



# Middle School Exploring Music Syllabus

## Course Length:

One Semester

## Course Description:

What comes to mind when you hear the word ‘music’? Do you think about your favorite band or artist? In this course, you’ll learn about how we hear music; how music affects our lives; essential elements of music like rhythm, pitch, and harmony; different musical genres; singing and your voice; various instruments; music composition; and the history and culture of music over the years.

## Prerequisite Skills and Knowledge:

None

## Textbook and Materials:

The ability to record using video and audio

Please review the general original credit software requirements at <http://mtda.link/techreq>

## Course Outline:

### Unit 1 - Good Vibrations (Intro to Music)

Unit Summary Imagine a baseball game that began without singing the National Anthem. What about a birthday party where, before cutting the cake, no one sang “Happy Birthday,” or a wedding where the bride walked down the aisle to silence? Music has been an important part of human life for thousands of years, and we are just now discovering the impact that music can have on the human brain, emotions, and

even the forces that shape history. In this Unit, we will explore the origins of music and the role that music plays in our lives.

## **Unit 2 - Elements of Music**

Have you ever been to a concert and wondered where the musicians learned how to perform so powerfully? They all started by learning the basics: the elements of music! You might be familiar with rhythm, pitch, melody, and harmony. We will explore these elements a little deeper so that you have the tools you need to create beautiful music!

## **Unit 3: Start With Your Ears**

In our busy world, how do we learn to really focus on the music all around us? Should we listen for the beat, the melody, or the harmony? What is most important? Well, the answer of course is—all of them! In this unit, we will learn how to sharpen our listening skills in order to hear the details of music. Doing so will help us to begin thinking about music in a new way.

## **Unit 4: Exploring Your Voice**

Even if you just sing in the shower, it's important to understand how our voices help us connect to ourselves and others, and also how our voices help us to express ourselves musically. In this unit, we will build on our knowledge of musical elements to start reading real music!

## **Unit 5: Instrumental Skills**

Picture yourself listening to your favorite song. What instruments can you detect? Even modern music, which is heavily dependent on electronic “instruments,” is based on instruments you may know well: guitar, trumpets, drums, and piano (synthesizers). Maybe you're familiar with video games where you competitively play virtual instruments— Guitar Hero, anyone?

## **Unit 6: Musical Cultures**

Human beings have been creating and enjoying music for thousands of years. Because we're such a creative species, we use music to communicate, solidify social bonds, and entertain ourselves, so this music has evolved into different categories. As you can see from our study of world instruments, the sky's the limit when it comes to creating new music and new instruments. Now, let's become familiar with the ways music has evolved over time and in different places!

## **Unit 7: Dynamic Performing Let's Rock!**

It's time to finally put all of our musical skills to work as we learn to play the guitar together. But first, we'll talk about good performances. Have you ever felt chills down your spine as you listened to a piece of music? How does that happen, and how can we make sure we are performing well for the audience? Let's find out!

## **Unit 8: Composing and Arranging**

By sticking with a few guidelines, we all have the power to follow in the footsteps of Beethoven or Bernstein! When we compose new music, we will draw upon our musical elements and put them together to create a new piece of music.

## **Grading Policy:**

Your assignments will be due each week the unit ends at midnight on Sunday.

Assignments will be open two weeks prior to the due date and will have a one-week grace period after the due date.

## **Grade Distribution:**

- Unit Assignments 25%
- Unit Discussions 15%
- Unit Quizzes 35%
- Midterm & Final Exam 25%

## **Late Work Policy:**

There is a one-week grace policy for all assignments where no late penalty will be given to work submitted. Zeroes will be entered on the due date for work not submitted, but a zero will be replaced by a grade for any work submitted within the grace period. Students must contact me if there are extenuating circumstances that prevented submission within the grace period and those will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Students should also contact me if they are struggling with their work for any reason so that they can receive help and get their work turned in on time; difficulties with the coursework or material will not be an excuse for late work.

## **Expectations for Academic Conduct:**

**Student Handbook**

It is your responsibility to read the [MTDA Student Handbook](#) and contact your instructor if you have any questions.

## **Acceptable Use & Netiquette Policy**

The [Acceptable Use Policy](#) outlines the guidelines and behaviors that all users (administrators, teachers, students, and parents) are expected to follow when participating in the Montana Digital Academy Online program.

## **Academic Honesty Policy**

Plagiarism, cheating, and any other act of dishonesty have a detrimental effect on student performance, student character, grading systems, and the academic climate of a school. It is the responsibility of students, teachers, and administrators to do everything possible to prevent it from happening. Students involved in any act of dishonesty will be penalized and could lose access to the program. Please review [MTDA's Plagiarism Policy](#).

Date: November 2023