

Explore Music 8

Curriculum At-a-Glance

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Explore Music 8: At-A-Glance

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The Nature of Explore Music 8

The delivery of an effective music curriculum at the Grade 8 level is dependent on the teacher's understanding of and appreciation for the variety of abilities of the learners in the music class. Explore Music 8 was developed for those learners who want to continue their music education beyond grade 7, but not necessarily in a band setting. The curriculum focuses on

- expanding each learner's knowledge base
- building skills in music to provide learners with the necessary tools for self-expression
- extending the range of music strategies each learner uses to construct meaning
- extending the range of situations that each learner can create, interpret, and respond to
- providing consistent challenge and support to enable learners to grow beyond their current level of creativity to one of increasing experience and maturity

The Explore Music 8 curriculum is supported by a resource comprised of four, 26-hour modules

- [*Introductory Module \(Rhythmic\)*](#)
- [*World Drumming*](#)
- [*Popular Music of the 50s and 60s*](#)
- [*The Art of Guitar*](#)

These modules are not sequential and teachers may pick and choose which modules fit their program. It is recommended that all learners begin with the Introductory Module as it reviews and reinforces the concepts and skills taught in Music Primary – 6 and prepares learners for the learning activities they will experience in the other modules. Often, schools offer Explore Music alongside other electives (i.e. Visual Arts, Family Studies). Creativity and flexibility with scheduling will be key, and the following examples provide suggestions for schools to consider:

- offering the same module three times to three different groups of learners
- schedule one term each of Technology Education, Family Studies, and Explore Music
- have one group of learners complete three music modules

Performance as Part of Instruction

Music is a performing art and performances must be planned as part of the instruction. The processes of preparing for and giving a performance are integral to learners' musical development. The performance can be for a classroom presentation, an assembly, or the wider community and will help build learners' self-confidence within the team environment inherent in musical ensembles. Learners should not only improvise and create their own music freely, but also record it in symbols, and perform their own works and those of others. This will allow them to experience the true meaning of music, and its role in their lives and in their own and other cultures.

Learners will analyse how rhythm, meter, and tempo communicate meaning.

Rationale

For learners to investigate how the elements of time (rhythm, meter, and tempo) communicate meaning, it is essential for them to experience learning through listening, singing, moving, reading, and playing instruments. Independent and collaborative experiences assist learners in developing responsive skill sets that can be applied in a variety of settings. Meaning can be conveyed through multiple contexts. Learners will have opportunities to communicate their understanding through improvisation, performance, and creation and will gain experience in how the complexities of music are interwoven in a way that expresses meaning.

Competencies

- Communication (COM)
- Creativity and Innovation (CI)
- Critical Thinking (CT)

Indicators

- **Investigate** time and meter (COM/CT)
- **Apply** tempi to convey meaning (COM/CT)
- **Perform** rhythmic activities represented in multiple forms of notation to convey meaning (COM/CI/CT)
- **Analyse** how rhythm, meter, and tempo are used to convey meaning (COM/CI/CT)

Concepts (and Guiding Questions)

Time

- What are the distinguishing features of rhythm/meter/tempo?
- What is the role of steady beat in music?
- What are the different ways I can use to detect the steady beat?
- What happens in ensemble playing when the beat is not steady?
- How can I perform the upbeat differently from the downbeat?
- How do I keep a steady beat?
- How might I communicate the steady beat to another person?

- How does the role of the steady beat change when the style of the song changes?
- How can the steady beat influence how I breathe when singing or playing?
- How do I listen for rhythm/meter/tempo?
- Can I have rhythm without beat?
- What is the difference between rhythm and beat?
- What kinds of music use simple rhythms? Complex rhythms?
- How do I maintain tempo?
- How can ensemble players communicate the tempo at the start of a piece?
- What challenges come with a slow tempo? A fast tempo?

Meaning

- How can I use rhythm/meter/tempo to communicate meaning?
- How does a change in tempo affect the style or mood of a piece?
- What ideas or emotions does the tempo communicate to the audience?
- How does steady beat connect performers and listeners?
- What might a change in tempo indicate to the audience?
- What experiences/emotions can be communicated through beat and tempo?
- How does complexity in rhythm change the experience of a performance?

Skills

Analyse

Gather and select appropriate information; determine accuracy, validity, and relevance of the information; identify perspectives; communicate findings.

