



Louis Armstrong

Music

Teacher Guide



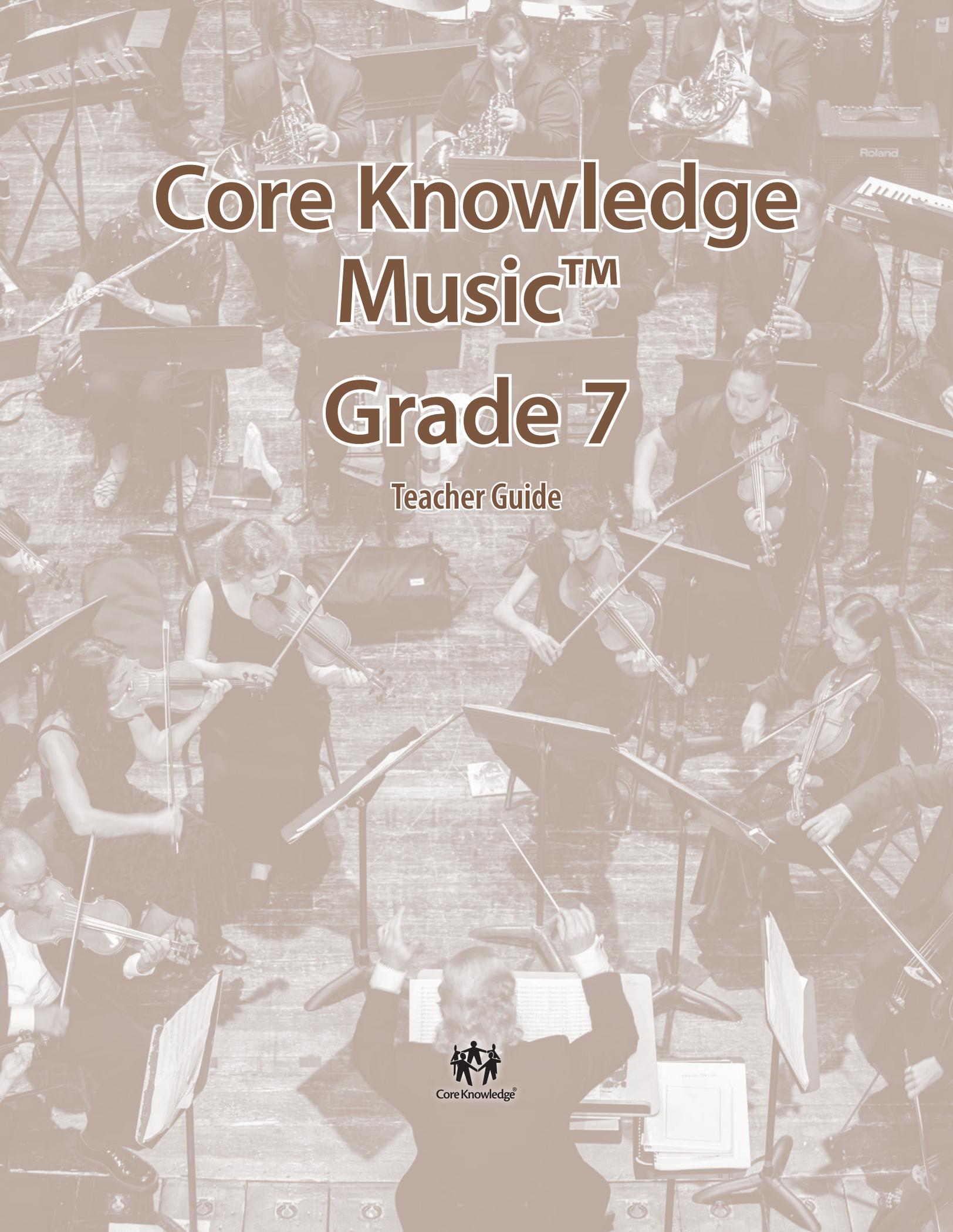
Tuba



Musical notes



Student demonstrating vocal range



Core Knowledge Music™ Grade 7

Teacher Guide



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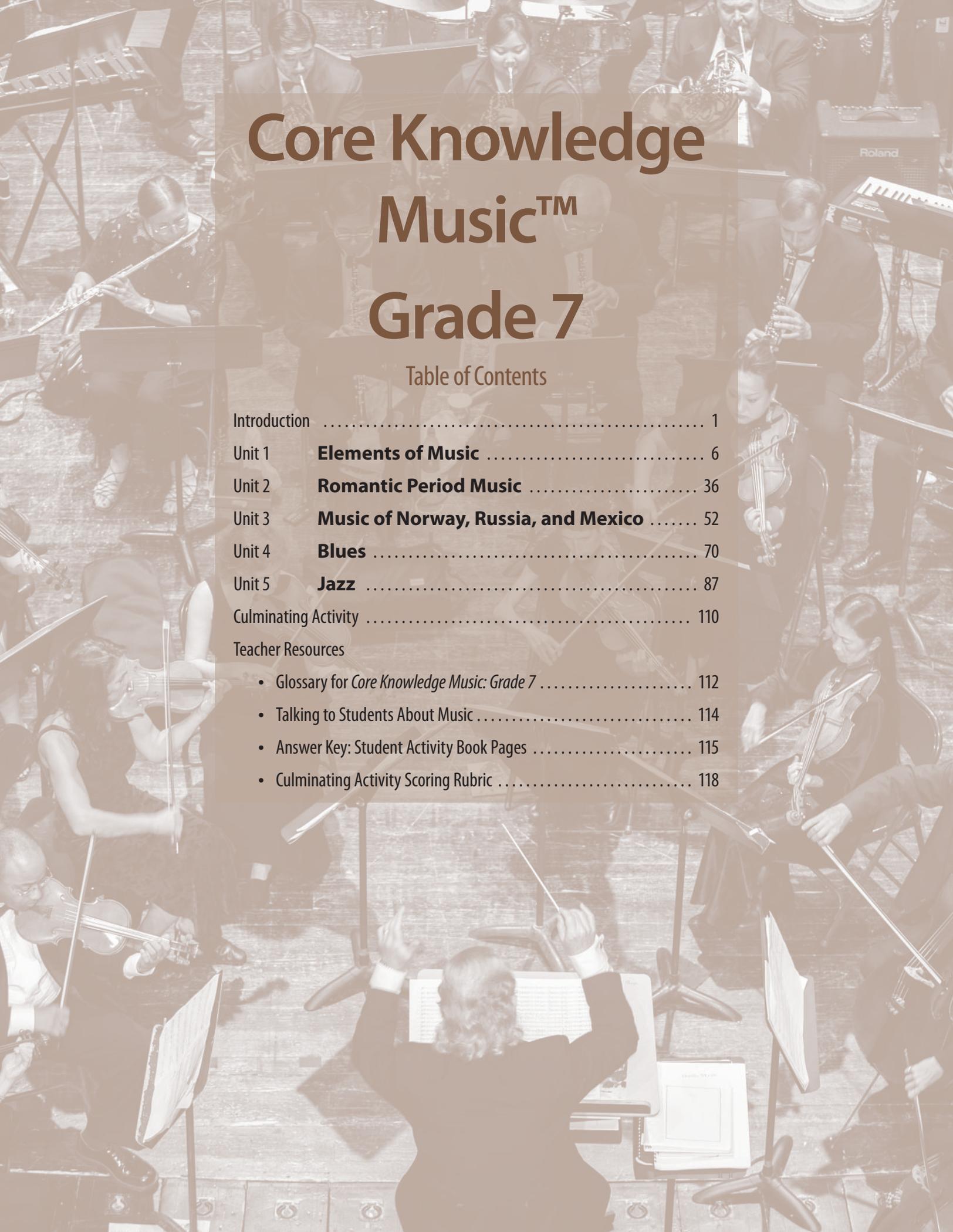
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Core Knowledge Music™ Grade 7

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Core Knowledge Music™ Grade 7
Teacher Guide

Introduction

Grade 7 Core Knowledge Music

This introduction provides the background information needed to teach the Grade 7 Core Knowledge Music (CKMusic) program. Within, you will find guidance on how to use the program and its components, Pacing Guides and Core Vocabulary, and directions on how to make connections to other elements of the Core Knowledge Curriculum materials to enrich, enliven, and deepen student understanding of and appreciation for music. Of note are the connections between CKMusic and Core Knowledge Visual Arts (CKVA). While each of these programs may be used independently, the content in each program has been intentionally designed to complement the other. Use of both sets of materials may enhance student understanding and allow for greater depth of knowledge.

The CKMusic materials are aligned to the grade-level music topics in the *2023 Core Knowledge Sequence*. These materials have also been informed by the National Core Arts Standards, available for download at nationalartsstandards.org.

Program Components

In Grade 7, the CKMusic program consists of the following components, designed to be used together:

- CKMusic Teacher Guide
- CKMusic Student Activity Book
- CKMusic Playlist on Spotify
- CKMusic Slide Deck
- CKMusic Online Resource Document

The **Teacher Guide** is divided into units, consisting of individual lessons that provide background information, instructional guidelines and notes, and guidance for student activities. Refer to individual Teacher Guide units for lesson plans and guidance.

The **Student Activity Book** is a consumable workbook used by students to complete activities as directed in the Teacher Guide. Note that the Student Activity Book cannot be used without the accompanying directions in the Teacher Guide. These resources are indicated throughout the Teacher Guide by the icon .

The **Playlist** consists of specific music selections on Spotify for students to listen and respond to. These selections include the instrumental music and songs mentioned in the *2023 Core Knowledge Sequence*.

TEACHER NOTE: There are two versions of Spotify available online. One is available at no cost and has occasional commercial interruptions. The premium version is available for a fee and is commercial-free.

You can access the Playlist through the Online Resource Document. The Teacher Guide will prompt you, lesson by lesson, as to which tracks to play and when. Listening and responding to music together is a powerful learning tool that will enable you and your students to listen,

explore, discuss, and practice the elements of music, as well as learn about musical forms and styles, instrumentation, and so on. These resources are indicated throughout the Teacher Guide by the icon .

Spotify Playlist Track List

CKMusic Grade 7 Music Selections

Playlist Track Number	Title of Work
1	Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, <i>Ouverture solennelle 1812 Overture</i> , op. 49
2	George Gershwin, <i>Rhapsody in Blue</i>
3–5	Manuel Ponce Track 3: “Estrellita” (voice and piano) Track 4: “Estrellita” (arranged for guitar) Track 5: “Estrellita” (arranged for violin and piano)
6	Ella Fitzgerald, “It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing)”
7	Elmore James, “Dust My Broom”
8	Franz Liszt, Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp Minor
9	Richard Wagner, <i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i> , “Overture”
10–13	Antonín Dvořák, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor (“From the New World”), op. 95 Track 10: No. 1, “Adagio – Allegro molto” Track 11: No. 2, “Largo” Track 12: No. 3, “Molto vivace” Track 13: No. 4, “Allegro con fuoco”
14	Johannes Brahms, Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, op. 68, no. 4, “Adagio – Più andante – Allegro non troppo, ma con brio – Più allegro”
15–19	Hector Berlioz, <i>Symphonie fantastique</i> , op. 14 Track 15: No. 1, “Reveries: Passions” Track 16: No. 2, “A Ball” Track 17: No. 3, “Scene in the Country” Track 18: No. 4, “March to the Scaffold” Track 19: No. 5, “Dream of the Witches’ Sabbath”
20–27	Edvard Grieg, <i>Peer Gynt Suites</i> Track 20: Suite No. 1, op. 46, no. 1, “Morning Mood” Track 21: Suite No. 1, op. 46, no. 2, “The Death of Aase” Track 22: Suite No. 1, op. 46, no. 3, “Anitra’s Dance” Track 23: Suite No. 1, op. 46, no. 4, “In the Hall of the Mountain King” Track 24: Suite No. 2, op. 55, no. 1, “Abduction of the Bride and Ingrid’s Lament” Track 25: Suite No. 2, op. 55, no. 2, “Arabian Dance” Track 26: Suite No. 2, op. 55, no. 3, “Peer Gynt’s Homecoming” Track 27: Suite No. 2, op. 55, no. 4, “Solvejg’s Song”
28	Lead Belly, “Midnight Special”
29	Bessie Smith, “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out”
30	Robert Johnson, “Cross Road Blues”
31	Mary Lou Williams, “Roll ‘Em”
32–33	Scott Joplin Track 32: “Maple Leaf Rag” (arranged for band) Track 33: “Maple Leaf Rag”

34	Track 34: "The Entertainer"
35	Louis Armstrong, "Potato Head Blues"
36	Louis Armstrong, "West End Blues"
37	Ella Fitzgerald, "Take the 'A' Train"
38	Duke Ellington, "Take the 'A' Train"
39	Duke Ellington, "Caravan"
40	Django Reinhardt, "Nuages"
41	Miles Davis, "So What"
42	George Frideric Handel, <i>Messiah</i> , "Hallelujah"

The **Slide Deck** consists of PowerPoint slides illustrating musical concepts, lyrics, and notation for you to display to the class. The Teacher Guide will prompt you, lesson by lesson, as to which slides to display and when. The slides will be a powerful learning tool, enabling you and your students to explore the elements of music together. These resources are indicated throughout the Teacher Guide by the icon .

The **Online Resource Document** provides links to other instructional and professional learning resources accessible online. These resources include, but are not limited to, videos, recordings, and other web resources that support the instruction in this Teacher Guide. These resources are indicated throughout the Teacher Guide by the icon .

Materials Needed in Each Unit

The individual materials, beyond the Teacher Guide, Playlist, and Student Activity Book, used in each lesson are clearly indicated at the beginning of each lesson.

Teachers may find the listing below of materials used in each unit helpful in planning and securing the necessary materials in advance.

Unit 1 Elements of Music

instruments (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)
 note cards
 pencils
 Optional: laptops or computer stations

Unit 2 Romantic Period Music

piano, keyboard, guitar, or similar
 whiteboard and dry erase-marker

Unit 3 Music of Norway, Russia, and Mexico

whiteboard and dry-erase marker

Unit 4 Blues

instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)
 musical instruments for classroom jam session (harmonica, drums, guitar, piano, etc.)
 pencils
 whiteboard and dry-erase marker
 Optional: recording and playback technology

Unit 5 Jazz

pencils
 whiteboard and dry erase-marker

Culminating Activity

instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)
 pencils
 whiteboard and dry erase-marker

Icons in the Teacher Guide

The following icons are used in the Teacher Guide to draw instructors' attention to different types of pages or to places in the lesson where a supporting component should be used:



Online Resource Document



Elements of Music



Slide Deck



Student Activity Book



Time Period Reference



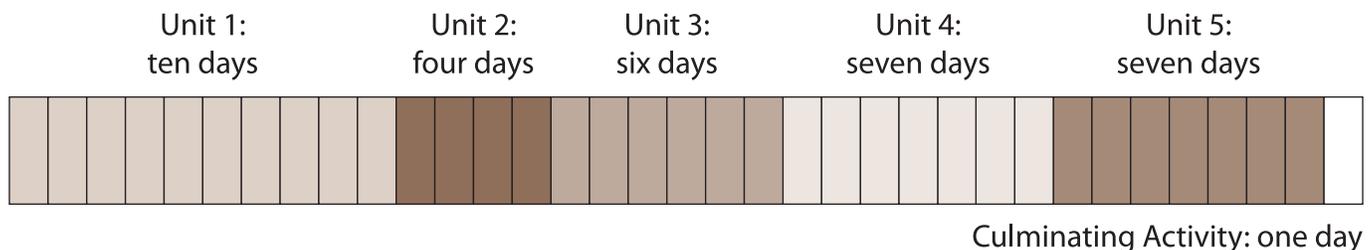
Playlist

Pacing Guide

Each unit of the Teacher Guide includes a Pacing Guide. This Pacing Guide is presented to help you plan your lessons and allocate a suitable amount of instructional time to each topic. The Pacing Guides also include several Looking Back features, each taking up to half a class day, that can be used for review and activities. The Teacher Guide ends with a Culminating Activity.

Over the course of the Grade 7 year, thirty-five class days are allocated for music, each with forty-five minutes of possible instruction time for the full-year program. Teachers may also choose to break the forty-five-minute lessons into smaller chunks of instruction as they deem appropriate.

There are a total of twenty-two lessons in Grade 7, divided into five units. While each unit has its own Pacing Guide, we have provided a combined Pacing Guide for the whole year below:



Cross-Curricular Connections

Music is strongly related to other subjects students will encounter as part of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. Teachers are encouraged always to look for ways to engage students in appreciating music's place in the wider picture of human activity. The introduction to each unit includes a chart of cross-curricular connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. Wherever possible, connections are noted to the following:

- CK History and Geography (CKHG)
- CK Science (CKSci)
- CK Language Arts (CKLA)
- CK Visual Arts (CKVA)
- CK Math (CKMath)

Where a connection exists, it will be noted in the chart as a reference to a named unit, with a lesson or chapter reference if applicable, to enable you to quickly and easily find the referenced material.

Core Vocabulary

Core Vocabulary, identified throughout the Teacher Guide, is words that are important for students to know and understand and for teachers to use when teaching the content. An understanding of the vocabulary of music is critical for student success in understanding, interpreting, and expressing themselves. Definitions for these terms are provided, and teachers are encouraged to take time to reinforce with students the meaning and use of these words. Core Vocabulary is shown in **bold** the first time it appears within lesson instruction.

The Core Vocabulary words, by unit, are:

Unit	Core Vocabulary
1	accidental, alto, <i>andante</i> , bar line, baritone, bass, bass clef, brass, chord, <i>crescendo</i> , <i>decrescendo</i> , dominant, dotted note, double bar line, flat, <i>grave</i> , interval, <i>largo</i> , measure, mezzo-soprano, middle C, natural, octave, percussion, <i>prestissimo</i> , <i>presto</i> , repeat, sharp, soprano, strings, subdominant, tenor, tie, tonic, treble clef, unison, woodwinds
2	idée fixe, overture
3	accelerating, acoustic, Indigenous music, tango
4	blue note, pentatonic scale
5	improvisation, syncopation

The definitions for Core Vocabulary words are included in the unit in which they are introduced.

Constructive Speaking and Listening

Constructive speaking and listening means that people engaged in conversation will share their own perspectives while also finding ways to understand each other. Students using CKMusic are encouraged to listen attentively, share their own opinions, and participate in discussions. Before teaching the lessons in this book, teachers are encouraged to establish some rules for speaking, listening, and reacting to the opinions of others in a respectful and constructive manner. When studying music, it is essential also to establish rules for listening, performing, and considering the performances of others. Tips for talking with students about music are included in the back of this book. Some additional resources to support listening and performing in the classroom and conducting discussions in a sensitive, safe, and respectful manner are provided in the Online Resource Document: <https://www.coreknowledge.org/music>

Elements of Music

Big Idea Students will work to expand their knowledge of musical notation and terms with the goal of achieving a holistic understanding of music.

Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Elements of Music* unit. In this unit, you will review basic elements of the orchestra as well as increase knowledge of notation.

This unit contains four lessons, split across ten class days. There will be a half-day Looking Back review on Day 6 and a unit assessment on Day 10. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for music. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1–2	Lesson 1 The Orchestra and Vocal Ranges
3–5	Lesson 2 Musical Notation

Day	Lesson
6–9	Lesson 3 Language of Music*
10	Lesson 4 Unit 1 Assessment

* Looking Back

What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

- The orchestra, families of instruments, and vocal parts and ranges
- Tempo terms including *grave*, *largo*, *andante*, *presto*, and *prestissimo*
- Various parts of pieces of music such as introduction, interlude, and coda
- Basic notation, note names, rests, and rhythmic values
- Dynamics terms including *piano*, *forte*, *mezzo piano*, *mezzo forte*, *pianissimo*, and *fortissimo*
- The time signatures 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, and 6/8

What Students Need to Learn

In this unit, students will:

- Review terms and concepts from previous learning;
- Expand their tempo and dynamics terminology;
- Explore intervals and creating harmony;

- Write music using accidentals (sharps, flats, and naturals);
- Explore concepts of harmony, such as tonic, subdominant, and dominant chords; and
- Listen to additional works of music by orchestral composers, including Tchaikovsky and Berlioz.

What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about notation and convention, study further the elements of music, and investigate more musical pieces.

Grade 8 Unit 1: *Elements of Music*

- Additional tempo terminology
- Articulations such as *staccato* and *legato*
- Additional types of bar lines

Vocabulary

accidental, n. a symbol that appears directly before a note and temporarily alters its pitch **(19)**

Example: The F note in this measure has a sharp accidental next to it.

alto, n. the lowest female voice part **(14)**

Example: Even though she is an alto, the part was written too low for her voice.

andante, adv. or adj. at a bright, walking pace **(29)**

Example: Listening to *andante* music is helpful for my morning walk.

bar line, n. the vertical line that denotes the end of a single measure of music **(21)**

Example: I played the music wrong because I misread the bar line.

baritone, n. the middle male voice part **(14)**

Example: He had a warm, rich voice, so he was made a baritone in the choir.

bass, n. the lowest male voice part **(14)**

Example: The bass part went so low I could not reach the notes.

bass clef, n. the F clef, used for notating lower-pitched instruments **(21)**

Example: The bass clef is also called the F clef.

brass, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes trumpet, trombone, French horn, and tuba; typically made of metal **(12)**

Example: The trumpet player in the brass section really had great tone.

chord, n. a combination of three or more notes sounded simultaneously **(25)**

Example: My hands were too small to reach all of the notes of the chord on the piano.

crescendo, n. a gradual increase in volume in a piece of music **(30)**

Example: The *crescendo* slowly rose in volume from *piano* to *fortissimo*.

decrescendo, n. a gradual decrease in volume in a piece of music **(30)**

Example: The music ended quietly with a long, soft *decrescendo*.

dominant, n. the fifth scale degree of a diatonic scale (or the chord built upon it) **(25)**

Example: The dominant almost always heads back to the tonic.

dotted note, n. a note with half of its rhythmic value added to it, indicated by a dot **(18)**

Example: The dotted note is three beats long.

double bar line, n. a type of bar line consisting of two lines, indicating the end to a specific section or the end of the piece **(21)**

Example: The short section of music ended with a double bar line.

flat, n. an accidental indicating to lower the note by a half step **(19)**

Example: The symbol for flat looks like a lowercase *b*.

grave, adv. or adj. very slow and solemn **(29)**

Example: The *grave* tempo made it hard for me to count beats accurately because it was played so slowly.

interval, n. the distance between any two notes **(25)**

Example: The large interval between the bottom note and the highest note made the piece hard for me to sing.

largo, adv. or adj. slow and stately **(29)**

Example: The king and his nobles made a grand procession as the musicians played a stately piece at a *largo* tempo.

measure, n. a small section of music that contains a specific number of beats, marked by vertical lines on a musical staff **(21)**

Example: There were three beats in each measure, as the piece was in $\frac{3}{4}$ time.

mezzo-soprano, n. the second-highest female voice part **(14)**

Example: The mezzo-soprano's part fit neatly between the alto and soprano.

middle C, n. the note near the middle of the piano keyboard **(21)**

Example: I sat at the center of the piano, in front of middle C.

natural, n. an accidental indicating to play the note without a sharp or flat **(19)**

Example: The piece was in a minor key, but the natural in the second measure made it sound major for a minute.

octave, n. the interval between two notes where the higher note has a frequency that is double that of the lower note, or where the highest and lowest notes have the same name but different pitches **(27)**

Example: The largest interval I can play on piano with one hand is one octave.

percussion, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes bass drum, snare drum, timpani, and cymbals; must be struck to make sound **(12)**

Example: The percussion instruments were entirely too loud.

prestissimo, adv. or adj. as fast as possible, exceeding 200 beats per minute **(29)**

Example: I was playing as fast as I could, but the conductor said it was still not quite *prestissimo*.

presto, adv. or adj. very fast (29)

Example: The *presto* tempo was a bit too much to keep up with.

repeat, n. a type of bar line consisting of two lines and two dots, indicating the section should be repeated (21)

Example: I played the repeat, but it didn't say how many times, so I kept going.

sharp, n. an accidental indicating to raise the note by a half step (19)

Example: The student said the sharp symbol looked like a hashtag.

soprano, n. the highest female voice part (14)

Example: A soprano's voice can have a very high upper range.

strings, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes violin, viola, cello, and bass; often made of wood and have four strings (12)

Example: The string section is at the front of the orchestra.

subdominant, n. the chord built on the fourth degree of a diatonic scale (25)

Example: The harmony moved to the subdominant before the dominant-tonic resolution.

tenor, n. the highest male voice part (14)

Example: The tenor's voice could be heard above the orchestra.

tie, n. a curved line connecting two notes of the same pitch, indicating they are to be played as one (18)

Example: The tie joined notes across four measures of music.

tonic, n. the first note (or scale degree) of a diatonic scale (like major or minor) (25)

Example: I expected the harmony to return to the tonic, but it didn't.

treble clef, n. the G clef, used for notating higher-pitched instruments (21)

Example: The treble clef symbol appeared at the beginning of each staff on the violin's sheet music.

unison, n. the state of two or more musical parts or voices performing the same pitch simultaneously (14)

Example: The whole class sang the song in unison.

woodwinds, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon; often made of metal or wood and have many keys (12)

Example: The passage written for woodwinds was incredibly delicate.

Cross-Curricular Connections

This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

CK Math
Grade 7 Unit 4: <i>Proportional Relationships and Percentages</i>

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resource Document.

Most Important Ideas

The most important ideas in Unit 1 are as follows:

- Notation includes rhythmic value, staff notation, and rests.
- Appropriate vocabulary can be applied to recorded orchestral music.
- Notation can indicate chords and harmony.
- Repeating measures are indicated with notations such as *D.C. al fine*, *D.S. al fine*, and *D.S. al segno*.
- Instruments with similar characteristics are grouped in families.

What Teachers Need to Know

Much of the *Elements of Music* unit is review and practice with orchestral and notation terms from instruction in previous grades of CKMusic. However, you will also expand upon some terms and skills. Students will begin to explore notating harmonies and working with chord progressions. They will also add to their knowledge of tempo and dynamics terms and begin working with accidentals.

Unit 1 Lesson 1

THE ORCHESTRA AND VOCAL RANGES

TIME: 2 DAYS

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will review the ranges of orchestral instruments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 1, <i>1812 Overture</i>• Slide Deck slide 1 and Student Activity Book page 2<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Orchestra Seating Positions• Student Activity Book page 3, Who Is Part of the Orchestra?• Note cards, each one with an instrument name (as a set, the note cards will represent an entire orchestra)• Pencils
DAY 2	Students will review the ranges of various voice parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 3, "Estrellita"• Track 6, "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)"• Track 7, "Dust My Broom"• Student Activity Book page 4, Vocal Voices• Pencils• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)

Lesson Objective

- Review orchestral and vocal ranges, with a focus on string, brass, woodwind, percussion, and various keyboard instruments.

What Students Have Learned

In Grade 6, students learned about instrument families and voice parts.

DAY 1: THE ORCHESTRA REVISITED

Introduce the lesson by discussing the orchestra. The orchestra is a staple of Western civilization and has undergone a great transformation over time. It has grown in size and added new instruments. Some orchestral works even include soloists or groups of vocalists. Today, some orchestral works include electronic and digital instruments. Ask students to identify orchestral instruments. You can choose to use visual images or play a piece of music and ask students what family each instrument belongs to.

Instrument Families of the Orchestra

Explain that the orchestra is divided into four primary families—**strings**, **brass**, **woodwinds**, and **percussion**. Occasionally, there will be the addition of keyboard instruments such as piano or celesta. Make a list of orchestral instruments organized by family. Explain what instruments belong to which families and what characteristics they share.

- Strings: have four strings and are primarily played with a bow; the backbone of the orchestra (examples: violin, viola, cello, bass)
- Brass: made of brass; usually use valves to change pitches (examples: trumpet, trombones, French horn, tuba)
- Woodwinds: diverse group; require air to make sound; may require mouthpieces (examples: piccolo, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon)
- Percussion: require a performer to strike the instrument with a stick or mallet or to shake, rattle, or slam instruments together (examples: timpani, snare drum, cymbals, bass drum)

Performers in the orchestra are seated according to what family their instruments belong to. Distribute one note card to each student. Have students sit together as they would in an orchestra.

TEACHER NOTE—If the class is small, change the activity so that students receive an instrument family instead of a specific instrument.

Music in This Lesson

1812 Overture, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky



1880, Russia



The *1812 Overture* provides a master class in orchestration due to its skillful use of orchestral part writing. It is most known for the notated “cannon” part during the finale.

Background for Teacher

Tchaikovsky was a prolific composer. His works are still widely enjoyed today, and his techniques are still used extensively by contemporary composers. This work celebrates Russia’s successful defense against Napoleon’s forces during the Napoleonic Wars.



Track 1

Play *1812 Overture*, track 1 of the Playlist. As students listen, instruct them to raise their hand or their note card when they think they hear their instrument in the orchestra. When they do not hear their instrument, their hand or note card should remain lowered. Act as the conductor, cueing in specific sections.

You can start the recording of the *1812 Overture* from the beginning.

- 00:00–01:30 string section only
- 01:31 enter woodwinds only with strings joining at 01:41 through 02:07

- 02:08 enter percussion and brass, along with strings and woodwinds
- 02:14 return to strings and woodwinds after a single percussion strike
- 02:58 enter increasing brass alongside strings and woodwinds
- 03:18 cue strong percussion hit and cue brass interlude
- 03:36 cue strong percussion strikes with brass and strings
- 03:42–04:06 string bass feature
- 04:07 cue high woodwind and brass with main theme
- 04:20 cue strings
- 05:06 string interlude
- 05:45 enter brass and percussion with no woodwinds until 06:51
- 07:04 cue strings, brass, and percussion, with woodwinds joining at 08:08
- 08:34 cue strings, flute, and percussion
- 09:24 enter strings, joined shortly by woodwinds and brass

Much of the following orchestration is a rapidly changing, dense mix of all four families of instruments, culminating in the well-known overture fanfare at 12:36. If you are still cueing sections through this time, be sure to cue percussion during the cannon fire section finale.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

Why are there long sections with a whole family of instruments not playing?

- o Artistic choices are made when composing. Sometimes one or more families of instruments are excluded due to range, timbre, or complexity.

Are there sections where only a single instrument is playing?

- o Occasionally, yes, but in this piece that would only apply to percussion.

Activity



Slide 1

Display slide 1, Orchestra Seating Positions, and invite students to open to the same image on page 2 in their Student Activity Books. Review the positions of each instrument and instrument family based on the color-coded system and labels. Then instruct students to complete the Who Is Part of the Orchestra? activity on page 3 in their Student Activity Books.



Pages 2–3

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing the placement of instruments in the orchestra. Ask students why the percussion instruments are so few and placed so far away. (*They are the*

loudest and do not need sections.) Conversely, strings have the weakest projection and need many more performers to match the volume of fewer brass and woodwind performers.

DAY 2: VOCAL RANGES

Introduce this part of the lesson by stating that just like in the orchestra, every voice in a choir has a part that belongs to a family of voices. Ask students to recall what their voice parts were in previous grades. Ask the following question: What has happened to your voice since then? (*Voices have matured, and some have lowered.*) Tell students that they will revisit the voice parts and review what each voice part can do.

Range of Voices

Every person has a limited voice range. Yes, people can practice expanding their range, but that range is generally limited. In a choir, voice parts are separated by each performer's ability to hit notes in a specific range. Voice parts are also traditionally divided by gender, as most male performers can achieve much lower notes while female performers can achieve higher notes.

While discussing the ranges and groupings of voice parts, explain that in a choir, each voice part serves a similar role to a family of orchestral instruments. Their performance is typically in **unison** but fits together with the entire choir like pieces of a puzzle or members of a sports team.

In a young children's choir, most voice parts are very high, as their voices have not reached maturity yet. In a middle school setting, students' voices are changing, and some may have even reached genuine bass or soprano territory.

Your Vocal Range

Divide students up into two groups, one made up of students with lower vocal ranges and one of students with higher vocal ranges. By the end of the activity, the hope is to have six groups of **soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, and bass** students—or to have as close to six as possible. Soprano is the highest singing voice, and bass is the lowest. Alto is lower than soprano but higher than tenor and bass. Tenor is lower than alto but higher than bass.

Lead the students in a vocal warm-up (such as reciting scales using a “La” syllable), with an instrument accompanying them. Next, tell students that you will move the pitches in the pattern higher by one half step, then demonstrate what this will sound like. Instruct students to sit down when they can no longer reach the notes being played. Then, move the pattern higher again by a half step. Continue until students are unable to reach the pitches. Repeat this entire activity by returning to the starting pitch, but this time move downward one half step at a time.

Instruct students to remember their voice parts because their parts will remain the same for group singing activities throughout the course.

TEACHER NOTE—When attributing lower and higher voice parts (which are traditionally separated by gender), please review your district’s policies regarding gender identity. Approach this topic sensitively with students.

Music in This Lesson

“Estrellita,” Manuel Ponce, performed by Patricia Caicedo



1912, Mexico



From Mexico, this song is a duet with a vocalist and piano. The singer, Patricia Caicedo, is a soprano.

Background for Teacher

Ponce studied music in Europe, and his music uses structure and techniques from European conservatory settings. However, his themes and style are uniquely Mexican.

“It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing),” Duke Ellington, performed by Ella Fitzgerald



1931, United States



A jazz classic, this song features a strong alto lead vocalist, as well as instrumental soloists. It also features scat singing, which is an essential part of jazz vocals.

Background for Teacher

Ella Fitzgerald was a masterful vocalist whose range ran from alto through soprano. While she is celebrated for her emotive alto works, her range was as broad as that of an opera singer.

“Dust My Broom,” traditional, performed by Elmore James



1950s, United States



Abiding by true blues form, the vocals represent the type of form blues performers were using at the time.

Background for Teacher

“Dust My Broom” is a blues standard that has been recorded by many artists, including Johnny Winter, Canned Heat, and Fleetwood Mac.



Tracks 3, 6, 7

Ask students to listen carefully to the vocals, as they will be asked to assess what voice part each singer is performing. Review what voice parts are typically available to female singers. Begin by playing “Estrellita” (track 3). Ask students to listen to Patricia Caicedo’s voice. You can cut the recording at 01:00 or let it play, time permitting. Ask students what voice part the singer is singing. The voice part is soprano.

Now play “It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing)” (track 6). You can stop the recording at 01:00 or let it play, time permitting. Ask students what voice part the singer is singing. The voice part is alto. Remind students that great performers like Ella Fitzgerald had a vocal range well beyond that. If appropriate, you can sing the part up one octave to give students a sense of what a soprano range would be like in that song.

Next, ask students to review the three typically male voice parts. Listen to “Dust My Broom.” (track 7). Stop the playback at 02:45, and ask students what voice part they hear. It is a tenor voice part.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following question:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTION

Do tenors and sopranos sing the same range?

- o No, they do not sing the same range, but their voice parts play the same role in their family of voices.

Activity



Page 4

Ask students to complete the Vocal Voices activity on page 4 in their Student Activity Books. As students work, circulate throughout the room observing their responses and suggesting feedback.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by revisiting the role voice parts play in a choir. Remind students that every voice part is important and plays a critical role in creating harmony and supporting melody. Ask students to volunteer their own voice parts and if they think they can perform beyond the usual ranges for those parts. Remind students that they can increase their range with practice and training, just like professionals do.

Unit 1 Lesson 2

MUSICAL NOTATION

TIME: 3 DAYS

AT A GLANCE CHART		
Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will review note and rest values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 8, Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2• Slide Deck slides 2–4 and Student Activity Book pages 5–7<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rhythm Tree Note Durations• Rhythm Tree Rest Durations• Reading Tied and Dotted Notes• Online Resource Document Whack-a-Note game from the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts• Optional: laptops or computer stations
DAY 2	Students will review accidentals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Activity Book pages 8–9<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accidentals Overview• Naming Notes and Accidentals
DAY 3	Students will review reading notation in treble and bass clef.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 9, <i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>, “Overture”• Online Resource Document Music Notation Practice• Student Activity Book pages 10–11<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name That Time Signature• Analyzing Notation

Lesson Objective

- Review note values from whole notes through grouped sixteenth notes, rests, and accidentals.

What Students Have Learned

In previous grades, students have been exposed to most common notations. Students should have a working understanding of rhythmic notation, rests, and accidentals.

DAY 1: RHYTHM AND RESTS

Introduce the lesson by reminding students that beat and rhythm are the most important elements of music. Begin clapping a steady, moderate tempo.

Tell students you are clapping a quarter-note beat. Ask them to join you.

As students continue clapping, change your clapping to a beat of steady eighth notes.

Ask students the following question: What note value am I clapping now? (*eighth notes*)

Putting It Together



Slide 2

Begin by reviewing rhythmic values. Display slide 2, Rhythm Tree Note Durations, for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page in their Student Activity Books. Explain how many beats each note receives. Lead students in a clapping exercise to help them internalize the value of each beat. Provide a steady beat for students by clapping or stomping. Point to notes in the rhythm tree, and instruct students to clap those notes, in time, throughout the exercise. You can stop the activity once you have been able to assess accuracy and student needs.



Page 5



Slide 3

Next, display slide 3, Rhythm Tree Rest Durations, and have students turn to the corresponding page in their Student Activity Books. Point out the whole through sixteenth rests. Lead students through the previous activity, but add rests into the mix. Observe students to assess accuracy and student needs.



Page 6

SUPPORT—Students struggling to distinguish between a whole rest and a half rest may find it helpful to use the memory trick that a whole rest sits under the line because it’s “heavier” than a half rest.



Slide 4

Add an additional layer to the activity by displaying slide 4, Reading Tied and Dotted Notes, and having students turn to the corresponding page in their Student Activity Books. Review **ties** and **dotted notes** with students. Remind them that a tie joins two separate notes together, making them sound as a single note. Dots, however, add half the value of the written note to itself. Give them examples such as the following: Adding a dot to a half note gives it three beats, and adding a dot to a quarter note gives it one and a half beats.



Page 7

SUPPORT—As this is a review, refrain from making rhythmic ideas too complex. The illustrations should be strictly instructional and not meant to challenge students’ performance levels.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by inviting students to work in pairs or small groups to quiz each other by writing a number of notes in a row and having a partner clap or tap the durations of the notes.

DAY 2: ACCIDENTALS

Begin the next part of the lesson by reminding students of the note durations they learned in the last class and then informing them that each of these note durations can have a different pitch value. Ask them to tell what they remember about the notes on a musical staff, and explain that they'll review these notes as well as the way these notes can be raised or lowered a half step.

Ask students the following questions: How many lines are on a musical staff? (*five*) How are the notes on the staff represented? (*with letters*)

Introduce students to the term **accidental** as it applies to music. An accidental is a symbol that temporarily alters the pitch of a note. Explain that accidentals appear directly next to a note to alter the pitch of that note. A note without an accidental is called a **natural**.

Sometimes one or more accidentals appear at the start of notated music; when they do, this is called a key signature. This means that every note on that line or space on the staff, in the entire piece of music, should be played with that accidental. When a key signature has more than one accidental, they will always be the same—either all **flats** or all **sharps**. Briefly explain that a piece of music with a key signature may also have accidentals next to individual notes to “cancel” the key signature’s accidental for those specific notes.

Tell students that they will listen to music that uses accidentals.

Music in This Lesson

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp Minor, Franz Liszt



Late 1800s, Hungary



A solo piano work displaying Liszt’s innovative technique, making it appear as if three hands are playing at the same time

Background for Teacher

Liszt was a sensation across Europe during his lifetime. The techniques he developed were so innovative that they are still taught and utilized today.



Track 8

Play Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 (track 8) in its entirety. Remind students what accidentals are: sharps, flats, and naturals. These signs are placed before a note they affect. Composers use these symbols to alter a pitch by a half step.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

What does an accidental do?

- o It can raise, lower, or naturalize a note.

What happens to a note when a sharp (#) is placed in front of it?

- o When a sharp (#) is placed in front of a note, it raises the pitch of the note by one half step.

Activity



Pages 8–9

Have students open their Student Activity Books to pages 8–9 to complete the Accidentals Overview activity and the Naming Notes and Accidentals activity. As time allows, walk around the room to check students's' responses to the Naming Notes and Accidentals activity.

Teaching Idea



If students have access to laptops or computer stations, consider having them play the Whack-a-Note game provided by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In this game, they must match cards that display the same notes on a staff. Consider making this a competitive activity, where the individual or group with the highest score receives some sort of prize.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Music Online Resource Document, where the specific link to the game may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/music>

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing practical ideas for accidentals. Without accidentals, composers would be limited only to notes included in the major scale. And for clarity, ask students the following questions: Which accidental raises a note? (*a sharp*). Which accidental lowers a note? (*a flat*). Which accidental can cancel out a previous accidental? (*a natural*).

DAY 3: READING NOTATION

Introduce this part of the lesson by reminding students that beats are grouped together to help provide a rhythm.

Ask students to clap a steady beat as a group but to emphasize the first beat in groups of four (or 4/4 time). Demonstrate this for students first, and remind them that this is the common 4/4 time signature. Repeat this activity with a 3/4 time signature.

Ask students the following question: How did the 3/4 time signature feel? (*Answers will vary.*)

Focus on Notation

Writing music requires many conventions, just as writing sentences has many rules. Sentences have capitalization, commas, periods, and other elements. Music is similar in that it has an organized set of structures that are used so that the person writing it can easily communicate it to the person reading it.

Clefs can tell a performer where notes exist on a staff. Display a **treble clef** and **bass clef**. The treble clef is the most common. It's a symbol that places G above **middle C** on the staff. Middle C is the note near the middle of the piano keyboard, and it acts as a strong reference point. The bass clef, which is less common, places F below middle C. The treble clef is used mostly for melody, and the bass clef is used for supporting instruments. In short, clefs tell us where notes exist on the staff.

Types of Lines

In addition to the five lines that create a staff, vertical lines are used to communicate specific ideas. Music is organized into **measures**. Measures, sometimes called bars, are an organization of a specific number of beats—most commonly four or three per measure. Measures are separated by **bar lines**. Display a bar line and a **double bar line**. Explain to students that not all bar lines are equal. Sometimes there are two lines, called double bar lines. This is done to demonstrate a change in sections of music. For example, if you were to measure a class period in bars, the end of class would be represented by a double bar line. There are also bar lines that represent a **repeat**.

Time Signatures

Within each measure, there are only so many beats allowed. This is communicated by the time signature that is written at the beginning of the notated music. The time signature is very important because it tells the performer exactly how to count their way through the beat, just like the students did at the beginning of class. You can draw a staff and a few measures on the board, then draw a time signature. Ask students to see if they recall what each number means.

At this point, review what the numbers in a time signature represent, and lead students through a short clapping activity emphasizing downbeats to help them internalize meter. Limit this activity to 4/4, 3/4, 2/4, and 6/8 time signatures.

Activity



Page 10

Ask students to open their Student Activity Books to page 10, Name That Time Signature. Provide help as needed while students count the number of beats in each measure.

Music in This Lesson

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, “Overture,” Richard Wagner



1860s, Germany



An excerpt from a German opera, this piece involves a full orchestra and a variety of themes across a single time signature.

Background for Teacher

Richard Wagner (/vɒgˈnɛr/) was a German composer who lived in the 1800s. Despite Wagner’s rich history in opera composition, this is his only comedic opera. All of his works, with the exception of this work, had a romantic theme of “redemption through love.”



Track 9

Play *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, “Overture” (track 9). You can instruct students to participate in another clapping activity. This activity is designed to help students internalize tempo and meter; however, you may find it helpful to have students include interpretive movements and gestures to go along with the dynamics. Instruct students to listen to the tempo and get a feel for the beat. Provide downbeats until students are able to fully join in. Ensure that a steady tempo continues even through moments where there are *ritardando* sections or where notes are held over multiple measures.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

How do you keep beats consistent over long passages?

- o Musicians simply count, or if they have a conductor, they follow the conductor’s lead.

What role does a conductor play?

- o Conductors keep time but also use gestures to help performers play with the appropriate style and intensity.

Activity



Page 11

Ask students to complete the Analyzing Notation activity on page 11 in their Student Activity Books. Students will analyze the song “Frère Jacques” to find multiple elements of the folk song. While students work, walk throughout the room, and provide guidance and clarification as needed.

Teaching Idea



As time permits, play the Music Notation Practice online activity together to identify the notes displayed, or have students work on the activity individually or in small groups.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Music Online Resource Document, where the specific link to the online activity may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/music>

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by reviewing the importance of notation. Explain that without notation, music could be lost to the ages or at the very least not able to be performed. The rules that govern music notation serve everyone, from composers to performers to listeners.

Unit 1 Lesson 3

LANGUAGE OF MUSIC

TIME: 4 DAYS

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will identify and describe intervals and chords.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 13, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, "Allegro con fuoco"• Slide Deck slide 5 and Student Activity Book page 12<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Types of Chords• Student Activity Book page 13, Identifying Harmony• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)
DAY 2	Students will explore and create their own harmonies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 13, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, "Allegro con fuoco"• Student Activity Book page 14, Creating Harmony• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)
DAY 3	Students will build on their understanding of dynamics and tempo.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 15, <i>Symphonie fantastique, no. 1, "Reveries: Passions"</i>• Slide Deck slide 6 and Student Activity Book page 15<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dynamic Markings• Student Activity Book page 16, Dynamics Review
DAY 4	Students will synthesize what they have learned about musical elements and notation to begin navigating sheet music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slide Deck slide 7 and Student Activity Book page 17<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeating Measures• Student Activity Book page 18, Music Road Maps

Lesson Objective

- Review and expand their knowledge of practical notation, including intervals, harmony, chord quality, dynamics, and form.

What Students Have Learned

Students have begun assembling a tool kit of notation elements such as accidentals, staff notation, and time signatures.

DAY 1: INTERVALS AND CHORDS

Ask students what concepts they've discussed in previous lessons. Ask the following question: What elements other than time signature and notation are essential to creating a song? (*Songs need melody, harmony, and structure/form.*)

Harmony

Use an instrument such as a guitar or keyboard to begin discussing **intervals** with students. A series of notes is a melody, but when that series of notes is joined by another series of notes, the two melodic lines create intervals. Play a melodic line or scale, then play two together to create intervals. Demonstrate how intervals can be close together, such as a major second, or far apart, such as a major sixth.



Slide 5

Display slide 5, the Types of Chords, for students, and ask them to turn to the corresponding page in their Student Activity Books. Keep the slide displayed, and refer to it as you review chords and intervals.



Page 12

Explain to students that adding a third note to one interval creates a **chord**. A chord is a series of three or more notes played simultaneously. Demonstrate three-note chords, starting with major chords only. Explain that each chord has a purpose. The **tonic** is “home base”; it’s the chord that most other chords want to return to either directly or indirectly. This chord, like most others, is made of two intervals: a third and a fifth. The tonic note is the “root” of the chord, and the third and fifth above it are what make it a chord.

Chord Road Maps

Play a major scale, and stop at *ti*. Ask if the scale sounds complete or resolved. (*Ti* creates the sense of pushing up toward *do*.) Like a tonic chord, a **dominant**, along with its four-note relative, the dominant seventh chord (V^7), is composed of notes that want to move to or resolve into other notes. For that reason, the dominant chord almost always returns to the tonic. There is also a **subdominant**, which can move back to the tonic or dominant.

SUPPORT—An instrument is not fully necessary for this lesson, but it helps a great deal to offer aural examples to students.

TEACHER NOTE—It can be helpful for students to start referring to chords with Roman numerals as they relate to the tonic. Begin using them during this lesson.

Music in This Lesson

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Antonín Dvořák



1890s, United States and Czech Republic



This is an overwhelmingly powerful piece of music with strong brass and string themes.

Background for Teacher

Dvořák was a Czech composer. However, this work was heavily influenced by his travels throughout the United States and his studies at an American conservatory.



Track 13

Prepare students to listen for the quality of chords (using mood words) and how chords are used to color melodic lines. You can also ask students to invoke other elements of music already discussed, such as dynamics, tempo, form, and so on.

Begin playing track 13, Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, “Allegro con fuoco,” from the beginning, and lead the discussion. Remember to encourage students to use both mood words and music vocabulary.

- 00:00–00:41 How does the use of chords help accentuate the brass melody?
- 01:19–01:49 How does this tonal shift compare to the opening theme?
- 01:50–02:54 What impact does it have when richer and more dense harmonies are slowly added to a solo melody?
- 04:00–05:58 Can you hear any similarities to previous themes or melodies being recycled?

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

What was the mood of the piece?

- o Parts of it sounded angry, sad, lost, or overwhelmed. Other parts sounded joyful and hopeful.

What can you say about the repetition and recycling of melodic lines and ideas?

- o Answers may vary, but students should say something about how the repetition and recycling of melodic lines and ideas made them feel and if they enjoyed the song or not.

Activity



Page 13

Instruct students to complete the Identifying Harmony activity on page 13 in their Student Activity Books. Assist students as needed. Remind students that they can simply “stack” intervals on top of each other to create chords.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by asking students if two notes can make a chord. (*They cannot.*) However, three notes can make a chord, and that will be the focus of the rest of this lesson.

Looking Back

Remind students of the Big Idea statement for this unit: *Students will work to expand their knowledge of musical notation and terms with the goal of achieving a holistic understanding of music.* Explain that they are adding new skills to their musical tool kits every day and that these skills can improve their ability not only to make music but also to understand and enjoy it. Ask students to recall terms from previous grades and engage in a discussion about what those terms mean. It does not matter if students remember terms with precision, but it may be helpful to reintroduce key terms from previous grades.

DAY 2: CREATING CHORDS

Introduce this part of the lesson by revisiting intervals as the building blocks for chords and harmony.

Ask students to identify the three types of intervals. Also ask students to describe how they are different. Ask the following question: What are the three types of intervals? (*The three types of intervals are major, minor, and perfect. The third of a major interval is one half step higher than the third of a minor interval. Major and minor intervals sound less tense. Perfect intervals have a neutral quality and do not qualify as major or minor.*)

Naming Intervals and Chords

Explain that perfect intervals have a rather neutral quality, as they do not associate with major or minor qualities. Minor qualities tend to sound tense, sad, or dissonant. Major intervals are the opposite and sound bright, positive, and consonant. Perform a few perfect intervals for students, and ask them for their thoughts. They tend to sound very open and neutral. In addition to a perfect fourth and perfect fifth, there is the unison, which is two of the exact same note playing at the same time, and the **octave**, which is two notes with the same name seven notes apart.

Use an instrument to begin playing various types of intervals. Tell students the interval distance, but ask students to identify them as major, minor, or perfect. Record these intervals on the board. Assess students' knowledge throughout this activity, and offer feedback relating to hearing intervals.

SUPPORT—It can be helpful to offer interval aids to students. Identify well-known songs that prominently feature specific intervals, and suggest those as a reference point.

Music in This Lesson

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, Antonín Dvořák



1890s, United States and Czech Republic



This is an overwhelmingly powerful piece of music with strong brass and string themes.

Background for Teacher

The New York Philharmonic commissioned Dvořák to write his Symphony No. 9, and it premiered in December 1893.



Track 13

You will be focusing attention on the main theme from Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 in E Minor in this lesson, track 13. Begin playing the opening theme from 00:00 to 00:42. Tell students that they can see the notes being played in the top section of the Creating Harmony activity on page 14 in their Student Activity Books. Pause the recording, and point out to the class that there are no chords in this example. Tell them that after they listen to the whole piece they will add some chords to this section of music and create their own harmonies. Play more of the track as time allows.



Page 14

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

What were your impressions of the music you heard?

- o Answers may vary, but students may respond that the song had a strong emotional sound and powerful, short notes played in unison by brass instruments.

What kinds of notes provided the short, detached sound?

- o *Staccato* notes provided the short, detached sounds.

Activity



Page 14

Direct students to complete the Creating Harmony activity on page 14 in their Student Activity Books. Ask students for ideas on how to create chords for the melody they heard in the first forty-two seconds of track 13. You may guide students by suggesting ideas such as “using every other note” to create chords, when and why to use accidentals, and more. Use an instrument such as a piano or guitar to create audible examples of student suggestions so that students can hear the result of their ideas.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by demonstrating students' harmonies. You can perform them at the piano or another instrument and solicit feedback from the class. Ideally, you would want very specific feedback, but if students are not able to offer it, break down the ideas into smaller chunks so that it can be more easily identifiable.

DAY 3: TEMPO AND DYNAMICS TERMS

Begin by stating that music isn't just a series of notes and rests. Music requires feeling to produce emotions. In order to do this, to humanize a performance, performers must play to a specific tempo and to a specific dynamic level.

Ask the following question: What tempo or dynamics terms do you remember? (*Answers may vary. Students have covered many dynamics terms, such as pianissimo and fortissimo, as well as a variety of tempo terms.*)

Tempo in Italian

Many terms in music are Italian in origin, and they are still used today. These terms describe very specific tempos in ranges of beats per minute. You can stop and provide an example of what each sounds like by clapping or tapping. If so inclined, you can even provide a short demonstration with a piece of instrumental music. Explain to students that tempo terms are required at the start of any notated music so that performers know how fast and in what style they should be playing. Review each term related to tempo with students:

- **Grave:** very, very slow
- **Largo:** very slow
- **Andante:** moderate, or a “walking” pace
- **Presto:** very fast
- **Prestissimo:** as fast as you can go

Ask students to stand up and move their feet and bodies to the tempo you call out, in random order.

Explain that in addition to terms that describe tempo, there are two terms that describe moving from one tempo to another. *Ritardando* means to slowly move from a faster tempo to a slower one. *Accelerando*, however, means the opposite: to move from a slower tempo to a faster one. Repeat the previous activity, but have students engage in *accelerando* and *ritardando* between tempos.

TEACHER NOTE—Be aware of potential dangers in your space while students are moving around at fast tempos. You should remove any hazards beforehand or provide students with a designated space to move. Instruct students not to crash into one another.

Dynamics in Italian

Dynamics describe the intensity of sound, or how loud or soft a passage is performed. Review that while *forte* means “loud” and *piano* means “soft,” the word *mezzo* can be added to each to create a “medium” loud or soft designation. Explain that these terms appear at the beginning of a piece of music, as well as throughout as intensity changes. However, while tempo terms are fairly specific, dynamics terms are relative. The terms are highly subjective and sometimes are only relative to the starting dynamic of a piece of music.



Slide 6

Display slide 6, Dynamic Markings, and invite students to turn to the corresponding page in their Student Activity Books. Review the terms, their meanings, and their abbreviations with students. Then draw their attention to the bottom of the page for the **crescendo** and **decrescendo** markings. A *crescendo* is a gradual increase in dynamics, from one level to another. A *decrescendo* is the opposite, as it is a gradual decrease from one dynamic level to another.



Page 15

Take a moment and ask a student to hum a note at a given dynamic level, such as *piano*. Then ask students to join in. Conduct them through humming various dynamic levels, and then repeat it as you indicate that they change their dynamics using *crescendo* and *decrescendo* humming as you call it out.

Music in This Lesson

Symphonie fantastique, Hector Berlioz



1830, France



The piece sticks to symphony form and goes through a very wide range of dynamics.

Background for Teacher

Berlioz was one of the most skilled orchestrators of his day, and perhaps all time, but his *Symphonie fantastique* was met with mixed reviews when first performed.



Track 15

Play track 15 as students look at slide 6, Dynamic Markings, or the corresponding page in their Student Activity Books. Ask students to listen carefully for dynamics through the first movement. You should be aware that the goal of this activity is not to have students accurately assess dynamic levels but to have them listen carefully and be able to assess relative dynamic shifts. Pause the music periodically, and poll students about their ideas on the dynamic levels. Discuss the following key moments: 00:00–00:58, 01:11–02:23, 04:36–04:59, 05:00–07:30, 09:53–end.



Slide 6



Page 15

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

How many dynamic levels do you think were used?

- o Six levels were used.

Were all the dynamic levels changed abruptly?

- o No, many changes were smooth transitions.

What are the terms for smooth dynamic transitions?

- o The terms *crescendo* and *decrescendo* indicate smooth dynamic transitions.

Activity



Page 16

Have students complete the Dynamics Review activity on page 16 in their Student Activity Books. The fill-in-the-blank assignment is part of their review of this lesson's vocabulary.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by reviewing students' understanding of dynamic and tempo markings. Invite them to name songs they are familiar with and indicate the tempo and dynamics that might be associated with those songs.

DAY 4: NAVIGATING SHEET MUSIC

Introduce this part of the lesson by revisiting dynamic and tempo terms explored on the previous day.

Ask the following questions: Which is louder: *mezzo piano* or *pianissimo*? (*mezzo piano*, because it means “medium quiet” while *pianissimo* means “very quiet”) Which is slower: *andante* or *largo*? (*Largo* is slower because it means “slow and stately,” while *andante* is a moderate walking pace.)

Putting It Together: Dynamics and Tempo

In this activity, you will be the conductor, and students will be the ensemble. Display the abbreviations for the six possible dynamic levels from softest to loudest. Display the five tempo terms from slowest to fastest. Explain that you will be conducting them by both keeping time and establishing new dynamics.

First, practice by establishing a tempo. Have students join in clapping, then gradually increase the tempo, then slowly return to the original tempo. Repeat this but with dynamics. This time, do not join in clapping with the students. Instead, use your hands to help communicate dynamics.

Once students have mastered responding to dynamic levels, begin manipulating the tempo as well so that the two elements are being changed at the same time. Finish by having students stop and discuss any difficulties they encountered.

SUPPORT—If students have a difficult time following conducting gestures, you may want to switch to simply pointing at the terms on the board instead.

Following Form

Explain that when a composer is writing music, one of their main goals is to write it in such a way that the performer can easily follow it. One way to ensure that a piece of sheet music is easy to read is to simplify notation and form instead of endlessly writing and rewriting sections.



Slide 7

Display slide 7, Repeating Measures, and ask students to turn to the corresponding page in their Student Activity Books. Review the meanings, abbreviations, and markings for *D.C. al fine*, *D.S. al fine*, and *D.S. al coda*.



Page 17

Activity



Page 18

Assist students with the Music Road Maps activity on page 18 in the Student Activity Book. First, students will alter an excerpt from *Symphonie fantastique*. Play the music for students, if possible. Next, students will alter the excerpt from Symphony No. 9 in E Minor. Walk students through this road map and how it should be performed.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by checking on students' understanding of the repeat markings they learned today. Explain that by using these symbols, musicians can limit their notation parts to only one or two pages instead of six or more.

Unit 1 Lesson 4

UNIT 1 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will review material in Unit 1 and will be assessed on their comprehension.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 19, <i>Symphonie fantastique</i>, no. 5, "Dream of the Witches' Sabbath"• Online Resource Document "A Look Inside the Score" video from, PBS LearningMedia• Student Activity Book pages 19–20<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Composer at Work• <i>Symphonie fantastique</i>

Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 1.

Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

Review and Assessment

Begin your review by reminding students how they have successfully expanded their knowledge of notation. You should reinforce this by stating that while many of the terms have been covered in previous grades, students are now expanding their knowledge and improving their mastery of topics such as: notation, terminology, the orchestra, vocal ranges, and general appreciation for classical music listening.

Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 1:

- Notation and notation terms from previous grades include rhythmic value, staff notation, and rests.
- Families of orchestral and keyboard instruments as well as vocal ranges can be divided into categories with similar characteristics.
- Recorded orchestral music can be described using various vocabulary terms related to the elements of music.
- Intervals and chords create intentional harmony with pleasing or unsettling sounds.

- Navigating sheet music includes understanding repeat markings such as *D.C al fine*, *D.S. al fine*, and *D.S. al segno*.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Students will work to expand their knowledge of musical notation and terms with the goal of achieving a holistic understanding of music.*

Teaching Idea



Students may benefit from viewing the video “A Look Inside the Score” to help them gain a firmer grasp on the concepts they are applying in this assessment.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Music Online Resource Document, where the specific link to the video may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/music>

Assessment



Page 19

Ask students to turn to page 19 in their Student Activity Books to complete the Composer at Work activity. Walk around to assist students who may have questions. You may have students work individually or in small groups to complete the activity.



Track 19

Play track 19, the fifth movement of *Symphonie fantastique* by Hector Berlioz, for students, and have them complete the reflection activity on page 20 of their Student Activity Books.



Page 20

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the musical ideas they learned in the unit:

- **Vocabulary Cards:** Students can work in pairs or small groups to create vocabulary cards for the terms they learned during the unit. Provide them with index cards, and have them write the word on one side of the card and the definition on the other side. Invite them to mix the cards and test each other on the meanings of the terms.
- **Critical Reflection:** Play students any song from the Grade 7 Spotify Playlist, and invite students to describe the elements of music they hear, including the tempo and dynamics heard and the instruments or vocal ranges they hear on the recording.

Additional Recommended Resources

Consider using the following trade books that discuss the elements of music for students:

- McAnally, Elizabeth. *Middle School General Music: The Best Part of Your Day*. R&L Education, 2010.
- Sweet, Bridget. *Growing Musicians: Teaching Music in Middle School and Beyond*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Consider using the following resources for teachers and parents:

- Lunika, Larysa, and Michael Lunika. *Music Theory for Teenagers*. Published by the author, 2016.
- Smith, Tim. *The NPR Curious Listener's Guide to Classical Music*. Penguin Publishing Group, 2002.

Romantic Period Music

Big Idea Students will explore the influential composers and works of the Romantic period and the circumstances that led to the period’s rise.

Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Romantic Period Music* unit. In this unit, you will lead students through music from this time period to examine the composers who were responsible for the many changes in music and creativity during this time.

This unit contains four lessons, split across four class days. There will be a unit assessment on Day 4. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for music. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 What Was the Romantic Period?
2	Lesson 2 Theme in Romantic-Era Music

Day	Lesson
3	Lesson 3 Overture
4	Lesson 4 Unit 2 Assessment

What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

- Basic staff notation, including whole through sixteenth notes and rests
- Dotted notes and ties
- Families of instruments in the orchestra
- Tempo terms, including *grave*, *largo*, *andante*, *presto*, and *prestissimo*
- Dynamics terms ranging from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*
- Music from the baroque and classical periods

What Students Need to Learn

In this unit, students will:

- Describe the progress made during the Romantic era and what made that progress possible;
- Understand the establishment of musical themes via *idée fixe*; and
- Learn what an overture is and how it ushered in a new form of composition.

What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about music notation, study further the elements of music, and investigate more musical pieces.

Grade 8

- Unit 1: *Elements of Music*
- Unit 3: *Twentieth-Century Music*
- Music form, including various *D.S.* and *D.C.* performance instructions
- Expanding knowledge of musical notation conventions

Vocabulary

idée fixe, n. a recurring theme or melody representing a specific person, object, or idea, often used to convey an obsession or passion (43)

Example: The persistent theme in *Symphonie fantastique* is a famous idée fixe in music.

overture, n. an instrumental work that opens a larger work such as an opera or a ballet and may contain main themes from other movements in the work (45)

Example: After the orchestra played the overture, the curtain rose, and the opera began.

Cross-Curricular Connections

This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 7 Volume 1 Chapter 7: "Westward Expansion Before the Civil War"

Grade 7 Volume 1 Chapter 8: "Division, Civil War, and Reconstruction"

Grade 7 Volume 1 Chapter 9: "Westward Expansion After the Civil War"

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resource Document.

Most Important Ideas

The most important ideas in Unit 2 are as follows:

- Several influential composers wrote music during the Romantic era.
- The Romantic era brought significant changes to music.
- Existing first as a brief introductory part of a piece of music, the overture eventually evolved into its own musical form.

What Teachers Need to Know

The Romantic era marks a great shift in music composition. This grew to be an era of truly independent musicians, and as such, musicians were able to embark on journeys of great creativity. They were no longer restrained by the patronage of wealthy and influential families. This allowed for new styles and forms to flourish. This era also coincided with the reshaping of great political and power structures throughout the world, as well as technological leaps forward.

Unit 2 Lesson 1

WHAT WAS THE ROMANTIC PERIOD?

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will reflect on Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 8, Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp Minor• Student Activity Book page 21, Music and Emotion• Whiteboard and dry-erase marker

Lesson Objective

- Examine how the Romantic period marks a great shift in creativity and artistic expression.

What Students Have Learned

Prior to this unit, students reviewed basic notation and symbols related to the elements of music.

DAY 1: WHAT WAS THE ROMANTIC PERIOD?

Introduce the lesson by reminding students that for many centuries, musicians and composers answered to larger institutions such as royal courts and the Catholic Church. These institutions often wielded strong control over what music was performed during these periods.

Ask students to think about how musicians today make a living. Ask the following questions: What sources of income exist for current musicians? (*ticket sales, streaming revenue, endorsement deals*) How would a musician in the 1500s make a living? (*Answers will vary, but students may mention live performances or requests to create music from royalty or the church.*)

Music in a Changing World

For many centuries, composers relied on religious and royal institutions for income. In return, they had to create music that satisfied those in charge of the institutions. However, political and social circumstances changed over time. By the mid-1800s, world governments were undergoing great changes in many countries, and religious institutions in some places were relinquishing control. With these institutional changes, musicians were more likely to take creative risks and make music that they thought sounded good.

During previous eras, some musicians were able to create musical progress and forge new ideas but not easily and certainly not without pushback. Composers like Mozart and Haydn, for example, were employed by both royal courts and the church.

SUPPORT—Time permitting, it may be helpful to play selections from previous Playlist presenting baroque and early classical music for a comparison to the Romantic era.

The First Independent Musicians

In the early 1800s, the world began changing even more quickly. A young composer named Ludwig van Beethoven quickly rose to prominence and success. In fact, he was so successful that he did not require the financial support of any institution. This makes Beethoven the first financially successful independent musician, and he would open the door to an era of wild creativity and musical risks, where musicians could make their own independent creative choices.

Beethoven’s work bridged the classical and Romantic eras. His early work was associated with standard classical structure. But the middle of his career was a transition to a Romantic style, and in his later work, he completely re-innovated the classical era with Romanticism.

After Beethoven’s success, many more composers and performers began experimenting with new ideas, and this is what forms the basis of the Romantic period. During this period, composers emphasized expressing emotion and developing new techniques, as well as being free to explore emotions typically not present in art from prior eras. There had once been a belief that a piece of music should only express one emotion, but Romantic-era composers discarded this idea in favor of expressing many complex emotions, even conflicting ones.

TEACHER NOTE—Be cautious not to paint the Catholic Church as malicious in holding back musical progress, out of sensitivity to some students’ religious beliefs. Instead, it could be discussed as a political issue, as the church was highly influential in the politics of the time.

Music in This Lesson

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp Minor, Franz Liszt



1851, Hungary



This piano piece works through a number of scales and modes, and it jumps from mood to mood. It also has a clearly stated main theme.

Background for Teacher

From a series of similar works, this piece is based on a Hungarian folk song. It employs piano techniques that were developed by Liszt himself, who revolutionized the way the piano is played.



Track 8

Play Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp Minor (track 8). Tell students they are going to listen to the song and try to figure out the emotions the song is trying to convey to the listener. Write numbers 1–10 on the board, left to right. On the left, write “sad,” and on the right, write “happy.” Explain to students that this is the “emometer,” which they will use to assess the emotions expressed in a piece of music. As a group, they will listen to music and tell you to move from number to number as

the emotions of the music change. Students should do this by pointing to the left or right, thus encouraging you to move the needle of the emometer.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

Which emotions did you hear other than happy or sad?

- o Responses will vary but may include hopeful or excited.

How does this compare to music you have heard from previous eras, such as classical or baroque?

- o There were more emotions involved. Baroque music really sticks to a single emotion.

Activity



Ask students to complete the Music and Emotion activity on page 21 in their Student Activity Books.

Page 21

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing the emotions we can feel when listening to or viewing something, like music or art. Explain that Romantic-era composers tried to embrace emotional responses to their work, after centuries of being told to avoid it. Point out that this can be seen across all the arts of this period.

Unit 2 Lesson 2

THEME IN ROMANTIC-ERA MUSIC

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will reflect on the themes in Romantic-era music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist tracks 15–19, <i>Symphonie fantastique</i>• Student Activity Book page 22, Reflect on <i>Symphonie fantastique</i>• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)• Online Resource Document “<i>Symphonie fantastique Guide</i>” from, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Lesson Objective

- Reflect the many moods present in Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* as well as the use of *idée fixe* in Romantic-era music.

What Students Have Learned

In the last lesson, students learned about the characteristics of the Romantic era and what circumstances led to such changes in the arts and music.

DAY 1: THEME IN ROMANTIC-ERA MUSIC

Introduce the lesson by discussing music and plot. Some songs have stories with characters, a narrator, settings, and so on. Ask students to think about songs that they know and like.

Ask the following question: What story does the song you chose tell? (*Answers may vary but may include it’s about two people in love or who just met or about friendship.*)

Songs and Stories

Remind students that they are discussing music of the Romantic era in the mid-1800s, a time when music went through a great transformation and exploration of new ideas. One such idea was using music to tell a story. For centuries, music had been used in religious stories and in opera; music was written and performed to help tell a story with the aid of physical sets or actors. Now, however, composers like Hector Berlioz aimed to transform the orchestra into a story-telling machine. Berlioz did this with his epic work *Symphonie fantastique*.

The Plot

Remind students that they heard parts of *Symphonie fantastique* in Unit 1. Explain the plot to students: *Symphonie fantastique* is a five-movement work that tells the story of a young artist

falling in love with a woman who does not share those feelings. The artist endures visions and hallucinations and eventually has an emotional breakdown as his world crumbles around him. Cleverly, Berlioz used a specific melody to represent the artist's passion; this melody changes in various ways as the artist descends deeper into despair.

The concept of using a melodic theme to represent an idea or obsession is called **idée fixe**. This was a revolutionary way of approaching music, and it represents the artistic ideals of the Romantic era. Additionally, this story is somewhat autobiographical, as it mirrors Berlioz's personal relationship with a famed opera singer.

Idée Fixe



Track 15

Explain that this concept is still relevant today and can be found in music that appears in film scores and video games, as well as in genres of music from country to hip-hop. Artists use *idée fixe* to convey changing emotions throughout a story. Berlioz uses a melodic theme, slowly changing it rhythmically and melodically over time. These changes reflect the main character's emotional journey as he faces many challenges that slowly break him down. Engage students in a brief discussion about other works that share this general concept, whether it be a video game, song, or movie.

Idée fixe
canto espressivo

SUPPORT—For more information about the story behind *Symphonie fantastique*, see the *Symphonie fantastique* Guide from the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Use this link to download the Online Resource Document, where the link to the specific document may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/music>

TEACHER NOTE—Note that the full plot of the symphony's story involves drug use, which may prove problematic for this grade level. Use discretion in explaining the plot, and avoid details that may be upsetting to some students.

Music in This Lesson

Symphonie fantastique, Hector Berlioz



1830, France



This is a programmatic symphony, meaning it tells a story, but it also includes an extra fifth movement. It is a work of great contrast and utilizes an *idée fixe*.

Background for Teacher

Berlioz was a guitarist and conductor but eventually became a master of orchestration. His writings on orchestral notation are still considered relevant educational resources today.

Activity



Tracks 15–19



Page 22

Play track 15 again. Then tell students that they will listen to approximately thirty minutes of music (tracks 16–19: movements 2–5). During that time, they should complete the Reflection on *Symphonie fantastique* activity on page 22 of their Student Activity Books. To identify places where the *idée fixe* is played, they can refer to time stamps of the music if they see them projected on the screen. Pause the recording between each movement for students to ask questions or share reflections.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following question:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTION

How did you interpret the change in music throughout the movements? Does the music make you think of a different story?

- o Answers may vary but should include something about the story the music is telling.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having a discussion where students can share their assignment responses. You can also point out specific instances where *idée fixe* occurs.

Unit 2 Lesson 3

OVERTURE

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will examine the characteristics of an overture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 9, <i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>, "Overture"• Student Activity Book pages 23–24<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overture Overview• <i>Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg</i>

Lesson Objective

- Through listening and analysis, examine the characteristics of an overture as well as identify key music elements from a previous unit.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about the major artistic shift during the Romantic era.

DAY 1: OVERTURE

Introduce the lesson by discussing elements of form such as chorus, verse, and coda. Give special attention to the introduction. Ask students to think of their favorite song. It could be by any artist, even one not discussed in class.

Ask the following question: How does your favorite song start? (*Responses may vary but may include students singing the first part of the song or humming it.*)

Introducing Music

Explain that Romantic-era composers also saw the importance of an introduction to their music. However, their works were much larger than a contemporary song. Therefore, the introduction to a two-hour-long opera or ballet had to be much longer. So, they began developing the **overture**. The overture was originally used during seventeenth-century operas and ballets to introduce all the main musical themes. Romantic-era composers began using it as a stand-alone performance piece in the late 1800s. It was still used to introduce themes to larger works, but as time went on, the overture would grow further and become a new musical form.

Overture and Beyond

Richard Wagner wrote many overtures to introduce his operas, which led to the short instrumental form growing in popularity. As the overture was originally intended to showcase the many themes of an entire performance, it would typically run through a wide range of dynamics, tempos, harmonies, and even moods.

Music in This Lesson

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, “Overture,” Richard Wagner



1868, Germany



This work is for a full orchestra and displays a wide use of dynamics and moods, as well as combinations of orchestral instrumentation.

Background for Teacher

The plot follows a group of craftsmen in a guild who take a guild-like approach to creating music.

Activity



Track 9

Tell students they will take notes using page 23, Overture Overview, in their Student Activity Books. Play track 9 from start to finish, and stop the recording at every minute based on the time stamp so students can take notes about what they just heard during that minute.



Page 23

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

How many different moods did you track throughout the song?

- o Answers may vary, but students should give at least one mood.

What particular section stood out to you? Which minute was it in?

- o Answers may vary, but students should be able to refer to the notes they took for each minute of the overture.

Activity



Page 24

Give students time to complete page 24, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, in their *Student Activity Books*. During this time, move throughout the room, and offer assistance to students who seem stuck formulating their ideas or who are struggling with music terminology.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by leading a discussion where students can share their answers and the plotlines they developed that match the arc of the music. Reinforce proper use of terminology.

Unit 2 Lesson 4

UNIT 2 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will review the content in Unit 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 42, <i>Messiah</i>, "Hallelujah"• Track 14, <i>Symphony No. 1 in C Minor</i>• Student Activity Book page 25, Comparing Time Periods

Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 2.

Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

Review and Assessment

Begin the review by asking students to discuss the changes brought about through the Romantic era. Remind them that in this era, composers were no longer stuck pleasing their wealthy patrons. Instead, they could write whatever works they thought sounded beautiful.

Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 2:

- The Romantic era was a period where creativity flourished and new ideas were explored.
- The Romantic era produced many influential composers.
- The concept of *idée fixe* was developed during this period as composers experimented more with themes.
- Overtures were originally used to introduce main themes, but they grew into their own unique form over time.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Students will explore the influential composers and works of the Romantic period and the circumstances that led to the period's rise.* Discuss activities students completed in this unit, such as comparing Romantic-era music to music from prior periods, examining how melodic themes can be reshaped into new melodic material, and analyzing newer forms in music such as the overture.

Music in This Lesson

Messiah, “Hallelujah,” George Frideric Handel



1741, Germany



Handel was a composer from Germany. He was known for his operas, oratorios, and instrument compositions. *Messiah* is probably his most well-known work.

Background for Teacher

This song was used in Grade 6, so this may be a song that students are familiar with.

Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Johannes Brahms



1876, Germany



Brahms was a composer and pianist from Germany. He wrote more than two hundred works, including symphonies, chamber music, piano music, and other works.

Background for Teacher

Johannes Brahms greatly admired Beethoven. He was born a few years after Beethoven's death and was raised listening to his music. Beethoven was considered the link between the Romantic and classical eras in music, and Brahms was compared to him often.

Assessment



Tracks 42, 14

Play *Messiah*, “Hallelujah” (track 42) followed by a few minutes of Brahms's Symphony No. 1 in C Minor (track 14) for students. Have them listen for the similarities and differences between the pieces. Remind students that Handel's “Hallelujah” was written during the baroque period and that Brahms's Symphony No. 1 in C Minor was a Romantic-era composition. Engage in a discussion about the differences. Ensure that the discussion uses appropriate musical terms correctly.



Page 25

Then ask students to open their Student Activity Books to page 25, Comparing Time Periods. Give students time to complete the assignment, replaying musical selections as necessary. As students finish their assessment, walk around and answer questions. As students finish, ask for volunteers to share their answers.

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the musical ideas they learned in the unit. For students who prefer, allow them to verbally explain their thoughts on the topics below.

- o Have students research what was happening around the world during the Romantic era in Europe. Students should recognize that this era occurred close to the era of the Civil War and westward expansion in the United States. Invite them to write a paragraph about how creative independence relates to American autonomy and expansion.
- o Invite students to create a short biography about a composer they learned about during this unit and present it to the class.

Additional Recommended Resources

Consider using the following trade books that discuss Romantic-era music for students:

- Naillon, Judy. *The Very Interesting Life of Tchaikovsky*. Violin Judy, 2023.
- Walters, Richard. *The Romantic Era: Book with Online Audio Access Intermediate Level*. Hal Leonard, 2014.

Consider using the following resources for teachers and parents:

- Dvořák, Antonín. *Symphony from the New World*. Curtis Institute of Music Archives. Accessed August 4, 2025. https://curtisarchives.libraryhost.com/repositories/4/archival_objects/15933.
- The Kennedy Center. “Beethoven Rocks! Classical Music’s Biggest Rock Star.” Accessed August 4, 2025. <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/resources-for-educators/classroom-resources/media-and-interactives/media/music/beethoven-rocks>.

Music of Norway, Russia, and Mexico

Big Idea Music can express a sense of national identity, bringing people closer together and giving them a sense of belonging and pride. The sounds, traditions, and history are unique to each place and mean something different to each person.

Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Music of Norway, Russia, and Mexico* unit. In this unit, you will introduce students to orchestral music that, through various musical conventions, conveys ideas and values of specific countries.

This unit contains five lessons, split across six class days. There will be a unit assessment on Day 6. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for music. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1–2	Lesson 1 How Can Music Express National Identity?
3	Lesson 2 Spirit of Norway
4	Lesson 3 Victory of Russia

Day	Lesson
5	Lesson 4 Culture of Mexico
6	Lesson 5 Unit 3 Assessment

What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

- Developments of the Romantic era in music and the arts
- The popularization of the overture as a form
- Berlioz and the use of *idée fixe* in music

What Students Need to Learn

In this unit, students will:

- Explore how music can portray national identity;
- Examine the works of Dvořák;
- Examine the works of Grieg;

- Examine the works of Ponce; and
- Explore themes used in the *1812 Overture* to describe real historical events.

What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about notation, non-Western music, patriotic music, modern music, and vocal forms; study further the elements of music; and investigate more musical pieces.

Grade 8

- Unit 1: *Elements of Music*
- Unit 3: *Twentieth-Century Music*
- Unit 4: *Opera*
- Unit 5: *Musical Theater*

Vocabulary

accelerating, adj. increasing in speed **(60)**

Example: The accelerating tempo of the background music gave the movie scene a feeling of building excitement.

acoustic, adj. (regarding musical instruments) having sound that is not electronically produced or modified **(65)**

Example: Audiences were used to seeing the popular rock star play electric guitars, but she played an acoustic guitar for her performance of several well-known folk songs.

Indigenous music, n. the music of the people or culture originating in a particular place **(57)**

Example: Musicians from all over the world gathered at the festival to perform examples of Indigenous music from their home countries.

tango, n. a form of music and a type of dance, originally from Argentina **(61)**

Example: The pair performed a beautiful tango when it was their turn on the dance floor at the ballroom dancing competition.

Cross-Curricular Connections

This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 7 Volume 1 Chapter 6: "The New Republic and the War of 1812"

Grade 7 Volume 1 Chapter 7: "Westward Expansion Before the Civil War (1820s–1860s)"

Grade 7 Volume 1 Chapter 9: "Westward Expansion After the Civil War"

CK Language Arts (CKLA)

Grade 7 Unit 5: *Poetry*

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resource Document.

Most Important Ideas

The most important ideas in Unit 3 are as follows:

- During the Romantic era, many composers began seeking inspiration from their national identity and culture.
- Composers can use elements of music and other ideas to instill a sense of national identity into their music.

What Teachers Need to Know

While these lessons focus on musical vocabulary, appreciation, and history, musical performance should be encouraged and emphasized as resources allow. The focus here combines music history with an appreciation of illustrative works and continues from Grade 6 with the idea of classifying Western music by periods, with examples of specific composers and works, as well as some associated musical terms. Timelines may help students situate the periods. The periods and their characteristics are not absolute distinctions but are generally helpful categories often used in discussions of music. In Grade 6, students studied music and composers from the baroque period to the Romantic period.

Unit 3 Lesson 1

HOW CAN MUSIC EXPRESS NATIONAL IDENTITY?

TIME: 2 DAYS

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will explore how music can express a nation's values and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 10, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, no. 1, "Adagio – Allegro molto"• Track 11, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, no. 2, "Largo"• Student Activity Book page 26, New World Themes
DAY 2	Students will compose music that showcases their family's cultural identity and values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 12, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, no. 3, "Molto vivace"• Track 13, Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, no. 4, "Allegro con fuoco"• Student Activity Book pages 27–28<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New World Themes 2• Composing Your Identity, Part 1

Lesson Objective

- Explore how music can express the values and traditions of a specific culture.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about the Romantic era. In this period, musicians expanded expression and creativity.

DAY 1: NATIONALITY IN MUSIC

Introduce the lesson by saying that every culture has different values, including what they find beautiful or important in music. Ask students to share something about their family's heritage or nationality.

Ask the following question: Is there a type of music your family listens to that comes from your cultural background? (*Answers may vary but could include things like Christmas music or something from their heritage.*)

Music and Culture

Explain that while many groups of people share traits and values, some cultures have very unique values. These values can translate to musical tastes. Music in movies often reflects the culture where the movie is set. A movie set in China will likely have different music than one set in Mexico, for example. Engage students in a discussion about what types of instruments or sounds they recognize as being specific to a particular region or country. Ask them why they think those examples are specific to those places.

TEACHER NOTE—Not every student wants to self-identify their cultural background publicly, so proceed with care and sensitivity.

Music in This Lesson

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor (“From the New World”), op. 95, nos. 1–2, “Adagio – Allegro molto” and “Largo,” Antonín Dvořák



1893, United States and Czech Republic



Powerful brass sections and intense dynamics

Background for Teacher

Dvořák wrote this music while in the United States. In this piece, he was trying to capture the spirit of the American Plains and Western regions before European colonization. However, he also added elements of his homeland by incorporating melodies from the Czech Republic.

Share with students a bit about Dvořák’s life. He was born in a Slavic country at a time when the region was not consistently ruled by a single country. Dvořák was a musically gifted child, eventually leaving his homeland to teach music in the United States. He brought his experiences with Slavic music with him, and these influences became part of his composing style. This is common with many composers.



Begin playing tracks 10 and 11, and ask students to pay attention to the mood. Point out that the music reflects the perspective of someone from outside the United States arriving for the first time.

Tracks 10, 11

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

What parts of the American landscape and history are captured in this piece of music?

- o This piece captures the feeling of exploration of the Great Plains by settlers.

How are these ideas portrayed?

- o They are portrayed with a sense of urgency and danger. There are also moments of beauty and appreciation for the incredible landscape and sights of the American West.

Activity



Page 26

Have students work on the New World Themes activity on page 26 of their Student Activity Books. Have a brief discussion about which elements of music made them think of the American West, elements of **Indigenous music**, or even Dvořák’s Slavic childhood. Ask students what elements they would incorporate if they were to write a similarly inspired piece of music.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by explaining how all of us bring our culture’s rich traditions to our musical experiences. Sometimes, influences from other cultures also make their way into our musical preferences or compositions (if we write our own music). Once again, ask students to volunteer any information about their backgrounds and things that their families do with music that is rooted in their cultural background.

DAY 2: MUSIC AND CULTURE

Introduce this part of the lesson by reminding students that not every culture views music in the same light. What a culture does value about music can tell us a lot about their people.

Ask students to think of a culture that values dancing and movement.

Ask the following question: What does dancing tell us about a culture? (*The culture values interaction and movement.*)

Developing Identity

In many cases, a country’s national identity is developed over centuries. Dvořák tried to capture his ideas on the American landscape and its past, when the country was very new. This new identity comes across in his music. He also—possibly subconsciously—included many Slavic themes. In Slavic countries, many different types of dances are designed to be paired with specific types of music.

Other values can be demonstrated in music as well. Almost every country has a national anthem that is used to communicate some aspect of its culture. Many of these songs tell stories of past wars or revolutions, much like “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Engage in a discussion about what other ideas “The Star-Spangled Banner” communicates about American culture and society.

SUPPORT—Dancing is not exclusive to Slavic countries. Consider polling students about their family’s participation in dances at cultural events such as weddings or other celebrations.

Music in This Lesson

Symphony No. 9 in E Minor (“From the New World”), op. 95, nos. 3–4, “Molto vivace” and “Allegro con fuoco,” Antonín Dvořák



1893, United States and Czech Republic



Powerful brass sections and intense dynamics

Background for Teacher

Dvořák incorporated Slavic dance themes in this work and would draw upon his prior piano work, the *Slavonic Dances*.

Activity



Have students fill out the New World Themes 2 assignment on page 27 in their Student Activity Books.

Page 27



Instruct students to listen for three components: American landscape, elements of Indigenous music, and Slavic dance movements. When a student hears one of these themes, ask them to raise their hand. Tell students you will discuss what themes they heard later.

Tracks 12, 13

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

Were you able to find at least one instance of each of the three themes? If so, name the theme.

- o Answers will vary but should include at least one theme.

Did you hear any additional themes not mentioned? If so, what were they?

- o Answers may vary but students should name the theme if they heard additional themes.

Activity



Tell students they will compose a piece of music that tells the listener something about themselves, their family, their culture, and their values. The criteria for the composition can be found on page 28 in their Student Activity Books. While students are working on this, move throughout the room to provide guidance and assistance as needed.

Page 28

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by asking students to share their work with their classmates. Ask for students to share both what the value was that they were trying to communicate and how they chose to accomplish it musically.

Unit 3 Lesson 2

SPIRIT OF NORWAY

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will examine the works of Grieg and the national identity of Norway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist tracks 20–23, <i>Peer Gynt Suite No. 1</i>, op. 46• Student Activity Book page 29, <i>Peer Gynt Suite</i>

Lesson Objective

- Understand how Grieg captured the Norwegian national identity through his music.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned how music could be used to express a country's or culture's values and beliefs.

DAY 1: SPIRIT OF NORWAY

Introduce the lesson by stating that occasionally, a composer is able to capture the spirit and identity of a nation with great skill. Ask students to think of any modern artists that may fit this description.

Ask the following question: How does this artist capture the spirit of their community or culture? (*Answers may vary.*)

Norwegian Identity

Norway is a small, mountainous country in northern Europe. It is known for its beautiful landscapes, wooded mountainsides, and many lakes. Edvard Grieg is widely considered to be the most accomplished composer from Norway, and his ability to capture the landscape and values of Norway was unmatched.

Grieg used Norwegian themes, folk songs, and mythology to create some of the Romantic era's most memorable works. This proved to be one of the essential aspects of the Romantic era. For most of the classical period, music composition was centered in Vienna, Austria. Musicians left their home countries to study there, and the result was compositions that sounded very similar stylistically. However, composers like Grieg began to incorporate their national and ethnic traits into their music. Composers from places like Finland, Hungary, Norway, and Russia would eventually find acceptance for their unique styles of composition.

SUPPORT—Most students have heard “In the Hall of the Mountain King” at some point in popular media. Ask students where they have heard it before.

Music in This Lesson

Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, op. 46, Edvard Grieg



1875, Norway



Four movements that evoke vivid imagery: a gentle, rising melody that captures the calm beauty of sunrise; a slow, mournful string piece expressing deep sorrow; a light, graceful rhythm with an exotic flair; and a dramatic, **accelerating** theme that builds intensity and suspense

Background for Teacher

The *Peer Gynt* Suite is a series of pieces that tell the story of a young man in love with a woman who he is not allowed to marry and the struggles he encounters while trying to win her over.



Tracks 20, 21,
22, 23

Play tracks 20–23. Tell students that each movement they will listen to tells part of a story and that each part takes place in a different location. While listening, students must assess each piece of music and describe where they believe it is set and what is happening. Pause briefly between each of the four movements to encourage discussion about what they heard.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

What images does the music bring to mind?

- o Answers may vary depending on the part of the music students focus on.

Describe the type of music you think would be used to represent your town or city.

- o Answers may vary but should include a reason behind the type of music chosen.

Activity



Page 29

While listening to each of the four movements, have students complete the *Peer Gynt* Suite activity on page 29 in the Student Activity Books. Pause between each movement so students can share ideas.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing the actual plot of Grieg's *Peer Gynt* Suite and how music is used to represent different locations and situations. Then, spend the remaining time helping students improve their national identity composition from the last lesson. Encourage students to work together in small groups, and provide feedback.

Unit 3 Lesson 3

VICTORY OF RUSSIA

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will examine the musical elements and ideas behind Tchaikovsky's <i>1812 Overture</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 1, <i>1812 Overture</i>• Student Activity Book page 30, Composing Your Identity, Part 2

Lesson Objective

- Explore some of the stories behind various musical ideas in Tchaikovsky's famous *1812 Overture*.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about Grieg's *Peer Gynt* Suite, in which he incorporated themes from Norwegian culture.

DAY 1: VICTORY OF RUSSIA

Introduce the lesson by mentioning themes from other cultures. For example, music from Chinese cultures traditionally uses a five-note scale, producing a characteristic sound. Also, Argentinian culture created the **tango**, both a musical form and a type of choreographed dance. The music and dance play an important part in expressing cultural values.

Ask students to think of a theme in American culture.

Ask the following question: How would you incorporate the theme into a song? (*Answers may vary.*)

Tchaikovsky on Themes

Students may have previously listened to Tchaikovsky's famous *1812 Overture*, which is still popular and performed today. In this work, the composer weaves together many different themes from different cultural backgrounds. This is particularly intriguing because during this time in the Romantic era, many composers focused on displaying their national identity in their music. Tchaikovsky, however, was eager to include many contrasting themes, including folk themes taken from other cultures.

Tchaikovsky was asked to compose a piece of music celebrating Russia's victory over France during the Napoleonic Wars. He was urged to make Russian culture and themes the primary focus, but this was at odds with his approach to composition. So he begins the composition by borrowing themes from the Russian Orthodox Church, representing peaceful Russian life.

But that is disrupted by the main theme featuring snare drums, symbolizing the start of war. Then, fragments of the French national anthem appear. Tchaikovsky even incorporates some themes from other works he had composed.

The French national anthem increases in tension. The Russian and French themes begin to overlap one another, symbolizing war. To add to the sense of violence, he incorporates cannon sounds. The music moves toward a victory theme as Napoleon strolls into Moscow—but it's a trap! The Russians had evacuated the cities, burned them down, and used church bells to signal this trap. France, depleted of resources, was forced to retreat. To represent this, Tchaikovsky includes the Russian national anthem in the background of his composition.

The event the music celebrates was a victory in Russia. Tchaikovsky represents this by including a celebratory fanfare.

SUPPORT—Students may or may not be familiar with the events captured in the composition. Cultural themes and traditions often arise out of times of strife. You can discuss cultural themes and traditions that students are familiar with from their own lives.

Music in This Lesson

1812 Overture, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky



1880, Russia



An overture filled with masterful use of theme and variation and expert orchestration

Background for Teacher

Tchaikovsky did not want to write this work and completed it in approximately one week.



Track 1

Play the recording of *1812 Overture* (track 1) for students. Write out or display elements of cultural themes as they are played.

- 00:00 Russian Orthodox Church themes
- 02:10 Tension symbolizing war
- 04:10 Beginning of the march to war theme
- 05:50 Fragments of the French national anthem as the French army approaches
- 07:05 Peaceful themes representing normal Russian life, unaware of the coming danger
- 09:25 Tense themes with French national anthem as the French army approaches
- 10:30 French national anthem representing an incoming French victory
- 12:36 Russian retaliation, preventing French victory
- 13:30 Church bells and Russian themes signifying the Russian trap was successful
- 14:40 Cannon fire and march theme as the French retreat from Moscow in failure

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

How was the French national anthem used?

- o It was like a character. It appeared when the French were in the scene.

What other themes were heard?

- o The Russian Orthodox themes were there to show regular peaceful Russian life, and the military march theme represented war.

Could you identify any other themes not mentioned?

- o Answers may vary, but students could mention a theme of being triumphant, celebrating Russia's victory.

Activity



Direct students to page 30, Composing Your Identity, Part 2, in their Student Activity Books. Tell them they can use the activity to evaluate and revise their work.

Page 30

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by checking in with students about the status of their composition. Inquire about what difficulties they are experiencing, and poll students to see if they are experiencing similar difficulties. Problem-solve together to develop solutions so students can move forward.

Unit 3 Lesson 4

CULTURE OF MEXICO

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will examine the works of Manuel Ponce and his contributions to Mexican music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist tracks 3–5, “Estrellita”• Student Activity Book pages 31–32<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Estrellita”• Composition Progress

Lesson Objective

- Continue to explore the connection between music and national identity by examining the works of Mexican composer Manuel Ponce.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about music from various European cultures.

DAY 1: CULTURE OF MEXICO

Introduce the lesson by reminding students that Europe is not a good representation of differences between cultures. Most countries in Europe are very close together with relatively small populations. They would have to expand their search to see contrast in culture. Ask students to name cultures that are not European. Briefly discuss what they know about other cultures.

Ask the following question: What do you know about our neighbor to the south, Mexico? (*Answers may vary, but students may share something about the food, music, movies, or clothing from Mexico.*)

Mexican Music and Culture

Focus the first portion of the lesson on Mexican history and culture. Before the arrival of Europeans in the Americas, the area that is now Mexico was inhabited by Indigenous populations such as the Maya and Aztec. Indigenous cultures existed and developed for centuries across the ocean from Europe. When the two cultures met in the fifteenth century, one consequence was an exchange of ideas about music. Both cultures used music as part of religious and cultural practices. Today, Mexico’s music carries influences and traditions from Indigenous peoples and European colonists.

The Creator of Modern Mexican Songs

Explain that Manuel Ponce is a Mexican national treasure, as he is considered to be the visionary responsible for the unique sound of Mexican music. Ponce, a native Mexican, was a celebrated composer and educator. He studied and composed extensively and even traveled to Europe to study and perform. In his works, there are clear themes of Mexican folk songs and ideas. He wrote many works for **acoustic** guitar and composed lyrics that spoke to Mexican cultural viewpoints. His most famous work was “Estrellita,” which is still popular today.

SUPPORT—Be sure to mention that this is the first non-European culture they are discussing, which means there will be unique cultural ideas and practices to discuss.

TEACHER NOTE—The European colonization and genocide of the Indigenous populations of the Americas is a delicate subject and should be approached with sensitivity.

Music in This Lesson

“Estrellita,” Manuel Ponce



1912, Mexico



In the three versions of this song, all are duets with an instrumentalist and a vocalist. One version uses a guitar, and two use a piano.

Background for Teacher

Ponce studied music in Europe, and his music has structure and techniques used in European conservatory settings. However, his themes and style are uniquely Mexican. Though he uses many instruments in his compositions, he is the first known Mexican composer to write music for the guitar and in various ranges.



Tell students they will listen to three versions of the same song by Ponce. Each is a unique interpretation of the work. Play tracks 3–5.

Tracks 3–5



Direct students to open their Student Activity Books to page 31 for the “Estrellita” activity. In this activity, students will answer questions about Ponce’s music as they listen.

Page 31

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

Which version did you connect with the most? Why?

- o Answers may vary.

What elements sound uniquely Mexican?

- o The language of the lyrics and the acoustic guitar sound Mexican.

Do you hear these elements in music today?

- o Yes, I hear them in Latin music and film music.

Activity



Page 32

Direct students to page 32, Composition Progress, in their Student Activity Books. This is their ongoing assignment on composing their identity. Instruct students to complete this assignment at home and return to class ready to discuss their work.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing elements of Mexican music. Mexican music uses many acoustic instruments, especially guitar. Songs often tell stories of love, loss, and adventure. The style of music reflects the Mexican landscape, and music is regularly used in social and cultural events.

Unit 3 Lesson 5

UNIT 3 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will reflect on their own compositions and review their peers' compositions, and they will make a comic to illustrate a song from the unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Activity Book pages 33–34• Composition Self-Reflection• A Song in Comics

Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 3.

Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

Review and Assessment

Begin by checking in with students regarding their compositions. Ask the following question: What would have helped you compose your work more easily? (*Answers may vary.*)

Then have students share their work, their creative process, their musical goals for the work, and what they found difficult or easy. Allow students to respond to their classmates' compositions.



After hearing feedback from their classmates, give students about ten minutes to complete the Composition Self-Reflection on page 33 in their Student Activity Books.

Page 33

TEACHER NOTE—Sharing work is deeply personal. Consider introducing guidelines that may help your students gauge the kind of feedback that would be helpful as opposed to hurtful. If a student does not want to share, do not force them.

Next, engage students in a discussion about how music can be used to capture a sense of national identity. Many composers have done it since the Romantic era. In this discussion, encourage students to use appropriate terminology and discuss how composers create music that evokes images of specific locations.

Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 3:

- Different countries have national identities that can be expressed through music.
- Instruments, notation, and dynamics all play a part in giving a song a national identity.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Music can express a sense of national identity, bringing people closer together and giving them a sense of belonging and pride. The sounds, traditions, and history are unique to each place and mean something different to each person.* Discuss with students the activities they did in this unit, such as exploring music of Norway, Russia, and Mexico, reviewing notation and terminology, and composing music to represent their own national identity.

Assessment



Page 34

Ask students to turn to page 34 in their Student Activity Books and complete the A Song in Comics activity. Remind them of the songs played during the unit, and replay some selections as students work.

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the musical ideas they learned in the unit:

- Play a game where students listen to random selections from the Playlist and attempt to identify what country the composer was from or was writing about.
- Invite students to add different instruments to give their composition project a sound that they associate with another nation. Encourage students to play their revised songs.

Additional Recommended Resources

Consider using the following trade books that discuss national identity in music for students:

- Herbert, David G. *Patriotism and Nationalism in Music Education*. Routledge, 2025.
- Moreno-Luzón, Javier, and Maria Negore-Ferrer. *Music, Words, and Nationalism: National Anthems and Songs in the Modern Era*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.

