

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Trumbull, Connecticut

Freshman Chorus

High School
Music
2016

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The Trumbull Board of Education will continue to take Affirmative Action to ensure that no persons are discriminated against in its employment.

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

The Trumbull school community, which engages in an environment conducive to learning, believes that all students will read and write effectively, therefore communicating in an articulate and coherent manner. All students will participate in activities that address problem-solving through critical thinking. Students will use technology as a tool in decision-making. We believe that by fostering self-confidence, self-directed and student-centered activities, we will encourage independent thinking and learning. We believe ethical conduct to be paramount in sustaining our welcoming school climate.

We believe:

- Music is an inextricable part of the human experience, and every individual is inherently musical.
- Every student should be assured a high-quality course of music instruction, taught by qualified music educators.
- Music is a pillar of cultural heritage and a means for interdisciplinary learning.
- Music is an essential, core subject, and providing a musical education is a necessary part of educating the whole child. Therefore, every student should be offered opportunities to perform, create, respond, and connect musically.
- Learning music gives students a mode of artistic expression, a sense of music appreciation, and the tools needed for becoming lifelong musical learners.
- All individuals should have the high-quality resources and facilities necessary to achieve success within a challenging curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Freshman Chorus is an elective course offered by the Trumbull Public Schools music department. This course is designed for the vocal student who wants to learn/refine his or her individual and ensemble skills and musical expression, practice the skills which lead to music literacy, understand basic theoretical and historical principles leading to a greater understanding of a variety of repertoire, and begin to explore the components of professional performance practice.

In accordance with National and State Standards, choral music students will be given the opportunity to learn to analyze and think critically, think and express creatively, communicate and collaborate artistically, and explore and share global connections.

PHILOSOPHY

Music is part of the human experience. We believe that every child is inherently musical, that music is an essential core subject, and that providing a musical education is a necessary part of educating the whole child. Accordingly, every child should be offered opportunities to perform, create and respond musically. Learning music gives students a mode of artistic expression and provides tools needed for becoming lifelong musical learners.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Name

Freshman Chorus

Prerequisites

Elective course – open to any ninth-grade student. No audition is required.

Course Credit

One credit in Music
One class period daily for a full year

General Description of the Course

This course is designed for a mixed-voice group of ninth-grade students interested in singing in a choral group. There should be a desire to learn basic music reading and vocal technique skills. Through participation in this group, students can attain the necessary experience for singing in the Concert Choir. Areas of study are basic music reading, voice production, and musical interpretation. A variety of music literature is studied and performed.

Major Projects

Students will perform at all school concerts.

Assessments

There will be a major assessment at the end of the year along with periodic written and performance-based assessments.

GOALS

Students will:

- Develop their singing voice using proper posture, breathing technique, and placement.
- Develop the skills necessary to produce a blended and balanced sound with good intonation.
- Develop their ability to sight-read musical notation.
- Begin to develop an understanding of the historical and theoretical principles necessary to produce an informed and musical performance.
- Work towards proper concert demeanor and professional performance practice.
- Come to appreciate how the study of music can enhance their lives and is an essential component of a complete and comprehensive education.

Within each unit, students who possess a higher level of ability due to higher grade level or experience will be able to expand on unit goals by:

- Assuming a leadership position in Concert Choir as an official Group Leader
- Becoming a Sectional Rehearsal Assistant
- Performing a solo section of the choral repertoire with the group
- Having opportunities to perform higher level music as a member of a group or individually
- Having additional performance opportunities, either in school or in community
- Preparing solo repertoire for Western Region/All-State auditions
- Upon acceptance, preparing choral music repertoire for Western Region Chorus or All-State Chorus
- Having the opportunity to apply for acceptance into the Tri-M Music Honor Society

MUSIC STANDARDS

The Performance Standards align with the 2014 National Core Arts Standards for Music.

I. CREATING

- Imagine: The creative ideas, concepts, and feelings that influence musicians' work emerge from a variety of sources.
- Plan and Make: Musicians' creative choices are influenced by their expertise, context, and expressive intent.
- Evaluate and Refine: Musicians evaluate and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.
- Present: Musicians' presentation of creative work is the culmination of a process of creation and communication.

II. PERFORMING

- Select: Performers' interest in and knowledge of musical works, understanding of their own technical skill, and the context for a performance influence the selection of repertoire.
- Analyze: Analyzing creators' context and how they manipulate elements of music provides insight into their intent and informs performance.
- Interpret: Performers make interpretive decisions based on their understanding of context and expressive intent.
- Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine: To express their musical ideas, musicians analyze, evaluate, and refine their performance over time through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.
- Present: Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place, and cultures. The context and how a work is presented influence the audience response.

III. RESPONDING

- Select: Individuals' selection of musical works is influenced by their interests, experiences, understandings, and purposes.
- Analyze: Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural, and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.
- Interpret: Through their use of elements and structures of music, creators and performers provide clues to their expressive intent.
- Evaluate: The personal evaluation of musical works and performances is informed by analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.

IV. CONNECTING

- Musicians connect their personal interests, experiences, ideas, and knowledge to creating, performing, and responding.
- Understanding connections to varied contexts and daily life enhances musicians' creating, performing, and responding.