Investigate

Ask and revise questions; locate several relevant and dependable details to support an answer; organize and compare details; identify relationships, recognize represented perspectives, and communicate findings.

Apply

Carry out, use or complete a procedure/ technique.

Perform

Synthesize knowledge for a specific purpose; Apply knowledge to refine skills and/or techniques; Communicate using refined skills and/or technique.

Learners will analyse the role of melody and harmony in the communication of meaning.

Rationale

Through listening, singing, moving, reading, and playing instruments, learners will analyse the elements of melody and harmony as a means to convey meaning. Applying developmentally appropriate ranges and tone sets will provide opportunities for learners to gradually extend their tessitura and range. Harmony will be explored through identifying and layering pitches to add depth and to create interest in musical compositions. Independent and collaborative experiences assist learners in developing responsive skill sets that can be applied in a variety of settings. Meaning can be conveyed in multiple contexts. Learners will have opportunities to communicate their understanding through improvisation, performance, and creation and will gain experience in how the complexities of music are interwoven in a way that expresses meaning.

Competencies

- Communication (COM)
- Creativity and Innovation (CI)
- Critical Thinking (CT)

Indicators

- Perform melody represented in multiple forms of notation (COM/CI/CT)
- Analyse how pitches combine in the creation of melody and harmony (COM/CT)
- Question how scale forms and tonality are used to convey meaning (COM/CI/CT)
- Analyse how melody and harmony convey meaning (COM/CI/CT)

Concepts (and Guiding Questions)

Melody and Harmony

- What are the distinguishing features of melody/harmony?
- What do I have to do to match pitch?
- What do I hear/feel when I mis-pitch?
- How does it help to scan the entire melody before you begin to perform it?
- How do I listen for melody/harmony?

- What is melody?
- How is melody created?
- Why is a scale a melody?
- Which part in the harmonized scale is hardest to play? Easiest? Why?
- What do I hear/feel when the class is not singing the same pitches?
- What role does/can the bass line play in a small ensemble?
- What is the function of harmony?
- What does harmony add to music?
- What do I think about while improvising a melody? Harmony?
- How do musicians use consonance? How do musicians use dissonance?

Meaning

- How can I use melody/harmony to communicate meaning?
- How does repetition affect my experience of a melody?
- How does having a “home-base” pitch affect my experience of a melody?
- What do I hear/feel when an improvised melody is successful?
- How does adding harmony change my experience of a melody?
- How does a strong bass line affect my experiences of a performance?
- How can I create a picture of a sound?
- How can changes in harmony communicate emotion?

Skills

Analyse

Gather and select appropriate information; determine accuracy, validity, and relevance of the information; identify perspectives; communicate findings.

Perform

Synthesize knowledge for a specific purpose; Apply knowledge to refine skills and/or techniques; Communicate using refined skills and/or technique

Question

Independently and collaboratively generate questions in response to increasingly complex problems and/or issues; Choose and develop a specific inquiry question to investigate.

Learners will evaluate the role of texture and form in communicating meaning.

Rationale

Learners will evaluate how the element of texture can be created through the layering of expressive sounds - combining melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic materials to convey meaning. Through investigation of a variety of musical structures (form), learners will evaluate the element of form in conveying intent. It is essential for them to experience learning alone and with others through listening, singing, moving, reading, and playing instruments. Meaning can be conveyed in multiple contexts. Learners will have opportunities to communicate their understanding through improvisation, performance, and creation and will gain experience in how the complexities of music are interwoven in a way that expresses meaning.

Competencies

- Communication (COM)
- Creativity and Innovation (CI)
- Critical Thinking (CT)

Indicators

- **Investigate** the strategies used in the creation of texture (COM/CT)
- **Question** how phrases are organized in musical compositions to create form (COM/CT)
- **Perform** musical works in a variety of forms (COM/CI/CT)
- **Analyse** how texture and form are used to convey meaning (COM/CI/CT)

Concepts (and Guiding Questions)

Texture and Form

- What are the distinguishing features of texture/form?
- How do I listen for texture/form?
- How many parts have to be present to create harmony?
- Can a bass line be a melody?
- What is the difference between melody and accompaniment?
- What is the difference between ending and stopping?

