

Music Theory

Music Theory is a semester-length fine arts elective for high school students. The course requires no prior instrumental, vocal, or music theory study. Using the piano keyboard as a visual basis for comprehension, the course materials explore the nature of music, integrating these concepts:

- rhythm and meter
- written music notation
- the structure of various scale types
- interval qualities
- melody and harmony
- the building of chords
- transposition

Throughout the series of assignments, ear training exercises are interspersed with the bones of composition technique, building in students the ability not only to hear and appreciate music, but step-by-step, to create it in written form as well.

This highly interactive course culminates in the students producing original compositions, which while based on standard notation, demonstrate facets of personal expression. As the students' ability to perform increases in the future, they will better understand music and therefore better demonstrate its intrinsic communication of emotion and ideas.

| Unit 1: Rhythm and Meter | | |
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| Assignments | | |
| Music Theory | 1. Course Overview | 15. Counting a Bit Faster |
| | 2. So, Why Study Music Anyway? | 16. Ear Training #2 - Rhythm 2 |
| | 3. Feeling the Beat | 17. Special Rhythms |
| | 4. The Value of a Note | 18. Creating a Rhythmic Piece |
| | 5. Measuring Music | 19. Quiz 2: Time Signature |
| | 6. The Value of Silence | 20. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form A: Time Signature* |
| | 7. Dots and Ties | 21. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form B: Time Signature* |
| | 8. Ear Training #1 - Rhythm 1 | 22. Special Project* |
| | 9. Quiz 1: Introduction to Rhythm | 23. Review |
| | 10. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form A: Introduction to Rhythm* | 24. Test |
| | 11. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form B: Introduction to Rhythm* | 25. Alternate Test - Form A* |
| | 12. 4/4 - The Basic Time Signature | 26. Alternate Test - Form B* |
| | 13. Going Beyond 4/4 | 27. Glossary and Credits |
| | 14. Still More Time Signatures | |

| Unit 2: Notation and Pitch | | |
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| Assignments | | |
| Music Theory | 1. The Printed Page | 16. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form B: The Sound of Music* |
| | 2. The Musical Alphabet | 17. Voicings |
| | 3. Altering Pitches | 18. Instrumentation |
| | 4. Ear Training #3: Pitch | 19. Instrumentation 2 |
| | 5. Direction and Signs | 20. Ear Training #5: Identifying Instruments |
| | 6. Quiz 1: The Look of Music | 21. Quiz 3: The Source of Music |
| | 7. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form A: The Look of Music* | 22. Alternate Quiz 3 - Form A: The Source of Music* |
| | 8. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form B: The Look of Music* | 23. Alternate Quiz 3 - Form B: The Source of Music* |
| | 9. Musical Intervals | 24. Special Project* |
| | 10. Writing Musical Intervals | 25. Review |
| | 11. Ear Training #4: Intervals | 26. Test |
| | 12. From Interval to Melody | 27. Alternate Test - Form A* |
| | 13. Project: Composing a Simple Melody | 28. Alternate Test - Form B* |
| | 14. Quiz 2: The Sound of Music | 29. Glossary and Credits |
| | 15. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form A: The Sound of Music* | |

| Unit 3: Scales and Key Signatures | | |
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| Assignments | | |
| Music Theory | 1. Introduction to the Scale | 13. Changing Keys |
| | 2. The Minor Scale | 14. Project: Transposing Melodies |
| | 3. Other Scales | 15. Quiz 2: Musical Key Signatures |
| | 4. Ear Training #6: Scales | 16. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form A: Musical Key Signatures* |
| | 5. Project: Composing Non-Diatonic Melodies | 17. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form B: Musical Key Signatures* |
| | 6. Quiz 1: Musical Scales | 18. Special Project* |
| | 7. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form A: Musical Scales* | 19. Review |
| | 8. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form B: Musical Scales* | 20. Test |
| | 9. Employing Scales as Keys | 21. Alternate Test - Form A* |
| | 10. Identifying Major Keys | 22. Alternate Test - Form B* |
| | 11. Identifying Minor Keys | 23. Glossary and Credits |
| | 12. Comparing Major and Minor Keys | |

| Unit 4: Harmony | | |
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| Assignments | | |
| Music Theory | 1. Interval Quality | 13. Ear Training #10: Hearing Triads |
| | 2. Ear Training #7: Major or Minor? | 14. Using Triads and Chords |
| | 3. Perfect Intervals | 15. Project: Creating a Simple Accompaniment |
| | 4. Ear Training #8: Major, Minor, or Perfect? | 16. Quiz 2: Working with Chords |
| | 5. Augmented and Diminished Intervals | 17. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form A: Working with Chords* |
| | 6. Ear Training #9: Harmony or Dissonance? | 18. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form B: Working with Chords* |
| | 7. Quiz 1: Beginning to Harmonize | 19. Special Project* |
| | 8. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form A: Beginning to Harmonize* | 20. Review |
| | 9. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form B: Beginning to Harmonize* | 21. Test |
| | 10. Building Triads | 22. Alternate Test - Form A* |
| | 11. Comparing Triads | 23. Alternate Test - Form B* |
| | 12. Inverting Triads | 24. Glossary and Credits |

| Unit 5: Making Music | | |
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| Assignments | | |
| Music Theory | 1. Musical Performance | 13. You're the Composer |
| | 2. Musical Performance 2 | 14. Original Composition |
| | 3. Ornamentation | 15. Quiz 2: Finding Your Voice |
| | 4. Phrasing | 16. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form A: Finding Your Voice* |
| | 5. Style | 17. Alternate Quiz 2 - Form B: Finding Your Voice* |
| | 6. Ear Training #11: Listening for Musical Expression | 18. Special Project* |
| | 7. Quiz 1: Interpreting Music | 19. Review |
| | 8. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form A: Interpreting Music* | 20. Test |
| | 9. Alternate Quiz 1 - Form B: Interpreting Music* | 21. Alternate Test - Form A* |
| | 10. Applications of Music | 22. Alternate Test - Form B* |
| | 11. Arranging | 23. Glossary and Credits |
| | 12. Composition Principles | |

| Unit 6: Course Review and Exam | | |
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| Assignments | | |
| Music Theory | 1. Review | 4. Alternate Exam - Form A* |
| | 2. Exam | 5. Alternate Exam - Form B* |