Unit 1

Proficiency in Basic Performance

At the completion of this unit, students will:

- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate an understanding of the basic layout of the closed vocal score
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate proper posture, seated and standing
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate an understanding of basic breathing techniques
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate competence with proper voice placement using a lifted and activated face
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate proficiency in the basics of proper diction in English
- MU:Pr5.3.E.8a Begin to demonstrate competence with choral balance and blend between and among individuals and voice parts
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Begin basic sight reading of pitch using Curwen Hand Signs
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Begin basic sight reading of rhythm using rhythm syllables and clapping
- MU:Re7.2.E.8a Demonstrate proficiency in performing choral music in various musical styles and appropriate to the grade level and group competency, with a goal of performing level 2-3 repertoire

Essential Questions

- How do I transfer the skills I am developing into my performance of the repertoire?
- How do I interact with the group to achieve a unified sound?

Focus Questions

- What areas in my posture and technique need refinement so I can be a better singer?
- What do I need to do to produce a free and clear tone?
- What exercises can I do to improve my breathing?
- Why is it important to become a literate musician?
- What should I listen for when I am singing with others?

Scope and Sequence

- Proper posture, seated and standing
- Layout of the choral score
- Proper breathing and voice placement
- Proper diction
- Introduce skills for sight reading
- Rehearse repertoire

Instructional / Teaching Strategies

- Teacher demonstrates and students practice proper posture, seated and standing
- Teacher explains the intricacies of the choral score layout
- Students practice exercises for proper breathing and voice placement
- Teacher models and students practice proper diction
- Students begin basic sight reading of pitch using Curwen Hand Signs
- Students begin basic sight reading of rhythm using rhythm syllables and clapping
- Students rehearse repertoire of various musical styles and appropriate to the grade level and group competency using the skills introduced in class

Evaluation / Assessment Methods

- On a regular basis, the teacher will give immediate verbal feedback to students regarding the skills introduced, the accuracy of notes, rhythms, dynamics, diction, etc.
- Students will be assessed periodically on an individual basis on the skills, competencies, and concepts introduced in class
- Students will be asked to evaluate their own performances through in-class discussions as well as written reflections

Time Allotment

- Approximately 12 weeks.

(Please note that a number of the concepts, such as proper posture, breathing, intonation, placement, diction, etc., introduced in Unit 1 will be reinforced and refined throughout the remainder of the year and are points of study and refinement throughout the careers of professional musicians.)

Unit 2

Refinement and Extension of Proficiency

At the completion of this unit, students will:

- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Continues score study, including basic terminology and symbols
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate competence with proper mouth position necessary for a blended sound
- MU:Re7.2.E.8a Demonstrate an awareness of proper intonation as an individual performer and as a member of an ensemble
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a
- MU:Pr4.3.E.8a Sing choral music repertoire demonstrating an understanding of phrasing and expression
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate proficiency in proper concert demeanor
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Continue their study of basic sight reading of pitch using Curwen Hand Signs
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Continue their study of basic sight reading of rhythm using rhythm syllables and clapping
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate proficiency in identifying major key signatures

Essential Questions

- What does it mean to perform expressively?
- How can my performance achieve a connection with an audience?

Focus Questions

- How does the position of my mouth affect my individual sound as well as the overall sound of the group?
- What do I need to do to sing in tune?
- In what way does proper breathing affect phrasing?
- What does it look like to have proper concert demeanor?

Scope and Sequence

- Mouth position and vowel modification
- Individual and group intonation
- Phrasing and expression
- Proper Concert Demeanor
- Key Signatures as they relate to sight reading
- Rehearse repertoire

Instructional / Teaching Strategies

- Teacher models and students practice correct mouth positions for all vowels
- Students practice exercises for proper voice placement, support, and mouth position for intonation
- Teacher models and students practice expressive singing and good phrasing

- Through discussion and observation of professional groups, students practice proper concert demeanor
- Teacher introduces and students practice Key Signature identification needed for sight reading
- Students rehearse repertoire of various musical styles and appropriate to the grade level and group competency using the skills introduced in class

Evaluation / Assessment Methods

- On a regular basis, the teacher will give immediate verbal feedback to students regarding the skills introduced, the accuracy of notes, rhythms, dynamics, diction, etc.
- Students will be assessed periodically on an individual basis on the skills, competencies and concepts introduced in class
- Students will be asked to evaluate their own performances through in class discussions as well as written reflections.

Time Allotment

- Approximately 12 weeks.