- How is a verse different from a chorus?
- What makes a bridge unique from the rest of the piece?
- What role does balance play in supporting structure?
- How does the structure of a piece create its order and clarity?

Meaning

- How can texture/form communicate meaning?
- What effect does a chorus have on the listener?
- Is there a contrasting emotional effect between full ensemble and one section playing at a time?

Skills

Evaluate

Review processes and results from an inquiry; Consider and communicate varying perspectives and alternative solutions; Identify potential new problems and/or issues; Justify decisions and/or findings.

Investigate

Ask and revise questions; locate several relevant and dependable details to support an answer; organize and compare details; identify relationships, recognize represented perspectives, and communicate findings.

Question

Independently and collaboratively generate questions in response to increasingly complex problems and/or issues; Choose and develop a specific inquiry question to investigate.

Perform

Synthesize knowledge for a specific purpose; Apply knowledge to refine skills and/or techniques; Communicate using refined skills and/or technique

Analyse

Gather and select appropriate information; determine accuracy, validity, and relevance of the information; identify perspectives; communicate findings.

Learners will **evaluate** how composers and performers synthesize the elements of music to communicate meaning.

Rationale

Learners will investigate the elements of timbre and volume as a means to convey meaning. Additionally, they will analyze how multiple elements of music combine in a coherent manner to communicate emotion in compositions and performances. It is essential for them to experience learning alone and with others through listening, singing, moving, reading, and playing instruments. Meaning can be conveyed in multiple contexts. Learners will have opportunities to communicate their understanding through improvisation, performance, and creation and will gain experience in how the complexities of music are interwoven in a way that expresses meaning.

Competencies

- Communication (COM)
- Creativity and Innovation (CI)
- Critical Thinking (CT)

Indicators

- **Analyse** how timbre and volume are used in musical expression (COM/CT)
- **Investigate** the intent of stylistic elements in performance and composition (COM/CT)
- **Compare** the impact of the different elements of music in creating meaning (COM/CI/CT)
- **Investigate** how combining the elements of music influences style (COM/CT)
- **Analyse** how unifying the elements of music impacts intent (COM/CI/CT)

Concepts (and Guiding Questions)

Timbre

- What are the distinguishing features of, and how do I listen for, timbre?
- How can timbre impact a composition?

Volume

- What are the distinguishing features of, and how do I listen for, volume?
- Are volume indicators (mf, pp, etc.) always performed at the same volume level in every context?

Elements of Music

- How are the elements of music organized?
- How is sound organized to make music?
- How do we use the elements of music to enhance performance?

Meaning

- Why do we create music?
- How is music like storytelling?
- How can works of music “speak” to an audience?
- How can I use the elements of music to create meaning?

Unity

- What contributions can I make to alter what I hear?
- What do I need to consider when unifying the elements of music to create a shared intent?

Skills

Evaluate

Review processes and results from an inquiry; Consider and communicate varying perspectives and alternative solutions; Identify potential new problems and/or issues; Justify decisions and/or findings.

Analyse

Gather and select appropriate information; determine accuracy, validity, and relevance of the information; identify perspectives; communicate findings.

Compare

Make observations; identify similarities and differences; identify relationships and offer an interpretation; communicate the findings.

Investigate

Ask and revise questions; locate several relevant and dependable details to support an answer; organize and compare details; identify relationships, recognize represented perspectives, and communicate findings.

Learners will analyse how the cultures of local and global communities are expressed through music.

Rationale

Music informs, influences, and sustains culture and identity. Through comparison, analysis, and performance of music from various cultures, learners will develop a deeper understanding of what makes cultures and people unique. It is essential that every opportunity be taken to promote the exposure of musical experiences derived from a variety of cultures in real time (and over time), as our learners' ways of knowing and experiencing the world are many. The music classroom is a place where deliberate, thoughtful selection of repertoire, activities, and involvement of mentors should reflect the learners and all voices of our ever-changing school landscape - a place where past and future can intersect in the most creative and respectful atmospheres. Culture is not an event; it permeates the environment to be actively and consistently fostered by all within it. Whether working on their own music or that of others, learners must see themselves. This will enable all learners to feel valued and engaged.

