
Music Standards of Learning

for
Virginia
Public Schools



Board of Education
Commonwealth of Virginia

April 2006

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**Adopted in April 2006 by the
Board of Education**

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Foreword

The Fine Arts Standards of Learning in this publication represent a major development in public education in Virginia. Adopted in April 2006 by the Virginia Board of Education, these standards emphasize the importance of instruction in the fine arts—dance arts, music, theatre arts, and visual arts—and, therefore, are an important part of Virginia’s efforts to provide challenging educational programs in the public schools. Knowledge and skills that students acquire through fine arts instruction include the abilities to think critically, solve problems creatively, make informed judgments, work cooperatively within groups, appreciate different cultures, imagine, and create.

The Fine Arts Standards of Learning were developed through the efforts of classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, administrators, college faculty, professional artists, fine arts organization representatives, and museum personnel. These persons assisted the Department of Education in developing and reviewing the draft documents. Opportunities for citizens to make comments with respect to the standards documents were provided through public hearings that were held at two sites across the state.

Copies of the Fine Arts Standards of Learning were distributed to public schools throughout Virginia for teachers to use in developing curricula and lesson plans to support the standards. The standards are minimum requirements in the fine arts, setting reasonable targets and expectations for what teachers need to teach and students need to learn. The standards set clear, concise, measurable, and rigorous expectations for young people. Schools are encouraged to go beyond the prescribed standards to enrich the curriculum to meet the needs of all students.

A major objective of Virginia’s educational agenda is to provide the citizens of the commonwealth with a program of public education that is among the best in the nation and that meets the needs of all young people in the commonwealth. These Fine Arts Standards of Learning continue the process for achieving that objective.

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Music Standards of Learning

Introduction

The Music Standards of Learning identify the essential content and skills required in the music curriculum for each grade level or course in Virginia's public schools. Standards are identified by each grade level for kindergarten through grade five and by grade clusters (6–8 and 9–12) at the middle and high school levels.

The standards are to be used as guidelines and benchmarks for student achievement and to provide a variety of music experiences throughout the different grade levels and grade clusters. The four strands—Performance and Production, Cultural Context and Music Theory, Judgment and Criticism, and Aesthetics—provide the basis for all instructional strategies that are appropriate to each category. The standards provide the framework for students to learn ways in which the content of disciplines within and outside the arts are interrelated with the content of music. The strands are integrated through a variety of classroom and performance activities. Through individualized instruction and the provision of multiple educational opportunities, students will obtain valuable music skills and knowledge to prepare them for future educational, occupational, and personal endeavors.

The standards are not intended to encompass the entire curriculum for a given grade level or course nor to prescribe how the content should be taught. Teachers are encouraged to go beyond these standards and select instructional strategies and assessment methods appropriate for their students. Teachers will consistently model appropriate use of copyrighted and royalty-protected materials.

Goals

The content of the Music Standards of Learning is intended to support the following goals for students:

- Develop understanding of music through experiences in singing, moving, listening, and playing instruments.
- Develop the ability to read and notate music.
- Create compositions that transcribe their thoughts and emotions into concrete musical forms of human expression.
- Exercise critical thinking skills by investigating and analyzing all facets of the music discipline.
- Demonstrate awareness of and responsibility for the safe and ethical use of materials, equipment, methods, and technologies.
- Demonstrate understanding of the relationship of music to history and culture.
- Make connections between music and other fields of knowledge.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply aesthetic criteria for making artistic choices.
- Develop awareness of copyright and royalty requirements when rehearsing, performing, or otherwise using the works of others.

Strands

The scope and sequence of the Music Standards of Learning reflect the gradual progression in musical development that culminates in a high level of artistic attainment. The standards are organized by grade levels and areas of instruction—Music K–12 (K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6–8, and 9–12), Instrumental Music (Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Artist), and Vocal/Choral Music (Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, and Artist). Within each level or area, the standards are organized into four related strands—

Performance and Production, Cultural Context and Music Theory, Judgment and Criticism, and Aesthetics. Although the strands are presented separately for organizational purposes, in practice they are integrated throughout all music instruction, regardless of the particular classroom or ensemble experience. They shape the music experience and guide the instructional process at all grade levels.

