



Northern York County School District
Curriculum Overview

Course: High School Guitar	
Grade Level: 9-12	
Approval Date:	Length of Time: 90 days
Course Description: <p>Beginner Guitar is an introductory course designed for students with little to no prior experience on the instrument. This class provides a solid foundation in the fundamentals of guitar playing while fostering creativity, musical literacy, and confidence as a performer.</p> <p>Students will learn proper playing techniques, including posture, hand position, strumming, picking, and basic chord progressions. The course also emphasizes music literacy, with instruction in reading standard notation, tablature, and chord symbols. Through guided practice, students will develop skills in rhythm, melody, harmony, and ensemble playing.</p> <p>Repertoire will include a variety of musical styles—ranging from folk and pop to classical and blues—giving students the opportunity to explore different genres and develop versatility as musicians. In addition to solo playing, students will participate in group ensembles that encourage collaboration, listening skills, and musical expression.</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will be able to perform simple songs with confidence, demonstrate basic music-reading skills, and apply foundational guitar techniques to further independent study.</p>	
Course Objectives: <p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze their posture, hand position, strumming, and picking techniques and apply proper guitar techniques to produce accurate and healthy playing• Interpret standard notation, tablature, chord diagrams, and rhythmic notation, and apply this knowledge to perform written exercises and simple songs• Analyze basic chords, scales, and progressions and apply them to accompany melodies and songs accurately• Perform simple melodies, riffs, and chord progressions with accuracy and consistent rhythm, and evaluate their performance for improvement• Explore a variety of musical genres (folk, pop, rock, classical, blues) to gain stylistic awareness.• Analyze rhythm, pitch, and harmonic structure in music and apply this understanding to improve their own playing and ensemble participation• Apply ensemble skills by maintaining steady tempo, blending with others, and coordinating parts during group performances• Apply practice strategies for independent skill development and problem-solving.	

- Synthesize learned techniques and musical skills to prepare and present a solo performance, demonstrating accuracy, musicality, and confidence

Related Standards:

National Core Arts Standards for Music Education

MU:Cr1.1 – Generate and conceptualize musical ideas

- Students experiment with melodic patterns and scale exercises to create simple riffs or melodies.

MU:Pr4.1 – Select, analyze, and interpret music for performance

- Students perform scales and simple melodies with attention to pitch, accuracy, and technique.

MU:Pr5.1 – Develop and refine technical skills

- Students practice finger placement, picking, and hand coordination to execute scales and melodic lines smoothly.

MU:Pr6.1 – Convey meaning through performance

- Students use dynamics, articulation, and phrasing to make even simple scales and melodies expressive.

MU:Re7.1 – Perceive and analyze musical work

- Students listen to their own melodic practice or peer performances to identify accuracy, intonation, and rhythm.

MU:Re7.2 – Describe how elements of music are used

- Students explain melodic patterns and scale usage in their own playing and in repertoire.

MU:Re8.1 – Interpret intent and meaning

- Students reflect on how scale exercises support expressive performance and musical understanding.

MU:Re9.1 – Evaluate musical work using criteria

- Students evaluate both personal and ensemble melodic performance using accuracy, tone, and musicality as criteria.

MU:Cn11.0 – Relate music to culture, history, and context

- Students explore how scales and melodic structures are used in different genres (folk, blues, rock, classical).

Units:

- Music Literacy & Notation
- Introduction & Fundamentals
- Basic Chords & Strumming
- Melody & Scales
- Song Repertoire & Style
- Performance & Reflection

<p>Concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guitar Fundamentals • Chords and Accompaniment • Music Literacy • Melody and Scales • Repertoire and Style • Performance and Reflection 	<p>Competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate and apply proper posture, hand position, strumming, and picking techniques. • Tune the guitar accurately using digital tuners, pitch references, or by ear. • Perform scales and melodies that reinforce finger strength, dexterity, and pitch accuracy. • Read and interpret standard notation, tablature, chord symbols, and rhythmic notation. • Play basic chord progressions accurately and with consistent rhythm. • Analyze and describe musical elements (melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics) in guitar repertoire. • Perform simple songs from a variety of genres with appropriate style, expression, and accuracy. • Perform melodies, riffs, and chord progressions with consistent rhythm and evaluate performance for improvement. • Present a solo or ensemble piece with confidence, demonstrating accuracy, musicality, and stage presence. • Keep steady rhythm while strumming or picking, both independently and in ensemble settings. • Follow cues from a conductor, group leader, or ensemble when playing with others. • Collaborate with peers in small group performances, demonstrating listening, teamwork, and responsiveness. • Apply effective practice strategies to improve individual and ensemble performance skills.
<p>Learning Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Warm-Ups – finger exercises, scales, and strumming patterns to build technique. • Repertoire Practice – learning songs from multiple genres, individually and as a group. • Music Reading Exercises – decoding tablature, chord charts, and standard notation. 	<p>Performance Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solo performances of simple songs or exercises. • Group ensemble performances in class • Playing scales, chords, or progressions to show technical growth. • End-of-term performance as a solo and/or as a group.

- **Call-and-Response Playing** – practicing rhythm and melody imitation to improve listening skills.
- **Ensemble Playing** – small group or full-class performances to build collaboration.
- **Peer Feedback Sessions** – performing for classmates and offering constructive feedback.
- **Guided Listening** – analyzing recordings of guitar music across styles and eras.

Other Assessment Measures:

- **Performance Assessments** – graded demonstrations of technique, repertoire, and solo playing.
- **Music Literacy and Theory Quizzes** – reading notes, rhythms, and chord symbols; theory fundamentals.
- **Practice Journals** – reflection on goals, challenges, and strategies.
- **Listening and Written Reflections** – responses to live or recorded guitar performances.
- **Participation and Effort** – consistent engagement in rehearsals and group work.

Textbook/Primary Resource:

Jerry Snyder's *Guitar School*

Beginner-level songbooks in folk, pop, rock, and classical styles.

Ensemble guitar arrangements for classroom performance.

Supplemental Resource Materials:

- Online resources
- Teacher generated notes and presentations
- Teacher-generated activities
- Multi-media resources
- YouTube videos
- Musictheory.net