Unit 03: Development of Vocal and Choral Technique

Content Area: **Music**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 2**
Length: **ongoing**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will refine and expand their understanding of healthy and effective vocal technique, including alignment, breathing, support, resonance, diction, and tone color. Through focused study and application, students will develop greater awareness of how vocal choices influence musical expression and ensemble performance. Students will explore rehearsal strategies used to achieve artistic excellence and will develop the skills necessary to contribute as independent musicians and effective leaders.

Revised: July 2026

Standards

Information Literacy

This unit challenges students to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively. Information literacy includes, but is not limited to, digital, visual, media, textual, and technological literacy. Lessons may include the research process and how information is created and produced; critical thinking and using information resources; research methods, including the difference between primary and secondary sources; the difference between facts, points of view, and opinions, accessing peer-reviewed print and digital library resources; the economic, legal, social, and ethical issues surrounding the use of information.

New Jersey Diversity and Inclusion Law

In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including diverse cultures, styles, genres, and historical periods.

ELD standards:https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdmsiGOdCHlrjU-

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1.3C.12adv.Pr	Performing
1.3C.12adv.Pr4	Selecting, analyzing and interpreting work.
1.3C.12adv.Pr4a	Develop and apply criteria to select varied programs to study and perform based on an understanding of theoretical and structural characteristics and expressive challenges in the music, the technical skill of the individual or ensemble, and the purpose and context of the performance.
1.3C.12adv.Pr4b	Examine, evaluate, and critique, using music reading skills (where appropriate), how the structure and context impact and inform prepared and improvised performances.
1.3C.12adv.Pr4c	Demonstrate how understanding the style, genre and context of a varied repertoire of music informs prepared and improvised performances as well as performers' technical skills to connect with the audience.
1.3C.12adv.Pr5	Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.
1.3C.12adv.Pr5a	Develop, apply, and refine appropriate rehearsal strategies to address individual and ensemble challenges in a varied repertoire of music.
1.3C.12adv.Pr6	Conveying meaning through art.
1.3C.12adv.Pr6a	Demonstrate an understanding and mastery of the technical demands and expressive qualities of the music through prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire representing diverse cultures, styles, genres, and historical periods in multiple types of ensembles.
1.3C.12adv.Pr6b	Demonstrate an ability to connect, engage and respond to audiences through prepared and improvised performances.
1.3C.12adv.Re	Responding
1.3C.12adv.Re7	Perceiving and analyzing products.
1.3C.12adv.Re7a	Use research and personally developed criteria to justify choices made when selecting music, citing knowledge of the music and individual and ensemble purpose and context.
1.3C.12adv.Re7b	Demonstrate and justify how the analysis of structures, contexts and performance decisions inform the response to music.
1.3C.12adv.Re8	Interpreting intent and meaning.
1.3C.12adv.Re8a	Justify interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical works by comparing and synthesizing varied researched sources, including reference to other art forms.
1.3C.12adv.Re9a	Develop and justify evaluations of music, programs of music, and performances based on criteria, personal decision-making, research, and understanding of contexts.
1.3B.12adv.Cn	Connecting
1.3B.12adv.Cn10	Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.
1.3B.12adv.Cn10a	Demonstrate how interests, knowledge and skills related to personal choices and intent when creating, performing and responding to music.
CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.
CRP.K-12.CRP1.1	Career-ready individuals understand the obligations and responsibilities of being a member of a community, and they demonstrate this understanding every day through their interactions with others. They are conscientious of the impacts of their decisions on others and the environment around them. They think about the near-term and long-term consequences of their actions and seek to act in ways that contribute to the betterment of their teams, families, community and workplace. They are reliable and consistent in going beyond the minimum expectation and in participating in activities that serve the greater

	good.
CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP3	Attend to personal health and financial well-being.
CRP.K-12.CRP3.1	Career-ready individuals understand the relationship between personal health, workplace performance and personal well-being; they act on that understanding to regularly practice healthy diet, exercise and mental health activities. Career-ready individuals also take regular action to contribute to their personal financial well-being, understanding that personal financial security provides the peace of mind required to contribute more fully to their own career success.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP5	Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
CRP.K-12.CRP5.1	Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions and regularly make decisions that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organization, and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials, and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact on the social condition, the environment and the profitability of the organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP6	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP8	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
CRP.K-12.CRP8.1	Career-ready individuals readily recognize problems in the workplace, understand the nature of the problem, and devise effective plans to solve the problem. They are aware of problems when they occur and take action quickly to address the problem; they thoughtfully investigate the root cause of the problem prior to introducing solutions. They carefully consider the options to solve the problem. Once a solution is agreed upon, they follow through to ensure the problem is solved, whether through their own actions or the actions of others.
CRP.K-12.CRP9	Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
CRP.K-12.CRP9.1	Career-ready individuals consistently act in ways that align personal and community-held ideals and principles while employing strategies to positively influence others in the workplace. They have a clear understanding of integrity and act on this understanding in every decision. They use a variety of means to positively impact the directions and actions of a team or organization, and they apply insights into human behavior to change others'

	action, attitudes and/or beliefs. They recognize the near-term and long-term effects that management's actions and attitudes can have on productivity, morals and organizational culture.
CRP.K-12.CRP12	Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.
CRP.K-12.CRP12.1	Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal. They apply an awareness of cultural difference to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.

Essential Questions

- How and why does a singer rely on vocal technique?
- How does understanding the cultural, historical, and stylistic context of a piece dictate the specific vocal techniques a singer must use?
- How does vocal technique affect a musical performance?
- In what ways can a singer self-evaluate and adapt their rehearsal strategies to overcome specific musical challenges within an ensemble?