Consider using the following resources for teachers and parents:

- Meacham, Jon. *Songs of America: Patriotism, Protest, and the Music That Made a Nation*. Delacorte Press, 2023.
- Seipman, Jeremy. *Tchaikovsky: His Life & Music*. Naxos of America, 2012.

Blues

Big Idea Students will explore blues, its social context, and the influence it has had on many genres in contemporary music.

Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Blues* unit. In this unit, you will discuss blues not only as a genre but also as a result of social context and as a distinct musical form. You will analyze works and explore influential performers.

This unit contains five lessons, split across seven class days. There will be a unit assessment on Day 7. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for music. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 What Is Blues?
2	Lesson 2 A Study in Lyrics
3–4	Lesson 3 Blues as an Inspiration

Day	Lesson
5–6	Lesson 4 Present Your Blues Song
7	Lesson 5 Unit 5 Assessment

What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

- Basic notation and symbols, tempo and dynamics terms, harmony, and form
- Baroque-era composers and conventions
- Classical-era composers and conventions
- Romantic-era composers and conventions

What Students Need to Learn

In this unit, students will:

- Compose a twelve-bar blues song with lyrics;
- Identify chords that are used in blues;
- Explore themes that are prevalent in blues;
- Listen to classic blues recordings and examine their influence; and
- Examine how blues has become an influential force in the development of later forms of music such as jazz, funk, and rock.

What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about blues music, study the elements of music further, and investigate more musical pieces.

Grade 8

- Unit 1: *Elements of Music*
- Unit 3: *Twentieth-Century Music*
- Unit 4: *Opera*
- Unit 5: *Musical Theater*

Vocabulary

blue note, n. the raised fourth scale degree, which was popularized by blues musicians (74)

Example: The solo was very melodic until they played that blue note, which was very tense.

pentatonic scale, n. a five-note scale with no half steps (74)

Example: The pentatonic scale is used extensively in both blues and Asian music.

Cross-Curricular Connections

This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 7 Volume 2 Chapter 1: "A Time of Great Change: Immigration, Industrialization, and Urbanization" (1865–1914)

Grade 7 Volume 2 Chapter 2: "The Progressive Era, Social Movements, and Reform"

Grade 7 Volume 2 Chapter 4: "America from the Twenties to the New Deal"

The Grade 7 Core Knowledge History and Geography (CKHG) materials include in-depth chapters on immigration, reform, and the Great Depression, which consist of a Teacher Guide, an illustrated Student Reader, and Timeline Cards.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the chapters in the Online Resource Document.

Most Important Ideas

The most important ideas in Unit 4 are as follows:

- Blues as a genre was born out of hardship, poverty, and terrible social circumstances, including slavery and racism.
- Blues as a form maintains a specific set of measures, chords, and procedural melodies in most cases.
- Blues has been incredibly influential on many forms of contemporary music.

What Teachers Need to Know

Blues is both a genre and a musical form. Its origins are from slavery in the American South, where enslaved people engaged in singing work songs and early gospel music. Some of the elements of these songs made their way into early blues music. Blues as a form is a strict twelve-measure, repetitive cycle. It focuses on singing about hardships and improvising melodies. This is a stark contrast to the musical traditions coming from Europe. Blues was revolutionary in its honesty of expression, as well as its emphasis on the voice of the individual. Many jazz and rock performers cite blues musicians as their inspirations. These genres would later go on to create new forms of music, such as soul, R & B, funk, and even hip-hop.

Unit 4 Lesson 1

WHAT IS BLUES?

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will explore the characteristics of blues and its origins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 28, "Midnight Special"• Track 29, "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out"• Student Activity Book page 35, Understanding Blues

Lesson Objective

- Examine the main traits of blues and the history of its growth in the United States.

What Students Have Learned

Students have followed the musical achievements composers and performers made in Europe through the Romantic era.

DAY 1: WHAT IS BLUES?

Introduce the lesson by explaining that the United States is a relatively young nation and that's why the focus has mostly been on European music.

Ask students to think about styles of music that are uniquely American.

Ask the following question: What types of music developed in the United States? (*Answers may vary but can include blues, jazz, country, rock and roll, or hip-hop.*)

Origin of Blues

Blues is a musical form and genre rooted in slavery in the American South. Work songs and spirituals grew into a new musical tradition that would eventually become blues. As a genre, blues deals with ideas of hardship. The themes are about overcoming adversity and resilience. These were necessary qualities during enslavement and after emancipation. In the blues genre, these themes continued.

The tradition of blues was mainly a form of local music in the Deep South, such as in Mississippi and Louisiana. However, as formerly enslaved people left this area to pursue a better life, they brought their music with them. They moved north to places like Tennessee, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. This helped spread blues as a genre across the United States.

Blues Form

Blues, in addition to being a genre, is a musical form with specific requirements and stylistic traits. Blues songs use a **pentatonic scale**. A pentatonic scale uses only five notes, plus a **blue note**. The blue note is a raised fourth scale degree, which can create a very dissonant sound. As a form, it is a repetitive structure of twelve measures of music.

Draw or display a blues form to illustrate the melodic pattern. Explain that musicians sing lyrics over the form and then take lengthy instrumental solos. Blues melodies typically establish a melody, repeat it, and then introduce a new melody to resolve, then repeat. Interestingly, blues music only uses three chords—the I, IV, and V chords. Blues has been adapted over time, and its influence can be seen in other forms of music, such as soul, rock, funk, and even hip-hop.

TEACHER NOTE—Due to the necessary discussion of slavery, approach the topic with care for students’ backgrounds.

Music in This Lesson

“Midnight Special,” traditional, performed by Lead Belly



1923, United States



A true blues form, with only a solo performer singing and playing guitar

Background for Teacher

Lead Belly’s performances were popularized by music fan and philanthropist Alan Lomax, who traveled the South to document these works.

“Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out,” Jimmie Cox, performed by Bessie Smith



1923, United States



A classic blues song, featuring a full band, including horns

Background for Teacher

This song was recorded on September 13, 1929, just about a month before the stock market crashed and the United States entered the Great Depression. “Race records,” records targeted primarily to Black Americans, were not chartable by *Billboard* at the time, but this was an incredibly popular recording.



Tracks 28, 29

For this portion of the lesson, display or draw a twelve-bar blues chart on the board. Play each selection (tracks 28 and 29) for students, and point out the chord changes so students can associate them with blues. Use Roman numeral chords, and play each selection from start to finish, with a brief discussion for reactions after playing each recording. Focus on the topics discussed in the songs and the moods they create.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN'S QUESTIONS

What emotion words would you match to each track?

- o The emotions I hear are sadness, loneliness, etc.

Why would the songwriter be sad? Consider the lyrics and the context of the time.

- o The songwriter could be sad for a number of reasons, like poverty, hopelessness, racism, and segregation.

Activity



Page 35

Give students time to work on page 35, Understanding Blues, in their Student Activity Books. While students work, move throughout the classroom and observe their responses, ensuring accuracy. Assist students as necessary.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing the need for blues. What might inspire Black people in the South during the early twentieth century to sing blues? This is a delicate but important topic. Remind students that music, throughout history, has been a refuge for many people and has helped people find solace, community, and catharsis.

Unit 4 Lesson 2

A STUDY IN LYRICS

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will analyze blues lyrics and create their own original lyrics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 7, "Dust My Broom"• Track 28, "Midnight Special"• Track 29, "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out"• Student Activity Book page 36, Writing a Blues Song• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)

Lesson Objective

- Listen to classic blues songs to analyze lyric traits and then create lyrics.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about the history of blues, its influence, and its function as a musical form.

DAY 1: A STUDY IN LYRICS

Introduce the lesson by stating that the nature of the blues genre is to express difficult emotions. Most blues songs are about hardship, tragedy, love lost, and similar themes.

Ask students to think of a difficult time in their lives. It does not have to be something tragic but can instead be something they dislike, like bad weather, a sports team losing, or too much homework. Allow students to brainstorm possible blues song topics or lyrics to blues songs as a class.

Ask the following questions: If you were to write a song about one of those topics, what would it be? How might it start? What instruments would you use? (*Answers may vary.*)

Blues Lyrics

Draw or display a twelve-bar blues form on the board, and insert Roman numeral chords. Explain that blues songs typically use the same formula for lyrics. First, establish a statement that lasts four measures, then repeat it with a small variation. Then, establish a new statement over the last four measures. Finally, the chords resolve and repeat back to the beginning of the

form. Ask students to give you a topic to sing about, and improvise a melody as an example. Repeat this process as more students offer topics to sing about.

Explain that students will listen to three different blues songs to prepare themselves to write their own lyrics as a class. The lyrics they write must comply with the three-part form traditionally used in blues songs, which is present in the listening selections.

SUPPORT—To really understand the concept behind blues, encourage students to pick a topic they feel strongly about and that actually causes difficult feelings in them.

TEACHER NOTE—Keep in mind that many blues songs use innuendo and colloquialisms to express ideas related to slavery, segregation, romance, and other sensitive topics. Research terms related to these ideas before using them in class.

Music in This Lesson

“Dust My Broom,” traditional, performed by Elmore James



1950s, United States



This song features a wild slide guitar riff, which is typical of blues guitar during the time. Elmore James was called the “King of the Slide Guitar” and influenced many rock and roll artists. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1992.

Background for Teacher

In the late 1800s, to “dust my broom” meant to leave town in a hurry. This was a common saying in the South at the time the song originated. The song has been recorded by many artists, but this recording by Elmore James is the most well-known.

“Midnight Special,” traditional, performed by Lead Belly



1923, United States



A true blues form, with only a solo performer singing and playing guitar

“Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out,” Jimmie Cox, performed by Bessie Smith



1923, United States



A classic blues song, featuring a full band, including horns

Background for Teacher

This song was recorded on September 13, 1929, about a month before the stock market crashed and the United States entered the Great Depression. “Race records,” records targeted primarily to Black Americans, were not chartable by *Billboard* at the time, but this was an incredibly popular recording.



Tracks 7, 28,
29

Play each selection (tracks 7, 28, and 29) for students. Ask them to focus on the lyrics and the melody. Each melody follows the procedural blues format outlined earlier in the lesson. As the melody plays, gesture to the chord chart on the board. Try to avoid talking over the music, and instead discuss briefly between selections and demonstrate with an instrument.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

What instruments did you hear on “Dust My Broom”?

- o I heard guitar mostly but also slide guitar.

What is the theme of “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out”?

- o Answers may vary.

Which of the three selections does not follow the procedural lyric format?

- o “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out” does not follow a procedural blues format.

Activity



Page 36

Direct students to complete the assignment on page 36, Writing a Blues Song, in their Student Activity Books. During this time, move throughout the room to help students create their melodies and focus on the form. Then create a group song as a class, and have students contribute to the lyrics. Focus on the life challenges that inspire blues songs, and encourage a topic the class may identify with collectively, such as too much homework or bad weather that causes a fun event to be canceled.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having students review their class lyrics so far.

Unit 4 Lesson 3

BLUES AS AN INSPIRATION

TIME: 2 DAYS

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will explore the ways in which blues has been influential on other forms of music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 30, “Cross Road Blues”• Student Activity Book page 37, “Cross Road Blues”
DAY 2	Students will take part in a classroom jam session inspired by blues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist tracks 28–36• Musical instruments for classroom jam session (harmonica, drums, guitar, piano, etc.)• Scrap paper for writing lyrics• Optional: recording and playback technology

Lesson Objective

- Make connections between early blues music and contemporary genres students enjoy today.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about blues form, phrasing a blues melody, and the origins of blues.

DAY 1: THE ELEMENTS OF BLUES

Introduce the lesson by explaining how blues became a driving force behind the development of many contemporary genres. Ask students to name some artists and genres they like to listen to.

Ask the following question: What might music be like today if blues had never developed? (*Answers may vary but may include that other types of music may have never developed, like rock and roll.*)

Historic Turning Point

In this portion of the lesson, explain that blues was integral to the development of many subsequent genres. Blues’ use of the pentatonic scale, a blue note, distressed textures, and improvisation became a turning point in music. For most of music history, particularly in Europe, music focused on group performance and notated music. Blues, however, was a stark departure from that tradition. Blues performers forged their own way by embracing improvisation, short forms, and individual expression.

Orchestra performers in Europe were required to play notated music as written, but blues performers were not constrained by notated music. Instead, they were able to express their unique individual voices about hardships, tragedy, and injustice. It was these aspects of blues that gained popularity and paved the way for future genres, including rock, funk, soul, R & B, and hip-hop.

SUPPORT—Compare the European and American music traditions to political structures. European orchestras were set up like a monarchy, but American blues musicians were set up as a democracy, which valued the voice of the individual.

Music in This Lesson

“Cross Road Blues,” Robert Johnson



1936, United States



A pure blues song featuring expressive vocals and wild guitar riffs

Background for Teacher

Robert Johnson comes with his own lore. It was rumored that he had sold his soul to the devil for incredible guitar skills. “Cross Road Blues” is allegedly his confession to this.



Track 30

Play track 30 for students and ask them to focus on elements of music that they hear in the contemporary music they enjoy today. Do they hear rough vocals? Improvised elements? Repetition? Strong cadence/flow? What other elements can be extracted from this recording that were not present in European orchestral music but are present in contemporary American music genres?

TEACHER NOTE—Early blues music can deal with sensitive subjects, such as racism, infidelity, poverty, and death. Approach with caution.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

How does this compare to the European orchestral music we’ve heard so far?

- o There’s no orchestra. It sounds raw and emotional. There’s a very rough, human quality to it. The tempo is not steady, and the musician seems to do what he wants at any moment.

What do you listen to that uses improvisation, unique sounds, and wild vocals?

- o Answers may vary but may include jazz, punk, heavy metal, hip-hop, or another genre of music.

Was there any European orchestral music that sounded like this at the time?

- o No, Europe was still playing traditional orchestras and did not see the same social environment that the United States did.

Activity



Page 37

After your discussion about the difference between European and American music traditions, direct students to complete page 37, “Cross Road Blues,” in their Student Activity Books. Break them into small groups so that they can engage in discussion before completing this assignment.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by granting students additional time to work on their blues composition. Ask students to share their work and any difficulties they may have encountered. You can offer guidance during this time. If recording and playback technology is available, this would be a great opportunity for students to record rough drafts of their works.

DAY 2: CLASSROOM JAM SESSION

Start the day by reminding students of the roots of blues and the fact that hardship was often an inspiration of the first blues musicians. Remind students that they worked together in an earlier lesson to brainstorm their own blues lyrics. Tell them that today they will take most of the class time to have fun and jam together as a class to create their own blues song.



If desired, replay some of the blues songs from the Playlist (tracks 28–36) to provide inspiration and to give students a style to follow for their own song.

Tracks 28-36

Invite students to work together to either create a new blues song to represent the class or to improve on the one they wrote previously. Then hand out instruments such as harmonicas, drums (or simply drumsticks), or other available instruments. Check that each student has an instrument to use, or if not enough instruments are available, designate the students without musical instruments to be the singers.

Allow students to conduct their jam session, with a focus on having fun.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by asking students to comment on how playing the music made them feel, despite the fact that the lyrics were inspired by hardship.

Unit 4 Lesson 4

PRESENT YOUR BLUES SONG

TIME: 2 DAYS

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will share their compositions with classmates and provide critical responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Activity Book page 38, Peer Assessment• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)• Pencils
DAY 2	Students will continue to share their compositions with classmates and provide critical responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Activity Book page 38, Peer Assessment• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)• Pencils

Lesson Objective

- Continue composing and provide feedback on others' compositions.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in a previous lesson, they learned about the procedural nature of blues lyric and melody construction.

DAY 1: SHARE YOUR BLUES SONG

Introduce the lesson by telling students that professional musicians often engage in self-reflection about their progress and ask others for their feedback.

Ask students to think about something in their composition that they are unhappy with or unsure about.

Ask the following question: How would you like feedback delivered to you by another student? (*I would like feedback delivered in kind words, with specific examples, and paired with a compliment about something that is working well.*)

Preparing for Feedback

Explain that it is important to know how to give feedback as well as receive it. These are both useful skills beyond music as well and can be practiced just like any other skills. When giving feedback, first make sure it is welcomed. Make sure to choose words carefully so that you don't insult anyone. Also, avoid delivering only criticisms. Pair constructive criticism with compliments. For every piece of criticism, think of two compliments you can add. Give students examples of how to phrase criticism.

SUPPORT—This course does not require that students play an instrument, but this is a great opportunity to place instrumentalist students in each group and encourage them to bring their instrument.

Activity



Page 38

Break students into groups. Avoid grouping together students with extensive music experience so that there is at least one student in each group who can share their knowledge with the others in the group.

Instruct students to turn to page 38, Peer Assessment, in their Student Activity Books. Have them use the assessment to share their progress. Each student should start by presenting their work and stating what they are happy with and what they are having difficulty with. Then, they should spend a few minutes asking for feedback. Have them repeat this process for each student in the group. During this time, you should be moving throughout the groups, facilitating feedback and providing musical examples when necessary.

DAY 2: CONTINUE TO SHARE YOUR BLUES SONG

Remind students that professional musicians often engage in self-reflection about their progress and that it is not just something students do. Professional musicians even ask others for their honest feedback.

Activity



Page 38

Have students get into their groups again and continue giving feedback. They should open to the Peer Assessment activity on page 38 in their Student Activity Books. If they finish and there is still time, switch up students so they can receive and give feedback with a different group of people.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by returning students to their original seats and asking them to share the most helpful feedback they received with the class, in the hopes that another student will also benefit from that same feedback.

Unit 4 Lesson 5

UNIT 4 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will provide a written analysis of blues songs presented in Unit 4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 30, "Cross Road Blues"• Track 29, "Nobody Knows When You're Down and Out"• Track 7, "Dust My Broom"• Student Activity Book page 39, Analyze Blues• Pencils (1 per student)

Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 4.

Review and Assessment

Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 4:

- The origin of blues and the social context that contributed to its popularity
- The different approaches to music in Europe and the United States
- The twelve-measure structure and harmony of blues
- The procedural construction of blues melodies and lyrics

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Students will explore blues, its social context, and the influence it has had on many genres in contemporary music.* Discuss with students the activities they did in this unit, such as writing their own compositions, analyzing classic blues songs, and discussing the social context and intergenerational influence of blues.

Assessment



Page 39



Tracks 30,
29, 7

Ask students to turn to page 39, Analyze Blues, in their Student Activity Books. Students will complete the assessment activity for this unit. In this assessment, students will engage in critical responses to various blues tracks. Students will be responding to the musical, lyrical, and sociological aspects of each piece of music. Introduce and provide context for each song. Students will listen to each selection once, and then they will have several minutes to write their response. Students will also write a short blues song and share it with a partner. If a student chooses an alternative assessment, they may use this time to work on that assignment.

- “Cross Road Blues” by Robert Johnson (track 30): This early blues tune is the source of legend. Johnson left home a mediocre guitarist and returned able to play blues like no other. He would set the tone for blues music for the next several decades. Johnson toured the country playing small venues in the segregated South.
- “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out” by Bessie Smith (track 29): Smith is considered the First Lady of Blues, but her early life was filled with hardship. She came from an impoverished background, and many of her family members died before she was a teenager. The themes of her works focus on tragedy and poverty. Despite segregation, she reached a high level of fame.
- “Dust My Broom” by Elmore James (track 7): James was a highly influential guitarist, with many later rock guitarists citing him as their inspiration. He specialized in slide guitar, which would later become an essential part of the blues genre. Due to his highly impoverished, rural upbringing, not much is known about his early life.

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students’ understanding and encourage them to explore the musical ideas they learned in the unit:

- Have students write a short essay analyzing how social issues played a role in the development and popularization of blues in the United States.
- Pick original blues compositions written earlier in the unit by two classmates to use as the basis for a critical analysis of the elements of music students have been studying throughout the course.

