Unit 04: Minor Scales

Content Area: **Music**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **3 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will extend their learning of scales to include minor scales in the natural, harmonic and melodic forms. Students will learn to construct and aurally identify each form. Relative minor key signatures will be presented as well, and students will examine the differences between the major and minor modes, and explore some basic examples of how composers use tonality in music composition.

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.

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

1.3B.12adv.Cr1a	Describe and demonstrate multiple ways in which sounds and musical ideas can be used to represent extended experiences or abstract ideas.
1.3E.12adv.Cr1a	Generate melodic, rhythmic and harmonic ideas for compositions and improvisations that incorporate digital tools and resources.
1.3E.12adv.Cr2a	Select, develop and organize multiple melodic, rhythmic and harmonic ideas to develop into a larger work that exhibits unity, variety, complexity, and coherence using digital and/or analog tools and resources.
1.3B.12adv.Cr2a	Assemble and organize multiple sounds or extended musical ideas to create initial expressive statements of selected extended experiences or abstract ideas.
1.3B.12adv.Cr2b	Analyze and demonstrate the development of sounds and extended musical ideas in drafts of music within a variety of moderately complex or complex forms.

1.3E.12adv.Cr3a	Develop and implement varied strategies and apply appropriate criteria to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of draft compositions and improvisations.
1.3E.12adv.Cr3b	Share a portfolio of musical creations representing varied styles and genres that demonstrates musical and technological craftsmanship as well as the use of digital and/or analog tools and resources in developing and organizing musical ideas.
1.3B.12adv.Cr3b	Share music through the use of notation, solo or group performance, or technology, and demonstrate and explain how the elements of music, compositional techniques, and processes have been employed to realize expressive intent.
1.3E.12adv.Pr4a	Develop and apply criteria to select varied programs to study and perform based on interest, an understanding of the musical characteristics, expressive challenges in the music, and the performer's musical skill using digital tools and resources.
1.3E.12adv.Pr4b	Examine, evaluate and critique how context, musical aspects of the composition and digital media/tools inform prepared and improvised performances.
1.3B.12adv.Pr4a	Identify and select specific sections, movements, or entire works that express personal experiences and interests, moods, visual images, concepts, texts, or storylines in moderately complex or complex forms.
1.3B.12adv.Pr4b	Analyze how the elements of music (including form), and compositional techniques of selected works relate to the style, function, and context, and explain and support the analysis and its implications for rehearsal and performance.
1.3E.12adv.Pr4c	Demonstrate how understanding the style, genre, context, and integration of digital technologies in a varied repertoire of music informs and influences prepared and improvised performances and their ability to connect with audiences.
1.3B.12adv.Pr4c	Develop interpretations of works based on an understanding of the use of elements of music (including form), compositional techniques, style, function, and context, explaining and justifying how the interpretive choices reflect the creator's intent.
1.3B.12adv.Re8a	Develop, justify and defend interpretations of varied works, demonstrating an understanding of the composer's intent by citing the use of elements of music (including form), compositional techniques, and the style/genre and context of each work.
1.3B.12adv.Re9a	Evaluate the effectiveness of the technical and expressive aspects of selected music and performances, demonstrating an understanding of theoretical concepts and complex compositional techniques and procedures.

Essential Questions

- How do the three forms of minor differ in construction and usage?
- What do I hear when I listen to music?
- What is the difference between chromatic, whole tone, major, and minor scales?

Enduring Understandings

- Minor scales are related to major scales and share their key signatures.
- There are many more scales, called modes, that are used in music composition.

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- How to recognize the minor mode in written and played music.
- How to use solfege to perform the three forms of the minor scale.
- How to use whole steps and half steps to construct the three forms of the minor scale.
- How to visually and aurally identify intervals in a given scale.
- Recognizing which notes will be changeable in a given minor key (the 6th and 7th scale degrees) and how to utilize them effectively.
- The minor key signatures and their relative and parallel majors.
- The three forms of minor: natural, harmonic, and melodic, and the differences between each.
- Writing a melody in the minor mode.

Learning Plan

- Continue practice of aural identification of major, chromatic, whole tone, natural, harmonic, and melodic minor scales.
- Preview the essential questions and return to them throughout the course, in discussion and written assignments.
- Students practice composing melodies in each form of minor.
- Students practice writing scales in the three forms of minor from given starting notes.
- Students utilize the circle of fifths to label or make charts of closely related keys in both major and minor modes.
- Teacher asks students to listen to major and the three minor scales. Students describe the aural differences between them.
- Teacher demonstrates the relationship of major key signatures and minor scales and students determine how to find the tonic note in minor from a key signature.
- Teacher demonstrates the rules, formulas, and patterns for constructing minor scales in notation.
- Teacher discusses and demonstrates the difference between relative and parallel major and minor scales.

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.

- Given a key signature, students will write the corresponding major and minor scales, parallel and relative.
- Given a key signature, students will write the relative major and minor scale for each key signature.
- Students will compose minor melodies, using each of the forms of minor.
- Students will hear, aurally recognize, and identify the difference between natural, harmonic, and melodic minor scales.
- Students will write a minor scale from a given starting note in each of the three forms of minor.

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

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