Performance and Production

Students will demonstrate mastery of musical skills and concepts at levels of increasing difficulty. They will learn to participate in music as a musician through singing, playing instruments, improvising, composing, and moving to music. Students will participate in all aspects of music production and demonstrate appropriate use of related materials, methods, and technologies.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

Students will understand music within the contexts of culture, music history, and music theory. They will study and practice music theory through music reading, notation, and sight-reading. They will use critical thinking skills to analyze the manner in which music is organized. Students will identify the style and distinctive characteristics of music that delineate each of the basic music historical periods as well as the influence of technology and compositional techniques employed in all genres of music. They will investigate the vocal timbres that are unique to children, adolescents, and adults. Students will be guided in the development of criteria for making informed artistic judgments about music, as well as about the other arts, and for evaluating the role of music in society. They will examine the interrelationships of current events, developing technologies, and music in society.

Judgment and Criticism

Students will observe, listen, respond, reflect, analyze, interpret, and evaluate music. They will articulate an objective evaluation of musical works by analyzing creative musical elements and production as a whole. Students will be guided in the development of criteria for making informed artistic judgments about music, as well as about the other arts, and for evaluating the role of music in society. They will apply these processes in creating and evaluating their own musical works.

Aesthetics

Students will reflect on and respond to the sensory, emotional, and intellectual qualities of music. They will examine various cultural perspectives and the factors that shape aesthetics responses. By viewing and evaluating the works of musical artists, students will become aware of the contribution of music to the quality of the human experience.

Kindergarten–Grade Five

Introduction

The Music Standards of Learning for kindergarten through grade five introduce basic music concepts through singing, playing instruments, moving, and listening. Students will gradually develop their singing voices, a repertoire of songs, and a sense of rhythm beginning with the steady beat and continuing toward complex rhythms and meters. Movement experiences are included as a means of demonstrating an understanding of concepts such as pitch, rhythm, and form. Listening experiences include traditional and contemporary classical works, American folk music, and music of other cultures. Through these experiences, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate and apply an understanding of music concepts.

Kindergarten

Performance and Production

- K.1 The student will sing songs and play instruments.
 - 1. Participate individually and in groups.
 - 2. Accompany songs and chants with body percussion and classroom instruments.
 - 3. Imitate two-pitch (*sol-mi*) patterns sung or played.
- K.2 The student will perform rhythmic patterns that include sounds and silences.
- K.3 The student will sing, play, or move at the appropriate time following a vocal/instrumental introduction.
- K.4 The student will respond to music with movement.
 - 1. Match movement to rhythmic patterns.
 - 2. Employ large body movement.
 - 3. Employ locomotor and non-locomotor movements.
 - 4. Use movement to enhance music, stories, and poems.
 - 5. Perform dances and games from various cultures.
 - 6. Use the body to illustrate moods and contrasts in music.
- K.5 The student will demonstrate the difference between a singing voice and a speaking voice.
- K.6 The student will demonstrate steady beat.
 - 1. Use body percussion, instruments, and movement.
 - 2. Use children's literature, chant, and song.
- K.7 The student will create music through a variety of experiences.
 - 1. Use classroom instruments, body percussion, or movement.
 - 2. Use the voice in speech and song.
 - 3. Dramatize songs, stories, and poems.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

- K.8 The student will recognize and demonstrate expressive qualities of music: fast/slow and loud/soft.
- K.9 The student will identify classroom instruments by sight and sound.
- K.10 The student will distinguish between tone colors.
 - 1. Identify voices and instruments.
 - 2. Identify men's, women's, and children's voices.

Judgment and Criticism

- K.11 The student will exhibit respect for the contributions of self and others in a music setting.
1. Contribute to a group effort of making music.
 2. Contribute to a group effort of listening to music.
 3. Participate in music activities that involve sharing, taking turns, and other ways of demonstrating good citizenship.

Aesthetics

- K.12 The student will recognize the relationships between music and other disciplines.

Grade One

Performance and Production

- 1.1 The student will sing a repertoire of songs and play instruments.
 - 1. Sing songs that contain *sol*, *mi*, and *la* pitches.
 - 2. Sing a variety of songs individually and in groups.
 - 3. Play pitched and non-pitched instruments.
- 1.2 The student will perform rhythmic patterns.
 - 1. Perform and notate rhythmic patterns that include quarter notes, paired eighth notes, and quarter rests.
 - 2. Demonstrate melodic rhythm.
- 1.3 The student will respond to music with movement.
 - 1. Perform line and circle dances.
 - 2. Perform dances and games from various cultures.
 - 3. Demonstrate locomotor and non-locomotor movements.
 - 4. Dramatize songs, stories, and poems.
- 1.4 The student will create music through a variety of experiences.
 - 1. Improvise, using classroom instruments, body percussion, and movement.
 - 2. Use the voice in speech and song.
 - 3. Create music to enhance songs, stories, and poems.
 - 4. Create melodies to familiar nursery rhymes or chants.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

