Winter and Spring Concerts

Content Area: **Vocal Music**
Course(s): **Vocal Music**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **15 Weeks (Ongoing)**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

The culminating activity for any choir is performing in concert. In this unit, the elements of vocal and choral technique, music theory and literacy synthesize with musical expression and interpretation to create a product that exhibits the students' growth and learning. Each ensemble will perform 3-5 appropriate choral pieces at each concert. The repertoire will vary in style, time period, language, subject matter, voicing and difficulty.

Standards

VPA.1.1.8.B.1	Analyze the application of the elements of music in diverse Western and non-Western musical works from different historical eras using active listening and by reading and interpreting written scores.
VPA.1.1.8.B.2	Compare and contrast the use of structural forms and the manipulation of the elements of music in diverse styles and genres of musical compositions.
VPA.1.3.8.B.1	Perform instrumental or vocal compositions using complex standard and non-standard Western, non-Western, and avant-garde notation.
VPA.1.3.8.B.2	Perform independently and in groups with expressive qualities appropriately aligned with the stylistic characteristics of the genre.
VPA.1.3.8.B.3	Apply theoretical understanding of expressive and dynamic music terminology to the performance of written scores in the grand staff.
VPA.1.3.8.B.4	Improvise music in a selected genre or style, using the elements of music that are consistent with basic playing and/or singing techniques in that genre or style.
VPA.1.4.8.A.1	Generate observational and emotional responses to diverse culturally and historically specific works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
VPA.1.4.8.A.2	Identify works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art that are used for utilitarian and non-utilitarian purposes.
VPA.1.4.8.A.3	Distinguish among artistic styles, trends, and movements in dance, music, theatre, and visual art within diverse cultures and historical eras.
VPA.1.4.8.A.5	Interpret symbolism and metaphors embedded in works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
VPA.1.4.8.A.6	Differentiate between “traditional” works of art and those that do not use conventional elements of style to express new ideas.
VPA.1.4.8.A.7	Analyze the form, function, craftsmanship, and originality of representative works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
VPA.1.4.8.B.1	Evaluate the effectiveness of a work of art by differentiating between the artist’s technical proficiency and the work’s content or form.

Essential Questions

- How does music communicate and elicit emotion?
- What can I contribute to each performance?
- How can our experience in singing diverse languages enable us to understand other cultures and societies?
- What behaviors should the audience see during a performance? What behaviors should the performers see exhibited by the audience?
- How can our experience in singing diverse languages enable us to understand other cultures and societies?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that…

- Choral performance develops independent musicianship.
- Knowledge results in understanding and understanding results in appreciation.
- Respect for performances, both on and off the stage, can build self-esteem, confidence, and respect for other performers.
- Singing in an ensemble requires cooperation and collaboration between many individual musicians.
- Singing is part of what makes us uniquely human. Vocal performance helps us express emotions that cannot be verbally expressed.
- These life skills are necessary in all areas of life.

Application of Skills: Students will be able to…

- develop the ability to critique performances and to adjust vocal technique, facial expression, posture, movement, and projection for each selection in order to reflect the individuality of each piece of music.
- develop the ability to improvise.
- express verbally or in written form an emotional connection to specific pieces, particular phrases, or text using appropriate music terminology.
- identify the main characteristics and composers of music from various historical periods.
- perform and analyze music from a variety of cultures, languages, historical periods, and styles, paying respect to accurate language pronunciation and specific performance customs.
- sing with appropriate conduct, focus, and effort during performance.

Assessments

Formative:

- Teacher observation of musical performances
- participation and understanding
- checklists (student daily evaluation) & solo and ensemble performance rubrics
- audition preparation concert programs
- student journaling

- criteria and goal setting activities.

Summative:

- Each student will receive a concert and dress rehearsal grade that will represent a significant percentage of their marking period grade. This assessment will take into account their preparedness for the concert, attention to concert dress codes, participation, behavior, punctuality, etc.

Suggested Activities

- Discuss performance techniques used in local and regional cultures (e.g. African, Latin, Native American). Discuss specific instruments used in local and regional cultures.
- Study echo, question and answer, and call and response techniques. Discuss similarities and differences between phrases in call and response. Practice improvising an appropriate response to a melodic or rhythmic call (5th and 6th grade), using the scale and maintaining the tonal center and using the scale to a given chord progression (7th and 8th grade).
- Follow the rules of concert etiquette in every rehearsal throughout the year. In class performance of rounds and partner songs for peers, accompanied, acappella, in small, large, and solo settings.
- Compare and contrast two different performances of the same piece for strengths and weaknesses. Study adjudicator's criteria from High Notes festival. Discuss/demonstrate/perform based on style of music.
- Analyze the structure of the music and identify key themes, expressions, and rhythms. Text-self, text-text, text-world. Identify the composer's intent for the piece and the intended audience.
- Use digital media to survey music history from Middle Ages to Modern. Discuss main innovations of each age, such as changes in texture, technical ability of instruments, growth of the orchestra, etc. Highlight 2-3 major composers for each period and listen to their music. Practice "drop the needle" listening assessments.

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

- Use of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles
- peer scaffolding to support learning
- adjusting questions
- peer and teacher modeling for demonstration
- acceleration/deceleration
- hands-on tools (tongue depressors, mirrors, books on abdomen) for reinforcement
- rubrics.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:

Students listen, analyze, interpret information, and draw conclusions based on the best analysis.

Life and Career Skills:

Students learn to deal positively with both praise and criticism, and set goals for learning.

Communication and Collaboration:

Use of compromise, consensus, and community-building strategies to create a successful performance.

Resources

Various videos (youtube.com and vimeo.com) and CD's of choral performances to critique and analyze

Choral Techniques by Gordon H. Lamb. Wm. C. Brown Publishing, 1988.

Complete Handbook of Voice Training by Richard Alderson. Prentice Hall Trade, 1979.

Time-Saving Warm Ups by Grier and Everson. Heritage Music Press, 1987.

Warm Ups and Work Outs for the Developing Choir by Emily Crocker, Vols. 1 & 2. Jensen Publications, 1990.

Warm-Ups by the Dozen by Russell Robinson, Set 1 & 2. Warner Bros. Publications, 2003.