

# National Music Standards

## GRADES 9-12

The standards in this section describe the cumulative skills and knowledge expected of students exiting grade 12 who have enrolled in relevant music courses. They presume that the students have achieved the standards specified for grades 5-8; they assume that the students will demonstrate higher levels of the expected skills and knowledge, will deal with increasingly complex music, and will provide more sophisticated responses to works of music. Every course in music, including performance courses, should provide instruction in creating, performing, listening to, and analyzing music, in addition to focusing on its specific subject matter. Determining the curriculum and the specific instructional activities necessary to achieve the standards is the responsibility of states, local school districts, and individual teachers.

### **1. Content Standard:** Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. sing with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory
- b. sing music written in four parts, with and without accompaniment
- c. demonstrate well-developed ensemble skills

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- d. sing with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 5, on a scale of 1 to 6
- e. sing music written in more than four parts
- f. sing in small ensembles with one student on a part

### **2. Content Standard:** Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. perform with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6
- b. perform an appropriate part in an ensemble, demonstrating well-developed ensemble skills
- c. perform in small ensembles with one student on a part

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- d. perform with expression and technical accuracy a large and varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 5, on a scale of 1 to 6

### **3. Content Standard:** Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts
- b. improvise rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major and minor keys
- c. improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- d. improvise stylistically appropriate harmonizing parts in a variety of styles
- e. improvise original melodies in a variety of styles, over given chord progressions, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

**4. Content Standard:** Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. compose music in several distinct styles, demonstrating creativity in using the elements of music for expressive effect
- b. arrange pieces for voices or instruments other than those for which the pieces were written in ways that preserve or enhance the expressive effect of the music
- c. compose and arrange music for voices and various acoustic and electronic instruments, demonstrating knowledge of the ranges and traditional usages of the sound sources

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- d. compose music, demonstrating imagination and technical skill in applying the principles of composition

**5. Content Standard:** Reading and notating music

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. demonstrate the ability to read an instrumental or vocal score of up to four staves by describing how the elements of music are used
- b. Students who participate in a choral or instrumental ensemble or class sightread, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 3, on a scale of 1 to 6

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- c. demonstrate the ability to read a full instrumental or vocal score by describing how the elements of music are used and explaining all transpositions and clefs
- d. interpret nonstandard notation symbols used by some 20th- century composers
- e. students who participate in a choral or instrumental ensemble or class sightread, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6

**6. Content Standard:** Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. analyze aural examples of a varied repertoire of music, representing diverse genres and cultures, by describing the uses of elements of music and expressive devices 1
- b. demonstrate extensive knowledge of the technical vocabulary of music
- c. identify and explain compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity and variety and tension and release in a musical work and give examples of other works that make similar uses of these devices and techniques

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- d. demonstrate the ability to perceive and remember music events by describing in detail significant events 2 occurring in a given aural example
- e. compare ways in which musical materials are used in a given example relative to ways in which they are used in other works of the same genre or style

- f. analyze and describe uses of the elements of music in a given work that make it unique, interesting, and expressive

**7. Content Standard:** Evaluating music and music performances

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. evolve specific criteria for making informed, critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations and apply the criteria in their personal participation in music
- b. evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing it to similar or exemplary models

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- c. evaluate a given musical work in terms of its aesthetic qualities and explain the musical means it uses to evoke feelings and emotions

**8. Content Standard:** Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. explain how elements, artistic processes 3, and organizational principles 4 are used in similar and distinctive ways in the various arts and cite examples
- b. compare characteristics of two or more arts within a particular historical period or style and cite examples from various cultures 5
- c. explain ways in which the principles and subject matter of various disciplines outside the arts are interrelated with those of music 6

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- d. compare the uses of characteristic elements, artistic processes, and organizational principles among the arts in different historical periods and different cultures
- e. explain how the roles of creators, performers, and others involved in the production and presentation of the arts are similar to and different from one another in the various arts 7

**9. Content Standard:** Understanding music in relation to history and culture

Achievement Standard, Proficient:

- a. classify by genre or style and by historical period or culture unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning behind their classifications
- b. identify sources of American music genres, 8 trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them
- c. identify various roles 9 that musicians perform, cite representative individuals who have functioned in each role, and describe their activities and achievements

Achievement Standard, Advanced:

- d. identify and explain the stylistic features of a given musical work that serve to define its aesthetic tradition and its historical or cultural context
- e. identify and describe music genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions, identify the cultural source of each influence, and trace the historical conditions that produced the synthesis of influences

**Notes:**

1. E.g., rubato, dynamics
2. E.g., fugal entrances, chromatic modulations, developmental devices
3. E.g., imagination, craftsmanship
4. E.g., unity and variety, repetition and contrast
5. E.g., Baroque, sub-Saharan African, Korean
6. E.g., language arts: compare the ability of music and literature to convey images, feelings, and meanings; physics: describe the physical basis of tone production in string, wind, percussion, and electronic instruments and the human voice and of the transmission and perception of sound
7. E.g., creators: painters, composers, choreographers, playwrights; performers: instrumentalists, singers, dancers, actors; others: conductors, costumers, directors, lighting designers
8. E.g., swing, Broadway musical, blues
9. E.g., entertainer, teacher, transmitter of cultural tradition