Additional Recommended Resources

Consider using the following trade books that discuss the blues genre for students:

- Beretta, Scott, and Mike Evans. *The Blues: A Visual History: 100 Years of Music That Changed the World*. Schiffer, 2020.
- Davis, Francis. *The History of the Blues*. Da Capo Publishing, 2003.

Consider using the following resources for teachers and parents:

- Gass, Glenn. *A History of Rock Music*. Indiana University Press, 2017.
- Tinton, Jeff Todd. *Early Downhome Blues: A Musical and Cultural Analysis*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Jazz

Big Idea Jazz has had a significant influence on American music and many later genres.

Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Jazz* unit. In this unit, you will explore the works and influence of multiple composers and performers. Students will also examine jazz traditions and conventions.

This unit contains four lessons, split across seven class days. There will be a unit assessment on Day 7. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for music. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 What Is Jazz?
2–5	Lesson 2 Masters of Jazz

Day	Lesson
6	Lesson 3 Influence of Jazz
7	Lesson 4 Unit 5 Assessment

What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

- Basic staff notation and the rhythmic values of whole notes through sixteenth notes
- Tempo and dynamics terms
- The history of European music through the Romantic era

What Students Need to Learn

In this unit, students will:

- Explore influential figures in jazz;
- Learn basic jazz thirty-two-measure form;
- Identify the importance of American history in our shared musical heritage;
- Compose their own musical works; and
- Engage in critical analysis of existing and original works.

What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about notation, non-Western music, patriotic music, modern music, and vocal forms and will study further the elements of music and investigate more musical pieces.

Grade 8

- Unit 1: *Elements of Music*
- Unit 3: *Twentieth-Century Music*
- Unit 4: *Opera*
- Unit 5: *Musical Theater*

Vocabulary

improvisation, n. the act of spontaneously creating music in the moment (90)

Example: She added a touch of improvisation to her piano solo, making the performance feel fresh and spontaneous.

syncopation, n. a technique where rhythmic emphasis is placed on offbeats or between beats instead of on downbeats (95)

Example: The drummer used syncopation to give the rhythm a lively feel.

Cross-Curricular Connections

This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 7 Volume 2 Chapter 1: "A Time of Great Change : Immigration, Industrialization, and Urbanization (1865–1914)"

Grade 7 Volume 2 Chapter 2: "The Progressive Era, Social Movements, and Reform"

Grade 7 Volume 2 Chapter 4: "America from the Twenties to the New Deal"

The Grade 7 Core Knowledge History and Geography (CKHG) materials include in-depth chapters on immigration, reform, and the Great Depression, which consist of a Teacher Guide, an illustrated Student Reader, and Timeline Cards.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the chapters in the Online Resource Document.

Most Important Ideas

The most important ideas in Unit 5 are as follows:

- Jazz is a uniquely American art form that focuses on the expression of the individual through improvisation.
- Jazz has many recognizable features, including thirty-two-measure form and improvisation.

- The origins of jazz are steeped in the traditions of blues and ragtime music, as well as slavery in America.
- Individuals such as Scott Joplin, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Duke Ellington were highly influential in jazz and genres that developed later.

What Teachers Need to Know

In this unit, students will explore the lives of individual musicians as well as an entire genre. They will also explore composition styles in the genre. Jazz has been a highly influential genre and is largely responsible for the popularization of improvisation and individual expression in music in the twentieth century. However, jazz sees its beginnings in controversial times in the United States, and it played an important role in those social contexts.

Unit 5 Lesson 1

WHAT IS JAZZ?

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will listen to early jazz and describe basic characteristics of jazz music.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 29, "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out"• Track 6, "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)"• Track 31, "Roll 'Em"• Student Activity Book page 40, Jazz and Blues• Whiteboard and dry-erase marker• Pencils

Lesson Objective

- Identify and describe essential characteristics of jazz music.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about blues as a genre and form. It was an influential genre and would eventually influence another new genre called jazz.

DAY 1: WHAT IS JAZZ?

Introduce the lesson by reminding students that blues was a genre born out of a specific social context. Slavery, racism, and poverty played a strong role in early blues. Ask students to brainstorm other social issues in the early twentieth century.

Ask the following question: How can the social context change a genre or create a new genre? (*Answers may vary.*)

Birth of Jazz

Just before the beginning of the twentieth century, jazz music was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, one of the most culturally diverse places in the world at the time. It was heavily influenced by blues, but while blues music uses twelve measures with the same harmony, jazz uses thirty-two measures with very colorful harmonies. Both genres rely heavily on **improvisation** and the performer's expression, rejecting the strict structure of European orchestral music. A player's ability to express their voice is highly valued in jazz. Both genres developed through

and were influenced by segregation, racism, world wars, and poverty. These contexts informed how jazz was perceived, first as party music and then as an art form with depth.

Improvisation

Improvising in jazz is not just making music up. Guidelines, expectations, and traditions make it more structured. Experiment with this idea with an activity. Have one student draw a few lines on the board. Then, ask another student to add to them. If possible, have students draw at the same time. Ask students to discuss the resulting drawing, including what would make it better.

Next, tell students they will work together to draw something specific (for example, a ship at sea). Have them create the drawing one line at a time by inviting students up to the board to draw one by one or in small groups.

Once they are finished, explain that this is how improvisation works in jazz. It's not several performers doing whatever they want but multiple performers working together to achieve a single, predetermined goal.

SUPPORT—The drawing activity works best when many students can draw on the board at the same time, and it occupies less instructional time.

Music in This Lesson

“Roll ‘Em,” Mary Lou Williams



1944, United States



Very typical of jazz during this time, featuring boogie-woogie piano and a standard jazz rhythm section

Background for Teacher

This recording is a master class in jazz and blues phrasing. While it abides by standard blues form, the melodies and rhythmic figures are uniquely early jazz, which makes this a great example of a bridge between the two genres.

“It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing),” Duke Ellington, performed by Ella Fitzgerald



1931, United States



A high-tempo number in standard thirty-two-measure form, with vocal and instrumental improvisation

Background for Teacher

Fitzgerald is considered one of the best jazz vocalists of all time. She appeared on many recordings for other artists in addition to her own works. “It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing)” was composed by Duke Ellington (lyrics by Bubber Miley) in 1931 and recorded by Ella Fitzgerald in 1957.

“Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out,” Jimmie Cox, performed by Bessie Smith



1923, United States



A classic blues song featuring a full band, including horns

Background for Teacher

Remind students they studied this song in Unit 4. As a reminder, this song was recorded on September 13, 1929, just about a month before the stock market crashed and the United States entered the Great Depression, which is ironic considering the lyrics. “Race records” were not chartable by Billboard at the time, but this was an incredibly popular recording.



Tracks 29,
6, 31

Tell students they will compare jazz music to blues. Their goal is to focus on similarities. They should also note concepts that they find interesting about each song. Play “Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out” (Track 29), and remind them it is a blues song. After playing, briefly discuss its blues characteristics. Then, play the two jazz recordings by Fitzgerald (track 6) and Williams (track 31). Discuss how the jazz selections compare to the blues selections.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

How many measures was the blues song before it repeated?

- o The blues song had twelve measures before it repeated.

How many measures were the jazz selections?

- o The jazz songs we listened to had thirty-two measures each before they repeated.

How did the blues improvisation differ from the jazz improvisation?

- o Jazz improvisation seems more intricate and complex. Blues improvisation is less complex but also very expressive.

Activity



Page 40

Have students work in small groups to complete the Jazz and Blues activity on page 40 in their Student Activity Books. While students work, encourage them to discuss improvisation, form, and complexity of style, using music vocabulary words in their responses.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by asking students to share some of their responses from their assignment. Drive discussion toward the differences between jazz and blues, instead of similarities.

Unit 5 Lesson 2

MASTERS OF JAZZ

TIME: 4 DAYS

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will explore the life, works, and influence of Scott Joplin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 32, "Maple Leaf Rag" (arranged for band)• Track 33, "Maple Leaf Rag"• Track 34, "The Entertainer"• Student Activity Book page 41, "Maple Leaf Rag"• Pencils
DAY 2	Students will explore the life, works, and influence of Louis Armstrong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 35, "Potato Head Blues"• Track 36, "West End Blues"• Student Activity Book page 42, Louis Armstrong• Pencils
DAY 3	Students will explore the life, works, and influence of Ella Fitzgerald.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 37, "Take the 'A' Train"• Track 6, "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)"• Student Activity Book page 43, Ella Fitzgerald• Pencils
DAY 4	Students will explore the life, works, and influence of Duke Ellington.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 38, "Take the 'A' Train"• Track 39, "Caravan"• Online Resource Document "Jazz: Education" web page from the National Museum of American History• Student Activity Book page 44, Duke Ellington• Pencils

Lesson Objective

- Explore the works of Scott Joplin, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Duke Ellington and examine their influence on jazz music.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about jazz form and traditions.

DAY 1: SCOTT JOPLIN AND EARLY RAGTIME

Introduce the lesson by stating that jazz did not just show up one day as a new genre. It took time for other styles of music to come together and become jazz. Ask students to think of a genre that they enjoy and name that genre.

Ask the following question: What do you know about jazz? (*Answers may vary but may include something about a jazz song or artist.*)

Ragtime Music

Ragtime was one of several styles of music that contributed to the development of jazz. Ragtime music embraced **syncopation**, a technique where emphasis is placed on offbeats or between beats (i.e., not beats 1, 2, 3, or 4). Syncopation was not common in European orchestral music, but it became a focus of music in New Orleans.

Demonstrate syncopation by stomping a steady beat and clapping syncopated rhythms. Invite students to join you in providing a steady beat. Once students understand the concept, ask for volunteers to provide a syncopated melody. After each volunteer, pause and provide feedback.

SUPPORT—You can expand the experimentation with syncopated rhythms by grouping students into small percussion ensembles and instructing them to take turns creating syncopated rhythms.

TEACHER NOTE—Discussing ragtime music may lead to a discussion about slavery. Syncopation was prevalent in African music, and many Europeans' first encounters with African music and its syncopation were likely the result of the slave trade. New Orleans was a major hub for the trade in enslaved people in the United States from the early 1800s through the Civil War.

Music in This Lesson

"Maple Leaf Rag," Scott Joplin



1899, United States



Strong elements of stride piano (a jazz piano style with roots in ragtime) and syncopation

Background for Teacher

This song became a pivotal work, inspiring other composers to incorporate new elements of music into their uniquely American works.

“Maple Leaf Rag,” Scott Joplin, performed by the New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble



Contemporary American performance of classic ragtime



This is an arrangement of a classic ragtime tune but with more instruments, featuring a full ensemble that includes percussion, woodwinds, and brass instruments. The original composition is for solo piano.

“The Entertainer,” Scott Joplin, performed by William Appling



Contemporary American performance of classic ragtime



Strong elements of stride piano and syncopation

Background for Teacher

The inclusion of “Maple Leaf Rag” and “The Entertainer” in the 1975 American film *The Entertainer* brought renewed popularity to the songs and Joplin’s style of ragtime.



Tracks 32,
33, 34

Tell students they will listen to three songs by the same composer, the first two of which are the same song, “Maple Leaf Rag.” The first version of “Maple Leaf Rag” (track 32) is slightly different from the second (track 33). The third song is called “The Entertainer” (track 34) and sounds similar because it’s the same composer and a similar style. Play each track, pausing between each to discuss the elements of music and how they are used in each recording. Prompt students to think about how these songs differ from the recordings of European orchestral music they have listened to.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

What influence brought syncopation to music in the United States?

- o Syncopation was common in African music, and New Orleans was the center of the trade in enslaved people. This brought together influences from very different backgrounds, despite terrible circumstances.

How did ragtime influence jazz?

- o Jazz was a direct result of ragtime due to its use of non-European traditions and popularity throughout the region.

What happened to ragtime after jazz?

- o Ragtime didn't disappear. People still play it today. But it evolved into a more robust genre called jazz, which overtook ragtime in popularity as public tastes changed over time.

Activity



Page 41

Give students time to work on page 41, “Maple Leaf Rag,” in their Student Activity Books. They should include reflections on the music as well as appropriate vocabulary.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing musical traditions. Joplin was an accomplished pianist by European standards, but he was fascinated with musical elements that were not common in that style of music, which Joplin had heard enslaved people use in their music. As Joplin incorporated these new elements into his music, he invented a type of music that became very popular in his area. And with New Orleans being a global hub of trade and commerce, it spread very quickly.

DAY 2: LOUIS ARMSTRONG

Introduce the next part of the lesson by explaining how the Internet has changed the way people encounter new music. The Internet has allowed music to be shared quickly across great distances.

Ask students to think about how they were introduced to the music they listen to.

Ask the following question: What are some other ways that people encounter music that do not involve the Internet? (*Answers may vary.*)

Jazz Ambassador

Louis Armstrong, also known by his nickname “Satchmo,” is an important figure in jazz and music history. Armstrong was at the forefront of jazz in the early twentieth century and was a highly skilled improviser on the trumpet. However, it was Armstrong’s unique, raspy singing voice and his charming personality that really launched him into the public spotlight. The popularity of his voice helped him become the jazz ambassador, introducing the general public to this previously largely unknown genre.

Armstrong grew up in poverty in New Orleans. He was exposed to music at an early age and was mentored by prominent New Orleans jazz musicians. These experiences shaped both his worldview and musicianship. As a teen, Armstrong quickly became an in-demand trumpet player due to his improvisational skills. His improvisational skills were so astounding that he single-handedly changed the focus of jazz from group improvisation to featured soloists, and he became the most prominent featured soloist.

SUPPORT—Depending on the maturity of the group, it may be worth discussing that Armstrong rarely spoke about race publicly, which angered some of the Black community. However, he did strongly support racial integration in schools.

Music in This Lesson

“Potato Head Blues,” Louis Armstrong



1927, United States



A true New Orleans–style blues song featuring group improvisation from an entire section of brass and woodwind performers

Background for Teacher

This recording is the one that led to Armstrong’s fame as an accomplished jazz improviser.

“West End Blues,” Joe “King” Oliver, performed by Louis Armstrong



1928, United States



With a strong focus on trumpet improvisation, this low-tempo blues song also features Armstrong’s famous vocalizations.

Background for Teacher

This recording was highly influential on another generation of jazz trumpet players and was eventually inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.



Tracks 35, 36

Explain that Armstrong became a household name and a successful recording artist. Despite his jazz musicianship, he was still mostly known for his singing. Most of his recordings featured him as a singer, with his jazz skills overlooked. He toured the world, bringing jazz across the United States and to many other countries. Play tracks 35 and 36, and encourage students to listen carefully and to consider the context of Armstrong’s life and the world he grew up in. They should include these in their responses to the assignment questions.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

How does this music differ from the European orchestral music you have heard so far?

- o The instruments seem different, but also the way they play them is different. There seems to be less structure to the performances.

What social contexts did Armstrong experience while growing up that may have influenced his music?

- o Racism, poverty, playing music in an emerging genre, and possibly other factors may have influenced Armstrong’s music.

Activity



Instruct students to complete the Louis Armstrong assignment on page 42 in their Student Activity Books.

Page 42

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having a brief discussion about the life of Louis Armstrong and the influence he has had on other genres of American music. Ask students to connect the idea of solo improvisation to later genres (e.g., rock, soul, hip-hop).

DAY 3: ELLA FITZGERALD

Remind students that in previous sessions, they learned about early jazz performers and the impact they had on jazz and other later genres.

Point out to students that music history is influenced not only by instrumentalists but by vocalists, too.

Ask students to think of their favorite singers.

Ask the following question: What is it that you like about your favorite singers? (*Answers may vary but could include something about their voice, their lyrics, their style, etc.*)

First Lady of Song

Jazz was a male-dominated field when Ella Fitzgerald arrived. Fitzgerald was known for her incredible tone, precise pitch, creativity, and expressiveness. She is remembered fondly for her contributions to the jazz genre as a vocalist and for helping to bring jazz to a wider audience.

Fitzgerald was born to an impoverished family in Virginia, and her father left before she was five years old. She moved with her mother to New York City, where life was still difficult. Fitzgerald did not get music lessons as a child. She was a self-taught performer and gained prominence after her early amateur performances in New York City's Apollo Theater. After these performances, many well-known bands wanted her to perform with them.

SUPPORT—Some students may bring up details of Fitzgerald's personal life, which may bring up sensitive topics about abuse. Be prepared to handle these discussions.

Music in This Lesson

“Take the ‘A’ Train,” Duke Ellington, performed by Ella Fitzgerald



1939, United States



A jazz standard that showcases the typical thirty-two-bar form

Background for Teacher

This 1957 recording features Fitzgerald’s vocal stylings and approach to phrasing melodies.

“It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing),” Duke Ellington, performed by Ella Fitzgerald



1967, United States



A jazz standard that showcases the typical thirty-two-bar form

Background for Teacher

This song was popular during its day and was sampled by many artists into the late twentieth century.



Tracks 6, 37

Ella Fitzgerald experienced poverty, adversity, abuse, and illness. Her struggle comes through in her tone and phrasing. She is best known for her incredible range, which spanned from alto to soprano and beyond. This is impressive because most people can sing only one voice part. Instruct students to listen carefully to which voice parts she is singing in each song. Encourage them to use other music vocabulary, such as tempo and dynamics terms. Play each recording (tracks 6 and 37) in its entirety, and reserve time for a brief discussion after each song.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

In which song was Ella Fitzgerald’s range higher?

- o “Take the ‘A’ Train” requires a higher voice part, which is in the soprano range.

What other dynamics or tempo terms did you apply to each song?

- o Answers may vary.

How do you think her upbringing impacted the way she approached singing?

- o Her voice has a certain pained quality in which she seems to strain to reach all notes, even notes in her range. It sounds like struggle.

Activity



Page 43

Give students time to complete the Ella Fitzgerald assignment on page 43 in their Student Activity Books. While students work, walk through the room and observe their responses. Help any student who may need it.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing how our upbringings impact the way we view the world and approach our craft. Many artists and musicians faced adversity in their younger years. Ask students to name musicians who struggled as children or young adults. Ask students to describe how this may have impacted their approach to music as adults.

DAY 4: DUKE ELLINGTON

Introduce this part of the lesson by stating that jazz was not always considered an artistic genre. Originally, jazz was often dismissed as silly party music, and it was expected to be a trend that would not last.

Ask the following question: What genre does not receive respect and why? (*Answers may vary.*)

Transforming Music

Duke Ellington rose to prominence in New York City in the 1920s, when jazz was still the music of nightclubs and many critics expected it to fade away. When the Great Depression hit in 1929, Americans lost their expendable income for late-night parties and their general feeling of hope. During this period, Ellington took creative risks to make jazz more expressive and reflective of the time.

Ellington began his career as a pianist but quickly moved to arranging and composing. Unlike many of his peers, he was a trained musician with the highest regard for classical music, especially the works of composer Franz Schubert. At the time, Ellington was the only jazz composer incorporating concepts from European orchestral music into his compositions. Ellington incorporated many influences into his work, ranging from Schubert's concepts of form and structure to elements of Latin music.

By the end of the 1930s, Ellington had become one of the most celebrated and respected jazz composers because, in many people's opinion, he had turned jazz into art. He added depth of expression, which gave his music the ability to remain relevant over time.

SUPPORT—The discussion about jazz being vapid, trendy music but growing into an elevated genre is a great point to explore students' listening habits and what they think the future holds for their favorite genres.

Music in This Lesson

“Take the ‘A’ Train,” Duke Ellington



1939, United States



A true thirty-two-bar form jazz standard with a full band arrangement and vocals

“Caravan,” Juan Tizol and Duke Ellington



1936, United States



Incorporates many elements of Latin music, such as percussion and melodies

Background for Teacher

This standard is one of Ellington’s most enduring hit tunes, but the melody was written by his trombone player, Juan Tizol.



