Unit 05: Chord Inversions and Seventh Chords

Content Area: **Music**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **2 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will review the construction of major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads and begin to invert them. The use of chord extensions, especially the seventh chord, will be introduced and students will explore the different types of seventh chords, as well as their possibilities for expanding the harmonic language of a piece of music.

Revised: July 2026

Standards

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.Cr3a	Research, identify, explain, and apply personally developed criteria to assess and refine the technical and expressive aspects of evolving drafts leading to final versions.
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.
1.3B.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.
1.3E.12adv.Pr4b	Examine, evaluate and critique how context, musical aspects of the composition and digital media/tools inform prepared and improvised performances.
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.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.
1.3B.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.
1.3E.12adv.Pr5a	Apply appropriate criteria as well as feedback from multiple sources and develop and implement varied strategies to improve and refine the technical and expressive aspects of prepared and improvised performances in varied programs of music.

Essential Questions

- What do I hear when I listen to music?
- What is harmony?

Enduring Understandings

- Chord inversions mean that root of the chord is not lowest note in the arrangement of notes.
- Chords are implied by melodies.
- Chords can appear in many different arrangements of notes, each of which change the aural effect for the listener.
- Seventh chords differ in use from triads.

Students Will Know/Student Will Be Skilled At

- How to add chord extensions to triads and construct a seventh chord.
- How to construct a major, minor, diminished, and augmented chord from any given note.
- How to invert triads and seventh chords, arranging the notes above a different chord tone besides the root.
- How to recognize and write the different types of seventh chords used in tertian harmony, including the major seventh, minor seventh, half-diminished seventh, fully-diminished seventh, and major-minor seventh (dominant seventh).
- The numeric values given to 1st inversion and 2nd inversion of a triad, and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd inversion of a seventh chord.
- The uses of the seventh chord, primarily only in dominant functions.

Learning Plan

- Preview the essential questions and return to them throughout the course, in discussion and written assignments.
- Students practice writing seventh chords from a given root.
- Students practice writing seventh chords off of a given bass note in each of the three inversions.
- Teacher and students review the construction of triads.
- Teacher demonstrates how a composer can rearragne the notes in a chord and create a 1st inversion or 2nd inversion chord. Teacher labels each with the numeric value symbols "six" and "six-four," describing they are labeled as such due to the intervallic relationships above the bass note.
- Teacher introduces seventh chord inversions and their appropriate numerical symbols.
- Teacher introduces seventh chords as a four note chord built upon a given root note. Teacher provides overview of the five commonly used types of 7th chords.

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 root note and inversion symbol, students will write a major, minor, diminished, or augmented chord based on that note, using appropriate accidentals.
- Given a root note and inversion symbol, students will write a seventh chord based on that note and label it accurately.
- Students will label given chords with the correct symbols and inversions.
- Students will write a chord above each note of any given scale.
- Within the context of a written piece of music, students will analyze a measure, recognize the notes of a chord and label it appropriately.

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

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