

# **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC GRADES 6-8**

THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
2099 Pennington Road  
Ewing, NJ 08618

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In accordance with The Ewing Public Schools' Policy 2230, Course Guides, this curriculum has been reviewed and found to be in compliance with all policies and all affirmative action criteria.

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## **PREFACE**

This curriculum guide is intended to provide vertical and horizontal framework for the music program of The Ewing Public Schools. It is designed to identify the essential components needed by teachers when they prepare instruction in middle school instrumental music which will best meet the needs of their students.

The teacher's knowledge of their students' level of development, learning styles and general readiness to learn should be the guiding factors in selecting the most appropriate ways to reach the goals and objectives defined by the guide.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE**

An essential part of the academic curriculum for achievement of human, social and economic growth should include an education in the arts. The instrumental music program provides an opportunity for students to explore, understand and develop an appreciation for our diverse cultural heritage and to provide an aesthetic experience by way of a musical instrument for the enrichment of the character and personality of the whole child.

This curriculum is intended for sixth, seventh and eighth grade instrumental music in The Ewing Public Schools. Music fundamentals are introduced in fourth grade and those concepts are further developed in sixth through eighth grade through the use of increasingly complex materials and techniques. Students receive 42 minutes of instruction every other day per semester, and receive weekly individual/small group instruction.

## **UNIT 1: PERFORMANCE CRITIQUE (13 Days)**

### **Why Is This Unit Important?**

The ability to analyze music (written and aural) and make decisions regarding future performance is fundamental to success as an instrumentalist. This unit will develop critical thinking through analysis and critique in order to make the student an independent and effective musician/practitioner.

### **Enduring Understandings:**

- The ability to analyze the elements and principals of music (written and aural) if fundamental to critiquing one's personal performance
- Cultural and historical context affects the style and performance practice of music

### **Essential Questions:**

- What are elements of music?
- What is critique?
- What is the process for critiquing personal performance?
- How does history and culture affect the style of performance?

### **Acquired Knowledge:**

- The process of analysis and critique
- Self-critique is fundamental to improvement during private practice
- How to relate self-critique to the ensemble as a whole

### **Acquired Skills:**

- Ability to analyze musical passages (written and aural)
- Ability to critique musical performance
- Ability to relate critique to self-performance
- Ability to make decisions about future performance based on the analysis and critique process

### **Assessments:**

Formative Assessments:

- Student self-assessment
- Teacher observation during rehearsals

#### Summative Assessments:

- Concert music performance tests

#### Benchmark Assessments:

- Performance based quizzes.
- Student generated audio recording assignments

#### Alternative Assessment:

- Self-assessment worksheets

#### **Interdisciplinary Connections:**

- Students will relate music notation rhythmic symbols to algebraic equations and fractions. Math
- Students will compare musical phrases with sentence/paragraph structure. Language Arts

#### **Technology:**

- Smart Music
- Audacity audio recording software or other DAW software.
- Professional audio recordings of concert music
- Sibelius or other music notation software
- Audio rehearsal recordings uploaded to Canvas

#### **Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:**

- Anticipatory Sets: Modeling and class discussion
- In-Class Activities: Direct instruction, class discussion
- Cross Content Writing Activities: Written critique of own performance or performance of others
- Home-Link Activities: Personal practice
- Accommodations: Critique should be developmentally appropriate and accessible to young musicians
- Extensions: The ability to make decisions regarding musical performance will be used in every aspect of music making

### **Rehearsal recording activity**

- Student reflection: The class will make a rehearsal recording of a concert selection. Once the recording is completed, the class will listen back to the rehearsal take. The students will discuss the positive and problem parts of their recording and write their suggestions on the Promethean Board.
- Class practice: The students will review the problem spots and practice each section as a class.
- Teacher demonstration: The instructor will demonstrate how to perform each problem spot correctly.
- Peer practice: The students will be given time to work on the problem spots with their section leader in a sectional.
- Class performance: The class will re-record the concert selection.
- Student evaluation: The students will compare both rehearsal recordings and discuss the positive or negative differences between the two.

### **2020 NJSLs:**

- 1.3A.8.Cr2b
- 1.3A.8.Cr3a
- 1.3A.8.Cr3b
- 1.3A.8.Pr4b
- 1.3A.8.Pr4e
- 1.3A.8.Pr5a
- 1.3A.8.Pr6a
- 1.3A.8.Re7b
- 1.3A.8.Re8a
- 1.3A.8.Re9a

### **Teacher Resources**

Core:

- Ensemble Music

Supplemental:

- Computers (Chrome books or laptops)
- Musictheory.net
- Emusictheory.com
- Canvas
- Audacity audio recording software or other Daw software
- SmartMusic.com
- Professional recordings of ensemble music

## **UNIT 2: Decoding Musical Notation (13 Days)**

### **Why Is This Unit Important?**

Students will expand their knowledge of tonal and rhythmic notation. They will learn how to properly count simple and complex rhythms including syncopation and how to play in key signatures up to at least three flats (band) or three sharps (orchestra).