(Please note that the concepts introduced in Unit 1 and 2 will be reinforced and refined during Unit 3)

Unit 3

Achievement of Greater Technical Competency

At the completion of this unit, students will:

- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate an ability to perform both a cappella and accompanied choral music
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a Demonstrate proficiency in the basics of proper diction in English and Roman Liturgical Latin
- MU:Pr4.2.E.1a Demonstrate an understanding of basic historical and theoretical principles necessary to produce an informed and musical performance
- MU:Cr1.1.E.8a Create and perform simple four-measure melodies using proper notation in a given key
- MU:Re9.1.E.1a Assess their individual and group performances demonstrating an understanding of the concepts, skills, and terminology studied in Units 1-3
- MU:Pr5.3.E.8a Demonstrate an ability to troubleshoot their individual performances and the performance of the ensemble using the skills learned throughout the year
- MU:Re7.2.E.8a Demonstrate proficiency in performing choral music of various musical styles and appropriate to the grade level and group competency, with a goal of performing level 3 repertoire
- MU:Pr6.1.E.1a

Essential Questions

- What does it mean to present an informed musical performance?
- How do musicians make creative decisions?

Focus Questions

- What are the basic rules for proper pronunciation of Roman Liturgical Latin?
- What tone quality changes should I make for the performance of repertoire in a variety of styles and genres?
- How will I select and develop musical ideas?
- How will I assess my individual performance as a member of Freshman Chorus and of the group as a whole?
- Based on my assessment, how might I refine my performance as a member of Freshman Chorus and of the group as a whole?

Scope and Sequence

- Introduction of a cappella music
- Basic rules for proper pronunciation of Roman Liturgical Latin
- Tone Quality variations for music of different styles and genres
- Creation of simple four-measure melodies
- Self–assessment and group performance assessment
- Students troubleshoot challenges uncovered in assessment
- Rehearse repertoire

Instructional / Teaching Strategies

- Students practice the strategies for successful performance of a cappella music
- Teacher models and students practice proper diction for Roman Liturgical Latin
- Students listen to examples of tone quality variations in music of varying styles and genres and incorporate these changes into their performance of the repertoire
- Students create and perform simple four-measure melodies using the skills learned in sight reading practice
- Students evaluate their own performance and that of the group as a whole
- Using the skills and understandings learned in Units 1 and 2, students troubleshoot the problem spots uncovered in the evaluation
- Students rehearse repertoire of various musical styles and appropriate to the grade level and group competency using the skills introduced in class

Evaluation / Assessment Methods

- On a regular basis, the teacher will give immediate verbal feedback to students regarding the skills introduced, the accuracy of notes, rhythms, dynamics, diction, etc.
- Students will be assessed periodically on an individual basis on the skills, competencies, and concepts introduced in class
- Students will be asked to evaluate their own performances through in class discussions as well as written reflections

Time Allotment

- Approximately 12 weeks

Technology Competency Standards

1. Creativity and Innovation - Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology.
2. Communication and Collaboration - Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others.
3. Research and Information Fluency - Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.
4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making - Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.
5. Digital Citizenship - Students understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior.

RESOURCE FILE / APPENDICES

Rating Scale – SIGHT SINGING

Name: _____

Key Signature	3	Identifies Key Signature accurately without assistance
	2	Identifies Key signature accurately with assistance
	0	Unable to Identify Key Signature
Pitch	5	Performs all pitches correctly
	4	Performs most pitches correctly
	3	Performs some pitches correctly
	2	Performs a few pitches correctly
	1	Performs no pitches correctly, but attempts the exercise
Tonality	3	Maintains Tonality
Rhythm	5	Performs all rhythms correctly
	4	Performs most rhythms correctly
	3	Performs some rhythms correctly
	2	Performs a few rhythms correctly
	1	Performs no rhythms correctly, but attempts the exercise
Tempo	3	Keeps a Steady Tempo throughout the piece
Solfege	5	Performs all solfege syllables correctly
	4	Performs most solfege syllables correctly
	3	Performs some solfege syllables correctly
	2	Performs a few solfege syllables correctly
	1	Performs no solfege syllables correctly, but attempts the exercise

Self-Assessment – Winter Concert

Name: _____

1. Posture:

During the performance were your:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| i. Shoulders Back? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| ii. Ribs Lifted? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| iii. Feet Slightly Separated? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| iv. Knees straight, but not locked? | very little | somewhat | completely |

2. Activation of the Face

During the performance:

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|----------|------------|
| i. Were your cheeks lifted? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| ii. Were your eyes bright? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| iii. Was your face expressive? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| iv. Did your face reflect an understanding of the text? | very little | somewhat | completely |

3. Mouth Position

During the performance was your mouth positioned to produce:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| i. An open sound? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| ii. Tall vertical vowels? | very little | somewhat | completely |

4. Overall contribution:

During the performance were you:

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|----------|------------|
| i. Focused, and free from distractions? | very little | somewhat | completely |
| ii. A vocal leader in your section? | very little | somewhat | completely |

5. From the results of this assessment, what will be your focus for improvement as we move forward to the Second Semester?

CURRENT REFERENCES

- National Core Arts Standards – NafME <http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>
- *American Choral Directors Association Choral Journal*
- *Music Educators Journal*
- *Music for Sight Singing* – Robert Ottman
- *A Choral Approach to Sight Singing* – Emily Crocker and Joyce Eilers
- *90 Days to Sight Reading Success* – Stan McGill and H. Morris Stevens
- *Essential Sight Singing* - Emily Crocker and John Leavitt
- *Choral Warm-Up Collections* – Sally Albrecht and Klaus Heizmann
- Octavos from various periods and in a variety of styles