

**HOPATCONG BOROUGH SCHOOLS**  
**MUSIC THEORY**  
**2008**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The emphasis of Music Theory is to expose students to a fundamental overview of the study of written music. Student-musicians will gain an academic and aural understanding of major and minor scales, rhythms, solfege, harmonic and melodic analysis, music history and part writing. Traditional classroom methods will be integrated with listening skills, singing and composing to provide students with a more in-depth view of the framework of music than is available in performance-oriented music classes.

Students are expected to be active, contributing member of class. This includes both preparation of written and oral homework assignments and daily class participation. Students are encouraged and expected to be active performers and listeners in class in order to better understand the topics presented.

**CORE CURRICULUM CONTENT STANDARDS:**

STANDARD 1.1 (AESTHETICS) ALL STUDENTS WILL USE AESTHETIC KNOWLEDGE IN THE CREATION OF AND IN RESPONSE TO DANCE, MUSIC, THEATER, AND VISUAL ART.

**Descriptive Statement:** The arts strengthen our appreciation of the world, as well as our ability to be creative and inventive decision-makers. The acquisition of knowledge and skills that contribute to aesthetic awareness of dance, music, theater, and visual art enhances these abilities. Through experience in the arts, students develop the capacity to perceive and respond imaginatively to works of art. These experiences result in knowledge of forms of artistic expression and in the ability to draw personal meaning from works of art.

Key skills necessary to an understanding of aesthetics include the abilities to identify arts elements within a work to articulate informed emotional responses to works of art, to engage in cultural reflection, and to communicate through the use of metaphor and critical evaluation. Aesthetics involves the following key understandings: appreciation and interpretation; stimulating imagination; the value and significance of the arts; art as object; the creation of art; developing a process of valuing; and acquaintance with aesthetic philosophies.

**CPI A.1:** Formulate responses to fundamental elements within an art form, based on observation, using the domain-specific terminology of that art form.

**CPI A.2:** Discern the value of works of art, based on historical significance, craftsmanship, cultural context, and originality using appropriate domain specific terminology.

**CPI A.3:** Determine how historical responses affect the evolution of various artistic styles, trends and movements in art forms from classicism to post-modernism.

**CPI B.1:** Compose specific and metaphoric cultural messages in works of art, using contemporary methodologies.

**CPI B.2:** Formulate a personal philosophy or individual statement on the meaning(s) of art.

**Suggested Activities:**

- Students will discuss and give examples of written and aural musical elements, which will increase aesthetic awareness in music.
- Students will study the wide variety of musical elements, which are universally acceptable.
- Students will observe and discuss musical elements and their effect on musical composition.
- Students will discuss written and aural musical examples from all periods of music history. They will compare similar musical examples from different time periods and explain how music has evolved through history and culture.
- Students will express in their own words their interpretation of various musical examples and compare that to what the composer actually intended.

**STANDARD 1.2 (CREATION AND PERFORMANCE) ALL STUDENTS WILL UTILIZE THOSE SKILLS, MEDIA, METHODS, AND TECHNOLOGIES APPROPRIATE TO EACH ART FORM IN THE CREATION, PERFORMANCE, AND PRESENTATION OF DANCE, MUSIC, THEATER, AND VISUAL ART.**

**Descriptive Statement:** Through developing products and performances in the arts, students enhance their perceptual, physical, and technical skills and learn that pertinent techniques and technologies apply to the successful completion of the tasks. The development of sensory acuity (perceptual skills) enables students to perceive and acknowledge various viewpoints. Appropriate physical movements, dexterity, and rhythm pertain to such activities as brush strokes in painting, dance movement, and fingering of musical instruments.

Active participation in the arts is essential to deep understanding of the imaginative and creative processes of the arts as they relate to the self and others. Involvement in the presentational aspects of art and art making also leads to awareness and understanding of arts-related careers.

**CPI B.1:** Sing or play musical works from different genres with expression and technical accuracy.

**CPI B.2:** Analyze original or prepared musical scores and demonstrate how the elements of music are manipulated.

**CPI B.3:** Improvise or compose melodies, stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts and rhythmic accompaniments using a chosen system of notation.

**CPI B.4:** Arrange simple pieces for voices or instruments using a variety of traditional and nontraditional sound sources and electronic media.

**CPI B.5:** Outline a variety of pathways and the requisite training for careers in music.

**Suggested Activities:**

- Students will learn and demonstrate the movable “do” or number system of solfege.
- Students will analyze individual chords and chord progressions and explain how they are used in music.
- Students will analyze the form and structure of a musical composition.
- Students will create and perform an original tone row composition.
- Students will use what they have learned in class to compose a short composition for performance at the end of the year.

**STANDARD 1.3 (ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES) ALL STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF DANCE, MUSIC, THEATER, AND VISUAL ART.**

**Descriptive Statement:** In order to understand the visual and performing arts, students must discover the elements and principles both unique and common to dance, music, theater, and the visual arts. The elements, such as color, line, shape, form and rhythm, time, space and energy, are the basis for the creation of works of art. An understanding of these elements and practice of the principles ensure the strengthening of interdisciplinary relationships with all content area curricula and their applications in daily life.