### **Enduring Understandings:**

- Students will be able to perform concert music in keys with at least three flats (band) or three sharps (orchestra)
- Students will be able to perform music containing whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, eighth notes, and sixteenth notes.
- Students will be able to perform music containing syncopated and dotted rhythms.
- Students will be able to perform music containing eighth note and quarter note triplets.
- Students will be able to perform music written with a variety of time signatures including 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, 6/8, and cut time.

### **Essential Questions:**

- What are the relationships between the different rhythmic notation symbols?
- How does the time signature affect the length of each measure and how does it change the way that rhythmic notation is counted?
- What is a key signature and how does it affect the pitches contained throughout a musical work?
- What is an accidental?

### **Acquired Knowledge:**

- Understanding how to read and decode a piece of sheet music is essential for all instrumental music students not only for the benefit for middle school performing ensemble, but also as a professional musician.
- Students will learn how to correctly interpret tonal and rhythmic notation.
- Students will learn how a key signature relates to the scale used when composing melodies.
- Students will learn how time signatures alter the length of a measure and affect the duration of rhythmic notation.



**Acquired Skills:**

- With a clear understanding of music notation, students will be able to learn concert selections quickly and efficiently.
- Students will learn how to apply music notation reading to sight reading and to independent practice.

**Assessments:****Formative Assessments:**

- Teacher observation during rehearsals
- Rhythmic analysis through exercises or concert selections
- Tonal analysis through exercises or concert selection

**Summative Assessments:**

- Concert music performance tests

**Benchmark Assessments:**

- Performance based quizzes
- Student generated audio recording assignments

**Alternative Assessment:**

- Rhythm dictation exercises.
- Scale quizzes.

**Interdisciplinary Connections:**

- Students will relate music notation rhythmic symbols to algebraic equations and fractions. Math
- Students will compare musical phrases with sentence/paragraph structure. Language Arts
- Students will discover that letter names in musical notation are a way to identify sound wave frequencies Science

**Technology:**

- Smart Music
- Promethean Board
- Professional audio recordings of concert music
- Sibelius or other music notation software

## **Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:**

- Anticipatory Sets: Modeling and class discussion
- In-Class Activities: Direct instruction, class discussion
- Cross Content Writing Activities: Written phrase analysis of concert music
- Home-Link Activities: Personal practice
- Accommodations: Students can write in note names or counting below sections of concert music
- Extensions: The ability to decode and affectively read music notation is necessary for professional solo/ensemble rehearsals, recordings, and live performances

### **Rehearsal recording activity**

- Student reflection: The class will choose a phrase of concert music that contains difficult rhythmic patterns.
- Class practice: The students will review the difficult phrase and complete a rhythmic analysis by writing in the counting.
- Teacher demonstration: The instructor will demonstrate how the counting translates to the musical phrase by performing the section of music.
- Peer practice: The students will be given time to work on the problem spot with their section leader in a sectional.
- Class performance: The class will perform the difficult phrase by saying the rhythmic patterns out loud and playing it on their instruments.
- Student evaluation: The students will listen to their performance and determine if they are able to play the way that the composer intended.

## **2020 NJSLs:**

- 1.3A.8.Cr2b
- 1.3A.8.Cr3b
- 1.3A.8.Pr4b
- 1.3A.8.Pr4c
- 1.3A.8.Pr4e
- 1.3A.8.Pr5a
- 1.3A.8.Pr6a
- 1.3A.8.Re7b

## **Teacher Resources**

Core:

- Ensemble Music

Supplemental:

- Computers (Chrome books or laptops)
- Musictheory.net
- Emusictheory.com
- Canvas
- Audacity audio recording software or other DAW software
- SmartMusic.com
- Professional recordings of ensemble music

## **UNIT 3: Applying Genre and Style to Concert Selections (13 Days)**

### **Why Is This Unit Important?**

The study of varied musical styles and time periods educates the student for stylistically appropriate performances, and expands their fundamental awareness of world cultures and historical context. This unit will develop an understanding of the relation of music to society, history and culture.

