

Pequannock Township School District

Curriculum Syllabus

Piano I/Grade 9-12

Course Description:

This course provides the student with the basis for lifelong enjoyment of playing the piano. Basic piano proficiency will benefit any student of music, regardless of their chosen instrument. It helps to enhance the student's conceptualization of music theory. When working with music software, the student will be able to more quickly and accurately record their music ideas. The first half of this course focuses on reading written notation. The second half focuses on comping — the art of playing by chord employed by many professional musicians. This allows the student to develop their own accompaniments for a practically unlimited variety of songs based on websites such as chordify.net or published “fake” books. Finally, this course gives the student an introduction to music theory, which is utilized in Music Technology, its companion course.

Course Standards:

The following is a list of NJSLS that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do as a result of successfully completing this course. The following NJSLS are the basis of the assessment of student achievement. The learner will demonstrate mastery of:

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| 1.3B.12prof.Pr6a | Share live or recorded performances of works (both personal and others') and explain how the elements of music are used to convey intent. |
| 1.3B.12prof.Re8a | Develop and explain interpretations of varied works, demonstrating an understanding of the composer's intent by citing technical and expressive aspects as well as the style/genre of each work. |

- 1.3B.12prof.Re9a Describe the effectiveness of the technical and expressive aspects of selected music and performances, demonstrating an understanding of the fundamentals of music theory.
- 1.3D.12nov.Cr1a Create melodic, rhythmic and harmonic ideas for simple melodies as well as chordal accompaniments for given melodies.
- 1.3D.12nov.Cr3a Apply teacher or student-provided criteria to critique, improve and refine drafts of simple melodies as well as chordal accompaniments for given melodies.
- 1.3D.12nov.Cr3b Share final versions of simple melodies and chordal accompaniments for given melodies, demonstrating an understanding of how to develop and organize personal musical ideas.
- 1.3D.12nov.Pr5a Apply teacher or student-provided criteria to critique individual performances of a varied collection of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces and chordal accompaniments selected for performance. Apply practice strategies to address performance challenges and refine the performances.
- 1.3D.12nov.Pr6a Perform with expression and technical accuracy a varied collection of music that includes melodies, repertoire pieces and chordal accompaniments, while demonstrating an understanding of the audience and the context.
- 1.3D.12nov.Re7a Identify reasons for selecting music based on characteristics found in the music, connection to interest and purpose or context.
- 1.3D.12nov.Re8a Identify interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical selections, referring to the elements of music, context (e.g., personal, social), and the setting of the text (when appropriate).
- NJSLSA.W8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

Scope and Sequence

Unit 1 (Marking Period 1-2)

Novice Piano Skills

This unit begins with posture, hand position, finger numbers, keyboard layout, and an introduction to reading music notation. Students quickly learn to play a melody with each hand. Students then develop foundational piano skills by working through mastery of piano pieces that gradually build on each other. Students work at their own pace and the teacher provides suggested milestones for the class as a whole. This unit ends with a formal playing assessment of a piece selected by the student, under the guidance of the teacher. Throughout this unit, students will also complete daily skills tests, which will provide practice in identifying pitches and rhythms.

Unit 2 (Marking Period 2)

Introduction to Harmony & Comping

In this unit, students gain an introductory knowledge of music theory, including the basics of harmony. They learn to read chord symbols and gain an understanding of the chords used in a typical pop song. Students explore the harmonic structure of various songs, including some they choose. They also learn the basics of song structure in popular music. Next, students learn various techniques for comping (i.e. improvising piano parts based on a given chord progression). They develop beginning solo and accompaniment skills. This unit gives the student the introductory knowledge necessary to complete some of the projects they will be assigned in Music Technology.

Assessments

Evaluation of student achievement in this course will be based on the following:

- a. Daily progress (i.e. Is the student working at their skills on a daily basis?)
- b. Daily basic skills tests (using musictheory.net)
- c. Informal playing tests (as students complete each assigned piece of music)
- d. Formal playing assessment at the end of Unit 1
- e. Harmony test (written)
- f. Song structure aural quiz
- g. Demonstration of comping skills

Curriculum Resources

Anchor Programs/Teacher Materials

- Alfred's All-In-One Course (Level 1)
- Musictheory.net
- Hookedtheory.com
- The Ultimate Guide to Common Chord Progressions
- Jamzone.littlekidsrock.org
- How to Get Real with a Fake Book by Steve Rawlins

Home and School Connection

The following are suggestions and/or resources that will help parents support their children:

- If students have a keyboard at home, they may spend time working on their current piece.
- Students may wish to repeat daily basic skills tests at home. These are found on musictheory.net and daily links will be provided in our google classroom.