

Advanced Chorus

Central High School East/West (050975)

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Basic Course Information

Title:	Advanced Chorus
Transcript abbreviations:	Chamber Choir
Length of course:	Full Year
Subject area:	Visual & Performing Arts ("f") / Music
Integrated (Academics / CTE)?	No
Grade levels:	10th, 11th, 12th
UC honors designation?	No
Course learning environment:	Classroom Based

Course Description

Course overview:

Advanced Chorus is a year-long course open to 10th - 12th grade students with an interest in ensemble singing, to positively engage in the joy of singing while expanding individual vocal technique and music theory knowledge. Students should have successfully completed one year of Chorus or show the equivalent level of vocal ability and basic music theory proficiency as determined by the director. This is a performance-based course designed to build vocal and choral skills, musicianship, creativity, confidence, aesthetic appreciation, teamwork, discipline, leadership and perseverance through the rehearsal process as well as performance. The content focus is vocal techniques, choral techniques, music theory/reading, aesthetic valuing, and sight-singing in addition to the historical, cultural, cross-curricular, and vocational aspects of choral music. Repertoire studied will span multiple historical periods, genres, cultures, and languages. Advanced Chorus may be repeated for three years and is offered in vocal configurations of mixed, and treble voices. While the specific repertoire for each choir is unique to the vocal ranges and level of experience implicit in each designation, the development of musicianship skills, understanding and extending the vocal range, and developing choral technique is accomplished through initial mastery of the same set of standards and objectives. Students will participate in a minimum of four evening concerts.

Prerequisites:

Concert Choir (Required)
 Treble Choir (Required)
 Bass Choir (Required)

Co-requisites:

None

Course content:

Unit 1: Music Theory/Score Reading

Concepts will be taught as discovered in the written score for concert literature. Concepts to include but not limited to the following: note names, rhythmic values and relationships, beat, time signature, key signature, standard music notation, clefs, major and minor scales, scale degrees, harmonic relationships, unison, dynamic markings, tempo markings, directional markings, and accidentals. As a result students will be able to read a choral score of up to 4 staves while observing how their part relates to the others as well as be able to explain how the elements are used across various musical styles, genres, and cultures.

Assessment: Assessment will be via written tests following each concert cycle. Following each major concert, students will take a written repertoire reading exam which asks specific questions that can be answered via the choral octavo to assess their ability to read all musical elements contained within the written notation of music.

Standards addressed:

1.1 Read a vocal score of up to four staves and explain how the elements of music are used.

Unit 2: Sight Singing and Rhythm Performance

Concepts and skills will be taught sequentially using Patti DeWitt's Sight Singing Series and Patterns of Sound. Moveable Do will be used to develop a sense of pitch in all keys. Compositions will be created using solfège syllables. A kinesthetic understanding of pitch will be developed through the use of Curwen hand signs. Students will use their knowledge of solfège and rhythm patterns to notate simple melodies as performed by the instructor as well as create their own exercises for their peers to perform.

Assessment: Performance assessment twice per semester. Students will sing individually into a recording device a major scale and a randomly selected sight singing exercise. The grade will be determined by a rubric developed for each assessment containing such elements as steady beat, pitch, intonation, rhythmic accuracy, and tone.

Standards addressed:

- 1.2 Transcribe simple songs when presented aurally into melodic and rhythmic notation (level of difficulty: 1 on a scale of 1-6).
- 1.3 Sight-read music accurately and expressively (level of difficulty: 3 on a scale of 1-6).
- 2.6 Compose music, using musical elements for expressive effect.

Unit 3: Vocal and choral skills

Concepts taught will include but not be limited to the following: breath flow, stagger breathing, tonal onset, tone quality, blend, balance, vowel formation, posture, facial expression, dynamics, phrasing, articulation, diction, pronunciation for common choral languages (i.e. Latin, Italian, Spanish, and German), round, harmony, resonance, register, intonation, and diphthongs. Students will also learn teamwork and leadership skills throughout our daily rehearsals as well as the importance of their individual contribution to the overall success (or failure) of the larger ensemble and how their actions impact others. Students will learn perseverance as they must often fail before they succeed at new physical skills but that we will do this together with support from one another.

