

# Grade Descriptors for Music

## Years 7 -11

### Grade 9

<b>Performing</b>	Students produce secure, well-projected performances, demonstrating complete conviction and communication. They show a mature understanding of the style and period of the music being performed. - Students understand, interpret and observe composers expressive and musical direction. They show complete unity of purpose with others when performing as a group.
<b>Composing</b>	Students produce compositions that are musically stimulating, interesting and satisfying. They demonstrate a coherent development of musical ideas, consistency of style and a sense of individuality. There is successful and imaginative creation of ideas. Students are able to develop different interpretations of the same stimulus and express their own ideas in a personal style that exploits instrumental possibilities. They can present their work using appropriate notational styles which are accurate and professional.
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	In addition to Grade 8...  Students can read and understand key signatures up to four sharps or flats. They recognise modulation to dominant and sub-dominant in major and minor key signatures. Students can recognise, and describe complex musical forms and structures making reference to standard musical conventions and time periods.
<b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b>	Students can discriminate between and develop different interpretations. They express their own ideas and feelings in a developing personal style. Students discriminate and comment on how and why changes occur within selected traditions, including the particular contributions of significant performers and composers.

### Grade 8

<b>Performing</b>	Students can give secure performances with only minor inaccuracies with a good level of conviction and communication. Students understand and observe composers expressive and musical direction. Performers can positively react to difficulties faced during ensemble performances.
<b>Composing</b>	Students create compositions which are musically stimulating and interesting. They demonstrate a mostly coherent development of musical ideas, clear understanding of style and a developing sense of self. There is imaginative creation of musical ideas. They are able to use a wide variety of notational devices that accurately demonstrate their intentions as a composer. There is a sense of completeness to the work presented.

<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	In addition to Grade 7...  Students can read key signatures up to three sharps or flats. They can recognise a modulation to a related key signature. Students can recognise and describe complex musical forms and structures.
<b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b>	Students can discriminate between and discuss different interpretations. They express their own ideas and feelings with a sense of self. Students comment on key moments of change in musical traditions including particular contributions of given performers and composers.

## Grade 7

<b>Performing</b>	Students give convincing performances and demonstrate empathy with other performers. They observe composers expressive and musical direction. Students can react to difficulties faced during ensemble performances.
<b>Composing</b>	Students create compositions which maintain musical interest and are largely satisfying. They can demonstrate development of musical ideas. There is evidence of a developing personal style. Students can use notational devices that express their intentions as a composer.
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	In addition to Grade 6...  Students can recognise key signatures up to three sharps or flats. They can identify a modulation. Students can identify music from different periods and suggest possible composers.
<b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b>	Students can discriminate between and discuss different interpretations. They express their own ideas and feelings with a sense of self. Students comment on key moments of change in musical traditions including particular contributions of given performers and composers.

## Grade 6

<b>Performing</b>	Students can give reasonably secure performances with a generally assured level of conviction and projection. They can improvise whilst exploiting potential musical resources, styles, genres and traditions. Students demonstrate a high level of responsiveness to other performers and show a good understanding of the nature of ensemble performing.
<b>Composing</b>	Students can compose extended compositions with a sense of direction and shape. There is a sound sense of understanding of musical ideas. There is a sense of wholeness to the work presented and some development of musical ideas presented. They make accurate use of appropriate notations.
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	In addition to Grade 5...  Students, can recognise key signatures up to two sharps or flats - They can identify a modulation. Students can identify music from different periods and suggest possible composers.

<p><b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b></p>	<p>Students discriminate and evaluate between the characteristics and expressive potential of selected musical resources, styles, genres and traditions. They discuss the relationship between the music and its context, making and justifying their own judgements.</p>
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## Grade 5

<p><b>Performing</b></p>	<p>Students can adapt, develop and discard musical ideas as part of a performance within given and chosen musical structures, styles, genres and traditions. They understand how to shape a melodic or rhythmic line during a performance. Students understand and consistently apply a variety of methods to maintain a sense of ensemble.</p>
<p><b>Composing</b></p>	<p>Students are able to create extended compositions with a sense of direction. They compose by ear and use appropriate notations. Students are able to follow and challenge musical conventions within specific styles.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge and Understanding</b></p>	<p>In addition to Grade 4...</p> <p>Students can recognise key signatures including one sharp or flat. They can make judgements about a piece of music based on knowledge. Students can name and describe different musical periods and their associated styles.</p>
<p><b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b></p>	<p>Students discriminate and between the characteristics of selected musical resources, styles, genres and traditions. They comment on the relationship between the music and its context, making their own judgements.</p>

