

# Unit 1: Rhythmic Literacy

Content Area: **Music**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**  
Length: **subject to change**  
Status: **Published**

## Brief Summary of Unit

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Describe, perform and notate common rhythms within several common styles of jazz (Latin, swing, funk, rock, ballad).

## Transfer

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## Essential Questions

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- • How are written rhythms performed?
- • How do you notate music that you hear?
- • What are the rules of notation?

## Essential Understandings

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- • all performers are responsible for establishing time.
- • the most common way to interpret and master standard jazz notation is to listen to recordings and gain performance experience within the style notated.
- • the most commonly performed styles of jazz include Latin, swing, funk, rock, and ballad.
- • the performance of jazz rhythm is affected by style and culture and is unique to jazz literature.

## Students Will Know

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- • how to interpret and perform rhythmic notation patterns in various styles of jazz (Latin, swing, funk, rock, ballad).
- • how to perform rhythmic sight-reading in the following time signatures: 4/4, 2/4, 3/4, 5/4, 6/4, 3/8, 6/8 (2 beat, 6 beat).
- • the function of the rhythm section.
- • the rules of music notation in jazz (Latin, swing, funk, rock, ballad)

## Students Will Be Skilled At

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### Evidence/Performance Tasks

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- • complete writing exercises — have students notate familiar rhythms using jazz notation.
- • discuss the essential questions and key concepts prior to reading, rehearsing, or listening to a jazz “chart.”
- • evaluate and critique ensemble rehearsals: written and aural.
- • improvise rhythms and melodies.
- • perform in private and public.
- • rehearse and recreate jazz rhythms from jazz “charts” within small and large group settings.
- • transcribe solos from the literature.

### Learning Plan

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- • Create warm-up activities to reinforce necessary rhythms and issues of time and pulse.
- • Discuss and model improvisation of jazz rhythms within a particular style of jazz.
- • Discuss the essential questions and key concepts prior to reading, rehearsing, or listening to a jazz “chart.”
- • Evaluate performances aurally and through written expression.
- • Group learning activity – Alter the rehearsal setting and listening responsibilities of the ensemble.
- • Group learning activity – Have students create improvised solos within a particular style using learned notation and rhythmic foundations.
- • Group learning activity – Have students rehearse desired sections of music in small group settings, such as sectionals.
- • Group learning activity – Have students rehearse the desired sections of music in large group settings.
- • Identify and rehearse essential rhythms that are particular to a jazz style before reading the entire “chart.”
- • Listen to standard recordings of various jazz charts within a desired style prior to reading or rehearsing a new “chart.”
- • Perform for each other and for the public.
- • Writing exercise — Have students write/recreate notated rhythms in various time signatures appropriate to the desired style.

### Materials

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## **Suggested Strategies for Modifications**

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- • Give different examples of varying difficulty for transcription.
- • Have different levels of rhythmic sheets that the students work from to address their different learning levels.
- • Have layers of rhythm when performing together.
- • Require more experienced students to complete longer assignments.
- • Require more experienced students to complete same length assignments faster.