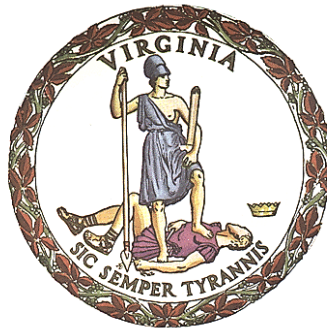


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# **Music Standards of Learning for Virginia Public Schools**



**Board of Education  
Commonwealth of Virginia**

**May 2020**

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**Adopted in May 2020 by the  
Board of Education**

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## **Foreword**

The Fine Arts Standards of Learning in this publication represent a significant development in public education in Virginia. Adopted in May 2020 by the Virginia Board of Education, these standards emphasize the importance of instruction in the fine arts—dance arts, music, theatre arts, and visual arts as part of a comprehensive education in the public schools. Knowledge and skills that students acquire through fine arts instruction include the abilities to think critically, solve problems resourcefully, communicate effectively, work collaboratively, understand historical and cultural perspectives, and exercise creative thinking by employing originality, flexibility, and imagination.

The Fine Arts Standards of Learning were developed through the efforts of classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, administrators, college faculty, professional artists, community arts organization representatives, fine arts professional organization representatives, and museum personnel. These persons assisted the Department of Education in developing and reviewing the draft documents. Opportunities for citizens to make comments with respect to the standards documents were provided through public hearings that were held at several sites across the state, as well as public comment email accounts.

The Fine Arts Standards of Learning are available online for divisions and teachers to use in developing curricula, lesson plans, instructional strategies, and assessment methods to support the standards. The standards state the minimum requirements in the fine arts, setting reasonable targets and expectations for what students need to know and be able to do in a sequential course of study. The standards set clear, concise, measurable, and rigorous expectations for students.

While the standards focus on what is most essential, schools are encouraged to go beyond the prescribed standards to enrich the curriculum to meet the needs of all students. Fine arts instruction in Virginia is responsive to and respectful of students' prior experiences, talents, interests, and cultural perspectives. Successful fine arts programs challenge students to maximize their potential and provide consistent monitoring, support and encouragement to ensure success for all. All students, including gifted students, English learners, and students with special needs, must have an opportunity to learn and meet high standards in fine arts instruction as part of a comprehensive education.

A major objective of Virginia's educational agenda is to provide the citizens of the commonwealth with a program of public education that is among the best in the nation and that meets the needs of all students of the Commonwealth. These Fine Arts Standards of Learning exemplify the expectations established in the Profile of a Virginia Graduate and are reflective of the skills and attributes students need to excel in the 21st Century workplace.

## Introduction

The *Music Standards of Learning* identify the essential knowledge, understanding, and skills required in the music curriculum for each grade level or course in Virginia’s public schools. The standards outline the minimum criteria for a sequential course of study within a comprehensive music education program. The standards are designed to be cumulative, progressing in complexity by grade level from kindergarten through several sequences of high school courses.

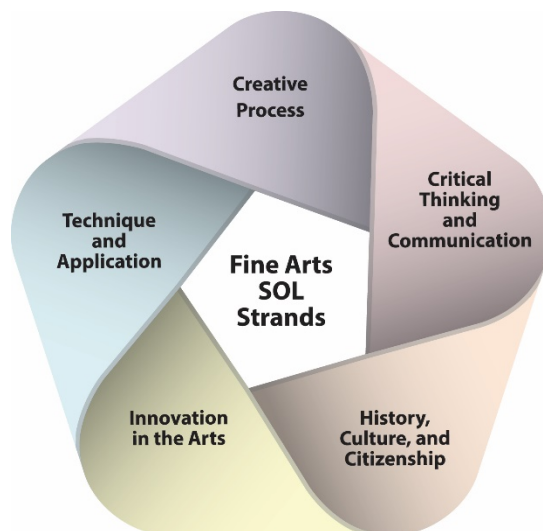
A comprehensive music program provides students with the ability to achieve the goals established in these standards, and to understand personal responses, and the responses of others, to the many forms of musical experience. Students develop individual voice and expression through individualized instruction and multiple group educational opportunities. They gain the ability to work collaboratively to achieve common goals while preparing for a lifetime of engagement with the arts.