Competencies

- Communication (COM)
- Creativity and Innovation (CI)
- Critical Thinking (CT)

Indicators

- **Investigate** compositional techniques in music of various cultures and communities (COM/CT)
- **Perform** music of various cultures and communities with intent (COM/CI/CT)
- **Investigate** how various cultural practices are expressed in and through music (COM/CT)
- **Compare** cross cultural aspects of rhythm, melody, harmony, texture, form, and musical expression (COM/CT)
- **Analyse** ways in which music informs, influences, and sustains culture and identity (CZ/COM/PCD/CI/CT)

Concepts (and Guiding Questions)

Culture and Community

- How does investigating the music of various cultures and communities help us understand cultures?
- What would the world be like without music?
- How are people connected through music?
- How are cultures connected through musical experiences?
- How are cultures sustained through musical experiences?
- How do musicians influence and sustain culture?
- How do musical works change or look the same across cultures?
- How does culture affect music?
- How does music change through time?
- How do music and history influence each other?
- How does one musical culture influence another?
- How can music from other places, communities, and times be relevant to me? To us?
- What determines a style of music?
- Why should I respect music if I don't like the way it sounds?

Identity

- Where does music exist in my world?
- Why do people make music?
- How is cultural identity expressed in musical works?
- How is cultural diversity expressed in musical works?
- What is the role of music in society?
- How does music build identity?
- How does identity affect music?
- In what ways have people used music to express their values and describe their experiences?

Skills

Analyse

Gather and select appropriate information; determine accuracy, validity, and relevance of the information; identify perspectives; communicate findings.

Investigate

Ask and revise questions; locate several relevant and dependable details to support an answer; organize and compare details; identify relationships, recognize represented perspectives, and communicate findings.

Perform

Synthesize knowledge for a specific purpose; Apply knowledge to refine skills and/or techniques; Communicate using refined skills and/or technique

Compare

Make observations; identify similarities and differences; identify relationships and offer an interpretation; communicate the findings.

Learners will create original musical works reflecting personal, social, and cultural contexts.

Rationale

Throughout the music-making process, it is essential for learners to have opportunities to explore and experiment with the creation of their own works. Through direct application of improvisational and compositional skills learners can manipulate the elements of music in order to express themselves musically. Learners will explore how music is made for self-expression and/or to identify with personal, social, and cultural contexts. The process of creating music has equal, if not more, importance and value than the product. Four principles will guide these learning experiences:

1. The process of creating music does not always result in a formal product.
2. Changes in understanding can occur throughout the process.
3. Learners need opportunities to discuss their works in progress, allowing them to reflect and modify; and
4. Connections between their own music and the world around them is a vital component.

In collaborative and individual settings, learners can ponder what is happening in the world around them and let it come out as music.

Competencies

- Citizenship (CZ)
- Communication (COM)
- Creativity and Innovation (CI)
- Critical Thinking (CT)
- Personal and Career Development (PCD)

Indicators

- **Investigate** reasons for creating music (CZ/COM/PCD/CI/CT)
- **Compare** appropriation and inspiration in music composition (CZ/COM/PCD/CI/CT)
- **Reflect** on personal, social, and cultural contexts to inform music composition (CZ/COM/PCD/CT)
- **Apply** the elements of music to express meaning (COM/CT)

- **Create** rhythmic and melodic ideas using multiple forms of notation, improvisation, and extended techniques (COM/CI/CT)
- **Reflect** on the effectiveness of decisions made during the compositional process (COM/PCD/CI)

Concepts (and Guiding Questions)

Music Creation

- Why is music such an integral part of the human experience?
- What is the power of music?
- Why do we create music?
- What inspires someone to create a piece of music?
- How is music created?
- How does music inspire me?
- What is a musician? Composer? Arranger?
- What makes a meritorious musical work?
- How are improvisational skills developed and sustained?
- How do I choose which compositional tools will give me the best effect?
- How can I organize the elements of music?
- What are the two main tonalities?
- What constitutes “composing”?
- What resources can be used in the creation of music?
- When am I finished?

Intent and Emotional Engagement

- How do I use the elements of music to communicate meaning?
- What ideas, moods, feelings or thoughts do I have while listening to music in a major key? In a minor key?
- Describe an experience I've had when the background music was ideally suited to the occasion. What made it so appropriate?
- How do composers and improvisors use music to communicate their experiences and feelings?
- How is meaning created?
- How can we create music to nurture our communities?
- What is non-verbal communication?

