

VOCAL MUSIC SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

GRADES 4 – 8

In this course of study, students will develop individual performance skills and acquire the skills and knowledge that can only be experienced in a choral ensemble setting. The development of these skills, i.e., balance, blend, and group intonation, are sequential over a two-year period. In fourth grade, these skills and basic rehearsal technique concepts are introduced and are reinforced throughout grade five. Acquiring these ensemble skills during the fourth and fifth grade will be a foundation for their ensuing school ensemble experiences.

In their development of choral performance, students will comprehend that singing is in itself a form of communication. They will know that vocal music has structure and organization, that Elements of Music are present in every song, and that these elements are used to create and shape musical ideas.

In their study of choral performance, students will enrich and apply their musical knowledge in authentic situations. They will be able to transform the written music to a live performance. They will understand that making music can be a lifelong experience and that in a truly diverse setting (i.e., cultural, social, learning) everyone can make music come alive.

The overarching goal of the 6th-8th Grade Choral Program is to provide students with the opportunity to broaden and enrich their musical experiences through singing. This course is designed to provide students with skills that will build on their current level of musical achievement. A variety of vocal repertoire is examined, stressing the knowledge and development of the rudiments of music and ensemble performance skills. Students will develop skills that enable them to evaluate and demonstrate an appreciation for Music as an art form. Participation in this course will strengthen aesthetic musical awareness and relate the study of Music to other disciplines. Students participating in this ensemble will perform at scheduled concerts, festivals, and occasionally, at school or community functions.

As a result of the study of Choral Music at the middle school level, students will demonstrate essential understandings in the following areas:

- Individual musicianship and teamwork are crucial to the success of a performance.
- The body is an instrument, and there is a proper technique for choral vocal production.
- Music reflects the culture and time in which it is created.
- There are direct connections between Music and the other arts.
- Reflecting on ensemble and individual performance is essential to musical growth.

4th-5th Grade

Unit 1: Vocal Proficiency

Students will know:

- Proper vocal technique and production.
- Intonation: on pitch/not on pitch.
- Articulation: singing text properly.

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate correct singing posture.
- Demonstrate correct breath control.
- Demonstrate pitch discrimination through listening and singing.
- Demonstrate the ability to sing pure vowel sounds.
- Develop an understanding of appropriate diction and pronunciation of the text.
- Demonstrate the ability to sing with accurate intonation.

Unit 2: Reading Choral Music

Students will know:

- How to read and perform a piece of choral music in its entirety (i.e. phrasing, dynamics, parts).
- How to sing their own part while a different part is being sung at the same time.

Students will be able to:

- Define vocabulary dealing with music terminology.
- Identify and perform from written musical notation.
- Apply musical terms and symbols in their performances.
- Identify and perform rhythmic patterns in their music.
- Isolate and follow their own part in their choral music.

Unit 3: Ensemble Rehearsal and Public Performance

Students will know:

- How to follow different conducting patterns and cues.
- How to sing with expression, turning the written page into an aesthetic musical performance.
- How to critique a choral performance.
- How to be committed to the schedule of an ensemble.
- The appropriate expectations when performing in public.

Students will be able to:

- Identify 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8 conducting patterns.
- Demonstrate proper phrasing within the section and/or ensemble.
- Blend and balance their part to the ensemble in terms of dynamics, articulation, tempo, tone quality, and style.
- Make aesthetic judgements about their own performance and that of others.
- Assess personal musical growth.
- Demonstrate expectations regarding public performances and rehearsals.

Unit 4: Repertoire

Students will know:

- Artistic inspiration is generated by historical, social, environmental, and cultural experiences and points of view.
- Selection of repertoire should be appropriate for the intended audience/setting.
- Voicings and arrangements of choral selections can vary in form and style (i.e., unison, rounds, partner songs).

Students will be able to:

- Describe the cultural and historic origins of music they perform.

- Perform music in different forms; unison, partner songs, canon, ostinato, and simple 2-part harmony.
- Sing music in other world languages.
- Convey understanding and aesthetic quality of text in other languages.

6th-8th Grade

Unit 1: Vocal Proficiency

Students will know:

- The importance of proper vocal technique. Proper vocal technique and production.
- The importance of dynamics.
- The importance of intonation in an ensemble.
- How to sing text properly with correct diction and pronunciation.

Students will be able to:

- Demonstrate correct singing posture.
- Demonstrate correct breath control, singing through the phrase.
- Demonstrate the ability to sing unified vowel sounds.
- Demonstrate appropriate diction and pronunciation of the text.
- Demonstrate the ability to sing with accurate intonation.
- Demonstrate dynamics in singing.

Unit 2: Reading Choral Music

Students will know:

- How to read and perform a piece of choral music in its entirety.
- How to isolate and follow their own part.
- The relative values of notes and rests.
- The function of time signatures.
- Musical terms and symbols.

Students will be able to:

- Identify and perform from written rhythm and pitch musical notation (grand staff).
- Apply musical terms and symbols in their performances.
- Sing parts independently.
- Demonstrate an ability to sight read simple melodies using pitched syllables.
- Identify various compositional devices as they occur in the choral literature.
- Sing simple melodies using Kodaly Hand Signs.

Unit 3: Ensemble Rehearsal and Public Performance

Students will know:

- The nomenclature of performance directions.
- All expectations regarding public performance and rehearsals.
- How to listen and adjust individually to create a more polished ensemble performance.

Students will be able to:

- Perform part assignments independently.
- Maintain pitch in the ensemble.
- Demonstrate proper phrasing within the section and/or ensemble.
- Blend and balance their part to the ensemble in terms of dynamics, articulation, tempo, tone quality, style, phrasing, and expression.
- Demonstrate correct and appropriate diction according to the language and style sung.
- Follow the directions of a conductor, both verbal and non-verbal cues.

- Interpret complex conducting patterns.
- Make aesthetic judgments about their own performance, and that of others, as it relates to the ensemble's performance.
- Assess ensemble musical growth and set personal goals to further the ensemble's growth.

Unit 4: Music and Society

Students will know:

- How music relates to history and culture.
- The relationships between music and the other fine arts.
- The distinguishing characteristics of common musical styles and eras.

Students will be able to:

- Identify relationships between music and the other fine arts.
- Identify ways in which music reflects society.
- Sing music of traditional non-western origin.
- Sing the distinguishing characteristics of common musical styles and eras.
- Identify career opportunities in the field of music.
- Evaluate, in the performances of musical works, the distinguishing characteristics of musical styles and eras, as well as the effectiveness of the performance.