

MENC Music Content and Performance Standards

JK

Content Standards:

1. Singing and playing instruments

- Children use their voices expressively as they speak, chant, and sing
- Children sing a variety of simple songs in various keys, meters, and genres, alone and with a group, becoming increasingly accurate in rhythm and pitch
- Children experiment with a variety of instruments and other sound sources
- Children play simple melodies and accompaniments on instruments

2. Creating music

- Children improvise songs to accompany their play activities
- Children improvise instrumental accompaniments to songs, recorded selections, stories, and poems
- Children create short pieces of music, using voices, instruments, and other sound sources
- Children invent and use original graphic or symbolic systems to represent vocal and instrumental sounds and musical ideas

3. Responding to music

- Children identify the sources of a wide variety of sounds
- Children respond through movement to music of various tempos, meters, dynamics, modes, genres, and styles to express what they hear and feel in works of music
- Children participate freely in music activities

4. Understanding music

- Children use their own vocabulary and standard music vocabulary to describe voices, instruments, music notation, and music of various genres, styles, and periods from diverse cultures
- Children sing, play instruments, move, or verbalize to demonstrate awareness of the elements of music and changes in their usage
- Children demonstrate an awareness of music as a part of daily life

Grades K-4

Content Standards:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

- Students sing independently, on pitch and in rhythm, with appropriate timbre, diction, and posture, and maintain a steady tempo
- Students sing expressively, with appropriate dynamics, phrasing, and interpretation
- Students sing from memory a varied repertoire of songs representing genres and styles from diverse cultures
- Students sing ostinatos, partner songs, and rounds
- Students sing in groups, blending vocal timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor

2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

- Students perform on pitch, in rhythm, with appropriate dynamics and timbre, and maintain a steady tempo
- Students perform easy rhythmic, melodic, and chordal patterns accurately and independently on rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic classroom instruments
- Students perform expressively a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres and styles
- Students echo short rhythms and melodic patterns
- Students perform in groups, blending instrumental timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor
- Students perform independent instrumental parts (e.g., simple rhythmic or melodic ostinatos, contrasting rhythmic lines, harmonic progressions, and chords) while other students sing or play contrasting parts

3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

- Students improvise "answers" in the same style to given rhythmic and melodic phrases
- Students improvise simple rhythmic and melodic ostinato accompaniments
- Students improvise simple rhythmic variations and simple melodic embellishments on familiar melodies
- Students improvise short songs and instrumental pieces, using a variety of sound sources, including traditional sounds (e.g., voices, instruments), non-traditional sounds available in the classroom (e.g., paper tearing, pencil tapping), body sounds (e.g., hands clapping, fingers snapping), and sounds produced by electronic means (e.g., personal computers and basic MIDI devices, including keyboards, sequencers, synthesizers, and drum machines)

4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

- Students create and arrange music to accompany readings or dramatizations

- Students create and arrange short songs and instrumental pieces within specified guidelines (e.g., a particular style, form, instrumentation, compositional technique)
- Students use a variety of sound sources when composing

5. Reading and notating music

- Students read whole, half, dotted half, quarter, and eighth notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 meter signatures
- Students use a system (that is, syllables, numbers, or letters) to read simple pitch notation in the treble clef in major keys
- Students identify symbols and traditional terms referring to dynamics, tempo, and articulation and interpret them correctly when performing
- Students use standard symbols to notate meter, rhythm, pitch, and dynamics in simple patterns presented by the teacher

6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

- Students identify simple music forms when presented aurally
- Students demonstrate perceptual skills by moving, by answering questions about, and by describing aural examples of music of various styles representing diverse cultures
- Students use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances
- Students identify the sounds of a variety of instruments, including many orchestra and band instruments, and instruments from various cultures, as well as children's voices and male and female adult voices
- Students respond through purposeful movement (e.g., swaying, skipping, dramatic play) to selected prominent music characteristics or to specific music events (e.g., meter changes, dynamic changes, same/different sections) while listening to music

7. Evaluating music and music performances

- Students devise criteria for evaluating performances and compositions
- Students explain, using appropriate music terminology, their personal preferences for specific musical works and styles

8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

- Students identify similarities and differences in the meanings of common terms (e.g., form, line, contrast) used in the various arts
- Students identify ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music

