



# STAFFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Curriculum Overview Music Theory

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### **Course Description:**

Music Theory develops a student's ability to recognize, understand, and describe basic elements of music literacy and composition. A knowledge of structural, technical, and historical elements of music is acquired through the study of music from varied periods and cultures. Aural, analytical, and compositional skills and techniques will be presented through listening and written exercises. Student theorists will read, notate, compose, and analyze music while engaging in the creative process through performance, written projects, and exercises. The relationship of music to the other arts and an exploration of career possibilities in music are also included in this course.

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### **Essential Skills/Processes:** Students will—

#### **Elements of Music**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic aspects of melody, harmony, texture, rhythm, and form
- Recognize time signatures, simple and compound meters, and changing meters
- Recognize advanced rhythmic patterns through 32<sup>nd</sup> note values and nontraditional notation
- Recognize meter and tempo changes, complex meters, improvisatory and aleatoric elements
- Recognize and respond to conducting patterns of simple/compound meters and changing meters as per level of difficulty of music
- Identify and construct major and minor scales (natural, harmonic, and melodic), whole tone scales and pentatonic scales
- Identify major, minor, augmented, diminished and perfect intervals, triads, and chords
- Employ compositional techniques (such as phrasing, sequencing, cadences, etc.)
- Compose and arrange using basic 4- part writing, voice leading, and counterpoint
- Identify and employ concepts of harmonic function and chord progression
- Identify and develop compositions using knowledge of non-harmonic tones, modulation and tonicization

#### **Aural Skills**

- Identify and perform by singing major and minor scales (natural, harmonic, and melodic), whole tone scales and pentatonic scales
- Identify and perform by singing major, minor, augmented, diminished and perfect intervals, triads, and chords
- Identify meter and rhythm within a composition
- Identify timbre within a composition
- Perform sight-singing examples in simple and compound meter with varied rhythmic devices
- Detect rhythmic and melodic errors in a performance
- Transcribe rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic aural examples into written notation
- Develop aural, sight-singing, written, compositional, and analytical skills

### **Music Literature and Analysis**

- Listen and analyze a wide variety of historical examples from different, periods and styles, and composers
- Explore the various periods in music history from the Middle Ages through contemporary
- Explore a wide variety of musical styles including contemporary and jazz
- Recognize and identify musical forms relative to historic periods
- Analyze motivic treatment, rhythmic and melodic interaction between voices, and harmonic analysis of functional tonal passages
- Identify and discuss the components of melody, harmony, texture, rhythm, timbre, and form
- Evaluate musical performances
- Introduce 20th century scales, chordal structures, and compositional procedures

### **Technology**

- Explore available music recording technologies and terminology
- Explore and observe available computer technology, especially music theory software
- Demonstrate an understanding of basic music notation and compositional software
- Explore and utilize online resources, websites, etc.
- Analyze musical works through the use of recordings and listening to performances

### **Career Explorations**

- Explore and discuss the available career options in music
- Discuss college audition process, possible majors; relation of the course to the process

### **Essential Knowledge:** Students will—

- Understand the role of music in our society
- Appreciate different cultures and customs
- Encourage creative experimentation
- Foster a spirit of cooperation
- Appreciate the work/study ethic
- Share the talents of others
- Expand career awareness

### **Resources:**

#### **Curriculum Connections:**

Stafford County Public Schools:

<https://www.staffordschools.net/>

VA Standards of Learning:

[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/fine\\_arts/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/fine_arts/index.shtml)

School Report Card (VA Department of Education):

<http://schoolquality.virginia.gov/>