These standards are not intended to establish or encompass the entire curriculum for a given grade level or course, nor to prescribe how the content should be taught. Teachers are encouraged to go beyond the standards and select instructional strategies and assessment methods appropriate for their students. Teachers are expected to consistently model digital citizenship in the legal and ethical use of resources and source material.

## Goals

The *Music Standards of Learning* support the following goals for students:

- Develop understanding of music through experiences in creating, singing, playing instruments, listening, and moving.
- Think and act creatively to transform ideas and emotions into distinct forms of musical expression.
- Understand and apply a creative process for developing ideas for creating and performing music.
- Develop the ability to read and notate music.
- Develop and apply the technical skills necessary to engage deeply with music.
- Develop critical thinking skills through the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of the work of self and others.
- Articulate personal responses to musical works, and recognize diverse responses and opinions of others.
- Identify and apply collaboration and communication skills for creating, developing, rehearsing, and performing music.
- Demonstrate understanding of cultural and historical influences of music.
- Develop a lifelong community engagement with music as a performer, listener, audience member, supporter, advocate, and consumer.
- Identify and adhere to ethical and legal standards for the use of intellectual property, and for the safe and ethical use of materials, equipment, and technologies.
- Connect knowledge, skills, and personal interests in music to college and career opportunities, and to skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workplace.
- Understand and explore the impact of current and emerging technologies, tools, and innovations on music.
- Cultivate authentic connections between music skills, content, and processes with other fields of knowledge to develop problem-solving skills.



## Strands

The *Music Standards of Learning* are organized into five specific content strands: Creative Process; Critical Thinking and Communication; History, Culture, and Citizenship; Innovation in the Arts; and Technique and Application. These strands exemplify the expectations established in the Profile of a Virginia Graduate and are reflective of the skills and attributes students need to excel in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workplace. Although the strands are presented separately for organizational purposes, in practice they are integrated throughout music instruction, regardless of the particular learning experience. Through knowledge and understanding of concepts and through the acquisition of skills, the goals for music education are realized.

### **Creative Process**

Students apply creative thinking to music when they use their skills and knowledge flexibly to create work that has individual voice and vision. A creative process is not a specific formula for developing creative work. Instead, it is following a course of action to guide the development of original work. A creative process includes inquiry and questioning, researching, interpreting, generating, testing, and discussing ideas and solutions, refining work as part of a creative community, and reflecting on the process, product, and performance of making music.

### **Critical Thinking and Communication**

Critical thinking, communication, and collaboration are inherent attributes in the creation, rehearsal, refinement, and performance of music. Students understand that critique is an integral part of an artistic learning environment. Students analyze, classify, and evaluate music, compare and contrast aspects of the art form, and develop a music vocabulary that allows them to recognize, describe, and justify personal responses, beliefs, and opinions regarding music. They recognize the value in evaluating diverse opinions and responses to music. They are responsive to the talents, interests, and cultural perspectives of others. Communication and collaboration, including both verbal and nonverbal cues, active listening, problem-solving, and performance agreement, are integral to the creation, rehearsal, refinement, and performance of music.

### **History, Culture, and Citizenship**

Students hear and understand musical works from many time periods and places and respond to a variety of music and musical styles from diverse composers and performers. Students identify the values, roles, and reasons for the creation and performance of music from the perspective of many time periods, people, and places. Students develop a lifelong engagement with music as a performer, community member, supporter, and advocate. They understand and respect the ethical and legal considerations for engaging with music as a responsible citizen.

### **Innovation in the Arts**

Innovation thrives by cultivating authentic connections between fields of knowledge. Students in music courses focus on music's role in the rapidly changing world and explore the newest tools, instruments, media, and processes in music through demonstrations, experiences, and experimentation that merge traditional forms of musical expression with emerging technologies and innovative techniques. Students are future-ready for evolving opportunities and advancements in music. They explore opportunities to connect fine arts experiences, content, and skills to college preparation, college and career opportunities, and to an expanding range of career prospects in the field of music.

### **Technique and Application**

Students develop and apply the technical skills necessary to express their musical ideas and engage deeply with music. Standards in this strand describe the essential skills necessary at each level to promote high quality instruction for every music student in the Commonwealth. Through sequential study and practice, students develop the physical, conceptual, intellectual, intuitive, and artistic skills necessary for success in music.

