. Music fosters creative growth as well as develops self-confidence and self-discipline. This creative art form allows use of the whole brain and promotes self-expression through performance, composition, and/or the use of technology. It provides many opportunities for all students, at all levels and abilities, to participate and excel while building teamwork. By helping our students to develop their musical abilities in ensemble and solo settings, we are helping to provide them with skills that also encourage lifelong learning.

This course offers students the opportunity to explore the mechanics and skills of becoming both a musician and a connoisseur of music. By learning how to carry themselves as a musician and work as a team in creative endeavors, students will develop the necessary skills and abilities to become lifelong music enthusiasts and broaden their perspectives.

They will be asked to make objective judgments forcing them to decide what is quality music, responding with a music vocabulary and an understanding of the creative process. The skills students learn in this course will prepare them for future courses in the visual and performing arts as well as other content areas.

Evaluation of student work will be done by the instructor as well as, in some instances, by fellow students. Students will be asked to create with and present for their peers and will be graded on how well they meet the specific criteria of that exercise. Most of the assignments and projects are performance based; therefore, preparation and delivery are considered when distributing grades. Finally, classroom participation is critical to the productivity of the course and is also included in all grading and evaluations.

Recommended Pacing

90 Days

National Core Arts Standards

Creating

MU:Cr1.1.E.8a	Compose and improvise ideas for melodies and rhythmic passages based on characteristic(s) of music or text(s) studied in rehearsal.
MU:Cr2.1.E.8a	Select and develop draft melodies and rhythmic passages that demonstrate understanding of characteristic(s) of music or text(s) studied in rehearsal.
MU:Cr2.1.E.8b	Preserve draft compositions and improvisations through standard notation and audio recording.
MU:Cr3.1.E.8a	Evaluate and refine draft compositions and improvisations based on knowledge, skill, and collaboratively-developed criteria.
MU:Cr3.2.E.8a	Share personally developed melodies and rhythmic passages – individually or as an ensemble – that demonstrate understanding of characteristics of music or texts studied in rehearsal.

Performing

MU:Pr4.2.E.8a	Demonstrate, using music reading skills where appropriate, how the setting and formal characteristics of musical works contribute to understanding the context of the music in prepared or improvised performances.
MU:Pr4.3.E.8a	Demonstrate understanding and application of expressive qualities in a varied repertoire of music through prepared and improvised performances.
MU:Pr5.3.E.8a	Develop strategies to address technical challenges in a varied repertoire of music and evaluate their success using feedback from ensemble peers and other sources to refine performances.
MU:Pr6.1.E.8a	Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music representing diverse cultures and styles.
MU:Pr6.1.E.8b	Demonstrate an understanding of the context of the music through prepared and improvised performances.
Responding	
MU:Re7.1.E.8a	Explain reasons for selecting music citing characteristics found in the music and connections to interest, purpose, and context.
MU:Re7.2.E.8a	Describe how understanding context and the way the elements of music are manipulated inform the response to music.
MU:Re8.1.E.8a	Identify and support interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical works, citing as evidence the treatment of the elements of music, contexts, and (when appropriate) the setting of the text.
MU:Re9.1.E.8a	Explain the influence of experiences, analysis, and context on interest in and evaluation of music.
Connecting	
MU:Cn10.0.E.8a	Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music.
MU:Cn11.0.E.8a	Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and the other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.
Interdisciplinary Standards	
NJSLSA.R7	Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words
21st Century Life & Career Standards	
CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills
CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason
CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation
Technology Standards	
8.2	All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.
Instructional Focus	
Unit Enduring Understandings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choral music promotes connection, expanding understanding of the world, other people, and oneself. ● All music has value even if it differs from an individual's musical preferences. 	

- There are core concepts vital to understanding choral music as an art form, which facilitate discussion, participation, and enable musical independence.

Unit Essential Questions

- In what ways have people used music to express their values, describe their experiences, and connect to each other?
- Why is music such an integral part of the human experience?
- How is personal preference for music developed?
- Why should we respect music if we don't like the way it sounds?
- Is there good and bad music?
- How does music elicit emotion?
- How do building music skills and independence create a significant and meaningful performance? How does this apply to other facets of life?

