

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Trumbull, Connecticut

Introduction to Music Theory
High School
Music
2016

Curriculum Writing Team

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Introduction to Music Theory- High School

Table of Contents

Core Values and Beliefs	3
Introduction	3
Philosophy	3
Course Description.....	4
Prerequisites	4
Methods of Assessment	4
Text(s)	4
Goals	5
Standards.....	6
Unit 1 Scales and Notation	7
Unit 2 Intervals and Triads	9
Unit 3 Tonality, Modality and the Circle of Fifths	11
Competency Standards/Technology	12
Resources	12

The Trumbull Board of Education will continue to take Affirmative Action to ensure that no persons are discriminated against in its employment.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

The Trumbull School Community, which engages in an environment conducive to learning, believes that all students will read and write effectively, therefore communicating in an articulate and coherent manner. All students will participate in activities that address problem-solving through critical thinking. Students will use technology as a tool in decision making. We believe that by fostering self-confidence, self-directed and student-centered activities, we will encourage independent thinking and learning. We believe ethical conduct to be paramount in sustaining our welcoming school climate.

We believe:

- Music is an inextricable part of the human experience, and every individual is inherently musical.
- Every student should be assured a high-quality course of music instruction, taught by qualified music educators.
- Music is a pillar of cultural heritage and a means for interdisciplinary learning.
- Music is an essential, core subject, and providing a musical education is a necessary part of educating the whole child. Therefore, every student should be offered opportunities to perform, create, respond, and connect musically.
- Learning music gives students a mode of artistic expression, a sense of music appreciation, and the tools needed for becoming lifelong musical learners.
- All individuals should have the high-quality resources and facilities necessary to achieve success within a challenging curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Music Theory is the study of how musicians, through notation and an understanding of musical patterns, relationships, and compositional techniques, are able to convey their musical creations so that others, across generations, are able to interpret and understand these musical creations. Students are then able to enhance their understanding of notation, musical patterns, relationships, and compositional techniques to gain greater appreciations, improve their performances, and convey their musical creations.

Introduction to Music Theory is an elective high school course building upon students' earlier work with music in the Trumbull Public Schools, and providing a formulation for Advanced Music theory should a student elect that next course.

PHILOSOPHY

Music is a universal art form and one of the earliest vehicles through which human beings were able and are still able to express their creativity and emotions, and connects present society to the past and all of us to each other, regardless of race, culture, language, or nationality. Theory is an essential part of this creative process, providing musicians the tools upon which to develop their musical expressions and understand how to effectively communicate musically.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Name

Introduction to Music Theory

Prerequisites

Elective course – open to any ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade students.

Materials Required

Students will be provided Alfred's *Essentials of Music Theory* as their main text/reference. Students will maintain a three-ring binder in which they will organize handouts/worksheets, manuscript paper, blank paper for notetaking, and a pencil.

General Description of the Course

This course is designed for the student interested in learning about the basics of musical notation in order to improve his/her own musicianship or to become prepared for the study of voice or any other musical instrument. Notation, manuscript writing, major and minor scales, intervals, basic chords, and cadences will be studied. The course will also include keyboard and ear training skills. In addition, important music history from the Renaissance to the Classical period will be studied.

Major Projects

Students will complete a composer project/presentation.

Assessments

There will be six major quizzes and a final exam.

Texts

Allen, Michael, et al. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000, Book I*. Hal Leonard, 2004.

Dillon, Jacquelyn, et al. *Strictly Strings, Book I*. New York: Alfred Publishing, Montclair, NJ, 1992.

Surmani, Andrew, et al. *Essentials of Music Theory Books 1-3*. Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1998.

GOALS

Students will:

- Understand the process by which composers/musicians read/express themselves through notation.
- Learn the basic patterns that comprise melody and harmony, such as scales, chords, and rhythm.
- Learn the vocabulary of musical terms that musicians use to convey their ideas and describe music.
- Be introduced to the basic forms in which music is composed.
- Be able to analyze musical compositions, and develop listening skills.
- Be introduced to basic keyboard skills such as playing scales and chords.
- Learn essential information relating to theory and performance of the Renaissance to the Classical period.

Music Standards

The Performance Standards align with the 2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music.

