

**Class Title:**

Orchestra 3,4

**Grade Levels:**

10, 11, 12

**UC Honors?**

No

**Course Overview**

Orchestra 3,4 teaches the musical concepts and instrumental technique of performing at an early intermediate level. In this course, students will increase their knowledge of music notation and musical vocabulary, and will continue to refine their pitch accuracy, instrumental tone, and performance skills. Students will interact with music through composing, improvising, transcribing, performing, and evaluating performances. They will be exposed to the harmonic minor scale, musical careers in media, and additional diverse repertoire, and will be asked to think deeply about the history of American music and the cultural functions of music.

**Pre-requisites**

Orchestra 1,2

## **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 perform with early intermediate-level string technique. They will be able to regularly produce supported tone, bow control, proper left hand placement, and moves up to 3rd (Vn/Vla) or 5th (C/B) positions, all in the pursuit of a mature tone. Students will work toward appropriate tone for the given style, blend with others, phrasing, and performing in harmony. They will develop better listening skills as they work to identify when pitches are in tune and use the concepts of consonance and dissonance when performing with others. They will seek to recognize the tonal center or tonic pitch as the home base of a given segment of music.

Students will study early intermediate-level notation, including compound time signatures (such as 6/8), dotted and sixteenth rhythmic values, tenuto articulation, accidentals (sharp, flat, natural), and format symbols (D.S, D.C., Coda), plus all basic notation previously studied. Students will study more complex elements of music. They will identify differences between extended compositional forms (eg. march, rondo, bridge) and define more complex dynamic and tempo terms (e.g. cresc., decresc., ff, pp, rit., accel., and various specific tempo markings).

Students will study the notation of a major scale and harmonic minor scale, with specific emphasis on pitch patterns, and practiced using increased ranges, a variety of articulation styles, and different arrangements of rhythmic values, tempos, articulations, and dynamics.

Key assignment: Students will individually perform one major scale and one harmonic minor scale. 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, and quality of tone.

## **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 pitches and/or rhythms in small segments. To introduce this skill, students will be asked to select the correct transcription from a number of visual examples or arrange notehead manipulatives to produce the correct pitch or rhythm sequence. For pitch transcription examples, the starting pitch will be identified by name and/or location on the staff, and the range will encompass an interval of no more than a fifth. For rhythmic transcription examples, a steady beat and count-off will be provided.

Key assignment: Students will create a transcription of either the pitches OR 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 the difference between major and minor, and be able to identify the tonalities aurally in both melodic and harmonic (chordal) format. They will be able to correctly use terminology such as key, major, and minor.

Key assignment: Students will identify major or minor in aural examples on a written test. The responses will be compared to an answer key.

#### **UNIT 4: Music in Other Cultures**

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

Students will study the use of music in other cultures using Merriam's Ten Functions of Music. Examples of musical functions include dance, communication, ritual, religion, social norms, etc. They will listen to recordings of works from numerous cultures with a variety of purposes and work to determine criteria that would help assess the purpose/function of a piece of music in its original culture.

Key assignment: Students will be assigned a specific piece of music from another culture and will verbally explain its purpose in that culture. 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 5: 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 in media, such as music director, radio program director, radio DJ/host, VJ, music producer, composer, arranger, recording engineer, sound technician/mixer, music editor, music supervisor, etc. They will consider topics such as required education, job duties, and pay.

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 6: Music Classification**

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

Students will look at early intermediate-level pieces from different backgrounds and discuss the musical elements that make them different. Students will be exposed to a number of works at their level in a variety of different styles, cultures, and/or historical periods (e.g. folk, gospel, jazz), with a focus on American music. Students will study the use of musical forms (e.g. blues, 32-bar song form, through-composed) in different genres.

Key assignment: Students will verbally classify at least two contrasting musical pieces by style, culture, and/or historical period, and cite evidence for the classification. The assignment will be based on a prompt, graphic organizer, or guided questions. The task will be measured by the validity of evidence in the student response as determined by the teacher.

## **UNIT 7: American Music**

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

Students will be exposed to multiple genres of American music (e.g. folk, jazz, musical theatre, popular music, etc.). Students will look at early intermediate-level pieces from different genres of American music and discuss the similarities and differences of musical elements. Historical and cultural viewpoints, backgrounds, history, or time lines should be consulted and discussed.

Key assignment: Students will complete a short written response (e.g. exit slip) in which they select two genres and explain how their historical context or backgrounds are different. A rubric will be used to assess their explanations.

## **UNIT 8: 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. 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 identify different musical elements or characteristics that help create a mood (e.g. dynamics, tempo, articulation, context/history).

Key assignment: Students will describe in writing the mood of one piece and the musical elements that help create that mood. 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 9: 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. Students will use their knowledge of notation, such as their ability to place rhythms and rests within a meter and subsequently add dynamics, articulations, and/or pre-defined pitches. Compositions at this level will include more complex rhythmic values (e.g. dotted and sixteenth notes), and an expansion of range up to an octave. Students will explore composing with a specific purpose, mood, or characteristic in mind, such as adding pitches and dynamics based on characteristics of music or text studied in rehearsal.

Key assignment: Students will create a brief composition of at least four measures, incorporating more complex rhythms and rests into a given meter and then adding pitches and dynamics 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 with a peer at least once during the process.

## **UNIT 10: 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. Students will explore electing appropriate musical components in their improvisation to fit a specific purpose, mood, or characteristic. Improvisations at this level will include more complex rhythmic values and expanded range.

Key assignment: Students will create a brief improvisation by making spontaneous choices to change or modify at least two of the following categories at the same time: dynamics, rhythms, pitches, and/or articulations based on the characteristic(s) of music or text(s) studied in rehearsal 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 11: 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. They will consider the new knowledge that would be needed to perform a given piece, and think about the strategies for addressing musical problems.

Key assignment: Students will choose a piece of music that is appropriate to the level of an ensemble or individual (self), possibly from a provided list of available options or resources. Students will give a presentation addressing why they chose their piece. They will analyze one possible musical problem, 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 12: 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 early intermediate-level rehearsal and performance etiquette, including posture, stage etiquette, and memorization (as needed). They will perform early intermediate pieces from a variety of cultures and historical periods, and in the appropriate mood or style based on the context of a piece. Sample repertoire includes:

- Alla Tchaikovsky (arr. Meyer)
- Hopak (Mussorgsky, arr. Isaac)
- In the Hall of the Mountain King (Grieg, arr. Monday)
- Modus a 4 (Atwell)
- William Tell Overture (arr. Dackow)

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 3,4 musical skills and techniques.

## **UNIT 13: 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 in a deeper and more complex way. 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 musical characteristics, the understanding of context, or the experience of the listener/adjudicator/audience member.

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.