Unit 2 - Pitch: Reading and Interpreting Music

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

Brief Summary of Unit

Experiencing and understanding the pitch (the highness and lowness of sound) and the relationships of pitches within a song or piece of music, is an essential foundation for student musical and vocal development. Students will work to develop aural skills, as well create a connection to and comprehension of written pitch on the staff.

Revised June 2025

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

1.3C.12prof.Cr1	Generating and conceptualizing ideas.
P.4	Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
P.5	Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
1.3C.12prof.Cr1a	Compose and improvise ideas for melodies, rhythmic passages and arrangements for specific purposes that reflect characteristic(s) of music from a variety of historical periods or cultures studied in rehearsal.
1.3C.12prof.Cr2	Organizing and developing ideas.
1.3C.12prof.Cr2a	Select and develop draft melodies, rhythmic passages and arrangements for specific purposes that demonstrate understanding of characteristic(s) of music from a variety of historical periods studied in rehearsal.
1.3C.12prof.Cr3	Refining and completing products.
1.3C.12prof.Cr3a	Evaluate and refine draft melodies, rhythmic passages, arrangements, and improvisations based on established criteria, including the extent to which they address identified purposes.
1.3C.12prof.Cr3b	Share personally developed melodies, rhythmic passages, and arrangements (individually or as an ensemble) that address identified purposes.
1.3C.12prof.Pr4	Selecting, analyzing and interpreting work.
1.3C.12prof.Pr4a	Explain the criteria used to select varied repertoire to study based on an understanding of theoretical and structural characteristics of the music, the technical skill of the individual or ensemble, and the purpose or context of the performance.
1.3C.12prof.Pr4b	Demonstrate, using music reading skills (where appropriate), how compositional devices employed and theoretical and structural aspects of musical works impact and inform prepared or improvised performances.
1.3C.12prof.Pr4c	Demonstrate an understanding of context in a varied repertoire of music through prepared and improvised performances.
1.3C.12prof.Pr5	Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.

1.3C.12prof.Pr5a	Develop strategies to address expressive challenges in a varied repertoire of music, and evaluate their success using feedback from ensemble peers and other sources to refine performances.
1.3C.12prof.Pr6	Conveying meaning through art.
1.3C.12prof.Pr6a	Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music representing diverse cultures, styles, and genres.
1.3C.12prof.Re7	Perceiving and analyzing products.
1.3C.12prof.Re7a	Apply criteria to select music for specified purposes, supporting choices by citing characteristics found in the music and connections to interest, purpose and context.
1.3C.12prof.Re9	Applying criteria to evaluate products.
1.3C.12prof.Re9a	Evaluate works and performances based on personally or collaboratively developed criteria, including analysis of the structure and context.
1.3B.12prof.Cn10	Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.
1.3B.12prof.Cn10a	Demonstrate how interests, knowledge and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing and responding to music.

Essential Questions

- How do musicians think about pitch?
- What is melody?
- What is harmony?
- How is pitch represented visually?
- How and why does individual pitch accuracy affect the intonation of the entire ensemble?
- How is solfege a useful tool for singers?
- What does it mean to have good intonation and how can poor vocal technique affect intonation?

Students Will Know/Skilled At

- The difference between melody and harmony.
- The difference between the major and minor modes.
- How to perform any major scale and chromatic scale.
- How to perform minor scales found within the choral repertoire.
- How to write a major scale using the appropriate “formula.”
- How to use solfege to aid in pitch accuracy, both in sight-singing and in the choral repertoire.
- How to interpret and perform accidentals.
- How to determine the tonic of a piece of music in a major key by looking at the key signature.
- How to take short melodic dictation.
- All note names for the treble clef, including enharmonics.
- How to compose a short melody.
- How to write a chord.
- How to identify and correct poor intonation.
- Pitches have relationships to the key of a piece of music.
- Careful listening, awareness, and accuracy are essential to the intonation of the choir.
- The practice and skill of singing scales and sight-singing directly affect a singer’s ability when

performing other music.

Learning Plan

- Teacher sings pitch sequences to students, who are asked to sing them back in order to build aural skills.
- Teacher leads students in performance of major and chromatic scale. Together, the teacher and students evaluate the performance and identify and remedy intonation difficulties.
- Using solfege charts, hand signs, and regular practice students become proficient in singing intervallic relationships between the diatonic pitches within a major scale.
- Students regularly perform written melodies and harmonies with solfege syllables. These exercises may be found in various sight-singing books, created by the teacher, or isolated from choral repertoire. The exercises increase in difficulty as student ability progresses.
- Teacher and students discuss note names on the treble clef and identify the notes on the piano. Students create acronyms to remember the note names.
- Teacher and students discuss the formula for constructing a major scale. Students are assigned specific scales to write out on staff paper and then to play on the piano.
- Teacher instructs students in the purpose and use of key signature, especially in finding the tonic of a piece of music.
- Students complete various music theory worksheets and packets, some developed by the teacher, to practice pitch, scale, key signature, etc.
- Students experience various keys, modes, and tonalities within the choral repertoire the class prepares for performance.
- Through careful listening, awareness, and discussion, teacher and students will identify and remedy intonation difficulties during rehearsal of the choral repertoire.
- Teacher records various rehearsals and the concert performance. The class listens, critiques, and assesses the pitch accuracy and intonation of the performances.
- Students compose melodies, demonstrating their understanding of pitch. Melodies can be used as sight-singing practice for the class and then be critiqued in its effective use and execution of melody.
- Student choose simple triads or chords to harmonize composed melodies, and through trial and error, determine which diatonic chords harmonize a melody best.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom/rehearsal. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative. The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments the teacher may use to track student progress and inform instruction.

- Explore and reflect on the essential questions through in-class and online discussions, journaling, turn-and-talk, entrance and exit tickets, peer and self reflections, etc.

- Teacher observation of student performance and participation in rehearsal.

- Individual or small group hearings.
- Written essays and reflections.
- Performances.
- Mid-term and final exams.

-Pre-assessment hearing of student ability to perform vocalises and diatonic scales at the beginning of the semester.

-Perform melodies as a class and individually, at sight and rehearsed, with accuracy.

-Identify and assign appropriate solfege syllables to corresponding pitches within sight-singing examples and choral repertoire.

-Identify the tonic of a piece of music by looking at the key signature.

-Perform major and chromatic scales as a class and individually.

-Write major scales using the appropriate “formula.”

-Write accurate pitches derived from aural dictation.

-Compose a simple diatonic melody.

-Write and assign simple chords (I, IV, V) to a given melody.

-Build an aural vocabulary using solfege and performing intervals accurately.

-Identify and assign appropriate solfege syllables to corresponding pitches within sight-singing examples and choral repertoire.

-Improvise diatonic harmonies to a given melody using solfege.

-Evaluate the accuracy of their own and others performances of pitches.

-Identify and remedy intonation problems within choral repertoire.

-Accurately perform selected repertoire in concert and individually.

-Final individual hearing of student ability to perform vocalises, diatonic scale, prepared repertoire, and sight-singing melody at the end of the semester.

Materials

- Varied and diverse choral and solo vocal repertoire
- The Jenson Sight Singing Course Volume 1
- Worksheets utilized from music theory textbooks or designed by teacher
- Music manuscript books/journals

- Solfege teaching manipulatives, charts, flash cards, etc.
- Acoustic piano

Suggested Strategies for Modification

Treble Chorus Accommodations and Modifications