Skills

Create

Develop an idea; communicate a representation for a process and/or a product; produce a product; modify as necessary; evaluate results and/or modifications.

Investigate

Ask and revise questions; locate several relevant and dependable details to support an answer; organize and compare details; identify relationships, recognize represented perspectives, and communicate findings.

Compare

Make observations; identify similarities and differences; identify relationships and offer an interpretation; communicate the findings.

Reflect

Ask questions of experiences and/or concepts; examine further ideas and information; consider ideas, perceptions, and perspectives about experiences and/or concepts; evaluate perceptions and perspectives in relation to experiences and/or concepts; synthesize perceptions, and perspectives in relation to experiences and/or concepts; communicate the impact of the process.

Learners will perform music in ensembles to communicate meaning.

Rationale

In both large and small ensembles, learners will have opportunities to rehearse and perform music to convey meaning. Meaning can be conveyed in multiple contexts. It is important that learners collaborate to solve problems, make performance decisions, and participate in individual and group assessments. The environment in any ensemble setting must encourage collaboration, so that the learners' thoughts and ideas play an essential role in the decision-making process. This allows learners to gain experience determining how the complexities of music are interwoven in a way that expresses meaning.

Competencies

- Citizenship (CZ)
- Communication (COM)
- Creativity and Innovation (CI)
- Critical Thinking (CT)
- Personal and Career Development (PCD)

Indicators

- **Implement** rehearsal etiquette as foundational to ensemble culture (CZ/COM/PCD/CI)
- **Formulate** solutions to musical and technical challenges in ensemble music (COM/PCD/CI)
- **Compare** appropriation and inspiration in music (CZ/COM/PCD/CI/CT)
- **Perform** music with intent (COM/CI)
- **Evaluate** the impact of the ensemble in conveying meaning in rehearsals and performances (CZ/CT/COM/PCD/CI)

Concepts (and Guiding Questions)

Communication of Meaning

- How do we realize the intent of composers?
- How do we realize and unify the meaning of a work?
- How does knowing the context of a piece affect our musical experience?
- What kinds of nonverbal communication take place in a group practice/performance?
- How does knowledge about composers and/or context impact a musical performance?

- How does adding dynamics change how I think and feel while playing?
- How does adding articulation change my ability to be expressive?
- How can a performance evoke an emotional response from the audience?
- How do we connect with our audience?

Ensemble Culture

- What is rehearsal etiquette?
- How does concert etiquette affect the performance?
- How does rehearsal etiquette change across contexts?
- What is the role of the teacher/conductor in an ensemble?
- What does it mean to collaborate in an ensemble?
- What is my role as a performer in the ensemble?
- How do we set goals as an ensemble?
- Musical and Technical Challenges
- How does seeing all parts change how I read my assigned part?
- How does my playing change when playing in an ensemble?
- What skills do I use in ensemble playing that I may not use when playing alone?
- What musical elements are more suitable to a small ensemble?
- What musical elements are more suitable to a large ensemble?
- Why is it important to reflect on rehearsals and performances?
- What determines quality in music performance?
- Who determines quality in music performance?
- What tools are required for successful rehearsals and performances?
- How could the performance be more successful?
- What makes a significant and meaningful performance?

Skills

Perform

Synthesize knowledge for a specific purpose; Apply knowledge to refine skills and/or techniques; Communicate using refined skills and/or technique.

Implement

Select - Locate several relevant and dependable details to support an answer

Plan – Formulate Identify a topic of interest; brainstorm ideas; choose, prioritize, and refine ideas; evaluate choices.

Devise a process to solve the problem. Execute the steps, modifying as necessary.

Evaluate - Review processes and results from an inquiry; consider and communicate varying perspectives and alternative solutions; identify potential new problems and/or issues; justify decisions and/or findings.

Apply - Carry out, use or complete a procedure/ technique.

Formulate

Identify a topic of interest; brainstorm ideas; choose, prioritize, and refine ideas; evaluate choices.

Compare

Make observations; identify similarities and differences; identify relationships and offer an interpretation; communicate the findings.

Evaluate

Review processes and results from an inquiry; Consider and communicate varying perspectives and alternative solutions; Identify potential new problems and/or issues; Justify decisions and/or findings.