### **Enduring Understandings:**

- Time, place and occasion determine the style of music and how it is performed
- Music of different world cultures and/or time periods can be identified by stylistic traits
- Music is used in daily life in various ways depending on the context of activity
- Music and audience behavior changes depending on the style and context of music performed

### **Essential Questions:**

- What are stylistic traits of music?
- What kind of stylistic traits represent different cultures and time periods?
- How is music used in daily life?
- How is music used in various social contexts?
- How does history and culture affect the style of performance?

### **Acquired Knowledge:**

- Stylistic traits are the differences in how rhythm, melody, harmony, instrumentation and expressive elements are composed and performed depending on time, place and culture
- Music can be associated with time, place and culture based on stylistic traits
- Performing music using appropriate stylistic characteristics makes the audience experience more meaningful and accessible

### **Acquired Skills:**

- Develop a greater sense of how the stylistic traits of music represent time, place, society and culture
- Develop the ability to describe and perform basic expressive elements (staccato, legato, accent, slur, etc.) as a foundation for present and future performances in varied musical styles

## **Assessments:**

Formative Assessments:

- Class discussions on the culture elements of a concert selection and how they are notated.

Summative Assessments:

- Culturally appropriate ensemble performances of concert selections.

Benchmark Assessments:

- Ensemble music performance tests on the style of a concert selection.

Alternative Assessment:

- Research and listen to other musical selections from the same genre or culture of a concert selection.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections:**

- Students will relate the style and genre of concert selections with the culture that the work is inspired by. Social Studies
- Students will compare musical phrases with sentence/paragraph structure. Language Arts

## **Technology:**

- Smart Music
- Audacity audio recording software or other DAW software.
- Professional audio recordings of concert music
- YouTube/Spotify/other music streaming service
- Sibelius or other music notation software
- Audio rehearsal recordings uploaded to Canvas

## **Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:**

- Anticipatory Sets: modeling and class discussion
- In-Class Activities: direct instruction, class discussion
- Cross Content Writing Activities: Written work regarding various aspects of music appreciation
- Home-Link Activities: Personal practice
- Accommodations: Work will be developmentally appropriate and relevant to elementary school children
- Extensions: Music appreciation skills will be used in all aspects of music performance

### **Swing Notation Interpretation:**

- Student reflection: Listen to a concert selection that should be performed with a swing rhythm. Note that the 1/8 note rhythms appear to be the same as non-swing music.
- Class practice: Perform a swing style section of music with the correct rhythmic interpretation.
- Teacher demonstration: Instructor demonstrates the difference between a "straight" 1/8 note and a swing 1/8 note phrase.
- Peer practice: Practice a section of concert music with the appropriate swing interpretation with your section leader.
- Class performance: Perform the concert selection with the appropriate swing interpretation.
- Student evaluation: Compare a rehearsal recording to a professional recording and observe whether or not the ensemble is performing the concert work authentically.

### **2020 NJSL:**

- 1.3A.8.Cr2b
- 1.3A.8.Cr3a
- 1.3A.8.Cr3b
- 1.3A.8.Pr4a
- 1.3A.8.Pr4b
- 1.3A.8.P4d
- 1.3A.8.Pr4e
- 1.3A.8.Pr6a
- 1.3A.8.Re7c
- 1.3A.8.Cn11a

### **Teacher Resources**

Core:

- Ensemble concert selection

Supplemental:

- Computers (Chrome books or laptops)
- YouTube/Spotify/other music streaming service
- Videos of stylistically appropriate performances of concert selections.

## **UNIT 4: TECHNIQUE (13 Days)**

### **Why Is This Unit Important?**

Without a solid foundation in basic technique, further refinement and musicianship cannot take place. This unit will develop the physical and intellectual skills necessary to fully and successfully perform a musical work with appropriate tone production and phrasing.

### **Enduring Understandings:**

- Proper posture is fundamental to playing an instrument efficiently and with proper tone.
- Basic characteristic tone quality is produced by various controlled physical movements
- The ability to play a specific pitch in tune is fundamental to listener recognition and enjoyment
- How to use breath control (wind instruments) or movement (string and percussion instruments) to appropriately perform dynamic changes.

### **Essential Questions:**

- What is proper posture?
- Why is posture important?
- What is characteristic tone?
- How is the sound of the instrument produced?
- Is my sound (tone) characteristic?
- What does it mean to be in tune?
- How can I hear specific pitches and/or intonation?
- How can I adjust pitch to play the intended pitch in tune?
- How can I properly perform dynamic changes in a musical work?

### **Acquired Knowledge:**

- Physical control, breath support techniques (wind instruments) and proper posture is necessary for appropriate tone production.
- Pitch discrimination and adjustment is fundamental to playing an instrument at an advanced level.
- How to adjust a pitch in order to play in tune with an ensemble.
- How to follow and appropriately interpret dynamic changes notated in a concert selection.

