Grade 7/8 Chorus - Unit 4 - Musical Expression & Ensemble Performance

Unit Focus

This unit focuses on intermediate ensemble skill development, with a focus on the integration of musical expression. Rehearsal strategies will foster accuracy in intonation by constantly reinforcing correct vocal techniques, developing students' understanding of the idiosyncrasies of each voice, and reinforcing listening. Students will learn how their individual contribution comes together toward the success of the group, providing them with a deeper awareness of the concepts that are integral to the success of a collaborative vocal performance.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)

National Core Arts Standards
Music Traditional and Emerging Ensembles: Intermediate

- Select a varied repertoire to study based on music reading skills (where appropriate), an understanding of formal design in the music, context, and the technical skill of the individual and ensemble. (MU:Pr4.1.E.8a)
- Demonstrate, using music reading skills where appropriate, how the setting and formal characteristics of musical works contribute to understanding the context of the music in prepared or improvised performances. (MU:Pr4.2.E.8a)
- Demonstrate understanding and application of expressive qualities in a varied repertoire of music through prepared and improvised performances. (MU:Pr4.3.E.8a)
- Develop strategies to address technical challenges in a varied repertoire of music and evaluate their success using feedback from ensemble peers and other sources to refine performances. (MU:Pr5.1.E.8a)
- Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music representing diverse cultures and styles. (MU:Pr6.1.E.8a)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the context of the music through prepared and improvised performances. (MU:Pr6.1.E.8b)
- Describe how understanding context and the way the elements of music are manipulated inform the response to music. (MU:Re7.2.E.8a)
- Identify and support interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical works, citing as evidence the treatment of the elements of music, contexts, and (when appropriate) the setting of the text. (MU:Re8.1.E. 8a)

Transfer

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...
T1 Develop and refine techniques and skills through purposeful practice and application to become more fluent
T2 Make appropriate choices as a responsible, respectful participant within a communal artistic experience
T3 Engage in critique to inform next steps or deepen examination of an artistic work

Meaning

Understanding(s)

Students will understand that...
U1 a musical performance is more than just the notes on a page.
U2 performance techniques, including responding to conductor's cues, ensemble balance and blend, and performance etiquette within an ensemble are essential to the success of an ensemble.
U3 applying the principles of teamwork and cooperation to achieve a common goal in the ensemble setting is essential to success.
U4 following a rehearsal routine aids in the successful preparation for a performance.
U5 informed critique is vital to growth as a musician.

Essential Question(s)

Students will keep considering...
Q1 What does quality look/feel/ sound like? How do I fine tune my work for and with an audience?
Q2 What (skill/technique) am I focusing on? How do I get better at this? How do I know I'm making progress?
Q3 What is important for me to communicate? When should the work stand on its own?
Q4 How do I show mood or feeling in this work of art? How did the audience/ viewers respond? Did what I was trying to express work?
Q5 How is what I'm/we're doing in real time impact the audience? What changes might we need to make (if any) to keep or create the feeling/emotional response?

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings		
Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate • Design: Engaging in a process to refine a product for an intended audience and purpose. (POG.2.2) • Collective Intelligence: Working respectfully and responsibly with others, exchanging and evaluating ideas to achieve a common objective. (POG.3.1)	**Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill**	
	Knowledge	**Skill(s)**
	Students will know... **K1** the following vocabulary: staccato, legato, tie, slur, dynamics, fermata, accent, piano, forte, crescendo, decrescendo, mezzo piano and mezzo forte, pianissimo and fortissimo. **K2** how to watch and follow conducting techniques to perform as an ensemble. **K3** how to develop and refine artistic techniques and work for performance, within an ensemble.	*Students will be skilled at...* **S1** performing a range of dynamics including piano, forte, crescendo, decrescendo, mezzo piano and mezzo forte, pianissimo and fortissimo. **S2** performing a variety of expressive musical symbols including staccato, legato, accent and fermata. **S3** accurately articulating consonants and vowels, uniformly and clearly. **S4** accurately performing clear entrances and cutoffs. **S5** demonstrating "staggered breathing."