9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

- Students identify by genre or style aural examples of music from various historical periods and cultures
- Students describe in simple terms how elements of music are used in music examples from various cultures of the world
- Students identify various uses of music in their daily experiences and describe characteristics that make certain music suitable for each use
- Students identify and describe roles of musicians (e.g., orchestra conductor, folksinger, church organist) in various music settings and cultures
- Students demonstrate audience behavior appropriate for the context and style of music performed

Grades 5-8

Content Standards:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

- Students sing accurately and with good breath control throughout their singing ranges, alone and in small and large ensembles
- Students sing with expression and technical accuracy a repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 2, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory
- Students sing music representing diverse genres and cultures, with expression appropriate for the work being performed
- Students sing music written in two and three parts
- Students who participate in a choral ensemble sing with expression and technical accuracy a varied repertoire of vocal literature with a level of difficulty of 3, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some songs performed from memory

2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

- Students perform on at least one instrument (e.g., band or orchestra instrument, keyboard instrument, fretted instrument, electronic instrument) accurately and independently, alone and in small and large ensembles, with good posture, good playing position, and good breath, bow, or stick control
- Students perform with expression and technical accuracy on at least one string, wind, percussion, or classroom instrument a repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 2, on a scale of 1 to 6
- Students perform music representing diverse genres and cultures, with expression appropriate for the work being performed
- Students play by ear simple melodies on a melodic instrument and simple accompaniments on a harmonic instrument
- Students who participate in an instrumental ensemble or class perform with expression and technical accuracy a varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 3, on a scale of 1 to 6, including some solos performed from memory

3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

- Students improvise simple harmonic accompaniments
- Students improvise melodic embellishments and simple rhythmic and melodic variations on given pentatonic melodies and melodies in major keys
- Students improvise short melodies, unaccompanied and over given rhythmic accompaniments, each in a consistent style, meter, and tonality

4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

- Students compose short pieces within specified guidelines (e.g., a particular style, form, instrumentation, compositional technique), demonstrating how the elements of music are used to achieve unity and variety, tension and release, and balance
- Students arrange simple pieces for voices or instruments other than those for which the pieces were written
- Students use a variety of traditional and non-traditional sound sources and electronic media when composing and arranging

5. Reading and notating music

- Students read whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth, and dotted notes and rests in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, 3/8, and alla breve meter signatures
- Students read at sight simple melodies in both the treble and bass clefs
- Students identify and define standard notation symbols for pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, articulation, and expression
- Students use standard notation to record their musical ideas and the musical ideas of others
- Students who participate in a choral or instrumental ensemble or class sight read, accurately and expressively, music with a level of difficulty of 2, on a scale of 1 to 6

6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

- Students describe specific music events (e.g., entry of oboe, change of meter, return of refrain) in a given aural example, using appropriate terminology
- Students analyze the uses of elements of music in aural examples representing diverse genres and cultures
- Students demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of meter, rhythm, tonality, intervals, chords, and harmonic progressions in their analyses of music

7. Evaluating music and music performances

- Students develop criteria for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of music performances and compositions and apply the criteria in their personal listening and performing
- Students evaluate the quality and effectiveness of their own and others' performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations by applying specific criteria appropriate for the style of the music and offer constructive suggestions for improvement

8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

- Students compare in two or more arts how the characteristic materials of each art (that is, sound in music, visual stimuli in visual arts, movement in dance, human interrelationships in theatre) can be used to transform similar events, scenes, emotions, or ideas into works of art
- Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music (e.g., language arts: issues to be considered in setting texts to music; mathematics: frequency ratios of intervals; sciences: the human hearing process and hazards to hearing; social studies: historical and social events and movements chronicled in or influenced by musical works)

9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture

- Students describe distinguishing characteristics of representative music genres and styles from a variety of cultures
- Students classify by genre and style (and, if applicable, by historical period, composer, and title) a varied body of exemplary (that is, high-quality and characteristic) musical works and explain the characteristics that cause each work to be considered exemplary
- Students compare, in several cultures of the world, functions music serves, roles of musicians (e.g., lead guitarist in a rock band, composer of jingles for commercials, singer in Peking opera), and conditions under which music is typically performed