**CPI B.1:** Evaluate a diversity of musical works to discern similarities and differences in how the elements of music have been utilized.

**CPI B.2:** Synthesize knowledge of the elements of music.

**CPI B.3:** Identify how the elements of music are utilized in a variety of careers.

**Suggested Activities:**

- Students will analyze the form and structure of musical works from across all music periods.
- Students will compare and contrast various musical styles from the elements used.
- Students will identify musical elements found in a diversity of musical works and discuss how they impact the work.
- Students will discuss the intentions of a composer and attempt to explain why certain elements are used.
- Students will create small passages of original music, using the same elements used in observed musical works.

**STANDARD 1.4 (CRITIQUE) ALL STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP, APPLY AND REFLECT UPON KNOWLEDGE OF THE PROCESS OF CRITIQUE.**

**Descriptive Statement:** Through the informed criticism of works of art, students will develop a process by which they will observe, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate

artistic expression and quality in both their own artistic creation and in the work of others. Through this critical process, students will arrive at informed judgments of the relative artistic and aesthetic merits of the work examined.

**CPI A.1:** Examine the artwork from a variety of historical periods in both western and non-western culture(s).

**CPI A.2:** Categorize the artistic subject, the formal structure, and the principal elements of art used in exemplary works of art.

**CPI A.3:** Determine the influence of tradition on arts experience, as an arts creator, performer, and consumer.

**CPI B.1:** Develop criteria for evaluating art in a specific domain and use the criteria to evaluate one's personal work and that of their peers, using positive commentary for critique.

**CPI B.2:** Provide examples of how critique may affect the creation and/or modification of an existing or new work of art.

**Suggested Activities:**

- Students will attend a professional/semi-professional performance and write a critique of the performance as an assignment.
- Students will observe musical works from differing time periods and discuss how they differ and why.
- Students will observe musical works from both western and non-western cultures and discuss how they differ and why.
- Students will listen to their peer's end-of-the-year compositions and critique them in a positive manner.
- Students will accompany their end-of-the-year compositions with a personal critique, explaining the intentions and inspiration for the work.

**STANDARD 1.5 (HISTORY/CULTURE) ALL STUDENTS WILL UNDERSTAND AND ANALYZE THE ROLE, DEVELOPMENT, AND CONTINUING INFLUENCE OF THE ARTS IN RELATION TO WORLD CULTURES, HISTORY, AND SOCIETY.**

**Descriptive Statement:** In order to become culturally literate, students need to understand the historical, societal, and multicultural aspects and implications of dance, music, theater, and visual art. This includes understanding how the arts and cultures continue to influence each other.

**CPI A.1:** Parallel historical events and artistic development found in dance, music, theater, and visual art.

**CPI A.2:** Summarize and reflect upon how various art forms and cultural resources preserve cultural heritage and influence contemporary art.

**CPI B.1:** Evaluate the impact of innovations in the arts from various historical periods in works of dance, music, theater, and visual art stylistically representative of the times.

**CPI B.2:** Compare and contrast the stylistic characteristics of a given historical period through dance, music, theater, and visual art.

**Suggested Activities:**

- Students will compare musical works of different musical periods and discuss how music has evolved over the course of history.
- Students will parallel the evolution of music with the events and people concurrent in world history.
- Students will compare works from western and non-western cultures and discuss how one has impacted the other.
- Students will compare the works of different composers from the same time period and discuss why they differ.
- Students will create an original composition based on a moment in their life, explaining how their own personal history and culture impacted their decisions.

**Instructional Strategies:**

- The movable “do” or number systems is taught
- Class discussion
- Demonstrations by teacher
- Use visual aids (dry-erase/black-board and other)
- Use video and/or live presentation
- Skill practice in dictation
- Problem-solving related to music
- Assignments and projects using library materials (multimedia projects)
- Individual assignments and projects
- Use of audio, video and computer technology

**Evaluation/Assessment of Students:**

Students will be evaluated at regular intervals using the following evaluation procedures:

- Projects
- Homeworks
  - Written homework
  - Dictation exercises
- Class participation
- Aural examinations
  - Notating one and two-part melodies
  - Notating intervals
- Written quizzes and examinations

**Evaluation/Assessment of Curriculum:**

This course of study will be evaluated/assessed by instructional staff during the first year of implementation for the purpose of necessary revision at the end of the first year. In addition, this course of study will be reviews according to the Five-Year Curriculum Review schedule.

**Resources/Bibliography:**

- New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards – Visual and Performing Arts
- Hopatcong Borough Schools Music Curriculum – September 1998
- West Morris Regional High School District Music Curriculum
- West Springfield High School Music Curriculum – Fairfax County Public Schools
- Midland Park High School District Music Curriculum