## **Acquired Skills:**

- Proper posture for seated and standing positions will help musicians play more efficiently and will avoid long term injuries.
- Using proper bowing (string instruments), stick height (percussion), and breath control will help a musician properly interpret musical phrases and changes in dynamics.
- Developing a strong sense of pitch and making adjustments to pitch within an ensemble will translate to a more professional sounding performance.

## **Assessments:**

### Formative Assessments:

- Teacher observation during rehearsals
- Warm-up and rudiment performances during rehearsals
- Concert music rehearsals and performances

### Summative Assessments:

- Scale/rudiment tests
- Concert Music tests

### Benchmark Assessments:

- Warm-up and rudiment performances during rehearsals
- Concert music rehearsals and performances

### Alternative Assessment:

- Long tone exercises
- Dynamics exercises and activities

## **Interdisciplinary Connections:**

- Students will compare musical phrases with sentence/paragraph structure. (Language Arts)
- Students will discover that when two pitches are "out of tune" it is because their frequency wavelengths are not the same which cause them to clash when they collide against each other. (Science)

## **Technology:**

- Smart Music
- Promethean Board
- Audio recording software such as Audacity or any other DAW software that displays waveforms.
- Electronic tuners or tuner mobile apps.



## **Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:**

- Anticipatory Sets: Modeling and class discussion
- In-Class Activities: Direct instruction, class discussion
- Cross Content Writing Activities: Written phrase analysis of concert music
- Home-Link Activities: Personal practice
- Accommodations: Students can use electronic tuners or tuning apps
- Extensions: Proper posture leads to more efficient tone production and helps musicians play in tune and play with proper dynamics.

### **Round Warm-up**

- Student reflection: The class will play the scale warm-up incorporating 8 beat phrasing while listening to the ensemble's blend.
- Class practice: The students will be split into teams and given a number. The conductor will create a round by staggering the entrances of each team so that the ensemble is performing the scale warm-up while simultaneously creating chords.
- Teacher demonstration: The instructor will demonstrate how the round version of the scale warm-up should sound and how it is important for the ensemble to blend so that each interval of each chord is heard.
- Peer practice: The students will be given time to work on the round scale warm-up in sectionals.
- Class performance: The class will perform the round warm-up again while focusing on the adjustments needed to achieve an even ensemble blend.
- Student evaluation: The students will listen to their performance and determine if they performed each chord with the correct intonation and blend.

## **2020 NJSLs:**

- 1.3A.8.Cr2a
- 1.3A.8.Cr2b
- 1.3A.8.Cr3a
- 1.3A.8.Pr4a
- 1.3A.8.Pr4e
- 1.3A.8.Pr6a

## **Teacher Resources**

### **Core:**

- Ensemble Music
- Scale or rudiment worksheets
- Long tone exercise worksheets

Supplemental:

- Computers (Chrome books or laptops)
- Musictheory.net
- Emusictheory.com
- Canvas
- Audacity audio recording software or other DAW software
- SmartMusic.com
- Professional recordings of ensemble music

## SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER OBSERVATION ASSESSMENT

Instrumental music assessment may be done formally or informally depending on the situation. Assessment techniques are many and varied. An instrumental music teacher may assess a student while they play an instrument, sing, chant, answer specific questions (written and/or oral), or participate in a formal concert performance.

In the case of assessment based on teacher observation, the following rubrics, or a similar rubric framework, can be employed.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Below Basic</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
Tone Quality	No regard given to quality tone production.	Seldom demonstrates full, round consistent sound.	Most of the time demonstrates full, round, consistent sound.	Always demonstrates full, round consistent sound.
Pitch	No regard given to printed pitches.	Seldom demonstrates accuracy to printed pitches.	Most of the time demonstrates accuracy to printed pitches.	Always demonstrates accuracy to printed pitches.
Rhythm	No regard given to printed note/ rest values.	Seldom demonstrates accuracy to printed note/rest values.	Most of the time demonstrates accuracy to printed note/rest values.	Always demonstrates accuracy to printed note/rest values.
Posture/ Hand Position	No regard to position.	Seldom demonstrates accurate posture/position.	Most of the time demonstrates accurate posture/position.	Always demonstrates great posture/position.
Note Recognition	Student can play few or none of the notes expected of him/her, and/or cannot successfully name them.	Student is able to name and play some, but not all, of the notes expected, given the time of year.	Ability to name and perform notes in appropriate clef for instrument. Required number of notes will increase as the year progresses.	Ability to name and perform notes beyond those expected of 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Below Basic</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
Rhythm Recognition	Student can perform and/or read few or no rhythm patterns expected in the 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grades.	Student can read and play some, but not all, expected rhythm patterns, or cannot play those same rhythms as part of a piece of music.	Student successfully reads and performs given rhythm patterns using sheet music or a music book for his/her instrument. Rhythms become more complex as the year advances.	Student reads and performs on his/her instrument rhythm patterns beyond those expected of 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders.
Musical Sign and Symbol Recognition	Student can perform or read few or no musical signs or symbols expected of 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders.	Student can perform and read some, but not all of the signs and symbols expected, given the time of year.	Student can read and perform various musical signs and symbols. Number of required symbols will increase as year progresses.	Student reads and performs signs and symbols beyond those expected of 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders.
Proper Instrument Technique (Posture)	Student rarely uses proper posture when holding instrument, even when reminded.	Student sometimes uses proper posture when holding instrument, but needs constant reminders.	Student uses proper posture when holding instrument most of the time, or only needs occasional reminders.	Student uses proper posture when holding the instrument, and never needs reminders to do so.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Below Basic</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Advanced</b>
Proper Instrument Technique (Articulation)	Student rarely or never articulates and/or bows correctly.	Student makes more than the expected number of articulation or bowing errors, but does articulate or bow correctly sometimes.	Student makes few articulation and/or bowing errors when playing.	Student articulates or bows correctly all of the time.
Tone Quality	Student tone is not up to par, and does not seem to be improving.	Student has inconsistent tone, but not quite at the expected 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade level.	Student produces a pleasing tone on the instrument most of the time.	Student produces a tone that is unusually good for 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders.
Self Evaluation of Musical Performance	Student uses no criteria when judging the quality of musical performances.	Student uses some criteria when judging the quality of musical performances, but not at a level expected of 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders.	Student uses specific criteria when judging quality of musical performances.	Student uses specific criteria to judge the quality of performances attended outside of class.
Cross-Content Connections	Student makes little or no connections between music taught and other subjects or life experiences.	Student makes an occasional connection between music taught and other subject areas or life experiences.	Student expresses clear connections between music taught and other subject areas or life experiences.	Student makes connections beyond those expected of normal 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> graders.
Implementing Personal Improvement Plan Through Self Evaluation	Student makes no evaluation, or doesn't see the need for evaluation or improvement.	Student can make a limited evaluation of their improvement or need for same, but only with teacher direction.	Student can make a self-evaluation of improvement or need for improvement in performance skills.	Student can evaluate improvement or need for improvement in performance skills after independent practice.

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills & Career Readiness Practices**

CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.

For Example: The students must be punctual and on time for all activities, be prepared for class; i.e., bring a pencil, required instrument equipment (reeds, valve oil, etc.), exercise self-control, follow directions and must participate consistently to contribute to the class as a whole

CRP2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.

For Example - Students will perform ensemble music with pitch, rhythmic and dynamic accuracy.

CRP4. Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.

For Example - Students will use music vocabulary to communicate with musicians and other music scholars.

CRP10. Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.

For Example - In Unit 1, students will research the many different careers that are possible in the field of music, music education, music performance and production by writing a professionally crafted essay on at least 5 different music careers.

9.3.12.A.5 Describe the career opportunities and means to achieve those opportunities in each of the Arts, A/V Technology & Communications Career Pathways.

For Example - Students will continue advanced research into the many different careers that are possible in the field of music, music education, music performance and production by writing an essay focusing on one area of career interest in the field of music.

## **Technology Integration**

8.1.12.A.2 Produce and edit a multi-page digital document for a commercial or professional audience and present it to peers and/or professionals in that related area for review.

For Example - In Unit 1, students employ Google Docs to work collaboratively, analyze musical passages and critique musical performances.

## **Interdisciplinary Connection**

2.2.12.A.3 Analyze the impact of technology on interpersonal communication in supporting wellness and a healthy lifestyle.

For Example - In Unit 3, students research and discuss wellness related to hearing and proper listening with regard to decibel levels.

Students also employ available technology to record and self-assess performances.

## **LGBTQ/Disabilities Resources**

- Explore LGBTQ composers and how sexuality may or may not have influenced their work.
  - Music and Sexuality – 5 LGBTQ+ Composers Everyone Should Know:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85fBNDfBapM&t=926s>
- Explore how famous musicians thrive with mental or physical disabilities.
  - Def Leppard drummer uses inspiring comeback to lift others:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HatF-AZWiHE>