GENERAL MUSIC
GRADES 6-8

THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2099 Pennington Road
Ewing, NJ 08618

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Written by: Music Teachers
Superintendent

In accordance with The Ewing Public Schools’ Policy 2230, Course Guides, this curriculum has been reviewed and found to be in compliance with all policies and all affirmative action criteria.
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Preface

The purpose of all music courses in The Ewing Public Schools is to develop comprehensive musicianship with a focus on musical literacy. As music educators, we believe all students are musical by nature and have a tremendous potential to learn and enjoy music. While research shows that music helps students to develop higher-order skills and increase desire to learn, our driving goal is to help students become more enlightened and truly alive through a balanced, comprehensive and sequential program of study.

The Middle School General Music program allows students to transfer prior knowledge and skills and to explore and develop their musicianship through various units of study.

Middle School General Music classes are in a 6 or 12 week cycle scheduled by each grade level. Each class meets 2 to 3 times a week for approximately 60 minutes each class.
Unit 1: The Advent of Jazz: The Dawn of the 20th Century

Why Is This Unit Important?

The Advent of Jazz is a course designed to give students a comprehensive look at the creation of jazz music at the dawn of the 20th century and to build important connections for students between the music and our nation’s history. Jazz is one of America’s great indigenous art forms, born from generations of African Americans who synthesized different musical traditions into an entirely new sound. Jazz speaks profoundly of the American experience because of its democratic nature, both in its practice, through the collaborative and improvisational qualities of performance and its important social role as an early meeting place for people of different races.

Enduring Understandings:

- Students will study how urban life changed at the turn of the 20th century.
- Students will be able to trace the migration of people from rural to urban areas.
- Students will study race relations and the struggle for equal rights as guaranteed in the nation’s founding documents.
- Students will investigate how New Orleans served as a microcosm of the development of our country at the turn of the 20th century.
- Students will learn about the social, cultural and economic origins of jazz within the African-American community.
- Students will identify the major early New Orleans jazz musicians, name the various roles they played (e.g., entertainer, teacher, transmitter of cultural tradition) and be able to describe their activities and achievements.
- Students will begin to understand how jazz redefined and continues to redefine what it means to be an American.
- Students will begin to consider jazz as a metaphor for the historical development of the United States.

Essential Questions:

- Why do you think jazz was born in America?
- Could jazz have been invented in a different country? At a different time in history?
- How did the cosmopolitan aspects of New Orleans lead to the development of jazz?
- Could jazz have been created outside of a major city with diverse cultures and influences?
- How does jazz reflect American pluralism?
- What are the qualities or characteristics of jazz that make it a unique form of self-expression?
- Are there parallels with other art forms?
What do you think the musical freedom of improvisation has to do with the historical events during the time when jazz was developed?

Do you think you can enjoy jazz music without an appreciation of its history and origins? Why/why not?

Acquired Knowledge:

- Jazz is an American art form; the music reflects the specific geographic, social and historical circumstances of the United States at the turn of the 20th century.
- Jazz was born in New Orleans at the turn of the 20th century and grew out of a complex historical context.
- New Orleans was the ideal birthplace for jazz because, as a port city, it attracted an extremely diverse population.
- Many musical sources gave birth to jazz, including opera, military marching music, funeral bands, the blues, church hymns, ragtime, Latin music and African drumming.

Acquired Skills:

- Recognize various musical styles of the 20th century
- Recognize various early jazz artists
- Synthesize how political events affect the arts

Major Assessments:

- Informal observation during discussion
- Worksheets
- Written assessment
- Listening exams

List of Applicable NJCCCS and Strands/CPIs Covered in This Unit:

1.1.8.A.1  1.2.8.A.2-3  1.2.12.A.1-2

Accommodations:

- Make sure learning objectives are clear and easy to read and understand
- Provide written individual instructional guides
- Create kinesthetic practice opportunities for hands on manipulations
- Provide visual aids
- Create classroom transitions during lesson/activity changes
- Create smaller chunks of information for understanding and processing
- Provide practice opportunities
Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:

- **Anticipatory Sets:** listening activities
- **In-Class Activities:** YouTube videos, reading, listening

Instructional Materials

- Website: neajazzinthescouts.org
- PBS: Jazz: A Film by Ken Burns
- YouTube videos
- Recordings from personal collection

Instructional Strategies:

