

Advanced Placement Music Theory Syllabus

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Students must provide the following materials: **a spiral staff-paper notebook, a two-inch three-ring binder, loose-leaf paper, pencils, and headphones.**

Students will be provided with the following texts:

1. Benward, Bruce, and Marilyn Saker. 2015. *Music in Theory and Practice, Vol. 1. 9th ed.* New York: McGraw-Hill. (abbreviated "MTP" in this document) CR1
2. Benjamin, Thomas E., Michael Horvit, and Robert S. Nelson. 2013. *Music for Sight Singing.* 6th ed. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning. CR1 CR1 The syllabus must cite the title, author, and publication date of a college-level music theory textbook. AND The syllabus must cite the title, author, and publication date of a college-level sight-singing textbook.

The teacher keeps a small library of the following texts used periodically as supplements:

1. Kostka, Stefan, and Dorothy Payne. 2009. *Tonal Harmony with an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music.* 7th ed. New York: McGraw Hill. Text and Workbook.
2. Berkowitz, Sol, et al. *A New Approach to Sight Singing.* New York: W. W. Norton.
3. Fux, Johann, trans. and ed. by Alfred Mann. *The Study of Counterpoint: From Johann Joseph Fux's Gradus ad Parnassum.*

Please set up your three-ring binder with division labels as follows:

- a. Spiral staff paper notebook for taking notes
- b. Homework to be handed in
- c. Homework already graded
- d. Sight-singing examples
- e. Composition exercises
- f. Study guides for AP Exam
- g. Returned quizzes and tests

Class description: This class is a rigorous, in-depth look into music and how it is put together. There is homework every night. Homework is consistently graded for accuracy and not just completion. Assigned Topic Questions in AP Classroom (given either before or during class) will confirm your understanding of topics before you attempt your homework. Once you complete the Topic Questions, you will receive rationales that will help you understand why an answer is correct or incorrect, and reveal content and skills you need to practice. Completing these questions will help you perform better on your homework and other graded assignments. Music theory is a skill that is developed slowly and methodically. You must hand in all homework assignments to pass the class. All who take the class are expected to take the AP Music Theory Exam in May. Singing is a crucial component of AP Music Theory and will be tested on the AP Music Theory Exam. You will be expected to sing every day.

Grading: 15% Homework
 20% Projects/Classwork/Aural Skills (Dictations, Sight-Singing, Compositions)
 50% Major Assessments: Unit Tests and portions of Practice AP Exam Exams
 15% Final Exam

A number of resources are available to students to facilitate the development of aural skills and keyboard fluency, which are requirements of AP Music Theory:

1. Your district-issued Chromebook along with self-purchased earphones will be used for listening to repertoire and practicing aural skills, as well as recording and playing back sight-singing exercises and tests.
2. There is a piano available in the choir room, and one in the ensemble rehearsal room. These pianos are available before and after school, during lunch, and during advisement period. Students may use a piano app to assist with various music theory assignments.
3. Students may also use their school-issued laptops or cell phones with DAC App to record and email me the weekly sight-singing assignments.

4. I recommend you download a music notation software program for completing homework and compositions. Finale, Sibelius, and Cakewalk are ideal. Just download the free-trial versions. Noteflight is also a great option and it is totally free.

Hint: If you are using your cell phone to record your sight-singing and the file is too big to email, compress the file or create a temporary YouTube channel. You can also save your recording to your Google Drive or Dropbox and send me the link. If you have any difficulty with this, please let me know, as you will be submitting your weekly sight-singing examples to me every Thursday (due by midnight).

AP Music Theory is a spiral curriculum based on a combination of content and skill. In this class, each new concept is built on mastery of the previous one. Think of music theory as a math course: without the skill of multiplication or addition, algebra would not be possible. These units are designed to scaffold the information from fundamental to advanced in increasingly complex steps. If there is a day you do not understand a concept, please come to my office hours that day for clarification.

Hint: Staying current on your AP Classroom assignments and homework will let you know if you don't understand something!

DETAILED COURSE SYLLABUS AND TIMELINE

WEEKS 1 – 6

Unit 1: Music Fundamentals 1: Pitch, Major Scales and Key Signatures, Minor Scales and Key Signatures, Rhythm, Meter, and Expressive Elements

Textbook Chapters: Chapters 1 and 2

Topics: pitch and pitch notation, rhythmic values, half steps and whole steps, major scales and scale degrees, major keys and key signatures, minor scales and scale degrees, minor keys and key signatures, relative and parallel keys, key relationships, interval size and quality, interval inversions, simple and compound beat division, meter and time signature, rhythmic patterns, tempos, dynamics, and articulation. **CR3**

Written Skills: Learn to notate pitches, major and minor scales, major and minor key signatures, and rhythmic patterns.

Analyzing Performed Music: Students listen to familiar melodies (such as “Jingle Bells”, “Pop Goes the Weasel”, “Take Me Out to the Ball Game”, etc.) and analyze them for their meter type and time signature. Students also listen to several classical examples to identify if the work is in a major key or a minor key and which type of minor key. **CR4**

Analyzing Written Music: For this unit, students are given a melody and are asked to identify the melodic intervals between each note of the given melody. They must also identify the key signature (major, minor – specifically), and the meter type and time signature. **CR5**

Dictation Skills: Students are asked to dictate a four-measure melody each class period. For unit 1, the dictations are limited to conjunct motion, quarter notes, half notes, and non-syncopated eighth notes. **CR6**

Sight-Singing Skills: Students first learn to attach solfège (using movable do) to melodies. This skill is reinforced by singing every melodic dictation presented in class. Students also have a weekly sight-singing assignment that must be completed via SightReadingFactory.com. For unit 1, the melodies are limited to simple meters, quarter notes, half notes, and conjunct, stepwise motion. **CR6**

| Topic | Skills |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pitch and Pitch Notation | 1.A, 2.A, 3D, 3.E |
| Half Steps and Whole Steps | 1.A, 2.A |
| Major Scales and Scale Degrees | 1.A, 2.A |
| Major Keys and Key Signatures | 1.A, 2.A, 3.A |

AP MUSIC THEORY CONTRACT

Please sign below, indicating that you have read and understand the requirements of this AP Music Theory class and plan to take the AP Exam this fall or spring: Please return contract for a test grade. Whether or not you return the contract, by continuing to take this class, you have agreed to the terms.

Print name:

Sign Name

Date: