

HMS Music Course Descriptions

Students participate in music classes once within the 6 day cycle for the entire year. Classes emphasize the development of good singing and rhythmic skills. Singing activities include learning to sing with a good sense of pitch and with a pleasant sound. Rhythmic activities are designed to help form a solid understanding of beat and rhythm, and involve movement, clapping, tapping, dancing and playing percussion and “barred” instruments (xylophones). The barred and percussion instruments are played both to accompany children’s singing and independently in the playing of instrumental music from the Orff Schulwerk Music for Children volumes and a variety of other sources from folk music traditions. Directed listening units, presented at each grade level, provide students with opportunities to investigate such musical elements as form, theme and variation, style and timbre.

Music 4

Students in fourth grade regularly discuss “The Composer of Note.” In each listening unit, students listen analytically and discuss recordings of works featuring various composers. Activities, including creative movement, singing and playing instruments expand on recorded materials and reinforce the decoding of printed music.

Music 5

Students in Grade 5 regularly discuss “The Featured Musician(s).” Students listen analytically and discuss audio and video recordings of works featuring performers. Creative movement, singing and playing instruments expand on recorded materials and reinforce the decoding of printed music.

Music 6

In Grade 6, listening units and activities center around “We’ve got Style Units.” In each of the listening units, students listen analytically and discuss recordings of works featuring various musical styles including symphonies, ballets, operas, musicals and many others. Activities, including creative movement, singing and playing instruments expand on recorded materials and reinforce the decoding of printed music.

Music 7

Students in Grade 7 explore the oral and aural traditions of folk music and engage in a comparative study of similar compositions. Included beneath the umbrella of folk music: ballads, work songs, sea shanties, spirituals and ethnic music are examined in depth. Students listen to and critique recordings, sing, play instruments and engage in creative movement. In each of the listening units, students listen analytically and discuss recordings of works featuring various examples of folk music. Activities, including creative movement, singing and playing instruments, expand on recorded materials and reinforce the decoding of printed music.

Music 8

Students in grade 8 follow the paths of the early European explorers on a journey from 15th century Europe to 20th century America by way of the Caribbean and Africa. Students listen to and play arrangements for classroom instruments from the Medieval, Renaissance and Classical Periods, and discover how Island and African music evolved into American Jazz. Included in our study is an extensive discussion and film documenting the life and works of Mozart and the Wynton Marsalis Jazz for Young People Curriculum. Students listen to and critique recordings, sing, play instruments and

engage in creative movement. In each of the listening units, students listen analytically and discuss recordings of works featuring various examples of music each of from historical musical periods. Activities, including creative movement, singing and playing instruments expand on recorded materials and reinforce the decoding of printed music.