Assessment: Students will individually sing their part into a recording device while singing in both large and small groups to determine ability to accurately perform one's part within 2, 3, and 4-part choral music. Grade will be determined by a rubric developed for each performance consisting of but not limited to the following factors: phrasing, pitch/part, rhythmic accuracy, intonation, posture, tone, vocal technique, memorization, and expressive interpretation. Written exams will also be given which cover specific vocabulary as related to vocal and choral skill.

Standards addressed:

- 2.1 Sing a repertoire of vocal literature representing various genres, styles, and cultures with expression, technical accuracy, tone quality, vowel shape, and articulation written and memorized, by oneself and in ensembles (level of difficulty: 4 on a scale of 1-6).
- 2.2 Sing music written in three or four parts with and without accompaniment.
- 2.3 Sing in small ensembles, with one performer for each part.
- 3.4 Perform music from various cultures and time periods.

Unit 4: Cultural and Historical Significance, Cross-Curricular and Career Connections

As each set of concert literature is determined, genres, cultures, and time periods will be defined and the musical concepts and elements unique to their choral output will be identified. Students will rehearse and perform music from a variety of periods, cultures, and styles including a cappella as well as accompanied pieces. Genres will include but not be limited to folk music, secular, sacred, pop, musical theater, African American Spiritual, Gospel, patriotic, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Contemporary, and opera. Students will also listen to recordings and read articles about the various genres, cultures, and historical periods as related to their concert literature.

Assessment: Students will identify unknown audio examples of genres, cultures, and historical periods similar to those studied through the concert preparation cycle.

Standards addressed:

- 1.4 Analyze and describe the use of musical elements and expressive devices (e.g., articulation, dynamic markings) in aural examples in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.
- 1.5 Identify and explain a variety of compositional devices and techniques used to provide unity, variety, tension, and release in aural examples.
- 1.6 Analyze the use of form in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.
- 3.3 Describe the differences between styles in traditional folk genres within the United States.
- 3.5 Classify, by genre or style and historical period or culture, unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music and explain the reasoning for the classification.
- 4.3 Explain how people in a particular culture use and respond to specific musical works from that culture.
- 4.4 Describe the means used to create images or evoke feelings and emotions in musical works from various cultures.

Unit 5: Aesthetic Valuing

Listening, analyzing, and responding to artistic intent. Students will assess two performances of the same work, using literature being studied in class if possible, comparing and contrasting the two. Using a rubric developed within a small group, students will assess a performance based upon the rubric criteria. Students will use similar rubrics to assess one another in small group performances prior to concert. They will use similar rubrics to assess themselves through a videotaped performance. Students will also listen to various recordings throughout the year to fine tune their ability to hear and identify specific musical elements and genres as well as vocal and choral qualities of sound. Students will respond in writing to these recordings as well as via discussions in small and large group settings.

Assessment: Chorus note book; written assessments

Standards addressed:

4.1 Develop specific criteria for making informed critical evaluations of the quality and effectiveness of performances, compositions, arrangements, and improvisations and apply those criteria in personal participation in music.

4.2 Evaluate a performance, composition, arrangement, or improvisation by comparing each with an exemplary model.

Unit 6: Team Building and Leadership

Students' ability to contribute individually to the larger ensemble will be an ongoing focus during rehearsal. Developing a sense of team as well as leadership within that team is essential to the performing success of the ensemble. The art of singing requires one to take tremendous risks without fear of critical judgment from one's peers. Creating a safe environment is therefore first and foremost. Once this environment has been established, students will be encouraged and challenged to develop leadership within small and large groups through various team building activities. Students will create and lead warm-ups in a small group. Students will write concert and song introductions to be auditioned for inclusion on culminating concerts. Students will work in voice part assignments without the leadership of the teacher to learn small parts of their choral scores.

Assessment: Instructor observation – this will include assessment of class and concert contribution. We will also employ self and peer evaluations of contribution throughout the concert preparation cycle to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Recordings and videotapes of performances will also be used for critique and analysis of students' skill and progress.

Course Materials

Manuals

Title	Author	Publisher	Edition	Website	Read in entirety
Sing Legato	Kenneth Jennings	Neil A. Kjos Music Company	1982	[empty]	No
Vaccai Practical Method of Italian Singing	Nicola Vaccai	G. Schirmer	1975	[empty]	No

Other

Title	Authors	Date	Course material type	Website
Published choral octavos in a variety of voicings	[empty]	[empty]	Music score	[empty]
A large body of CDs and digital music files	[empty]	[empty]	Audio recordings	[empty]

Additional Information

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