- 1.5 The student will distinguish between melodic rhythm and steady beat, using sight and sound.
- 1.6 The student will recognize when music changes from one section to a contrasting section.
- 1.7 The student will recognize and describe sudden changes in expressive qualities of music.
 - 1. Demonstrate changes in dynamics vocally, instrumentally, or with movement.
 - 2. Demonstrate changes in tempo vocally, instrumentally, or with movement.
- 1.8 The student will identify high pitches and low pitches.
 - 1. Demonstrate different pitches vocally, instrumentally, and with movement.
 - 2. Distinguish between extreme contrasts of sound.
- 1.9 The student will identify pitched and non-pitched classroom instruments, using sight and sound.
- 1.10 The student will distinguish between accompanied and unaccompanied vocal music.

Judgment and Criticism

- 1.11 The student will exhibit respect for the contributions of self and others in a music setting.
1. Contribute to a group effort of making music.
 2. Contribute to a group effort of listening to music.
 3. Participate in music activities that involve sharing, taking turns, and other ways of demonstrating good citizenship.

Aesthetics

- 1.12 The student will identify the relationships between music and other disciplines.

Grade Two

Performance and Production

- 2.1 The student will sing a repertoire of songs and play instruments.
 - 1. Sing melodies within the range of a sixth.
 - 2. Sing a variety of songs individually and in groups.
 - 3. Play ostinato and single-chord accompaniments on classroom instruments.
- 2.2 The student will perform and notate rhythmic patterns, using traditional notation and including paired eighth notes, quarter notes, quarter rests, half notes, and whole notes.
- 2.3 The student will respond to music with movement.
 - 1. Perform line and circle dances.
 - 2. Perform dances and games from various cultures.
 - 3. Demonstrate locomotor and non-locomotor movements.
 - 4. Dramatize songs, stories, and poems.
 - 5. Perform choreographed and non-choreographed movements.
- 2.4 The student will read lyrics containing more than one verse and including words divided into syllables.
- 2.5 The student will create music through a variety of experiences.
 - 1. Create lyrics to familiar melodies.
 - 2. Create new verses to songs.
 - 3. Create accompaniments and ostinatos.
 - 4. Create music to enhance songs, stories, and poems.
 - 5. Create movement to illustrate meter and form.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

- 2.6 The student will recognize form in music.
 - 1. Identify like and unlike melodic phrases.
 - 2. Identify and perform music in AB and ABA forms.
 - 3. Identify the beginning and end of phrases.
- 2.7 The student will recognize sudden and gradual changes in expressive qualities of music.
 - 1. Demonstrate changes in dynamics and tempo vocally, instrumentally, and with movement.
 - 2. Use music terminology to describe changes.
- 2.8 The student will identify selected orchestral and folk instruments, using sight and sound.
- 2.9 The student will identify melodic patterns that move upward, downward, and remain the same.
 - 1. Use the voice, instruments, and movement.
 - 2. Use music terminology.
 - 3. Use the seven letters of the music alphabet.

Judgment and Criticism

- 2.10 The student will exhibit respect for the contributions of self and others in a music setting.
1. Contribute to a group effort of making music.
 2. Contribute to a group effort of listening to music.
 3. Participate in music activities that involve sharing, taking turns, and other ways of demonstrating good citizenship.

Aesthetics

- 2.11 The student will identify and discuss the relationships between music and other disciplines.

Grade Three

Performance and Production

- 3.1 The student will sing a repertoire of songs in tune with a clear tone quality.
 - 1. Sing melodies within the range of an octave.
 - 2. Perform in a two-part music ensemble.
 - 3. Accompany singing with rhythm and/or melody instruments.
 - 4. Use music terminology to interpret a music selection.

- 3.2 The student will notate and perform rhythmic patterns that include sixteenth notes, single eighth notes, paired eighth notes, quarter notes, quarter rests, half notes, dotted half notes, and whole notes, using body percussion, melodic percussion instruments, or non-pitched percussion instruments.

- 3.3 The student will notate and perform melodies from the treble staff, using traditional notation.
 - 1. Use voice or melodic instruments.
 - 2. Use a wide range of tempos and dynamics.
 - 3. Recognize that music is divided into measures.

