



RADNOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
Course Overview



6th Grade Orchestra
7681 - 1

General Information

Credits: N/A
Length: Full Year
Weighted: N/A
Format: 2 X per cycle

Prerequisite: 5th Grade Orchestra
Grade: 6

Course Description

6th Grade Orchestra is an instrumental performing course for students learning a member of the stringed instrument family (violin, viola, cello or bass). Typically, students are in their third year of study. All students participate in one small group class, a lesson comprised of up approximately ten students of like instruments; and two large group classes, a rehearsal group comprised of all participants, up to approximately sixty members; in a six-day cycle.

Course Objectives:

The objective of this course is to allow the students to grow as ensemble musicians, to increase their knowledge and application of personal technique, and their knowledge of historical and technical aspects of music beyond the level achieved in 5th grade.

- Analyzing creators' content and how they manipulate elements of music provides insight into their intent and informs performance.
- Performers make interpretive decisions based on their understanding of context and expressive intent.
- To express their musical ideas, musicians analyze, evaluate, and refine their performance over time through openness to new ideas, persistence and the application of appropriate criteria.
- Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place and cultures. The context and how a work is presented influence the audience response.
- Response to music is informed by analyzing context (social, cultural and historical) and how creators and performers manipulate the elements of music.
- Through their use of elements and structures of music, creators and performers provide clues to their expressive intent.
- How does understanding the structure and content of musical works inform performance?
- How do performers interpret musical works?
- How do musicians improve the quality of their performance?
- When is a performance judged ready to present? How do context and manner in which a musical work is presented influence audience response?
- How does understanding the structure and context of music inform a response?
- How do we discern the musical creators' and performers' expressive intent?

Common Assessments:

Students will participate in four individual playing assessments per graded quarter. Each assessment will include one technical or scalar aspect and one performance aspect. Each aspect will be judged on a rubric by the teacher for the following criteria: Tone, Knowledge of Keys or Key Signatures, Rhythm, Dynamics, Intonation, Bowing and Posture. Students will be afforded a study guide near the beginning of the quarter and to be completed by the end of said quarter. The total point value for each assessment is 100 points. The same rubric will be used for all four playing assessments. The compilation of each playing assessment will result in a seating change within the orchestra usually based on highest to lowest scores. This is the only manner in which students might be conceived as being compared to each other. The main purpose of each assessment is to see individual student growth over the course of the year.

Major Units of Study:

There are two major units of study: Winter Concert Preparation and Spring Concert Preparation. Within these two units, students will gain greater technical proficiency on their chosen instruments through study, practice and assessment, and will progress to higher levels of ensemble performance as a result.

Materials & Texts

- Student Instruments
- Published compendium of age-appropriate performance music, up to and including Grades 2 ½.
- Technique books, which include but are not limited to the following:
 - “Essential Elements 2000, Book II” by M. Allen, R. Gillespie, P. Tellejohn-Hayes, published by Hal Leonard Corporation
 - “All for Strings – Theory Workbook 1” by Gerald Anderson and Robert S. Frost;
 - “Viva Vibrato! By Gerald F. Fischbach and Robert S. Frost; Daily Warm-Ups for String Orchestra/Hal Leonard, Pub.
 - “Daily Warm-Ups” by Michael Allen, Pub. Hal Leonard
 - “Fun With Flats” arr. Maerle J. Isaac; Wynn Music, Pub.; and
 - “String Rhythms for Classroom or Individual Study” by Sally O’Reilly, all published by Neil A. Kjos Music Company.

Students have access to electric string instruments, such as the electric violin/viola, electric cello and electric bass.

Summer Assignment

All incoming students are contacted and given guidelines to prepare for this course in advance. It is recommended that they keep their instruments through the summer months, practice and take private lessons, if possible, to maintain and increase skill levels.