I. CREATING

- Imagine: The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians' work emerge from a variety of sources.
- Plan and Make: Musicians' creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent.
- Evaluate and Refine: Musicians evaluate and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.
- Present: Musicians' presentation of creative work is the culmination of a process of creation and communication.

II. PERFORMING

- Select: Performers' interest in and knowledge of musical works, understanding of their own technical skill, and the context for a performance influence the selection of repertoire.
- Analyze: Analyzing creators' context and how they manipulate elements of music provides insight into their intent and informs performance.
- Interpret: Performers make interpretive decisions based on their understanding of context and expressive intent.
- Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine: To express their musical ideas, musicians analyze, evaluate, and refine their performance over time through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.
- Present: Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place, and cultures. The context and how a work is presented influence the audience response.

III. RESPONDING

- Select: Individuals' selection of musical works is influenced by their interests, experiences, understandings, and purposes.
- Analyze: Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.
- Interpret: Through their use of elements and structures of music, creators and performers provide clues to their expressive intent.
- Evaluate: The personal evaluation of musical works and performances is informed by analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.

IV. CONNECTING

- Musicians connect their personal interests, experiences, ideas, and knowledge to creating, performing, and responding.
- Understanding connections to varied contexts and daily life enhances musicians' creating, performing, and responding.

Unit 1 – Scales and Notation

At the completion of this unit, students will:

- MU: Re9.1.C.IIa Explain the effectiveness of the technical and expressive aspects of selected music and performances, demonstrating understanding of music theory as well as compositional techniques and procedures.
- MU:Cr3.2.C.Ia Share music through the use of notation, performance, or technology, and demonstrate how the elements of music have been employed to realize expressive intent.
- MU:Re7.2.C.IIa Analyze aurally and/or by reading the scores of musical works the elements of music (including form), compositional techniques and procedures, relating them to style, mood, and context; and explain how the analysis provides models for personal growth as composer, performer, and/or listener.

Essential Questions

- How does the understanding of theory help musicians express themselves more effectively?
- How do composers and musicians become musically literate, being able to read, write, and convey musical ideas?

Focus Questions

- What is the Diatonic System in music and what importance does it play in creating the patterns that make music sound the way it does?
- How do the whole/half step system, major scale, and triads transfer from a written form to a physical form on the keyboard?
- How can one use solfege syllables/hand symbols to sing patterns of the Major scale?
- Which hand/fingers do I use on the keyboard?
- By understanding the basics of writing and reading notation, how does one use that skill to effectively read music while playing the keyboard?

Scope and Sequence

- The basics of musical notation (staff, notes, clefs, rhythmic values)
- Reading, writing, and playing half steps and whole steps
- The pattern of the Major scale, demonstrated by writing and playing
- The solfege syllables/hand symbols that correspond to the scale
- How to place fingers on the keyboard, specifically the 5-finger pattern
- Playing short songs on the keyboard, right and left hand independently

Instructional/Teaching Strategies

- By using Alfred's *Essentials of Music Theory* and the website musictheory.net, teaching the basics of reading and writing music
- Introducing students to the Diatonic system of music visually (on staff), aurally (by listening), and physically (on keyboard)
- Guiding students in learning the solfege syllables and hand symbols by copying singing/motions of teacher
- Guiding students into correct hand/finger position on keyboard

Evaluation/Assessment Methods

- On a regular basis, teacher will give immediate verbal feedback to students on written class activities, homework, and keyboard activities.
- Students will complete two quizzes of written and performance tasks for this unit.

Time Allotments/Pacing Guide

Approximately 7 weeks

Unit 2 – Intervals and Triads

At the completion of this unit, students will:

- MU: Re9.1.C.IIa Explain the effectiveness of the technical and expressive aspects of selected music and performances, demonstrating understanding of music theory as well as compositional techniques and procedures.
- MU:Cr3.2.C.Ia Share music through the use of notation, performance, or technology, and demonstrate how the elements of music have been employed to realize expressive intent.
- MU:Re7.2.C.IIa Analyze aurally and/or by reading the scores of musical works the elements of music (including form), compositional techniques and procedures, relating them to style, mood, and context; and explain how the analysis provides models for personal growth as composer, performer, and/or listener.

Essential Questions

- How does the number of half steps between notes affect the way certain intervals and triads sound?
- What is the role of melody vs. harmony?

