

Delaware Model Unit Gallery Template

Unit Title: Performance Skills
Designed by: Chris Celfo, Innovative Schools
Content Area: Music
Grade Level(s): 7

Summary of the Unit: Students will learn the proper etiquette for being a performer and also an audience member, as well as what it takes for a choir to look successful. They will understand that different performance and styles of music require different behaviors for both the performer and the audience. Performances in the choir and classroom activities will develop personal and interpersonal skills. These experiences will help them to be a lifelong supporter of the arts in their communities and appreciate the role of music in society.

Stage 1 – Desired Results What students will know, do, and understand

Delaware Content Standards

Music Standards:

- 1.2 Sing on pitch within the appropriate singing range
- 1.3 Sing on pitch in rhythm while applying a steady beat
- 1.4 Sing demonstrating proper posture and breathing
- 1.5 Sing demonstrating proper vocal technique
- 1.6 Sing expressively utilizing dynamics and phrasing
- 1.9 Sing in groups in response to gestures of a conductor
- 1.12 Sing music in 2 and 3 parts
- 1.13 Sing in groups and blending vocal timbres
- 1.14 Sing a repertoire of songs representing different genres, styles, and languages
- 1.15 Sing expressively with phrasing, dynamics, and stylistic interpretation
- 1.16 Sing music in 4 parts with and without accompaniment
- 1.17 Sing a repertoire of choral literature with expression and technical accuracy, including songs performed from memory
- 6.1 Express changes and contrasts in music through movement
- 6.6 Express through verbal and nonverbal means various styles/genres of music
- 8.3 Make connections with other disciplines as they relate to music
- 8.4 Compare and contrast terms common between the arts and other curricular areas (e.g., texture, color, form)

8.5 Compare and contrast artistic themes across cultures, history, and multiple media

Theatre Standards:

2.4E Portray a believable character with effective performance techniques (use of voice, facial expressions and body movement) in both improvised and structure presentations

2.5E Apply various acting and performance methodologies to appropriate theatrical styles

Big Idea(s)

Musical performance

Actors bring life experiences to the role, making each performance and portrayal unique.

A musical performance is not only about sounding good, it is about looking good as well.

Unit Enduring Understanding(s)

A musical performance is not only about sounding good, it is about *looking* good as well.

Participating in a choir and using knowledge of musical skills in a singing performance can help build self- esteem and confidence.

Demonstrating respect for a performance, both on and off the stage, can foster a deep appreciation for other performers.

Unit Essential Questions(s)

What is the role of the conductor in musical interpretation?

Why do manners and etiquette matter to a chorus member?

What do you want the audience to feel when you are performing?

What qualities make an individual's performance great?

How time- and culture-bound is the evaluation of an individual's performance?

To what extent do the character and context affect an actor's choices and vice versa?

Knowledge and Skills

Students will know...

The elements of proper singing posture

How to exhibit proper posture when on risers

How facial expression affects performance

How to follow a conductor

Elements of proper stage presence

What proper performance etiquette looks like

What proper audience etiquette should look like

The role of the conductor and how to follow him/her

Students will be able to...

- Exhibit good singing posture
- Follow a conductor
- Use facial expressions effectively while singing
- Perform with proper performance manners and etiquette

Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence
Evidence that will be collected to determine whether or not Desired Results are achieved

Suggested Performance/Transfer Task(s)

Teacher will video tape the choir’s performance at a rehearsal two weeks prior to concert, and then again at the concert. He/she will then watch the performances, and evaluate each student using the following rubric:

