Unit 06: Harmony and Harmonic Progression

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

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will explore how basic harmonic structures and chords accompany melodies, and understand the typical progression of chords in tonal music.

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

1.3E.12adv.Cr1a	Generate melodic, rhythmic and harmonic ideas for compositions and improvisations that incorporate digital tools and resources.
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.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.

1.3B.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.
1.3E.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.
1.3B.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.
1.3B.12adv.Pr5a	Create rehearsal plans for works, identifying the form, repetition and variation within the form, compositional techniques, and the style and historical or cultural context of the work.
1.3B.12adv.Pr5b	Using established criteria and feedback, identify the ways in which performances use compositional techniques and convey the formal design, style and historical/cultural context of the works.
1.3B.12adv.Pr5c	Identify, compare and implement strategies for improving the technical and expressive aspects of multiple contrasting works.
1.3E.12adv.Re7b	Justify (by using examples) how an analysis of the structural characteristics, context, and technological and creative decisions, informs interest in and response to the music.
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

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

Enduring Understandings

- Intervals, triads, and chords are the basic structures of harmony and they can be arranged in a variety of ways to produce different aural effects.
- The ultimate goal of a tonal piece of music is the tonic chord.
- There are typical progressions of chords that are heard in all types of tonal music.

Students Will Know/Students Will Be Skilled At

- How to choose chords to accompany a melody.
- How to create accompnaiment arrangements including block chords, arppegiated chords, ostinato, walking bass line, and other figures.
- The appropriate Roman numeral indications for chords in both major and minor keys.
- The typical progression of chords within a major or minor key.

Learning Plan

- Preview the essential questions and return to them throughout the course, in discussion and written assignments.
- Students bring in recordings of their own popular songs and work together to determine the chord progressions within the songs.
- Students compose melodies and harmonize them using diatonic chords and following the chords of the progression chart.
- Students create their own chord progressions that conform to the progression chart and share them with the class.
- Teacher and students discuss chord progressions and how one chord moves to the next in a given piece of music.
- Teacher describes the most common chord progressions, I, IV, V, I, or I vi IV V, or I VI vi V, etc. and shares multiple recorded and written examples, especially from popular songs.
- Teacher introduces the use of Roman numerals to label chords with roots based on each note of the scale within a given key.
- Teacher presents students with the "progression chart" for both major and minor keys, demonstrating what is known as "functional harmony," with the ultimate goal of a piece of music being the tonic chord.

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.

- Students will compose block chord progressions that conform to the progression chart.
- Students will harmonize a given melody with chords in progression.
- Students will label chords in a given key using Roman numerals and lead sheet symbols.

- Students will memorize the progression chart and the typical diatonic chord movement.
- Students will recognize and identify common chord progressions in popular music.
- Students will write their own melody in a major key and harmonize it with chords in progression.

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

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