

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow



Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide

6-7 General Music

Description

At both Coolidge and Parker Middle School, students are offered multiple opportunities for rich instruction in music in the form of band, choir, and general music. In sixth grade general music, students continue developing skills in reading and notating music, and take on more responsibility to develop their own artistic voices as composers using traditional writing and music technology. In seventh grade, the curriculum widens to look at connections between music, society, and culture, and students are given many opportunities, both individually and in groups, to create, perform, and express themselves. At both levels, general music instruction is student-centered, hands-on, and project-based in nature.

Guiding Principles

Arts are our human birthright—every culture throughout time and across the globe has them. As opposed to being the purview of the talented few, the arts are essential throughout everyone’s lives for understanding and appreciation, expression, social and emotional well-being, and creative opportunity. The primary guiding principles for fine and performing arts education in the state of Massachusetts are artistic literacy and artistic intent. *Artistic literacy* is the unique knowledge, skills, and capacities required to participate authentically in the arts (such as reading music notation or creating realistic shading). *Artistic intent* is the meaning the artist intended in a work. A high-quality arts education keeps artistic intent central by helping students create or perform work guided by thoughtful and intentional decision-making.

Source: MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019, page 14

Music Content Standards

By the end of seventh grade, students will have learned the following processes and skills:

Creating:

1. Compose musical ideas (e.g. rhythms, melodies, ostinato, and harmonies) using expanded forms (e.g. introductions, transitions, codas).
2. Document an original melody and simple accompaniment using standard notation (e.g. a melody and chords).
3. Refine draft arrangements to ensure consistency in notation.

Performing:

4. Identify basic strategies musicians use to practice and employ them in readying a musical work for performance.
5. Perform with accuracy and expression a repertoire of vocal or instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 1, on a scale of 1 to 6.
6. Match a musical performance or composition with expressed intent.

Responding:

7. Analyze how cultures are reflected in a diverse range of musical work.
8. Explain how a musical work is connected to the particular cultural and historical context where it was created.
9. Develop criteria for a rubric for evaluating musical works.

Connecting:

10. Describe and demonstrate influences of one’s personal musical style and preferences.
11. Identify how musical ideas and traditions migrate with the people who originated them to affect other cultures, historical periods, and musical genres and styles (e.g. immigrant European folk music).

Source: MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019, page 44

By the end of seventh grade, students will have an understanding of the following concepts:

Cultural and Historical Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effect of culture and historical events on a society’s music and modes of performance • Role of music in society • Origin and development of American popular music • Function of music as both a source of inspiration and expression of individuality
Musical Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call and response • Strophic, binary, and rondo forms • Contemporary verse/chorus/bridge structure
Rhythm and Meter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole note, half note, quarter note, eighth note, sixteenth note, and dotted combinations • Whole rest, half rest, quarter rest, and eighth rest • Common time signatures • Italian tempo terminology, including largo, andante, allegro, presto, and accelerando
Pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand staff (treble and bass clef) • Chord progressions and charts • Common ukulele chord shapes
Dynamics and Articulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian dynamic terminology and symbols, including pianissimo, piano, mezzo-piano, mezzo-forte, forte, crescendo, decrescendo/diminuendo, staccato, legato, and accent • Use of dynamic and articulation markings to create emotion and meaning in a piece of music
Lyrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text painting • Language and lyrics as a representation of culture and society

Structures for Learning

During a typical class, students and teachers may be engaged in...

- Active listening to popular, folk, and classical music
- Exploring diverse repertoire from varied cultures, time periods, styles, and perspectives, and analyzing the historical and social context in which it was written and performed
- Reading, transcribing/decoding, and composing rhythmic patterns
- Reading pitch in the form of melodies and/or chord progressions
- Utilizing music technology to compose and/or arrange music ideas
- Playing instruments:
 - Soprano or baritone ukulele
 - Percussion, including West African djembes, talking drums, gankoguis, shekeres, and ratchets
- Performing (alone and in groups, formally and informally) for peers in class
- Analyzing and/or writing lyrics

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Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide Overview

Curriculum Guide

Curriculum guides are public documents aligned with the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks. They outline and highlight the set of standards that students will learn within certain disciplines at each grade level. Curriculum guides are intended for teachers, parents, and the wide school community to provide an overview of the course of study for the year.

Curriculum Map

Curriculum maps are internal documents utilized as planning tools for teachers and administrators. Curriculum maps keep a focus on the end-of-year standards and chart a course for teaching and learning over the year. They are typically organized by month and/or marking period and may include: genres/topics or units of study, methods of assessment, and major content resources. Maps are fluid documents that are revised and revisited regularly to ensure students' needs are being met.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles are philosophical statements that underlie the standards and resources in the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework. They should guide the design and evaluation of arts programs in schools. Programs guided by these principals will prepare students for colleges, careers, and their lives as productive citizens.

Content Standards

The standards used as the foundation of our curriculum come directly from the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework. State standards may be viewed here: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/>

Structures for Learning

Structures for learning are examples of the instructional contexts and activities that students and teachers *might* be engaged in during arts instruction. Those listed represent a sampling and the list is in no way exhaustive. The list is not intended to mandate or require certain types of instruction at any given time, merely to suggest best practices.