- Explore with students the music they are interested in and how it evolved from previous styles of music.
- Play examples of various music styles that fused together to create jazz from CDs websites and videos. Ask students to identify musical characteristics, such as instruments played, tempo, use of syncopation, polyrhythms, improvisation to help focus their listening.
- Familiarize students with some of the most significant jazz pioneers of the era: Buddy Bolden, Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, King Oliver and Louis Armstrong.
- Explore the national events between 1860 and 1920 that provided a context for the development of jazz in New Orleans around the turn of the 20th century.
- Develop a comparative timeline of events related to the rise of industry, urbanization, immigration, migration and racial conflict in the wake of segregation and Jim Crow laws.
- Review the definition of Jim Crow. Discuss the impact of segregation on the development of jazz.
Unit 2: Inanimate Object Sounds/Soundscapes

Why Is This Unit Important?

This introduction to soundscape music focuses on sounds (natural and man made), to create a foundation and knowledge for discussing and analyzing sounds as they pertain to music and varying cultures. A study of these sounds will help the students understand the way music is used within different cultures and their own lives.

Enduring Understandings:

- Students will understand the concept of a soundscape.
- Students will understand how varying soundscapes can have similarities and differences.
- Students will understand the difference between an inanimate and animate object.
- Students will understand how inanimate objects can be used as instruments.
- Students will understand how inanimate objects (such as pens, pencils, rulers, paper) can be used to create and perform multiple rhythms.

Essential Questions:

- What is a soundscape?
- What elements can be found in the soundscape in this room?
- What elements can be found in the soundscape in a busy city?
- What elements can be found in the soundscape by the ocean?
- What are the commonalities of the soundscapes imagined above?
- What are the definition of the terms ‘inanimate’ and ‘animate’?
- What is a ‘rhythm instrument’?
- What are the three ways a rhythm instrument makes a sound?
- Explore the different ways a pen can make a rhythmic sound. What parts of the pen are being used (and what kind of sounds does each part produce)?

Acquired Knowledge:

- A soundscape is a collection of the sounds heard in a particular location, considered as a whole.
- The elements of soundscapes are variable and each soundscape has its own character.
- An inanimate object is one that has no life-bearing parts.
- An animate object is one that has life-bearing parts.
- A rhythm instrument is one that has a constant set of sounds or a sound that is repeated in a pattern.
- A rhythm instrument can be struck, shaken or rubbed to produce a sound.
Acquired Skills:

- Students will be able to identify and comprehend the concept of a soundscape.
- Students will be able to identify similarities and differences between varying soundscapes.
- Students will be able to identify inanimate objects which would be ideal for use as a rhythm instrument.
- Students will be able to create and perform multiple and layered rhythms using inanimate objects (such as pens, pencils, rulers and paper).

Major Assessments:

- The students will be formally assessed by tests, quizzes, board work, homework and class participation/discussion.

List of Applicable NJCCCS and Strands/CPIs Covered in This Unit:

- 1.1.2.B.4
- 1.1.8.B.1-2
- 1.1.12.B.1
- 1.2.5.A.1
- 1.2.8.A.1,3
- 1.2.12.A.1-2
- 1.4.5.A.3
- 1.4.8.A.1

Instructional Materials:

- 8th Grade General Music Syllabus (written by J. Horne)
- ‘Music Survey’ worksheet
- ‘Music Everywhere’ worksheet
- News article ‘Adele’s Songs and the Science Behind Why They Make You Cry’
- ‘Adele Article’ Worksheet
- Recording of Adele’s ‘Someone Like You’
- Recording of Adele’s ‘Rolling in the Deep’
- Stereo/speakers or music playing device
- ‘Music Therapy’ Worksheet
- ‘Stomp Out Loud’ DVD
- Projector
- DVD player
- iPad (and VGA cable adapter)
- ‘Stomp Out Loud’ worksheet
- Various videos from YouTube of examples of ‘Pen Beats’
- ‘Inanimate Object Sounds’ Worksheet
- Pencils, scrap paper, pens

Instructional Strategies:

- Discuss the concept of soundscapes, providing examples from student feedback.
- Discuss the role music plays in our daily lives.
• Imagine various soundscape scenarios. Have the students identify the similarities and differences between each scenario.
• Discuss with students the potential for music therapy as a tool to change a behavior or emotion.
• Play the ‘Stomp Out Loud’ video – students will be able to list various examples of inanimate objects being used as rhythm instruments.