Performance Rubric					
Following Conductor	Unacceptable	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	Student is never watching/following conductor, detracting from the overall performance.	Student rarely watches/follows conductor, detracting from the overall performance.	Student is occasionally watching/following conductor, but detracting from the overall performance.	Student is usually watching/following conductor, without detracting from the overall performance.	Student is consistently watching/following conductor, detracting from the overall performance.
					Professional level following
Etiquette	Unacceptable Etiquette is never appropriate, significantly detracting from the overall performance.	Poor Etiquette is rarely appropriate, detracting from the overall performance.	Fair Etiquette is usually appropriate, but detracting from the overall performance.	Good Etiquette is usually appropriate, without detracting from the overall performance.	Excellent Etiquette is consistently appropriate. Professional level etiquette
Facial Expression	Unacceptable Effective facial expressions are never employed within the ensemble, significantly detracting from the overall performance.	Poor Effective facial expressions are rarely employed within the ensemble, detracting from the overall performance.	Fair Effective facial expressions are mostly accurate within the ensemble, detracting from the overall performance.	Good Effective facial expressions are usually employed within the ensemble without detracting from the overall performance.	Excellent Effective facial expressions are consistently employed within the ensemble enhancing the overall performance. Professional level expression
Posture	Unacceptable Correct posture is never employed, significantly detracting from the	Poor Correct posture is rarely employed, detracting from	Fair Correct posture is often employed, but detracts from the overall	Good Correct posture is usually employed, without detracting from the overall	Excellent Correct posture is consistently employed enhancing the

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Other Evidence

Exit tickets

Reflection of performance as a classroom discussion

Use of questioning during whole group instruction

Student Self-Assessment and Reflection

A great deal of reflection will occur throughout the unit as the teacher guides the students to discuss the performance of music.

Students will be asked to complete exit tickets to reflect their thinking on the lesson's content and their grasp of the enduring understandings and essential questions.

After performance, students will have a chance to reflect on their work, watching both performances and writing about their personal performance.

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

(Design learning activities to align with Stage 1 and Stage 2 expectations)

Key learning events needed to achieve unit goals

Lesson One: Posture

1. Explain to the group that proper singing technique begins with good posture, setting up the body to produce the best sound possible.
2. Have students stand in a circle facing each other, and give them the following instructions. Circulate around the circle and correct any problems:
3. Have students place feet shoulder length apart, one foot slightly ahead of the other, weight evenly distributed and toward your toes. Instruct them to rise up on tiptoes, and lower back down slightly so heels are barely touching the ground.
4. Have them slightly bend their knees so that they can feel it, but no one can see it. Instruct them to wiggle knees forward and back to feel how relaxed they are while still standing tall.
5. Instruct them to raise chest slightly, creating a lift throughout the middle of their body. Have them tap on sternum to feel the area that should be lifting (show them where sternum is).

6. Indicate that in raising your chest you should feel a tilt in your ribcage, rotating upward from the sternum.
7. Have them relax and lower shoulders comfortably, parallel to chest. Instruct them to raise shoulders to ears, and then lower them to the ground. Then have them take a deep breath, relax, and try to lower them an inch more.
8. Have them place their arms at their sides, hanging them in a relaxed position. Instruct them to shake their hands out and let their fingers hang.
9. Tell them to imagine their chin resting on a table, parallel to the ground.
10. Ask each group to demonstrate their version of correct body posture for the group. Class members are encouraged to evaluate group performance in a positive, constructive way.
11. To further emphasize correct alignment, the teacher asks students to find a blank wall space and stand with their backs against the wall. Students place their heels, buttocks, shoulder blades, and back of the head (with chin parallel to the ground) against the wall. The teacher points out that this is the "standing tall" posture we're looking for. Students are then instructed to move 6 inches away from the wall, keeping this posture alignment.
12. In a final step, students are asked to rise up on their tip-toes, and lower slightly so that their heels are barely touching. This will create the weight shift desired.
13. While this lesson should be ongoing throughout the year, when concert time comes, teacher should bring the students on stage to the risers; have them arrange themselves in concert order. They will then display appropriate posture while singing a selection chosen by the teacher.
14. Teacher will video tape performance, and have students evaluate themselves using the "posture" portion of the performance rubric.

Lesson Two: Following a conductor

1. Have students write down what they believe a choir conductor is communicating when conducting a choir.
2. Make a list on the board of some of the student's answers.
3. Give students a brief overview of how a conductor keeps the beat
4. Explain how the first beat of the baton is usually downward and is known as the "ictus," or "downbeat.", the second beat the baton continues inward toward the conductor's body, beat three moves outward, away from the body. and finally, the conductor moves his baton upward to signify the final beat of the measure (the "upbeat" or "prep beat").
5. Explain how this four beat conducting pattern is repeated throughout the entire piece of music, helping all members of the ensemble know where they are at in the overall performance simply by keeping one eye on the conductor's baton.

