Unit 4: Ensemble Musicianship

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

Brief Summary of Unit

This unit emphasizes sustained, focused development of the core instrumental skills necessary for successful performance within a jazz ensemble setting.

Revised August 2025

Standards

ELD standards:https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdmsiGOdCHlrjU-WPvAtENnEgi0EStZXo0uiFYv1Nu4/edit

1.3C.12acc.Cr3a	Evaluate and refine draft arrangements, sections, short compositions, and improvisations based on personally developed criteria, including the extent to which they address identified purposes.
1.3C.12acc.Cr3b	Share personally developed arrangements, sections and short compositions (individually or as an ensemble) that address identified purposes.
1.3C.12acc.Pr4b	Document and demonstrate, using music reading skills (where appropriate), how compositional devices employed, and theoretical and structural aspects of musical works, may impact and inform prepared and improvised performances.
1.3C.12acc.Pr4c	Demonstrate how understanding the style, genre and context of a varied repertoire of music influences prepared and improvised performances as well as performers' technical skills to connect with the audience.
1.3C.12acc.Pr5a	Develop and apply appropriate rehearsal strategies to address individual and ensemble challenges in a varied repertoire of music and evaluate their success.
1.3C.12acc.Pr6a	Demonstrate mastery of the technical demands and an understanding of expressive qualities of the music in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire representing diverse cultures, styles, genres, and historical periods.
1.3C.12acc.Pr6b	Demonstrate an understanding of intent as a means for connecting with an audience through prepared and improvised performances.
1.3C.12acc.Re7a	Apply criteria to select music for a variety of purposes, justifying choices citing knowledge of the music and the specified purpose and context.
1.3C.12acc.Re7b	Explain how the analysis of structures and contexts inform the response to music.
1.3C.12acc.Re8a	Support interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical works citing as evidence the treatment of the elements of music, contexts, the setting of the text (when appropriate), and varied researched sources.
1.3C.12acc.Re9a	Evaluate works and performances based on research as well as personally and collaboratively developed criteria, including analysis and interpretation of the structure

	and context.
1.3B.12acc.Cn10a	Demonstrate how interests, knowledge and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing and responding to music.
1.3B.12acc.Cn11a	Demonstrate how interests, knowledge and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing and responding to music.

Transfer

VPA.1.1.12	All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
VPA.1.2.12	All students will understand the role, development, and influence of the arts throughout history and across cultures.
VPA.1.3.12	All students will synthesize those skills, media, methods, and technologies appropriate to creating, performing, and/or presenting works of art in dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

Essential Questions

- • How does the way we rehearse affect our performance?
- • How is the notation of the arrangement helpful to an ensemble?
- • What are the performance objectives of a jazz ensemble?
- Why is the physical arrangement of an ensemble important and how does it change in a particular venue?

Essential Understandings

- • choosing appropriate literature is essential to a successful performance.
- • each musician has a responsibility to the ensemble, musical and otherwise.
- • increasing their awareness of musical literature will positively affect their ability to perform in any ensemble.
- • understanding their part in relation to the entire ensemble is as important as understanding their part as an individual.
- what or who to focus attention on during a given performance.

Students Will Know

- • how to identify the performance needs of varying jazz venues.
- • how to identify, isolate and improve musical objectives within a rehearsal.
- • the advantage of studying and performing jazz literature as it pertains to each performers continued improvement.
- • the importance of having an increased awareness of other sections and performers within a jazz ensemble.

- why developing a plan for performance is different each time, even when performing the same literature.

Students Will Be Skilled At

- Changing their performance based on the changes made by their fellow bandmates.
- Improving group performance through isolation and repetition.
- Leading and participating in an effective ensemble rehearsal.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

- describe the musicianship of recording artists in each of the major classifications of jazz music (ragtime, Dixieland, swing, bebop, cool jazz, hard bop, avant-garde, fusion, contemporary).
- discuss the differences in performance venues and programming for each unique “gig.”
- evaluate and critique their performances using devised criteria: written; verbal.
- participate in group discussions of the essential questions.
- perform in public.
- rehearse jazz literature within small and large group settings.

Learning Plan

- Create warm-up activities to reinforce necessary considerations that are specific to each musical performance.
- Discuss performance considerations pertaining to physical space and venues prior to performing and/or rehearsing for a concert.
- Discuss the essential questions and key concepts prior to reading, rehearsing, listening or performing jazz literature.
- Group learning activity – Have students create background figures for improvised solos.
- Group learning activity – Have students rehearse literature in large and small group settings.
- Have each student improvise on each song in a rehearsal setting.
- Identify and discuss essential areas of instrumental proficiency that influence the performance of jazz.
- Identify and experience acoustical considerations that are unique to the jazz ensemble set up.
- Listen to standard recordings jazz literature prior to performing or rehearsing a new “chart” for an audience.
- Perform for each other and for the public. .
- Sing – “scat sing,” or recreate elements of rhythm and melody away from musical instruments.
- Writing exercise—Have students reflect on a performance from the performer’s standpoint.

Materials

- Smartboard
- Student instrument
- Various rehearsal and performance spaces

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

Jazz Band QSAC Accommodations and Modifications

- Enhance arrangements by adding intros, interludes, etc. featuring more experienced students.
- Have the less experienced students perform using basic improvisational techniques such as chord tones only, or scales.
- Have the more experienced students perform the lead parts, and the less experienced students perform the supporting roles.
- Require more advanced students to apply advanced improvisational techniques such as chromatic approach, etc.
- Simplify parts for less experienced students as necessary.