Accommodations:

• Make sure learning objectives are clear and easy to read and understand
• Provide written individual instructional guides
• Create kinesthetic practice opportunities for hands on manipulations
• Provide visual aids
• Create classroom transitions during lesson/activity changes
• Create smaller chunks of information for understanding and processing
• Provide practice opportunities

Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities

• **Anticipatory Sets:** Listening activities
• **In-Class Activities:** Listening activities, reading, writing, playing instruments
Unit 3: Music Theory Skills

Why Is This Unit Important?

The terms and skills which are learned/developed can be used as building blocks throughout the duration of the course. It should be noted that all elements of this unit incorporate important concepts in notation that can be used in conjunction with other music classes such as band, orchestra and choir.

Enduring Understandings:

• Students will comprehend and identify staff, notes and pitches.
• Students will comprehend and identify treble clef and staff.
• Students will comprehend and identify bass clef and staff.
• Students will comprehend and identify the grand staff.
• Students will comprehend and identify ledger lines.
• Students will comprehend and identify note values.
• Students will comprehend and identify measure, bar line and double bar line.
• Students will comprehend and identify time signature and note values.
• Students will comprehend and identify whole, half and quarter rests.

Essential Questions:

• How are pitches and notes represented on the staff?
• How do notes placed on the treble staff represent musical sound?
• How do notes placed on the bass staff represent musical sound?
• Where are the pitches located on the grand staff using different clefs?
• How are alphabetical letters used to represent sounds on the treble and bass clef staffs?
• How is the range of the staffs extended through the use of ledger lines?
• How does the shape of the note represent the duration of musical sound?
• How are bar lines used to divide music into parts?
• What do the top and bottom numbers of time signatures represent?
• How does the shape of the rest represent the absence of musical sound?

Acquired Knowledge:

• Music is written on a staff of 5 lines and 4 spaces in between.
• Music notes are oval-shaped symbols that are placed on the lines and in the spaces. They represent musical sounds, called pitches.
• If the note appears higher on the staff, the sound is higher in pitch.
• If the note appears lower on the staff, the sound is lower in pitch.
• By their position on the staff, they can represent the entire range of musical sound.
• The treble clef is used for notes in the higher pitch ranges.
• The bass clef is used for notes in the lower pitch ranges.
• When the bass and treble staffs are connected by a brace and a line, they combine to form the grand staff.
• Ledger lines are short lines, which are added to extend the range of the staff when the notes are too low or too high to be written on the staff.
• A whole note is drawn as an open oval.
• Two half notes equal the duration of one whole note.
• Four quarter notes equal the duration of one whole note.
• Music is divided into equal parts by bar lines. The area between the two bar lines is called the measure or bar.
• The time signature appears at the beginning of the music after the clef sign.
• The upper number tells how many beats (or counts) in each measure.
• The lower number indicates what type of note receives 1 beat.
• Music is not only made up of sounds, but also the silence between sounds.
• The duration of musical silence is determined by the value of the rest.
• A whole rest means to rest for a whole measure.
• A half rest is equal to half of a whole rest.
• A quarter note is equal to one quarter of a whole rest.

Acquired Skills:

• Students will be able to identify the musical notes that are named after the first seven letters of the alphabet (A-G).
• Students will be able to identify the alphabetical names of the treble clef staff.
• Students will be able to identify the alphabetical names of the bass clef staff.
• Students will be able to notate the various note durations (whole note, half note, quarter note) on a musical staff.

Instructional Materials:

• Alfred’s Music Theory Book Lessons 1-3 (pgs 3-5)
• iPad (and VGA cable adapter)
• Projector
• Speakers
• ‘Educreations’ iOS app (with blank staff image)
• ‘Theory’ iOS app
• ‘Learn Notes!’ iOS app
• ‘Virtuoso’ iOS app
• Unit 1 Music Theory Test
• Computer Lab
• Access to www.musictheory.net
• Access to http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/interactives/steprightup/whackanote/whackanote.html
Instructional Strategies:

- Utilize a staff to demonstrate low and high pitch.
- Utilize the staff to demonstrate the notes in treble clef.
- Utilize the staff to demonstrate the notes in bass clef.
- Discuss and draw whole, half and quarter notes on a staff.
- Discuss and demonstrate the use of ledger lines.
- Discuss the concept of a measure as it relates to time signature.
- Discuss time signatures and their relation to the notes within a measure.

Major Assessments:

- The students will be formally assessed by tests, quizzes, board work, homework and class participation/discussion.