6. Inform them that other kinds of music with different meters and beats per measure are conducted in different ways, but the ictus and the upbeat will always be done with the same basic motions, with the upbeat immediately preceding the ictus.
7. Have students sing “My Country ‘Tis Of Thee”, while watching you conduct. Explain to them the importance of watching, and following the tempo they are given. Vary the tempo dramatically throughout, and keep a close eye on who is following correctly. Kids love this activity, and it really shows them the power the conductor has.
8. Explain to the class that the conductor does much more than simply keep a beat, however. The conductor is solely responsible for making the chorus sing the music exactly as he or she feels is appropriate, at varying dynamic levels. Large motions often signify loud, smooth passages. Small, gently motions will accompany soft, delicate passages.
9. Have students sing “My Country ‘Tis Of Thee” again, and this time vary large, and small motions, and tell students to adjust their dynamic level based on the conductors gestures.
10. Also discuss that the conductor will also express articulations through his or her gestures. Choppy, short motions go along with bouncy, choppy rhythms, while bigger, flowing motions will signify smooth, legato passages.
11. Have students sing once again, this time stressing different articulations.
12. Finally, have students sing one last time, and combine varied dynamics, tempo, and articulations.
13. This lesson is continuous, in the sense that the teacher should vary his/her conducting on a daily basis to get students accustomed to following a conductor.

Lesson Three: Facial Expression

1. Ask students to write down reasons why facial expressions are important in singing.
2. Have students discuss their answers in groups of 3-5, and then share with the entire class.
3. Stress to the class the importance of facial expressions, and the importance that they convey the mood of the text.
4. Explain how face and body are very vital to your song delivery, in that appropriate facial expressions can make a song come alive!

5. Discuss/demonstrate the importance of the raising (slightly) of the eye/eyebrow area as this technique will enhance the use of facial expressions while adding more depth and expression to the singing tone.
6. Throughout the semester, spend time analyzing lyrics with the students. What is the song about? What mood is the composer trying to convey? Teacher should encourage students to “feel” the lyrics, and be aware of using effective facial expression while singing.
7. Video tape the class during rehearsal, and then have the class evaluate their facial expression by watching their performance, and answering the following questions:
 - a. Are you just moving your lips, or are you gradually moving your mouth to accommodate the vowels in the song?
 - b. Are you lifting your eyebrows?
 - c. Do the facial expressions of the singers convey the mood of the text?
8. Have students provide exit tickets answering the questions.

Lesson Four: Concert Performance Etiquette

1. Have students jot down what they believe are elements of proper performance etiquette.
2. Discuss as a class, and make a list on the board.
3. Demonstrate to students the proper way to file on and off the risers. Stress the importance of maintaining singing posture from the moment they enter the stage, till the moment they exit the stage.
4. Discuss the importance of remaining quiet while filing on and in between selections.
5. Teach students the proper way to bow as a chorus.
 - Throughout the year, do several “practice runs” of a performance by doing the following:
 - Have students line up in riser order in the chorus room.
 - Have them enter the auditorium, and load onto the risers.
 - Run through 30 seconds of each song.
 - Have them bow as a group, and exit the risers.
 - Two weeks before the 1st performance, video tape the “practice run” and evaluate students using the “Etiquette” portion of the rubric.
 - This lesson should be revisited many times throughout the year.

Resources and Teaching Tips

Resources:

Video Camera

“Lyrics to “My Country Tis Of Thee”

A variety of musical repertoire

Differentiation

Students use the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles during this unit.

Technology Integration

The ability to responsibly use appropriate technology to communicate, solve problems, and access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information

The teacher makes use of video by recording the chorus and having them evaluate their own performance skills.

Content Connections

Content Standards integrated within instructional strategies

Math – Dividing time with measures, beat, syncopation