- 3.4 The student will respond to music with movement.
 - 1. Perform line and circle dances.
 - 2. Perform dances and games from various cultures.
 - 3. Dramatize songs, stories, and poems.
 - 4. Perform choreographed and non-choreographed movements.

- 3.5 The student will perform in a two-part ensemble, using pitched and non-pitched instruments.

- 3.6 The student will perform I and V (V^7) chords to accompany a two-chord melody, using classroom instruments.

- 3.7 The student will create music through a variety of experiences.
 - 1. Create accompaniments and ostinatos for songs and chants.
 - 2. Create movement to illustrate meter and form.
 - 3. Create lyrics to familiar melodies.
 - 4. Create new verses to songs.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

- 3.8 The student will identify and perform sets of beats that are grouped in twos and threes, using descriptive terminology to identify which beats are strong and which beats are weak.

- 3.9 The student will identify ABC form.

- 3.10 The student will recognize music symbols within a musical score and use music terminology to explain their functions.

- 3.11 The student will explore the music of world cultures through song, dance, and movement.
 - 1. Study folk tales and musical settings of folk tales.
 - 2. Listen to examples of instruments not traditionally found in bands or orchestras.
 - 3. Interpret music through movement.
 - 4. Perform traditional dances.
- 3.12 The student will identify the four orchestral families (woodwind, string, brass, percussion), using sight and sound.
- 3.13 The student will demonstrate the melodic shape (contour) of a musical phrase, using music terminology to describe how pitches may move upward, downward, or stay the same.

Judgment and Criticism

- 3.14 The student will exhibit respect for the contributions of self and others in a music setting.
 - 1. Contribute to a group effort of making music.
 - 2. Contribute to a group effort of listening to music.
 - 3. Participate in music activities that involve sharing, taking turns, and other ways of demonstrating good citizenship.

Aesthetics

- 3.15 The student will describe the relationships between music and other disciplines.

Grade Four

Performance and Production

- 4.1 The student will sing a repertoire of songs in tune with a clear tone quality.
 - 1. Sing with expression, using indicated dynamics and phrasing.
 - 2. Sing in a group performing songs in simple harmony.
- 4.2 The student will notate and perform rhythmic patterns that include sixteenth notes, single eighth notes, eighth rests, paired eighth notes, quarter notes, quarter rests, half notes, half rests, dotted half notes, whole notes, and whole rests, using body percussion, voice, pitched instruments, or non-pitched instruments.
- 4.3 The student will notate and perform melodies from the treble staff, using traditional notation.
 - 1. Identify melodic movement as step, leap, or repeat.
 - 2. Use voice or instruments.
- 4.4 The student will respond to music with movement.
 - 1. Perform choreographed and non-choreographed movements.
 - 2. Perform traditional folk dances.
 - 3. Use body percussion.
- 4.5 The student will perform in a two-part musical ensemble, using pitched and non-pitched instruments.
- 4.6 The student will play I, IV, and V (or V⁷) chords to accompany a three-chord melody.
- 4.7 The student will create music through a variety of experiences.
 - 1. Improvise simple melodic and rhythmic accompaniments.
 - 2. Create melodic or rhythmic motives to enhance literature, using a variety of sound sources, including technology.
 - 3. Create movement to illustrate meter and form.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

- 4.8 The student will identify rondo form.
- 4.9 The student will recognize dynamic markings and interpret them in performance.
- 4.10 The student will identify instruments from various music ensembles, including instruments from other cultures, using sight and sound.
- 4.11 The student will identify the function of the top and bottom numbers of a meter signature involving 2, 3, and 4 beats.
- 4.12 The student will distinguish between major and minor tonality.

- 4.13 The student will use music terminology to describe various styles of music.
1. Place musical examples into broad categories of style.
 2. Recognize a composer and a music composition from each of four different periods of music history.

Judgment and Criticism

- 4.14 The student will exhibit respect for the contributions of self and others in a music setting.
1. Contribute to a group effort of making music.
 2. Contribute to a group effort of listening to music.
 3. Participate in music activities that involve sharing, taking turns, and other ways of demonstrating good citizenship.

Aesthetics

- 4.15 The student will compare the relationships between music and other disciplines.