Objectives

When **CREATING**, Students will know and be able to:

- Collaboratively determine vocal challenges in a piece and create warm-up to address the challenge.
- Collaboratively determine rhythmic challenges in a piece and create warm-up to address the challenge.
- Adapt a pre-composed warm-up.
- Choose from a variety of notation or recording options to preserve created warm-ups.
- Critique/assess composed warm-up to determine success or improvement of targeted musical element.
- Refine composed warm-up based on reflections and observation of choir.
- Collaboratively serve as peer teachers in sharing warm-up with small groups.

When **PERFORMING**, Students will know and be able to:

- Sight-read, as an ensemble, a variety of repertoire and collectively discuss and select the most appropriate piece(s) based upon individual and ensemble skill level vocal range, and overall message.
- Discuss programming strategies that will address a variety of repertoire, tonalities, meters, voicings, texture, and target audience.
- Extract and analyze rhythmic and melodic passages.
- Combine rhythmic and melodic readings and apply to context of the piece.
- Perform music utilizing musical elements and expressive qualities such as dynamics, articulation, tempo, style, and phrasing.
- Create a warm-up out of a vocally challenging section.
- Listen to recordings of other choirs as a comparative/reflective tool from another source.
- Listen to and reflect on a recording of the group performance using peer assessment strategies that use appropriate musical terminology.
- Perform expressively by observing proper vocal technique, dynamic markings, articulations, tempo markings, style, and phrasing appropriate genre or culture.
- Research and discuss historical, cultural or poetic context of repertoire.
- Develop the ability to follow their individual part in a musical score (to include: systems, measures, staff...)
- Sing melodic and harmonizing parts, independently and in groups, adjusting to the range and timbre of the developing voice.
- Sing with awareness of intonation.
- Identify Treble Clef note names, key signatures and tonality.

- Sight read using correct solfege syllables using moveable ‘Do’ and ‘La’ based minor and Curwen hand signs.
- Sight read and identify music containing whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, dotted and syncopated notes in a variety of time signatures found in the repertoire.
- Perform rhythms accurately using Gordon syllables.
- Recognize and understand musical symbols used in concert pieces.
- Sing in a variety of forms. For example: unison, rounds, ostinato, partner songs, two part and three part songs.
- Demonstrate breathing techniques necessary for healthy vocal production, including diaphragmatic support, posture, and open tone.
- Use developmentally appropriate registers of the voice.
- Demonstrate appropriate consonant and vowel production (diction).
- Consistently exhibit proper posture, energy, and focus.

When RESPONDING, Students will know and be able to:

- Analyze and reflect on, through group discussion, the musical elements that attracted them to a particular composition.
- Discuss programming strategies that will address a variety of repertoire, tonalities, meters, voicings, texture, and target audience.
- Reflect, through group discussion, on the musical elements that connected them to a particular composition.
- View and listen to a variety of choral ensembles and identify and discuss how musical elements convey the intent of the composer to create meaningful performances.
- Discuss and experience conductor's gestures with regard to musical elements and interpretation.
- Describe personal experiences and goals through participating in performances.
- Discuss programming strategies including musical elements, a variety of meters and tonalities and target audience to expand their musical palettes.
- Sing with sensitivity to ensemble sound.
- Consistently exhibit level of participation required for proper rehearsal technique.
- Describe appropriate vs. inappropriate performer etiquette.
- Describe appropriate vs. inappropriate audience etiquette.

When CONNECTING, Students will know and be able to:

- Reflect, through group discussion, on the musical elements that connected them to a particular composition.
- Describe personal experiences and goals through participating in performances.
- Discuss programming strategies including musical elements, a variety of meters and tonalities and target audience to expand their musical palettes.

Evidence of Learning

Assessment

Teacher observation and performance assessment

Competencies for 21st Century Learners

X	Collaborative Team Member	X	Effective Communicator
X	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	X	Information Literate Researcher
X	Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	X	Self-Directed Learner

Resources

- Choir Music
- Piano