

Music Standards and Benchmarks

General Music

1. Students will sing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Sing accurately and with good breath control throughout modest ranges
- Sing expressively and with technical accuracy, vocal literature with a difficulty rating of two, including some songs from memory
- Sing music representing diverse genres and cultures with expression appropriate for the work performed
- Sing music written in two parts

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Sing expressively, with technical and stylistic accuracy, a varied repertoire of music
- Demonstrate effective use of ensemble skills such as balance, intonation, rhythmic unity, and part singing when performing as part of a group

2. Students will perform alone, or with others, a varied repertoire of music on instruments

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Perform on at least one classroom instrument accurately and independently, alone and with others, with good posture, good playing position, and good breath, bow, or stick control
- Perform with expression and technical accuracy on at least one classroom instrument a repertoire of instrumental literature with a difficulty rating of two
- Perform music representing diverse genres and cultures with appropriate expression
- Play by ear simple melodies on a melodic instrument, and simple harmonies on a harmonic instrument

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Play a varied repertoire of music expressively and accurately on a classroom instrument
- Play on a classroom instrument using ensemble skills such as balance, intonation, rhythmic unity, and independence when performing with a group
- Play by ear accompaniments on a harmonic instrument while playing or singing the melody

3. Students will compose and arrange music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Improvise simple harmonic accompaniments
- Improvise simple melodic and rhythmic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major keys
- Improvise short melodies, unaccompanied and over given rhythmic accompaniments, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts
- Improvise rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major and minor keys
- Improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

4. Students will compose and arrange music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Compose short pieces within specific guidelines, demonstrating the use of the elements of music
- Arrange simple pieces for voices or instruments other than those for which the piece is written
- Use a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources and electronic media when composing

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Compose music in several distinct styles, demonstrating creativity in using the elements of music for expressive effect
- Arrange simple pieces for acoustic or electronic instruments
- Use computer and electronic technology in composing and arranging music

5. Students will read and notate music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Read whole, half, eighth, sixteenth, and dotted notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, 3/8, and alla breve (2/2) meter signatures
- Sight read simple melodies in both treble and bass clefs
- Identify and define standard notation symbols for pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, articulation and expression
- Use standard notation and nontraditional notation to record musical ideas

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Continue to use standard and nontraditional notation to record musical ideas
- Read and notate chord symbols on harmonic classroom instruments
- Read an instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves

6. Students will analyze and describe music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Describe specific musical events upon listening to a given example, using appropriate terminology
- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of meter, rhythm, tonality, intervals, chords, and harmonic progressions
- Analyze and compare the use of the elements of music upon listening to examples representing diverse genres and cultures

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Analyze the elements of music and expressive devices used in music from diverse genres and cultures upon listening to a given example
- Understand the technical vocabulary of music (Italian terms, form, harmony, and tempo markings)
- Identify and explain compositional devices and techniques that are used to provide unity and variety, and tension and release in a musical work
- Analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive

7. Students will evaluate music and music performances

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Develop criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of music performances and compositions, and apply the criteria to their personal listening, composing, and performing
- Evaluate the effectiveness and quality of their own and others' performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations by applying specific criteria appropriate for the style of the music, and offers constructive criticisms for improvement

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Apply and refine specific criteria for making informed, critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations, and apply the criteria in their personal participation in music
- Evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing it to similar or exemplary models
- Evaluate a given musical work in terms of its aesthetic qualities and explain the musical means it uses to evoke feelings and emotions

8. Students will relate music to the other arts and disciplines outside the arts

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Compare how the characteristic media of two or more arts can be used to transform similar events, scenes, emotions, or ideas into works of art
- Compare the terminology and contrasting definitions used for various artistic elements in each of two or more arts
- Describe how the principles and subject matter of other school disciplines interrelate with those of music

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style, and cite examples from various cultures
- Explain how the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts interrelate with music
- Explain how the roles of creators, performers, and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another
- Compare the uses of characteristic elements and organizational principles among the various arts

9. Students will relate music to history and culture

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Describe distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures
- Classify by genre and style (and if applicable, by historical periods, composer and title) a varied body of high quality and characteristic musical works and explain the characteristics that cause each work to be considered exemplary
- Compare, in several cultures of the world including their own, functions music serves, roles of musicians, and conditions under which music is typically created and performed

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Classify music by culture or historical period based on characteristic styles or genres, and justify their classification
- Identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and name well-known musicians associated with them
- Identify various roles that musicians perform, name representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements

Music Standards and Benchmarks

Choral Music

1. Students will sing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Sing accurately and with good breath control throughout their singing ranges, alone and in small and large ensembles
- Sing expressively and with technical accuracy a varied repertoire of vocal literature, with a difficulty of three on a scale of one to six, including some songs performed from memory
- Sing written music in two, three and four parts
- Sing music that represents diverse genres (e.g., folk, classical, sacred)

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study

- Sing a varied repertoire of vocal literature with expression and technical accuracy at a moderate level of difficulty, including some from memory
- Sing music written in four parts, with and without accompaniment
- Demonstrate well-developed ensemble skills (e.g., balance, intonation, rhythmic unity)

Students who have completed more than one year of study

- Sing with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of five, on a scale of one to six
- Sing music written in more than four parts
- Sing in small ensembles with one student on a part

2. Students will play alone, and with others, a varied repertoire of music on instruments

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Play on a classroom instrument accurately and independently, alone and in small and large ensembles
- Play music representing diverse cultures and genres, with expression appropriate for the music
- Play simple melodies and accompaniments on an instruments

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

- Play their voice part on a melodic instrument
- Play accompaniments on melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic instruments

3. Students will improvise harmonies and accompaniments

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Improvise simple harmonies to moderately easy songs
- Improvise simple rhythmic variations and simple melodic embellishments on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major keys
- Improvise short melodies, unaccompanied and over given rhythmic accompaniments, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study

- Improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts
- Improvises rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major and minor keys
- Improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

Students who have completed more than one year of study

- Improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts in a variety of styles
- Improvise original melodies in a variety of styles, over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

4. Students will compose and arrange music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Compose short pieces within specified guidelines, demonstrating the use of the elements of music
- Arrange simple pieces for voice and instruments other than those for which the pieces were written
- Use traditional and non-traditional notation to represent compositions or arrangements
- Use a variety of sound sources and electronic media when composing and arranging

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study will

- Compose music in several distinct styles, demonstrating creativity in using the elements of music for expressive effect
- Arrange pieces for voices in ways that preserve or enhance the expressive effect of the music
- Compose and arrange music for voices and various accompaniment instruments, demonstrating knowledge of the ranges and the traditional usage of sound sources

Students who have completed more than one year of study will

- Compose music, demonstrating imagination and technical skill in applying the principles of composition
- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of computer technology-notation and sequencing programs-to compose and arrange music for various vocal and instrumental ensembles and solos

5. Students will read and notate music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Read notation sufficiently to preform simple melodies or rhythms accurately
- Sight-read simple melodies in both the treble and bass clefs
- Identify standard notation symbols for pitch, rhythm, dynamics (e.g., piano, forte, crescendo, diminuendo), tempo, articulation (e.g., accents, legato, staccato, marcato) and (e.g., phrasing)
- Use standard notation to record musical ideas

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study

- Demonstrate the ability to read a vocal score of up to four staves
- Sight-read accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of three on a scale of one to six
- Interpret nonstandard notation symbols used by some 20th century composers

Students who have completed more than one year of study

- Demonstrate the ability to read a vocal score by describing how the elements of music are used and explaining all transpositions and clefs
- Sight-read accurately and expressively, music with a difficulty of four on a scale of one to six

6. Students will analyze and describe music

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Identify and discuss commonly used musical forms (such as binary and ternary, rondo, theme, and variations, and fugue)
- Listen to and describe specific music events in a given example using appropriate terminology
- Analyze the uses of elements of music upon listening to given examples representing diverse genres and cultures
- Identify and describe stylistic elements heard in folk, popular, and non-western music

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study

- Listen to and analyze examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of the elements of music and expressive devices
- Demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music
- Identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity and variety of tension and release in a musical work, and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques

Students who have completed more than one year of study

- Demonstrate the ability to perceive and remember music events by listening to and describing in detail significant events in a given example
- Compare how musical materials are used in a given example relative to how they are used in other works of the same genre or style
- Analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive

7. Students will evaluate music and music performances

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Know specific criteria that affect the quality and effectiveness of musical performances and composition
- Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and others' performances and offer constructive suggestions for improvement

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study

- Apply and refine specific criteria for making informed critical evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisation and apply the criteria in their participation in music
- Evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing it to a similar or exemplary model

Students who have completed more than one year of study

- Evaluate a given musical work in terms of its aesthetic qualities and explain the musical means it uses to evoke feelings and emotions

8. Students will relate music to the other arts and disciplines outside the arts

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Compare how the characteristic materials of two or more arts can be used to transform similar events, scenes, emotions, or ideas into works of art
- Describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other school disciplines interrelate with those of music

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study

- Explain how elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles are used in similar and distinct ways in the various arts and cite examples
- Compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style, and cite examples from various cultures
- Explain how the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts interrelate with those of music

Students who have completed more than one year of study

- Compare the characteristic elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles among the arts in different historical periods and cultures
- Explain how the roles of creators, performers, and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another

9. Students will relate music to history and culture

Level III (Grades 6-8)

- Describe distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures
- Compare and classify exemplary musical works by genre, styles, historical period, composer, and title
- Compare, in several cultures of the world, the functions music serves, roles of musicians, and conditions under which music is typically created, and performed

Level IV (Grades 9-12)

Students who have completed one year of study

- Classify music by culture or historical period based on characteristic styles or genres, and justify their classification

- Identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and name well-known musicians associated with them
- Identify various roles that musicians perform, name representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements

Students who have completed more than one year of study

- Identify and explain the stylistic features of a given musical work that define its aesthetic tradition and its historical or cultural content
- Identify and describe music genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, identify the cultural source of each, and trace the historical conditions that produced the synthesis of influences

Music Standards and Benchmarks

Instrumental Music

1. Students will sing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Sing accurately and with good breath control, alone and/or in small and large ensembles
- Sing with expression and technical accuracy
- Sing music written in two and three parts

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental class will:

- Demonstrate well-developed ensemble skills

2. Students will play alone and with others a varied repertoire of music on instruments

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Perform on at least one instrument accurately and independently, alone and in small and large ensembles, and with good posture, good playing position, and good breath, bow, or stick control
- Perform, with expression and technical accuracy on a band or orchestral instrument, a repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of three on a scale of one to six*
- Perform music representing diverse genres and cultures, with appropriate expression and style*
- Play by ear simple melodies on a band or orchestral instrument

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental class will:

- Perform with expression and technical accuracy, a large and varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of four on a scale of one to six*
- Perform an appropriate part in an ensemble, demonstrating well-developed ensemble skills
- Perform in small ensembles

Students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Perform with expression and technical accuracy a large varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of five, on a scale of one to six*

*In music education, musical pieces are rated on a scale of difficulty from one to six

3. Students will improvise music

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Improvise melodic embellishments and simple rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic* melodies, blues melodies, and melodies in major and/or minor keys
- Improvise short melodies, unaccompanied and over give rhythmic accompaniments, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

*Pentatonic melodies are melodies built on five-tone scales

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed one year of study will:

- Improvise rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic* melodies and melodies in major and minor keys
- Improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Improvise original melodies in a variety of styles, over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

4. Students will compose and arrange music

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Compose short pieces within specific guidelines, demonstrating use of the elements of music
- Arrange simple pieces for two or more instruments from a concert key, demonstrating spacing of voices and balance
- Use a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources and electronic media when composing and arranging

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed one year of study will:

- Compose music in several distinct styles, demonstrating creativity in using the elements of music for expressive effect
- Arrange pieces for instruments other than those for which the pieces were written in ways that preserve or enhance the expressive effect of the music
- Compose and arrange music for instruments other than their own, demonstrating knowledge of the ranges and traditional uses of the sound sources

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Compose music, demonstrating imagination and technical skill in applying the principles of composition
- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of computer technology-notation and sequencing programs-to compose and arrange music for instruments

*Pentatonic melodies are melodies built on five-tone scales

5. Students will read and notate music

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Read whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, and dotted notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/8, and alla breve (2/2) meter signatures
- Sight read simple melodies in both treble and/or bass clefs
- Identify and define standard notation symbols for pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, articulation and expression
- Use standard notation to record their musical ideas and the musical ideas of others
- Sight-read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of two on a scale of one to six*

*In music education, musical pieces are rated on a scale of difficulty from one to six

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed one year of study will:

- Demonstrate the ability to read an instrumental score of up to four staves by describing how the elements of music are used
- Sight-read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of three on a scale of one to six*
- Interpret nonstandard notation symbols used by some 20th century composers

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Demonstrate the ability to read a full instrumental score by describing how the elements of music are used and explaining all transpositions and clefs
- Sight-read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of four on a scale of one to six*

6. Students will analyze and describe music

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Listen to and describe specific music events in a given example, using appropriate terminology
- Listen to and analyze the uses of the elements of music in examples representing diverse genres and cultures
- Demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of meter, rhythm, tonality, intervals, chords, and harmonic progressions in their analyses of music

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed one year of study will:

- Listen to and analyze examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of the elements of music and expressive devices
- Demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music
- Identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity and variety and tension and release in a musical work and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Demonstrate the ability to perceive and remember music events by describing in detail significant events occurring in a given example
- Compare how musical materials are used in a given example relative to how they are used in other works of the same genre or style
- Analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive

7. Students will evaluate music and music performances

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Develop criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of music performances and compositions and apply the criteria in their listening, composing, and performing
- Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and others' performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations by applying specific criteria appropriate for the style of the music and offer constructive suggestions for improvement

*In music education, musical pieces are rated on a scale of difficulty from one to six

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed one year of study will:

- Apply and refine specific criteria for making informed, critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations and apply the criteria in their participation in music
- Evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing it to similar or exemplary models

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Evaluate a given musical work in terms of its aesthetic qualities and explain the musical means it uses to evoke feelings and emotions

8. Students will relate music to the other arts and disciplines outside the arts

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Compare how the characteristic media of two or more arts can be used to transform similar events, scenes, emotions, or ideas into works of art
- Compare the terminology and contrasting definitions of various elements in each of two or more arts
- Describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other school disciplines interrelate with those of music

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed one year of study will:

- Explain how elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts
- Compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style and cite examples from various cultures
- Explain ways in which the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts interrelate with those of music

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Compare the characteristic elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles among the arts in different historical periods and cultures
- Explain how the roles of creators, performers, and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another

9. Students will relate music to history and culture

By the end of Grade 8 students in instrumental classes will:

- Describe distinguishing characteristics or representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures
- Classify by genre and style (and, if applicable, by historical period, composer, and title) a varied body of high-quality and characteristic musical works and explain the characteristics that cause each work to be exemplary
- Compare, in several cultures of the world including their own, functions music serves, roles of musicians, and conditions under which music is typically created and performed

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed one year of study will:

- Classify music by culture and historical period based on characteristic styles or genres and justify their classification

- Identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and name well known musicians associated with them
- Identify various roles that musicians perform, name representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements

By the end of Grade 12 students in instrumental classes who have completed more than one year of study will:

- Identify and explain the stylistic features of a given musical work that define its aesthetic tradition and its historical or cultural context
- Identify and describe music genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, identify the cultural source of each influence, and trace the historical connections that produced the synthesis of influences