

Reading Public Schools

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



Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide

Course: Music Theory

Course Description

Music Theory is designed to expose students to the written language of music. At this level, no prior music experience is required. Students will be exposed to basic music notation, time signatures, key signatures, and different clefs. Emphasis is placed on the study of melodic writing, basic harmonic analysis, and transposition. Instrument ranges and vocal ranges are included. Ear training is a central component of the course, enabling students to aurally identify basic rhythms, melodies, intervals, and chords. Students are also exposed to the basics of digital composition and arranging, using a computer-based program for composing and arranging.

Standards for Artistic Practice

Based on the 2014 National Core Arts Standards, these practices describe the processes and skills students learn as practitioners throughout the elementary, middle, and high school years in order to achieve artistic literacy.

- ⇒ *Creating art with artistic intent.*
- ⇒ *Presenting, performing, or producing artistic works to evoke, express, or communicate.*
- ⇒ *Responding to art through intellect and emotion.*
- ⇒ *Connecting the arts to the self, society, history, culture, and other disciplines and bodies of knowledge.*

Source: MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019, page 20

Content Standards for Advanced General Music

Creating:

1. Consistently apply research to generate compositional ideas.
2. Document strategies used regularly to organize artistic ideas.
3. Refine musical pieces to extended rhythmic and harmonic ideas.

Performing:

4. Explain how one's composition relates to established musical genres, styles, and forms.
5. Lead the production and sharing of an original composition.
6. Perform a musical work that causes audience reflection by presenting different musical styles or viewpoints.

Responding:

7. Identify ways contemporary musical compositions push boundaries of the genre and discipline.
8. Analyze the ways one's own cultural and personal perspectives and biases affect how one understands specific musical works.
9. Construct an argument for selecting one criteria over another for evaluating a musical composition.

Connecting:

10. Explain the development of one's musicality or musical style and how it relates to a composition.
11. Identify the social, cultural, and personal influences on one's musical style as a composer or musician.

Source: MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019, page 49



Concepts	Essential Questions
1. Elements of Pitch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is sound organized to make music? • Why is knowledge and understanding of pitch a necessary foundation for the study of music composition?
2. Elements of Rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is knowledge and understanding of rhythm a necessary foundation for the study of music composition? • Can you have rhythm without a beat?
3. Chords and Seventh Chords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the use of seventh chords add harmonic interest and complexity to musical compositions? • What does harmony add to music?
4. Diatonic Chords in Major and Minor Keys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a chord diatonic? • What are the characteristics of diatonic chords? • How is a melody created? • What distinguishes melody from harmony?
5. Triads in First and Second Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does inverting a chord impact its sonority? • What impact do inversions have on voice leading?
6. Harmonic Progression and Sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do smooth voice leading techniques and common harmonic progressions create the most pleasing tonal music compositions? • How does the use of accidentals in diatonic keys indicate the use of altered chords (secondary dominant and secondary leading tone chords) and modulation?
7. Cadences, Periods and Phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do different cadences impact the way we perceive music? • How does the length of a phrase impact the way a line of music is perceived?

Structures for Learning

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

- *Whole class instruction*
- *Listening to musical examples from standard Western tonal repertoire and contemporary art music, jazz, popular music, and the music of non-Western cultures*
- *Musical analysis using the computer program Musition*
- *Ear training using the computer program Aurelia*
- *Composing and arranging music*
- *Formative and summative assessments*

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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.

Content Standards

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

Standards for Artistic Practice

The standards for artistic practice describe the processes and skills students learn as practitioners throughout the elementary, middle, and high school years in order to achieve artistic literacy. Based on the processes presented in the 2014 *National Core Arts Standards*, these practices are grouped into four clusters that focus on creating, presenting/performing, responding, and connecting across the five arts disciplines (dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts)."
- *MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019*, p.20

Essential Questions

Essential questions are questions that are not answerable with an easy answer or a simple instruction. The purpose of essential questions is to provide opportunities for inquiry into learning and act as an umbrella to anchor the unit/lesson.

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.