

**Class Title:**

Orchestra 5,6

**Grade Levels:**

11, 12

**UC Honors?**

No

**Course Overview**

Orchestra 5,6 allows intermediate musicians to further develop their instrumental technique and tonal control. They will begin to independently monitor and modify their own pitch, articulation, and interpretation, and evaluate performances using more sophisticated analysis. More complex musical concepts, notation, and vocabulary will be studied, including modulations, cadences, and multiple types of scales. Students will perform diverse repertoire that take place in a variety of performance settings and venues. They will create longer and more intricate compositions, improvisations, and arrangements of music, and improve their aural skills through transcription. The students will complete a musical career research project and draw conclusions about the context of a piece based on its stylistic features.

**Pre-requisites**

Orchestra 1,2

Orchestra 3,4

## **UNIT 1: Music Foundations**

In this unit, students will focus on the Artistic Perception and Creative Expression categories of the California State Music Standards and the Perform category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will develop intermediate-level string technique. They will regularly demonstrate sensitive performing and modify tone and dynamics based on the style of the work. Students will strive to produce clear tone, bow control and left hand technique with vibrato. Students will begin to independently monitor and adjust personal pitch, interpret expressive qualities of the music (e.g. phrasing), and explore the concept of vibrato. Blend and balance within the ensemble are critical elements during this year of study.

Students will expand their understanding of musical notation, including additional compound time signatures (3/8, 6/8, 9/8) and syncopated rhythmic values. They will recognize five key signatures, and utilize intermediate vocabulary such as divisi and subito. They will begin to identify intervals. They will identify expanded compositional forms (e.g. sonata allegro) and define more complex dynamic and tempo terms (e.g. sforzando, forte-piano, and tempo terminology including a tempo, molto, meno, poco).

Students will expand their study of major and harmonic minor scales to include at least five keys and different arrangements of rhythmic values, tempos, articulations, and dynamics. They will study the notation of the natural minor scale and chromatic scale, with specific emphasis on pitch patterns.

Key assignment: Students will individually perform a representative selection of major scales and harmonic minor scales in representative keys. The assessment may be live or recorded, and will be evaluated by the teacher using a rubric that includes accuracy of pitch, consistency of rhythm/tempo, quality of tone, and articulation.

## **UNIT 2: Music Transcription**

In this unit, students will focus on the Creative Expression and Artistic Perception categories of the California State Music Standards and the Create category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will develop aural skills by transcribing more complex series of pitches and rhythms, and by combining the two elements. Basic rhythms and close intervallic leaps will be used when working on dictation of both pitch and rhythm combined. When dictating single elements (either melodic or rhythmic), examples will be more difficult (e.g. a range of an octave, more complex rhythms) and/or longer (e.g. four measures).

Key assignment: Students will create a transcription of both the pitches and the rhythms used in a two-measure example. The written responses will be compared to an answer key.

## **UNIT 3: Aural Skills**

In this unit, students will focus on the Artistic Perception category of the California State Music Standards and the Perform category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will study modulations and cadences. Students will be able to tell when a piece modulates to a new key, and be able to identify an obvious modulation in an aural example. They will recognize perfect authentic and half cadences in aural examples.

Key assignment: Students will identify perfect authentic or half cadences in aural examples on a written test. The responses will be compared to an answer key.

## **UNIT 4: Careers in Music**

In this unit, students will focus on the Connections, Relationships, Applications category of the California State Music Standards and the Connect category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will learn about a diverse number of musical careers, encompassing historical careers (e.g. copyist) and contemporary careers (e.g. music producer). They will consider topics such as required education, social standing, job expectations, pay, and how the musical role or career has changed over time.

Key assignment: Students will research a musical career and create a poster or display describing the job (e.g. listing the educational requirements, etc.). A rubric will be provided to the students to illustrate how they will be assessed.

## **UNIT 5: Connection to Other Subject Areas**

In this unit, students will focus on the Connections, Relationships, Applications categories of the California State Music Standards and the Connect category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will compare and contrast how artistic elements are used in music, other disciplines (e.g. English, science), and daily life. Examples of artistic elements discussed may include form (poetry, architecture), pitch (physics, acoustics, music), style (fashion, dialect), as well as creating (compositions, experiments, extemporaneous speaking, on-demand essays).

Key assignment: Students will create a chart (e.g. Venn, t-chart, compare/contrast, etc.) that visually shows how the elements of music compare to other disciplines and daily life. Students will be assessed individually or in small groups, and the task will be measured by depth and insightfulness of student response as determined by the teacher.

## **UNIT 6: Music Analysis**

In this unit, students will focus on the Historical and Cultural Context and Aesthetic Valuing strands of the California State Music Standards and both the Respond and Connect categories of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will consider how mood is created in music from other cultures. A musical piece should be looked at from a number of different perspectives: stylistic features, significant musical events, and historical or cultural background. Students will learn to visually identify significant musical events or compositional techniques in a piece of written music (e.g. transitions, modulations, or changes in dynamics, tempo, instrumentation, or texture).