Focus Questions

- How is memorizing the number of half steps between certain notes vital to the ability to construct various types of intervals and triads?
- How do I count a compound time signature/meter differently from a simple time signature/meter?
- What is the purpose of a chord progression, what makes the “primary triads” so important in the construction of an effective harmonic progression, and why is it important to assign Roman Numerals in order to analyze them?
- How do the Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical periods contrast with one another?

Scope and Sequence

- Relating Major/minor 2nd to whole/half step, and counting half steps between 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, and 5th
- Identifying visually on staff, aurally by listening, and physically by keyboard the four types of triads (Major, minor, augmented, and diminished)
- Learning the crossover technique necessary for playing the major scale on the keyboard
- Listening to and constructing the Primary triads, assigning Roman numerals and understanding the correct order (I, IV, V, I) to making a “complete” progression

Instructional/Teaching Strategies

- Through technology as well as text, guiding students to differentiate triads/chords by counting half steps
- Through listening and reading, guiding students to be able to differentiate and be able to perform, by clapping, the difference between rhythms in the simple time signature vs. rhythms in the compound time signature
- Guiding students into correct technique on keyboard to playing the Major scale and arpeggio as well as forming triads
- Students listen to, write and perform the I, IV, V, I harmonic progression.

Assured Experiences (Projects)

Students will complete a project on a composer from the Renaissance, Baroque, or Classical period.

Evaluation/Assessment Methods

- On a regular basis, teacher will give immediate verbal feedback to students on written class activities, homework, and keyboard activities.
- Students will complete two major quizzes of written and performance tasks for this unit.

Time Allotment/Pacing Guide

Approximately 7 weeks

Unit 3 – Tonality, Modality and the Circle of Fifths

At the completion of this unit, students will:

- MU: Re9.1.C.IIa Explain the effectiveness of the technical and expressive aspects of selected music and performances, demonstrating understanding of music theory as well as compositional techniques and procedures.
- MU:Cr3.2.C.Ia Share music through the use of notation, performance, or technology, and demonstrate how the elements of music have been employed to realize expressive intent.
- MU:Re7.2.C.IIa Analyze aurally and/or by reading the scores of musical works the elements of music (including form), compositional techniques and procedures, relating them to style, mood, and context; and explain how the analysis provides models for personal growth as composer, performer, and/or listener.

Essential Questions

- What does “tonality” mean and how does the circle of fifths establish tonal centers?
- What is the effect of the relative minor on the sound of melodies and harmonies?

Focus Questions

- Why is the interval of a perfect fifth so important in music theory?
- What are the different ways to remember/memorize the order of sharps/flats and keys?

Scope and Sequence

- Adding necessary information on a blank circle of fifths.
- The order of sharps/flats and keys by using the interval of a perfect fifth.

Instructional/Teaching Strategies

- Demonstrating the circle of fifths by various methods.
- Comparing the minor scale to the major scale by the pattern of whole and half steps, and the Major Key that shares the same key signature.
- Modeling and guiding students into transferring a Major melody and chord progression to minor.
- Instructing on the correct finger pattern of the Chromatic scale.

Evaluation/Assessment Methods

- On a regular basis, teacher will give immediate verbal feedback to students on written class activities, homework, and keyboard activities.
- Students will complete two major quizzes of written and performance tasks for this unit.
- Students will complete a cumulative final exam for all three units.

Time Allotment/Pacing Guide

Approximately 7 weeks

Technology Competency Standards

1. Creativity and Innovation – Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:
 - b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression
 - c. use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues.
4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making – Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students:
 - a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
 - b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.
 - c. collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions.
 - d. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions.
5. Digital Citizenship – Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:
 - a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.
 - b. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivity.
 - c. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning.
 - d. exhibit leadership for digital citizenship.

Resources

Texts

- Allen, Michael, et al. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000, Book 1*. Hal Leonard, 2004.
- Dillon, Jacquelyn, et al. *Strictly Strings, Book 1*. New York: Alfred Publishing, Montclair, NJ, 1992.
- Surmani, Andrew, et al. *Essentials of Music Theory Books 1-3*. Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1998.

Websites for Teachers

www.nationalartsstandards.org/

nccas.org/

www.nafme.org