Grade Five

Performance and Production

- 5.1 The student will sing a repertoire of songs in tune with a clear tone quality.
 - 1. Demonstrate beginning choral behaviors and skills in group singing.
 - 2. Participate in group singing involving two-part or three-part harmony.
 - 3. Develop age-appropriate ability in singing skills.

- 5.2 The student will notate and perform rhythmic patterns that include sixteenth notes, a dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth note, single eighth notes, eighth rests, paired eighth notes, quarter notes, quarter rests, half notes, half rests, dotted half notes, whole notes, and whole rests, using body percussion, voice, pitched instruments, or non-pitched instruments.

- 5.3 The student will notate and perform melodies from the treble staff, using traditional notation.
 - 1. Use voice or instruments.
 - 2. Use computer technology.

- 5.4 The student will respond to music with movement.
 - 1. Perform choreographed and non-choreographed movements.
 - 2. Perform dances and games from various cultures, including traditional folk dances.
 - 3. Use body percussion.

- 5.5 The student will perform music of increasing difficulty in musical ensembles, using pitched and rhythm instruments.

- 5.6 The student will create music through a variety of experiences.
 - 1. Improvise melodies and rhythms of increasing complexity.
 - 2. Create movement to illustrate meter and form.
 - 3. Compose short melodic or rhythmic phrases within specified guidelines.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

- 5.7 The student will identify theme and variations form.

- 5.8 The student will use music terminology to describe music performances and compositions.

- 5.9 The student will identify instruments from various music ensembles, including instruments from other cultures, using sight and sound.

- 5.10 The student will identify the functions of the top and bottom numbers of meter signatures in duple and triple meters.

- 5.11 The student will place music examples into broad categories of style.
 - 1. Use music terminology to compare and contrast a variety of music styles.
 - 2. Explore how vocal style contributes to the quality and enjoyment of musical selections.
 - 3. Explore and perform a variety of music styles.
 - 4. Identify notable characteristics of the music of world cultures.
 - 5. Identify a composer and one musical composition from each of four different periods of music history.

Judgment and Criticism

- 5.12 The student will exhibit respect for the contributions of self and others in a music setting.
1. Contribute to a group effort of making music.
 2. Contribute to a group effort of listening to music.
 3. Participate in music activities that involve sharing, taking turns, and other ways of demonstrating good citizenship.

Aesthetics

- 5.13 The student will compare and contrast the relationships between music and other disciplines.

Grades Six–Eight General Music

The middle school general music standards involve students in a higher level of music concepts and the further development of music skills through singing, playing instruments, moving, and listening. The standards encourage the reading of music notation and the assimilation of previous music study toward understanding the mechanics of a music score. Students will explore the creative and expressive aspects of music through composing and arranging. Evaluation of music performances will allow students opportunities to apply music knowledge and experiences to new situations.

Performance and Production

- MS.1 The student will read and perform rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic patterns.
- MS.2 The student will sing and play music written in two or more parts.
- MS.3 The student will participate in a variety of movement activities in the study of music.
 - 1. Demonstrate a variety of styles, periods, and forms through structured and unstructured dance and movement.
 - 2. Demonstrate elements of music, using body percussion and other physical responses.
- MS.4 The student will create music through a variety of experiences.
 - 1. Discuss how a composer communicates ideas by manipulating elements of music.
 - 2. Improvise melodies, rhythms, and harmonies.
 - 3. Compose melodies, rhythms, and harmonies.
 - 4. Create arrangements of known melodies, using traditional or nontraditional sound sources, including computer-related technology.

Cultural Context and Music Theory

- MS.5 The student will investigate musical sounds, forms, styles, and genres through listening, discussing, writing, and performing.
- MS.6 The student will investigate the role of music in society.
 - 1. Identify career pathways in music.
 - 2. Identify the influence of daily music experience in one's personal life.

Judgment and Criticism

- MS.7 The student will describe performances, live or recorded, using music terminology.
 - 1. Develop criteria for evaluating music performances.
 - 2. Identify music of diverse cultures, including representative composers.
 - 3. Identify instruments, voice classifications (soprano, alto, tenor, bass), and a variety of performing ensembles aurally and visually.
 - 4. Use traditional and nontraditional sound sources.
- MS.8 The student will demonstrate appropriate performance behavior as a participant and/or listener.
 - 1. Exhibit respect for the contributions of self and others within a music setting.
 - 2. Demonstrate appropriate audience behavior for the context and style of music performed.

Aesthetics

MS.9 The student will identify and compare the relationships between music and other disciplines.