Key assignment: Students will analyze in writing the mood, structure, style, and background/context of one piece from another culture. After a period of study and/or listening, students will first determine the mood of the piece. Then they will describe the musical characteristics and significant musical events that contribute to the mood. Lastly, they will identify the features of the piece that are uniquely from that culture or historical era. The assignment will be based on a prompt, graphic organizer, or guided questions. The task will be measured by depth and insightfulness of student response as determined by the teacher (e.g. whether the mood is appropriate to the piece, and whether the evidence contributes to the mood).

## **UNIT 7: Composition**

In this unit, students will focus on the Creative Expression and Artistic Perception categories of the California State Music Standards and the Create category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will have the opportunity to create their own music and/or their own arrangements of previously written music. Students will use their knowledge of notation, such as their ability to place combinations of rhythms, rests, dynamics, articulations, and pitches to design music in a specific style, genre, culture, or historical period (e.g. a fugue subject). Compositions or arrangements at this level will include new pitch centers/keys and use of expanded dynamics appropriate to the mood of the piece.

Key assignment: Students will create an intermediate-level composition of at least eight measures, incorporating combinations of rhythms, rests, pitches, and dynamics that include components of a specific style, genre, culture, or historical period within parameters set by the teacher. The composition will be assessed through a checklist of musical elements used and whether they were used appropriately. Students will then modify their composition based on the feedback from a variety of sources, including the provided checklist, self-evaluation, peer feedback, and/or teacher feedback. Students will share their composition or arrangement with a peer at least once during the process.

## **UNIT 8: Improvisation**

In this unit, students will focus on the Creative Expression and Artistic Perception categories of the California State Music Standards and the Create category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will explore intermediate-level improvisation by making more complex personal choices about dynamics, rhythm/rest values, pitches, or articulations to fit a specific style, genre, culture, or historical period (e.g. Baroque, jazz). Improvisations at this level will include use of syncopated rhythms, various pitch centers, and more nuanced articulation choices.

Key assignment: Students will create an intermediate-level improvisation by making spontaneous choices to change or modify dynamics, rhythms, pitches, and/or articulations that include components of a specific style, genre, culture, or historical period within parameters set by the teacher. The improvisation will be assessed by determining whether the students have made a creative choice while remaining within the parameters of the assignment. Students will evaluate their own improvisation using a checklist of more complex musical elements to identify whether they met the parameters of the assignment. Students will have multiple opportunities to improvise using the same existing composition in order to refine their improvisation, and will share their improvisation with at least one other person.

## **UNIT 9: Music Selection**

In this unit, students will focus on the Aesthetic Valuing category of the California State Music Standards and the Perform category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will think critically about music choice and repertoire selection. They will look at a variety of pieces to compare level of difficulty and instrumentation. They will consider the new knowledge that would be needed to perform a given piece, and think about the strategies for addressing problems of technique and expression. They will discuss the impact of performance purpose, event type (e.g. festival), or audience expectations when selecting new repertoire.

Key assignment: Students will choose a piece of music that is appropriate to the level of an ensemble or individual (self), based on an assigned performance event. Students will give a presentation addressing why they chose their piece, paying specific attention to musical characteristics. They will analyze one possible problem of technique or expression, identify at least three strategies that could address the challenge, and rank the strategies in the order they should be implemented. The task will be measured by a checklist of criteria as well as depth and insightfulness of student response as determined by the teacher using a rubric.

## **UNIT 10: Performance**

In this unit, students will focus on the Artistic Perception and Creative Expression categories of the California State Music Standards and the Perform category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will demonstrate proficient rehearsal and performance etiquette, and be able to adjust to new performance settings, venues, and audiences. They will perform intermediate-level pieces from a variety of cultures and historical periods, and with contrasting elements, styles, moods, musical periods, and expanded forms. Sample repertoire includes:

- Allegro in D (Vivaldi, arr. Frackenpohl)
- Concerto Grosso Op.6 No. 8 (Corelli)
- Four Royal Dances (Ewazen)
- Sonata in D (Tartini, arr. Mosier)
- Water Music Suite (Handel, arr. Etling)

Key assignment: Students will present a formal performance, either live or recorded, performed by the individual, a small group, and/or the entire ensemble. The performance will include at least two contrasting pieces demonstrating proficiency of Orchestra 5,6 musical skills and techniques.

## **UNIT 11: Performance Evaluation and Critique**

In this unit, students will focus on the Aesthetic Valuing categories of the California State Music Standards and the Respond category of the National Core Arts Standards.

Students will critically assess and evaluate musical performances using sophisticated analysis and terminology. Students will provide feedback on their own performances and those of others, incorporating analysis of the interpretation based on the composer's intent and/or performance practice. They will discuss how the evaluation would be different based on the knowledge and experience of the performer.

Key assignment: Students will use an adjudication rubric to describe the strengths and weaknesses of a performance, either live or recorded, of an individual (self or other) or ensemble. This task will be assessed by determining whether the students have made valid judgments of the performance and provided commentary, feedback, or evidence that defends their opinion.