## **Grade Four General Music**

The standards for Grade Four General Music emphasize a deeper understanding of musical concepts including singing, playing instruments, listening, creating, composing, and performing. Students expand on the use of a creative process as they reflect on the process and outcome of creating music and revise work based on peer and teacher feedback. Emphasis is placed on developing more advanced techniques in singing and playing instruments, expanded understanding of rhythmic and harmonic techniques, and using a system for improved melodic and rhythmic sight-reading. Students use an expanding music vocabulary to explain personal preferences for musical works and performances.

### **Creative Process**

- 4.1 The student will improvise and compose music.
- a) Improvise melodies and rhythms using a variety of sound sources.
  - b) Compose short melodic and rhythmic phrases within specified guidelines.
- 4.2 The student will apply a creative process for music.
- a) Describe ideas for creating music as a group.
  - b) Describe elements of a creative process for music.
  - c) Reflect on the process and outcome of creating music and revise work based on peer and teacher feedback.

### **Critical Thinking and Communication**

- 4.3 The student will analyze and evaluate music.
- a) Identify instruments from a variety of music ensembles both visually and aurally.
  - b) Distinguish between major and minor tonality.
  - c) Listen to, compare, and contrast music compositions from a variety of cultures and time periods.
  - d) Identify elements of music through listening using music terminology.
  - e) Identify rondo form (ABACA).
  - f) Review criteria used to evaluate compositions and performances.
  - g) Describe performances and offer constructive feedback.
- 4.4 The student will explain personal preferences for musical works and performances using music terminology.
- 4.5 The student will apply collaboration and communication skills for music rehearsal and performance.
- a) Demonstrate audience and participant etiquette appropriate for the purposes and settings in which music is performed.
  - b) Explain active listening for musical understanding.
  - c) Give and receive age-appropriate feedback on performance.

### **History, Culture, and Citizenship**

- 4.6 The student will explore historical and cultural aspects of music.



- a) Describe music compositions from different periods of music history.
- b) Describe musical styles from a variety of time periods and places.
- c) Listen to and describe music from a variety of world cultures.
- d) Examine how music from popular culture reflects the past and influences the present.
- e) Explain how criteria used to value music may vary between people and communities.

4.7 The student will explain how music is an integral part of one's life and community.

4.8 The student will describe digital citizenship for exploring music topics.

### **Innovation in the Arts**

4.9 The student will identify skills learned in music class that relate to a variety of career options.

4.10 The student will compare and contrast digital and traditional methods for creating music.

4.11 The student will explore connections between music and other fields of knowledge for the development of problem-solving skills.

### **Technique and Application**

4.12 The student will demonstrate music literacy.

- a) Read melodies based on a hexatonic scale.
- b) Use traditional notation to write melodies containing stepwise motion.
- c) Read two-note accompaniment patterns (bordun).
- d) Read and notate rhythmic patterns that include dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note.
- e) Use a system to sight-read melodic and rhythmic patterns.
- f) Identify the meaning of the upper and lower numbers of simple time signatures ( $\frac{2}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ ,  $\frac{4}{4}$ ).
- g) Identify dynamic markings (e.g., *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*).

4.13 The student will develop skills for individual and ensemble singing performance.

- a) Sing with a clear tone quality and correct intonation.
- b) Sing diatonic melodies.
- c) Sing melodies notated in varying forms.
- d) Sing with expression using dynamics and phrasing.
- e) Sing in simple harmony.
- f) Demonstrate proper posture for singing.

4.14 The student will develop skills for individual and ensemble instrumental performance.

- a) Play music of increasing difficulty in two-part ensembles.
- b) Play melodies of increasing difficulty notated in varying forms.

- c) Play a given melody on an instrument.
  - d) Play with expression using dynamics and phrasing.
  - e) Accompany songs and chants with tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords.
  - f) Demonstrate proper playing techniques.
- 4.15 The student will classify, perform, and count rhythmic patterns.
- a) Use a counting system.
  - b) Include patterns that suggest duple and triple meter.
  - c) Use instruments, body percussion, and voice.
  - d) Include dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note.
- 4.16 The student will demonstrate meter.
- a) Apply strong and weak beats.
  - b) Perform and illustrate sets of beats grouped in twos and threes.
- 4.17 The student will respond to music with movement.
- a) Perform non-choreographed and choreographed movements.
  - b) Perform dances and other music activities.
  - c) Create movement to illustrate rondo (ABACA) musical form.