Enduring Understandings

- An effective warm-up and rehearsal are carefully planned to move the ensemble forward, enhance musicianship, and maintain the vocal health of the singers.
- Audiation (inner hearing) coupled with a well-trained ear is vital to advanced musical success.
- Clear and uniform diction is essential to the interpretation and communication of music to an audience.
- Individual understanding and execution of alignment, breathing, support, and vocal health, affects the sound quality and performance of the entire choir.
- Professional ensembles adjust a variety of the elements of a piece for each presentation of the music, depending upon the circumstances of the performance, the audience, and the size and acoustics of the space.
- Singing requires awareness and development of the body in relation to the physical demands of performance.
- Sound and movement are dynamically linked together, as sound is created by movement.
- The elements unique to a piece of repertoire affect the way a piece is presented, approached, prepared, and learned in rehearsal.

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- Basic IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) symbols and common vowel sounds.
- How to adjust and vary the amount and type of vocal resonance used for a specific piece or genre.
- How to align themselves posturally for singing and use breath support effectively for their own body.
- How to change and manipulate tone color and weight in the voice as appropriate for different repertoire.
- How to collaborate with other professionals in the field, including conductors, composers, diction

coaches, etc.

- How to healthfully warm up their own voice and how structure and run a basic ensemble warm-up (breath, resonance, energy, range).
- How to listen and balance their voices in a variety of repertoire and acoustic situations.
- How to negotiate the passaggio (register break) appropriately and manipulate different vocal registers to create musical effects.
- How to practice daily vocal health habits, including proper hydration, adequate vocal rest, recognizing signs of vocal fatigue, and avoiding vocal strain.
- How to take responsibility for their own part in performance.
- How to teach themselves their own musical part of a written piece.
- How to use their breath to create long, sustained phrases and collaborate stagger breathing within vocal section.
- Several rehearsal methods and reasons for employing them (e.g. count-singing, staccato singing, vowels only, use of movement)
- The basic rules for proper English, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, and/or Spanish singer's diction, depending on repertoire selected.
- The typical, appropriate, and accepted color of each voice part (soprano, alto, tenor, bass).
- When and how to make their own appropriate musical markings on sheet music without being asked by the conductor.

Learning Plan

- Preview the essential questions and connect to learning throughout the course.
- Students and teacher discuss vocal color and tone in relation to the repertoire being performed. Students compare the sound of several pieces and discuss why the differences are important and necessary in their performance of the music.
- Students and teacher evaluate the class's use of proper vocal technique, diction, and tone throughout the rehearsals and from the recording of the performance.
- Students assist teacher in directing and shaping the choral rehearsal. Students are asked to determine the group vocal techniques appropriate for dealing with specific repertoire issues, for example, count-singing for maintaining pulse or singing staccato with a metronome to line up diction.
- Students occasionally lead the Madrigal Choir or the Concert Choir in warm-up and/or rehearsal. In the absence of the teacher, students select and utilize basic rehearsal techniques to accomplish the goals the teacher has set.
- Students will actively listen to, compare, and analyze diverse recordings of professional choral ensembles to identify varying tone colors, stylistic choices, and historical accuracy.
- Teacher encourages students to write in and prepare their own diction, only addressing specific issues that need attention, such as diphthongs or glottal stops, etc. Students become the class's diction experts in foreign languages when appropriate, as they speak it at home or take class in school. Students guide the class in pronouncing the text correctly.
- Teacher expects students to demonstrate proper body alignment, breathing, and support. Teacher confers with students individually regarding their posture and student self-regulate their technique.
- Teacher facilitates vocal warm-ups, breathing exercises, and vocalises in each class that will serve to aid in teaching and improving specific vocal issues related to the choral repertoire.
- Teacher instructs students to learn a section of music on their own, in a given amount of time utilizing any resources they have. Students may break into sectionals or employ the use of solfege. Students are

asked to be resourceful and rely on their knowledge and ability to learn their music and assist others.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Performing Arts students demonstrate differentiated proficiency according to their ability to answer the essential questions through formative and summative assessments. Evidence of progression may be demonstrated in divergent ways through the Artistic Processes of Creating, Performing/ Presenting/ Producing, Connecting, and Responding.

- Create kinesthetic experiences which reflect the line, tone, shape, and/or color of a phrase in a piece of music.
- Demonstrate proper body alignment, breathing, and breath support when performing and rehearsing, as a class and individually.
- Determine and perform the appropriate vocal tone and color for specific repertoire pieces and give reasoning for choices.
- Evaluate and critique the vocal technique of others and help identify potential technical problems.
- Explore and reflect on the essential questions through discussions and journaling.
- Lead a sectional or full-ensemble rehearsal and use effective rehearsing techniques to achieve desired outcomes.
- Lead the class in a well-planned vocal warm-up.
- Mark their own musical scores with both widely accepted markings, as well as their own system of indications.
- Perform stylistically varied choral repertoire successfully and appropriately.
- Sing with resonance and correct, uniform diction when performing and rehearsing, as a class and individually.
- Warm up their own voice in preparation for rehearsal or performance.

Materials

The materials used in this course allow for integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

- A variety of advanced high school choral repertoire, including but not limited to recommendation lists from the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), and the NYSSMA Manual
- Alfred's IPA Made Easy by Anna Wentlent
- Diction by John Moriarty
- Your Voice: An Inside View by Scott McCoy

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations: Performing Arts Accommodations & Modifications

Course-specific modifications include:

- Allow students to choose from several journal, essay, or discussion prompts and allow for multiple methods of response.
- Allow students to make their own vocal technique goals. With guidance from the teacher, students are encouraged to practice and self-regulate their own issues with breathing, alignment, support etc.
- Provide ample space for all students to participate and respond during class discussions.
- Provide students opportunity to lead the class if they wish and allow them to determine in what capacity or for how long.