## Grade 4

<p><b>Performing</b></p>	<p>Students can perform music in a range of styles, making significant contributions to an ensemble and using relevant notations. They can understand style specific musical expression. Students understand a variety of methods to maintain a sense of ensemble.</p>
<p><b>Composing</b></p>	<p>Students can create coherent compositions that are based on internalised sounds. There is some evidence of understanding the musical ideas presented. Students can handle musical ideas competently and they adapt, improvise, develop, extend and discard musical ideas within given and chosen musical structures, styles, genres and traditions. They can use appropriate notation with accuracy but there may be some omissions and/or inaccuracies.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge and Understanding</b></p>	<p>In addition to Grade 3...</p> <p>Students can name different musical periods and recognise their basic features. They can name key composers from each musical period. Students can make comparisons between pieces of music and the relevant time, place, and culture.</p>

<p><b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b></p>	<p>Students discriminate between and explore musical conventions in and influence on selected styles, genres and traditions. They evaluate, make critical judgements about the use of musical conventions and other characteristics and how different contexts are reflected in their own and others work.</p>
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## Grade 3

<p><b>Performing</b></p>	<p>Students can perform with musical expression – tempo, dynamics, phrasing and timbre. They can make subtle adjustments in order to respond to others in a group performance. Students can improvise within a range of styles.</p>
<p><b>Composing</b></p>	<p>Students are able to make expressive use of tempo, dynamics, phrasing and timbre. They are able to use harmonic and nonharmonic devices consistently whilst sustaining and developing musical ideas in a basic manner. Students are able to use relevant notations to plan, revise and refine their work whilst showing their musical ideas clearly.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge and Understanding</b></p>	<p>In addition to Grade 2...</p> <p>Students can combine elements of music to discuss a piece of music in detail. They can name musical periods and well known composers. Students can identify genre and style and discuss characteristics in relation to context.</p>
<p><b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b></p>	<p>Students identify and explore different processes and contexts of selected musical styles, genres and traditions. They analyse, compare and evaluate how music reflects the context in which it is created, performed and heard. Students make improvements to their own and others work in the light of chosen styles.</p>

## Grade 2

<p><b>Performing</b></p>	<p>Students can perform parts from memory and from notation with awareness of their own contribution. They can perform a solo part or significant supporting parts confidently.</p>
<p><b>Composing</b></p>	<p>Students identify and explore musical devices. They improvise melodic and rhythmic material and can compose music for different occasions. Students are able to write for voices and sound sources in a simple manner which may lack finish. They are able to use a variety of notations.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge and Understanding</b></p>	<p>In addition to Grade 1...</p> <p>Students can identify instrumental timbres. They can use musical vocabulary to describe texture, pitch. Students can discuss how music represents time, place and culture.</p>
<p><b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b></p>	<p>Students identify musical devices and can identify how music reflects time, place and culture. They analyse and compare musical features. They evaluate how venue, occasion and purpose affect the way music is created, performed and heard. Students can refine and improve their work.</p>

## Grade 1

<b>Performing</b>	Students can sing in tune and perform rhythmically simple parts that use a limited range of notes. They can improvise short repeated patterns. Students can perform from simple notation and maintain their part with awareness of how different parts fit together.
<b>Composing</b>	Students recognise and explore how sounds can be combined. They can combine several layers of sound with an awareness of the combined effect. Students compose within simple musical structures.
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	Students can group timbre by sound. E.g. instrumental families. They can use musical language to describe dynamics and tempo. Students can read simple notation.
<b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b>	Students recognise and explore the way sounds can be combined and used expressively. They can describe how music reflects different intentions. Students make improvements to their own and others work commenting on how intentions have been achieved. They can identify where their work is successful.

## Foundation +

<b>Performing</b>	Students can sing with a sense of shape of the melody and perform simple patterns keeping to a steady pulse. They order sounds within basic structures such as beginning, middle and end.
<b>Composing</b>	Students can order sounds and make careful choices within simple structures such as beginning, middle and end. They can repeat short melodic and rhythmic fragments.
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>	Students can describe changes in musical elements using Standard English. They can read and understand basic symbols to represent sound.
<b>Evaluative and Critical Judgements</b>	Students recognise how sounds can be organised. They represent sounds with symbols and recognise how musical elements can be used to create different moods and effects. Students can improve their own work.