List of Applicable NJCCCS and Strands/CPIs Covered in This Unit:

1.1.12.C.2-3  1.2.12B(2).1-3  1.3.12A(2).2  1.4.12C.1-2

Accommodations:

- Make sure learning objectives are clear and easy to read and understand
- Provide written individual instructional guides
- Create kinesthetic practice opportunities for hands on manipulations
- Provide visual aids
- Create classroom transitions during lesson/activity changes
- Create smaller chunks of information for understanding and processing
- Provide practice opportunities

Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:

- **Anticipatory Sets:** Discussion
- **In-Class Activities:** Workbook assignments, iPad music application questions
Unit 4: Music and Technology: Copyright and the RIAA

Why Is This Unit Important?

This introduction to music technology begins with a timeline approach to the history of music recording technology, from the invention of the phonograph to the iPod and beyond. The iPod revolution is discussed through a variety of articles and videos. This unit then leads into several discussions on the development of digital music distribution as it pertains to the music industry, including a discussion on copyright laws and the RIAA. The main focus then develops from a series of lawsuits pertaining to illegal file-sharing of music to a discussion on the thoughts of the student regarding this issue (this crosses over into studies of laws and amendments in the United States). The study of these topics help the student understand the rules about downloading music and the legal consequences that ensue.

Enduring Understandings:

- Students will be able to identify music recording technology and during what time period it was introduced.
- Students will comprehend the difference between analog and digital music technology and be able to provide examples of both.
- Students will have an understanding of digital music as a whole and its role in music history’s past and present.
- Students will comprehend how the iPod has revolutionized the music industry.
- Students will be able to develop an opinion regarding the fairness of the RIAA’s actions against music pirates after being presented arguments and evidence from both sides.

Essential Questions:

- When was the first human voice ever recorded and on what device?
- How does a phonograph work? Is it analog or digital technology?
- How does an LP work? Is it analog or digital technology?
- How does an audio cassette tape work? Is it analog or digital technology?
- What product did Sony introduce in 1978 that sold over 100 million units?
- How does a CD work? Is it analog or digital technology?
- What was the first digital music technology developed?
- What did Karlheinz Brandenburg invent?
- What does MP3 stand for and how is it used?
- When was the first digital audio player introduced? What was its name?
- What was special about the Diamond Rio?
- In 2001, Apple Computers introduced their own MP3 player. What was its name?
- Who was the founder/CEO of Apple Computers?
- What was the name of the engineer that Steve Jobs hired to design the iPod?
• What was the initial reaction from the music industry regarding Apple’s iTunes store (and having each song sold for 99 cents)?
• What is the iTunes store? How did it change the music industry?
• How did the iPod change the way we listen to music?
• Why did the iPod become so popular?
• How did the iTunes store make CD stores go out of business?
• Who did the RIAA file lawsuits against (in general)?
• Name two examples of RIAA lawsuits for illegal music piracy:
• What are some *legal* alternatives to illegal music piracy?

**Acquired Knowledge:**

- The transition from analog to digital music recording technology happened within the span of just a century.
- Students will know the functionality of a phonograph, LP, audio cassette tape, Walkman, CD player, MP3 player and the iPod.
- Until the invention of the CD by Sony in 1988, all music recording and playback technology was analog in nature. The CD was the first piece of technology to use computer language (binary code) to represent musical data that had to be converted by a ‘computer’ in a playback device.
- An MP3 file is a compressed sound sequence in a very small file on the computer. An MP3 player device plays these files back, as well as computers.
- Many MP3 players were introduced in the mid 1990s, however they were limited by their small disk capacity and battery life.
- The iPod was introduced in 2001 and was the most popular MP3 player to include a long-lasting rechargeable battery and an internal hard drive to store over 1,000 songs.
- The invention of the iPod led to the introduction of the iTunes store, a means to purchase music in digital formats.
- The invention of the iTunes Store was in response to many people downloading music illegally, using P2P (peer to peer) software such as Napster and Kazaa.
- The RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) started filing lawsuits against individuals, families and college campuses for music piracy.
- Legal alternatives to illegal means of getting digital copies of music have emerged, in response to the RIAA lawsuits. These include services such as the iTunes Music Store, Zune Music Pass, Pandora and Spotify.

**Acquired Skills:**

- The students will be able to define ‘Music Piracy’.
- The students will be able to define ‘copyright infringement’.
- The students will be able to define ‘RIAA’.
- The students will be able to define ‘P2P’.
- The students will be able to define ‘Napster’.
• The students will be able to provide examples of RIAA lawsuits for illegal music piracy.

Major Assessments:
• The students will be formally assessed by tests, quizzes, board work, homework and class participation/discussion.

