



Jazz Band 9th-12th

Approved by KSD Board of Education: May 19, 2025

Course Description:

This year-long performance class is designed for students interested in studying and performing jazz and jazz-related music. The course focuses on developing skills in jazz rhythms, harmonies, articulations, improvisation, and performance practices. Placement in this class is by audition only and an extension of the concert band and concert orchestra experience. This course takes place weekly after school.

Grade Level: 9th-12th Grade

Unit Scope and Sequence

Unit 1: Jazz Performance Technique

Unit 2: Jazz Style

Course Enduring Understanding:

- Jazz is a dynamic and evolving art form, shaped by diverse styles, traditions, and cultural influences.
- Individual musicianship and collaborative ensemble skills are both essential to creating a cohesive jazz performance.
- Jazz improvisation is a key component of the genre, requiring both creativity and technical skill.
- Essential jazz techniques, such as swing rhythm, articulation, and phrasing, are fundamental to interpreting and performing jazz music.

Course Essential Question:

- What understandings and skills do jazz musicians need to be successful in performing the art form?
- How does understanding the history, styles, and techniques of jazz influence the way we perform and interpret music as a band?

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Unit 1: Jazz Performance Technique

This unit is designed for high school band and orchestra students to develop and refine their jazz performance skills. Focus will be on enhancing students' technical ability, ensemble cohesion, improvisation, and style interpretation in the context of jazz music. Through weekly sessions, students will learn how to perform various jazz standards, improve their ensemble playing, and gain the tools to confidently express their individual creativity within a group setting.

Unit Essential Learning Targets	
<i>Enduring Understandings</i>	<i>Essential Questions</i>
• Jazz notation combines traditional musical symbols/structures with unique jazz notation for improvisation, jazz rhythms, and jazz phrasing. • An understanding of the nuances in rhythm and dynamics that define the jazz tradition and sound allow for an authentic performance. • Jazz is a blend of personal creativity and tradition, while concert music performance is rooted in classical traditions of precision and interpretive discipline.	• How does jazz notation differ from traditional concert notation? • What does jazz notation communicate to musicians about the performance style? • In what ways does jazz articulation contribute to the overall "feel" and authenticity of a jazz performance? • In what ways does jazz performance encourage personal expression, and how does this compare to the more structured and uniform expectations of concert music? • How can an understanding of the cultural and historical context of jazz and concert music influence a musician's approach to performance?
<i>Students must know:</i>	<i>Students must be able to:</i>
• Jazz notation and articulation. • Distinctions between concert and jazz performance standards/expectations.	• Apply appropriate articulations (e.g., staccato, legato, accents) in jazz performances to enhance phrasing and expressiveness. • Identify and perform swing rhythms and syncopations commonly used in jazz music.

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Unit 1: Jazz Performance Technique

Missouri Learning Standards

Priority Standard: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. (Perform 5)

Supporting Standards:

- a. Develop strategies to address expressive challenges in a varied repertoire of music, and evaluate their success using feedback from ensemble peers and other sources to refine performances. (MU:Pr5A.E.1a)

Priority Standard: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. (Respond 9)

Supporting Standards:

- a. Evaluate works and performances based on personally- or collaboratively developed criteria, including analysis of the structure and context. (MU:Re9A.E.1a)

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Unit 2: Jazz Style

This unit focuses on teaching high school jazz band students how to interpret and perform various styles within the jazz genre. The unit will emphasize the stylistic nuances and historical contexts of different jazz subgenres, such as swing, straight-eighth, Latin jazz, and ballads. Students will explore how to shape phrasing, dynamics, articulation, and tone to authentically perform jazz music, and will develop the ability to apply these elements to both ensemble and solo performances.

Unit Essential Learning Targets	
<i>Enduring Understandings</i>	<i>Essential Questions</i>
- Jazz styles are rooted in distinct cultural and historical contexts. - Each style has unique musical characteristics, rhythms, and influences that shape its sound and performance approach.	How do the cultural, historical, and rhythmic elements of different jazz styles shape their sound and performance?
<i>Students must know:</i>	<i>Students must be able to:</i>
- Identify various jazz styles through listening and or performance - Swing - Latin - Blues - Funk - Rock - Ballad	Identify and perform various jazz styles (such as Swing, Latin, Blues, Funk, Rock, and Ballad) by recognizing their distinct rhythmic patterns, cultural influences, and stylistic characteristics in both listening and performance contexts.

Missouri Learning Standards
Priority Standard: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation. (Perform 5) Supporting Standards: a. Develop strategies to address expressive challenges in a varied repertoire of music, and evaluate their success using feedback from ensemble peers and other sources to refine performances. (MU:Pr5A.E.1a)
Priority Standard: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. (Respond 9) Supporting Standards: a. Evaluate works and performances based on personally- or collaboratively developed criteria, including analysis of the structure and context. (MU:Re9A.E.1a)