Tracks 38
and 39

In this portion of the lesson, play each recording in its entirety. Pause after each selection to discuss what elements of music are noteworthy but also how this type of jazz differs from what they have heard in earlier lessons (e.g., blues, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong). The main focus should be how Ellington elevated jazz as a genre into an American art form.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

What influences does Ellington include in his compositions?

- o Ellington includes Latin music, percussion, and a jazz swing band horn section.

During the Great Depression, how would Ellington’s style reflect the time period?

- o Ellington’s music rejected the ideas of jazz as party music and instead tried to make it an expressive art form, capable of expressing many different moods.

Activity



Page 44

Instruct students to complete the Duke Ellington assignment on page 44 in their Student Activity Books. In this assignment, they explore how Ellington revolutionized the genre and write their reflections on his two featured works.

Teaching Idea



Time permitting, consider having students explore other jazz artists that came before or after Ellington using the “Jazz: Education” web page from the National Museum of American History. Ellington’s influence could be heard and felt for many years, but his appearance on the jazz scene marked a stark transformation of the genre. Without his work, many of the subsequent turns in the genre would not have been possible. Engage students in a discussion about his influence by examining other composers who came before and after him.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Music Online Resource Document, where the specific link to the web page may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/music>

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing jazz before and after Ellington. Before Ellington, jazz was the equivalent of party music for twenty-year-olds. After Ellington, it was taken seriously as an artistic genre that would become something you could major in at a prestigious university. But how did this happen? Engage students by comparing it to other genres, such as rock and hip-hop.

Unit 5 Lesson 3

INFLUENCE OF JAZZ

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will study the influence jazz has had on American music history.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist track 2, "Rhapsody in Blue"• Student Activity Book page 45, <i>Rhapsody in Blue</i>• Pencils

Lesson Objective

- Examine the influence that jazz has had on contemporary music and culture.

What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about some of the most influential figures in jazz: Scott Joplin, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Duke Ellington.

DAY 1: INFLUENCE OF JAZZ

Introduce the lesson by stating the impact jazz has had on American history, not just music history. Jazz was involved in the Civil Rights Movement, and it advanced the importance of the individual musician, not just the ensemble. Ask students to discuss group performances versus individual performances in today's music.

Ask the following question: Do you prefer to listen to individual singers or groups? (*Answers may vary but should include a reason why they like a solo artist or a group.*)

Changing Music History

Explain to students that the development of jazz was a uniquely American contribution. Joplin developed ragtime by combining elements of Western music with African music concepts. Louis Armstrong paraded improvisation across the country when it was not a popular concept. Ella Fitzgerald brought heart and soul to jazz singing, and Duke Ellington rose above the Great Depression to deliver heartfelt music that represented the time.

Jazz ushered in a transformative period where music was about the musician, not the group or composer. It valued individual expression, living in the moment, and truly letting loose. This was a uniquely American value and could not have happened in the European orchestral setting.

Jazz became a cultural force by the 1940s. It was both the popular music and art music of the time. Also, it quickly became a growing industry. Jazz was influencing musicals and films and

receiving tons of radio play. Jazz performers played segments of musical show tunes, which were the beginnings of the jazz standard repertoire.

No jazz composer was more commercially successful than George Gershwin, though. Gershwin wrote many musicals, and songs from his musicals quickly became tunes that jazz musicians would play. However, Gershwin went further and wrote for larger ensembles. He aspired to bring jazz to the orchestral stage with his composition *Rhapsody In Blue*.

SUPPORT—Jazz “standards” are tunes that all jazz musicians are expected to know. Most of these standards are derived from early show tunes or similar adaptations. Early show tunes played an important role in the proliferation of jazz as an art form.

Music in This Lesson

Rhapsody In Blue, George Gershwin



1924, United States



A jazz work on an orchestral scale, featuring a piano solo, strong melodic themes, a string section, and ragtime rhythms

Background for Teacher

The clarinet glissando intro has become one of the most recognizable themes in all of twentieth-century music. This work is the pinnacle achievement of Gershwin’s illustrious career.



Track 2

Play track 2, *Rhapsody in Blue*, and ask students to focus their energy on active listening, as their assignment will be based on the notated music from the selection. However, you should pause the music frequently to discuss certain elements, such as the melodic theme, the use of piano in an orchestral setting, and the distinct early jazz march feel. Try to make it very clear to students that this is jazz in an orchestral setting and that this was the first time this had been attempted.

After students have listened to the music, ask the following questions:

A MUSICIAN’S QUESTIONS

Was this jazz or orchestral music?

- o The song had a bit of both.

Would it be difficult for a jazz composer to write an orchestral score?

- o I think it depends on the composer. Gershwin did have education in music, so he might not have had a hard time. But it was a new feat, which could have made it difficult.

Activity



Page 45

Direct students to complete an activity in which they will answer questions related to the notated music from *Rhapsody in Blue*. While students are working on this assignment, walk through the room to check on their progress and assist when necessary.

Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing the influence of jazz on American culture and music. With *Rhapsody in Blue*, jazz pushed its way into the art music scene. It had also dominated the pop culture, nightclub, and theater scenes. Jazz focuses on the voice of the individual. Ask students where they see that occur today. Discuss whether we would have gotten there without jazz shaking off the chains of the ensemble.

Unit 5 Lesson 4

UNIT 5 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will review the content in Unit 5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playlist<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track 40, “Nuages”• Track 41, “So What”• Student Activity Book page 46, Unit Assessment• Pencils

Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 5.

Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

Review and Assessment

In this assessment, you will guide students through a critical analysis of two jazz works that they are unfamiliar with. Students will listen to the works and focus their analysis on explaining and describing two elements of jazz they hear in each musical selection. If a student chooses an alternative assessment, they may use this time to work on that assignment.

- “Nuages” by Django Reinhardt: This is an example of early “hot jazz” or pre-swing. It features string instruments but also incorporates woodwinds. “Nuages” complies with the standard thirty-two-measure jazz format in which the melody is stated, then the form is opened up for soloists. Reinhardt is a featured soloist, and instead of playing his typical blistering fast phrases, he shows restraint, leaving moments of rest and longer tones.
- “So What” by Miles Davis: The titular track from the best-selling jazz album in history, “So What” is representative of the “cool jazz” period that followed the bebop and swing eras. It is a much more subdued style of jazz, with great use of rests during both the solos and opening melody. The most noteworthy aspects of this tune are the iconic bass line and “hits” that the entire group follows. The jarring half-step upward modulation is also very attention-grabbing.

Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 5:

- Jazz's origins are in ragtime music, which was a style of piano music that combined elements common in African music with Western European concepts of form and structure.
- Key figures such as Scott Joplin, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, and Duke Ellington made important contributions to music.
- Jazz, including Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, greatly influenced later music.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Jazz has had a significant influence on American music and many later genres*. Discuss with students the activities they did in this unit and the concepts they explored:

- The origins of jazz in ragtime music
- The influence individuals have had on the genre
- The change in direction from European music, focusing on improvisation instead of group performance
- Standard thirty-two-measure jazz format
- The social context of the origins of jazz and the social impact it had on the United States

Assessment



Ask students to turn to page 46 in their Student Activity Books. Students will complete the assessment activity for this unit. Walk around and assist as needed.

Page 46



Tracks 40, 41

You may also choose to use the following activity to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the musical ideas they learned in the unit:

- Make connections to the Great Depression, race relations in the United States, or other social issues. Then, give an oral presentation to the class on the topic.

Additional Recommended Resources

Consider using the following trade books that discuss jazz for students:

- Burns, Ken, and Geoffrey Ward. *Jazz: A History of America's Music*. Knopf, 2002.
- Gerber, Richie. *Jazz: America's Gift: From Birth to George Gershwin's "Rhapsody In Blue" and Beyond*. Gerber's Miracle Publishers, 2015.

Consider using the following resources for teachers and parents:

- Goodkin, Doug. *Now's the Time: Teaching Jazz to All Ages*. Pentatonic Press, 2004.
- Tirro, Frank. *Jazz: A History*. W. W. Norton & Company, 1993.

Culminating Activity

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

TIME: 1 DAY

AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will review the year's content, prepare their own compositions, and engage in critical analysis and reflection of peers' works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Activity Book pages 47–48• Composer at Work• Music in Context• Whiteboard and dry-erase marker• Instrument (keyboard, piano, guitar, etc.)• Pencils

Lesson Objective

- Compose works that incorporate the elements of music learned throughout the year and present the works to peers for critical analysis.

DAY 1: CULMINATING ACTIVITY

Introduce the activity by asking students to review the elements of music they explored in Unit 1, such as tempo, musical notation, accidentals, time signature, chords, octaves, instruments, vocal ranges, and dynamics. Tell them that it takes a combination of all these elements to create a piece of music. Explain that during this culminating activity, they will have a chance to put all these elements of music together to create their own composition.

Review of the Year

Provide students with a brief summary of the material they covered during the course. Ask the following questions as you replay music from previous units:



Tracks 1, 9,
30, 38

Unit 1: *1812 Overture* (track 1) How would you describe the piece using the vocabulary of music? Think about the time signature, accidentals, dynamics, tempo, or any other elements of music you have learned this year. (*Answers may vary but should use content-specific vocabulary correctly in context.*)

Unit 2: *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, “Overture” (track 9) What does the *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* overture tell you about the opera? (*Answers may vary, but students should observe that the overture contains a variety of themes, moods, and styles, and they should connect this observation with their knowledge that an overture showcases the main themes of the larger performance.*)

Unit 3: *1812 Overture* (track 1) What story does this tell, and how does it tell the story? (*It tells the story of the Napoleonic Wars and the Russian victory. It uses cultural melodies such as the French and Russian national anthems to tell the story.*)

Unit 4: “Cross Road Blues” (track 30) What is significant about the origins of blues? Think both musically and culturally. (*Blues was a showcase of American values, mostly bad and sad. It was born out of slavery but embodied the American spirit. It focused on improvisation over a twelve-measure form instead of group performance.*)

Unit 5: “Take the ‘A’ Train” (track 38) How did Duke Ellington change jazz? (*Jazz developed from ragtime music into trendy party music. It was Ellington who made jazz what we know it as today.*)

Options for Assessing

Choose one or more of the following activities to assess your students. The main activity should be assessed with the Culminating Activity Scoring Rubric on page 118.

- **Composition:** Alone or in groups, compose a musical piece that incorporates elements of music learned throughout the school year.
- **Reflect:** Alone or in groups, research an individual or topic that has contributed to the advancement of blues or jazz in the United States.

SUPPORT—Depending on the students and their experience, it may be helpful to allow them to choose to work in small groups or alone on this project. Use your discretion.

Activity



Page 47

Instruct students to open their Student Activity Books to page 47, *Composer at Work*. In this assignment, they will compose their own musical piece using what they learned during this year’s class. Remind them as they are working to include elements of correct notation, tempo, time signature, and other elements of music. Inform them that they will have this class period and the next to complete their composition and that volunteers may share their work with the class.



Page 48

Students can also choose to do the *Music in Context* activity on page 48 in their Student Activity Books and research a topic that has affected the development of jazz and blues in the United States. This can be a social issue, such as race or poverty, or the life and contributions of specific musicians discussed in class. During this time, move throughout the room offering guidance and assistance to students as needed.

Check Understanding

Conclude the session by having students share their works. In this portion of class, students should be prepared to have their jazz works performed by you—or themselves!—or share their research project ideas. Classmates are encouraged to provide feedback and ask questions.

Glossary for Core Knowledge Music: Grade 7

A

accelerating, adj. increasing in speed

accidental, n. a symbol that appears directly before a note and temporarily alters its pitch

acoustic, adj. (regarding musical instruments) having sound that is not electronically produced or modified

alto, n. the lowest female voice part

andante, adv. or adj. at a bright, walking pace

B

bar line, n. the vertical line that denotes the end of a single measure of music

baritone, n. the middle male voice part

bass, n. the lowest male voice part

bass clef, n. the F clef, used for notating lower-pitched instruments

blue note, n. the raised fourth scale degree, which was popularized by blues musicians

brass, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes trumpet, trombone, French horn, and tuba; typically made of metal

C

chord, n. a combination of three or more notes sounded simultaneously

crescendo, n. a gradual increase in volume in a piece of music

D

decrescendo, n. a gradual decrease in volume in a piece of music

dominant, n. the fifth scale degree of a diatonic scale (or the chord built upon it)

dotted note, n. a note with half of its rhythmic value added to it, indicated by a dot

double bar line, n. a type of bar line consisting of two lines, indicating the end to a specific section or the end of the piece

F

flat, n. an accidental indicating to lower the note by a half step

G

grave, adv. or adj. very slow and solemn

I

idée fixe, n. a recurring theme or melody representing a specific person, object, or idea, often used to convey an obsession or passion

improvisation, n. the act of spontaneously creating music in the moment

Indigenous music, n. the music of the people or culture originating in a particular place

interval, n. the distance between any two notes

L

largo, adv. or adj. slow and stately

M

measure, n. a small section of music that contains a specific number of beats, marked by vertical lines on a musical staff

mezzo-soprano, n. the second-highest female voice part

middle C, n. the note near the middle of the piano keyboard

N

natural, n. an accidental indicating to play the note without a sharp or flat

O

octave, n. the interval between two notes where the higher note has a frequency that is double that of the lower note, or where the highest and lowest notes have the same name but different pitches

overture, n. an instrumental work that opens a larger work such as an opera or a ballet and may contain main themes from other movements in the work

P

pentatonic scale, n. a five-note scale with no half steps

percussion, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes bass drum, snare drum, timpani, and cymbals; must be struck to make sound

prestissimo, adv. or adj. as fast as possible, exceeding 200 beats per minute

presto, adv. or adj. very fast

R

repeat, n. a type of bar line consisting of two lines and two dots, indicating the section should be repeated

S

sharp, n. an accidental indicating to raise the note by a half step

soprano, n. the highest female voice part

strings, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes violin, viola, cello, and bass; often made of wood and have four strings

subdominant, n. the chord built on the fourth degree of a diatonic scale

syncopation, n. a technique where rhythmic emphasis is placed on offbeats or between beats instead of on downbeats

T

tango, n. a form of music and a type of dance, originally from Argentina

tenor, n. the highest male voice part

tie, n. a curved line connecting two notes of the same pitch, indicating they are to be played as one

tonic, n. the first note (or scale degree) of a diatonic scale (like major or minor)

treble clef, n. the G clef, used for notating higher-pitched instruments

U

unison, n. the state of two or more musical parts or voices performing the same pitch simultaneously

W

woodwinds, n. the orchestral family of instruments that includes flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon; often made of metal or wood and have many keys

Talking to Students About Music

Talking to students about pieces of music is a vital part of building their knowledge and confidence about the subject. It is especially important to build student comfort and familiarity with the language of music. Structured discussions will help students become comfortable talking about music and will encourage them to develop and share their own interpretations.

When talking to students about music, it is important to bear in mind the following:

- Use descriptive, appropriate vocabulary, in context. Explain terms, and give examples.
- Refer to songs and pieces of music by the title of the piece and the composer's, artist's, and/or performer's name, to build familiarity.
- Ask questions that will encourage critical thinking about music. The best time to ask these questions is while listening to music together or immediately following.

Answer Key: Student Activity Book Pages

Note: Some questions in the Student Activity Books are created to encourage student creativity and reflection and therefore have no correct answers. Below are those pages and questions that do have correct answers or expected responses.

Unit 1 *Elements of Music*

Lesson 1 The Orchestra and Vocal Ranges

Who Is Part of the Orchestra? p. 3

- 4
- 1
- 3
- 2
- 1
- 2
- 1

Lesson 2 Musical Notation

Accidentals Overview p. 8

- It raises the pitch of the note.
- No, a key signature does not include both flats and sharps.
- A natural sign cancels out a sharp note in a key signature.

Name That Time Signature p. 10

- 3/4
- 4/4
- 6/8
- 2/4

Analyzing Notation p. 11

- 4
- 4
- bar lines
- quarter note
- 8

Lesson 3 Language of Music

Identifying Harmony p. 13

- Add a flat sign to the middle note.
- Add a sharp sign to the middle note.

Dynamics Review p. 16

Term	Abbreviation	Description
1. <i>crescendo</i>		
2.	<i>ff</i>	
3. <i>piano</i>		
4.	<i>decresc.</i>	
5.		medium loud
6.	<i>pp</i>	
7. <i>forte</i>		
8.		medium soft

- 4
- 1
- 5
- 3
- 2

Lesson 4 Unit 1 Assessment

Symphonie fantastique p. 20

- Possible response: The dynamics range from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo* as different emotions are emphasized.

2. Possible response: The orchestral instruments heard include the flute, trumpet, trombone, and timpani.

Unit 2 Romantic Period Music

Lesson 1 What Was the Romantic Period?

Music and Emotion p. 21

1. Possible response: It made me feel happy or hopeful. The tempo is upbeat and fun at the end. The piano made me feel light and like I was floating.

Unit 3 Music of Norway, Russia, and Mexico

Lesson 1 How Can Music Express National Identity?

New World Themes p. 26

1. Possible response: pentatonic scale and rhythms inspired by Indigenous and African American music

2. Possible response: Some elements depicted Dvořák's Czech background.

Lesson 4 Culture of Mexico

“Estrellita” p. 31

1. Possible response: The guitar music creates a sad and lonely mood that matches the lyrics and story.

Unit 4 Blues

Lesson 1 What Is Blues?

Understanding Blues p. 35

1. twelve; repeated; improvise
2. three; I; IV; V; pentatonic; fourth; blue; dissonant
3. work songs; spirituals; hardship; resilience; adversity
4. Mississippi; Louisiana; Tennessee; Maryland; Pennsylvania

Lesson 3 Blues as an Inspiration

“Cross Road Blues” p. 37

1. Possible answers: real-life topics, unsteady tempo, repetitive form

2. Possible answers: The experiences African Americans had in American society at the time shaped blues.

Reflection: Possible responses: poverty, the Great Depression, discrimination, etc.

Unit 5 Jazz

Lesson 2 Masters of Jazz

“Maple Leaf Rag” p. 41

1. Possible responses: I noticed this sounds like a lot of instruments/a band.

2. Possible responses: I noticed this sounds like one person playing the piano.

Reflection: Possible responses: It's very upbeat and happy. The syncopation makes me want to dance around. I haven't heard something so upbeat from this time period.

Louis Armstrong p. 42

1. Possible response: the poverty of his childhood and his early talent with music

Ella Fitzgerald p. 43

1. Possible response: the poverty and tragedies she experienced during her childhood

2. Reflection: Possible response: The fast tempo creates an energetic tone.

Duke Ellington p. 44

1. Possible response: He added rich harmonies and made people realize that jazz was a serious genre of music and not just a form of entertainment.

2. Possible response: The song helped capture what life in New York City could be like, and it introduced many people to jazz.

Reflection Possible response: Jazz has its roots in the United States, and many of the most popular jazz musicians, such as Duke Ellington, were from American cities, such as New York City.

Lesson 3 Influence of Jazz

Rhapsody in Blue p. 45

1. Possible response: A
2. Possible response: half rest

3. 110 beats per minute
4. Possible response: *mezzo piano* or *mp*
5. Possible response: a tie

Culminating Activity Scoring Rubric

Note: Students should be evaluated on their use of the musical conventions they have learned, as well as the musicality of what they are expressing. Use the rubric to assess the level of a student's achievement.

Exemplary	<p>Response is accurate and detailed. Student demonstrates strong understanding of music studied during the year by including three correct details, which may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notation is legible and accurate according to what was learned.• All prompts were appropriately met.• Reflections used music vocabulary accurately.
Accomplished	<p>Response is mostly accurate and somewhat detailed. Student demonstrates solid understanding of notation, but some aspects were incorrect or not met.</p>
Developing	<p>Response is mostly accurate but lacks detail. Student demonstrates a very basic understanding of notation or analysis.</p>
Limited	<p>Response is incomplete and demonstrates a minimal understanding of the content.</p>



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