List of Applicable NJCCCS and Strands/CPIs Covered in This Unit:

1.2.8.A.1-3  1.2.12A.1

Instructional Materials:
• ‘Transition to Digital Music’ timeline/packet
• iPad (and VGA cable adapter)
• Projector
• YouTube videos of analog and digital music technology in use
• Cassette Tape Player (for show)
• Cassette Tape (for show)
• ‘iGenius’ documentary
• iGenius Question Worksheet
• ‘iPod Turns 10’ news article
• ‘iPod Turns 10’ article questions
• YouTube videos of RIAA court cases
• YouTube videos of anti-piracy commercials

Instructional Strategies:
• Discuss with students the following terms as they relate to music technology:
  analog  digital  phonograph
  LP     audio cassette tape  Walkman
  CD     MP3 file  MP3 player
  iPod   music piracy  copyright infringement
  RIAA   P2P software  Napster
  lawsuit  Kazaa  iTunes
  Pandora  Spotify  Zune Music Pass
• Discuss with students how music recording/playing devices have changed over time.
• Discuss and provide examples of analog and digital music technology.

Accommodations:
• Make sure learning objectives are clear and easy to read and understand
• Provide written individual instructional guides
• Create kinesthetic practice opportunities for hands on manipulations
• Provide visual aids
• Create classroom transitions during lesson/activity changes
• Create smaller chunks of information for understanding and processing
• Provide practice opportunities

Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:

• Anticipatory Sets: Discussion
• In-Class Activities: YouTube videos, news articles, discussion
Unit 5: Computer Composition (Song Creation)

Why Is This Unit Important?

The introduction to loop editor software gives the student an idea of how a song is produced and edited. The unit begins with an introduction to the ‘Loop Editor’ software in the computer lab. Basic skills such as learning how to sample, copy, repeat, stretch or cut a loop and mix multiple loops together, are introduced to the student. The student then has several class periods to experiment with the loops and mix them together to create their own remix of a song. A study of the loop editor software will help the students understand the way music producers and song writers develop and mix the popular songs of today.

Enduring Understandings:

• Students will comprehend the concept of a ‘loop editor’ on the computer.
• Students will understand how to open a new project within the loop editor.
• Students will understand how to save the student’s personal project.
• Students will understand how to listen or sample a loop (small clip of music).
• Students will understand how to copy a loop to the timeline within the loop editor.
• Students will understand how to repeat (or elongate) a loop within the loop editor.
• Students will understand how to cut a loop within the loop editor.
• Students will understand how to mix multiple loops together within the loop editor.
• Students will understand the process music producers and song writers use to develop and mix songs.

Essential Questions:

• What is a loop editor?
• Using a loop editor, how does one open a new project?
• Using a loop editor, how does one save a project for later use?
• Using a loop editor, how does one sample (or listen to) a loop?
• Using a loop editor, how does one copy a loop to the timeline for use in their own mix?
• Using a loop editor, how does one repeat (or elongate) a loop?
• Using a loop editor, how does one cut (shorten) a loop?
• Using a loop editor, how does one mix multiple loops together?

Acquired Knowledge:

• A loop editor is a computer program or a program embedded in a website that allows for the user to manipulate small clips of music (known as loops) into a mix of their own.
• Acquired knowledge of the various elements and tasks involved in being able to use loop editor software to create a song.

**Acquired Skills:**

• Identifying the essential steps the student needs to take in order to create a song using the loop editor software.
• Create a mixdown using the loop editor to share with the class.

**Major Assessments:**

• The students will be formally assessed by tests, quizzes, board work, homework and class participation/discussion.

**List of Applicable NJCCCS and Strands/CPIs Covered in This Unit:**

1.3.5.B.3-4    1.3.12.B.3-4

**Instructional Materials:**

• Dedicated computer lab time
• iPad (and VGA cable adapter)
• Projector
• Headphones
• Access to Loop editor software (website)

**Instructional Strategies:**

• Explain and present the procedure involved in the creation of a song using a Loop Editor on the computer.

**Accommodations:**

• Make sure learning objectives are clear and easy to read and understand
• Provide written individual instructional guides
• Create kinesthetic practice opportunities for hands on manipulations
• Provide visual aids
• Create classroom transitions during lesson/activity changes
• Create smaller chunks of information for understanding and processing
• Provide practice opportunities
Suggested Learning Experiences and Instructional Activities:

- **Anticipatory Sets**: Demonstration of computer skills in loop editor
- **In-Class Activities**: Demonstration of computer skills in loop editor, individual song creation.